

1. AN ANALYSIS¹

After four days of searching examination of the State Paper² issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, my conviction abides that it is the best document the British Government could have produced in the circumstances. It reflects our weakness, if we would be good enough to see it. The Congress and the Muslim League did not, could not agree. We would grievously err if at this time we foolishly satisfy ourselves that the differences are a British creation. The Mission have not come all the way from England to exploit them. They have come to devise the easiest and quickest method of ending British rule. We must be brave enough to believe their declaration until the contrary is proved. Bravery thrives upon the deceit of the deceiver.

My compliment, however, does not mean that what is best from the British standpoint is also best or even good from the Indian. Their best may possibly be harmful. My meaning will, I hope, be clear from what follows.

The authors of the document have endeavoured to say fully what they mean. They have gathered from their talks the minimum they thought would bring the parties together for framing India's charter of freedom. Their one purpose is to end British rule as early as may be. They would do so, if they could, by their effort, leave united India not torn asunder by internecine quarrel bordering on civil war. They would leave in any case. Since in Simla the two parties, though the Mission succeeded in bringing them together at the Conference table (with what patience and skill they could do so, they alone could tell), could not come to an agreement, nothing daunted, they descended to the plains of India, and devised a worthy document for the purpose of setting up the Constituent Assembly which should frame India's charter of independence, free of any British control or influence. It is an appeal and an advice. It has no compulsion in it. Thus the Provincial Assemblies may or may not elect the delegates. The delegates, having been elected, may or may not join the Constituent Assembly. The Assembly having met, may lay down a procedure different from the one laid down in the Statement. Whatever is

¹ An advance copy of this was sent to Sir Stafford Cripps.

² *Vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Declaration and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

binding on any person or party arises out of the necessity of the situation. The separate voting is binding on both the major parties, only because it is necessary for the existence of the Assembly and in no otherwise. At the time of writing, I took up the Statement, reread it clause by clause, and came to the conclusion that there was nothing in it binding in law. Honour and necessity alone are the two binding forces.

What is binding is that part of it which commits the British Government. Hence, I suppose, the four members of the British mission took the precaution of receiving full approval of the British Government and the two Houses of Parliament. The Mission are entitled to warm congratulations for the first step in the act of renunciation which the Statement is. Since other steps are necessary for full renunciation, I have called this one a promissory note.

Though the response to be made by India is to be voluntary the authors have naturally assumed that the Indian parties are well-organized and responsible bodies capable of doing voluntary acts as fully as, if not more fully than, compulsory acts. Therefore, when Lord Pethick-Lawrence said to a Press correspondent¹, "If they do come together on that basis, it will mean that they will have accepted that basis, but they can still change it, if a majority of each party they desire to do so," he was right in the sense that those who became delegates, well knowing the contents of the Statement, were expected by the authors to abide by the basis, unless it was duly altered by the major parties. When two or more rival parties meet together, they do so under some understanding. A self-chosen umpire (in the absence of the one chosen by the parties, the authors constitute themselves one) fancies that the parties will come together only if he presents them with a proposal containing a certain minimum, and he makes his proposal, leaving them free to add to, subtract from or altogether change it by joint agreement.

This is perfect so far. But what about the units? Are the Sikhs, for whom the Punjab is the only home in India, to consider themselves against their will, as part of the section which takes in Sindh, Baluchistan and the Frontier Province? Or is the Frontier Province also against its will to belong to the Punjab, called "B" in the Statement, or Assam to "C" although it is a predominantly non-Muslim province? In my opinion, the voluntary character of the Statement

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946.

demands that the liberty of the individual unit should be unimpaired. Any member of the sections is free to join it. The freedom to opt out is an additional safeguard. It can never be a substitute for the freedom retained in paragraph 15(5) which reads:

Provinces should be free to form groups with executives and legislatures and each group could determine the Provincial subject to be taken in common.

It is clear that this freedom was taken away by the authors by section 19 which “proposes” (does not order) what should be done. It presupposes that the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly at its first meeting will ask the delegates of the Provinces whether they would accept the group principle and if they do, whether they [would] accept the assignment given to their Province. This freedom inherent in every Province and that given by 15(5) will remain intact. There appears to me to be no other way of avoiding the apparent conflict between the two paragraphs as also charge of compulsion which would immediately alter the noble character of the document. I would, therefore, ask all those who are perturbed by the group proposal and the arbitrary assignment, that, if my interpretation is valid there is not the slightest cause for perturbation.

There are other things in the document which would puzzle any hasty reader who forgets that it is simply an appeal and an advice to the nation showing how to achieve independence in the shortest time possible. The reason is clear. In the new world that is to emerge out of the present chaos, India in bondage will cease to be ‘the brightest jewel’ in the British crown it will become the blackest spot in that crown, so black that it will be fit only for the dustbin. Let me ask the reader to hope and pray with me that the British crown has a better use for Britain and the world. The ‘brightest jewel’ is an arrogation. When the promissory note is fully honoured, the British crown will have a unique jewel as of right flowing from due performance of duty.

There are other matters outside the Statement which are required to back the promissory note. But I must defer that examination to the next issue of *Harijan*¹.

NEW DELHI, May 20, 1946
Harijan, 26-5-1946

¹ *Vide* “Vital Defects”, 2-6-1946.

2. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,

May 20, 1946

DEAR LORD,

As the matters we discussed yesterday morning and the day before were very important and affected and still affect my attitude and corresponding action, I think it worth-while to reduce a summary to writing. You can correct me if there is a mis-understanding. This may even help you wherever necessary.

I may add that I have conveyed to the Working Committee of the Congress the purport, to the best of my ability, of our talks.

With this preface I proceed to give the summary.

1. You were good enough to assure me that you will see to it that European members of Provincial Assemblies, neither voted at the elections of delegates to the Constituent Assembly nor expected to be elected by the electors of non-Muslim delegates.

2. Election of the possible 93 delegates on behalf of the States would be determined by the Nawab Sahib of Bhopal and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In the absence of an agreed solution, there should be no election of delegates on behalf of the States, the function of looking after the interests of the Princes and their people devolving upon the Advisory Committee referred to in clause 20 of the State Paper.

3. In view of the fact that there is no machinery in British Baluchistan analogous to the Provincial Assemblies, it should be treated as the special concern of the Constituent Assembly and should be included in the function of the Advisory Committee. Meanwhile it should be the duty of the Interim National Government to set up machinery to bring Baluchistan on a par with the other Provinces.

4. I ventured to suggest that Paramountcy should cease even while independence is at work in fact, though not in law, till the Constituent Assembly has finished its labours and devised a constitution. Sir Stafford saw danger in acting upon my suggestion. I hold the opposite view. Acceptance of my proposal would vivify the people of the States as if by a stroke of the pen. And the Interim

Government would be a boon to the Princes who, though the creation of the Paramount Power and dependent on it for the continuance of their existence, still chafed under its heavy hand. The immediate end of Paramountcy would test the sincerity of the Princes and the Paramount Power.

But if this Indian feeling did not find an echo in your hearts, I personally would be satisfied with Sir Stafford's view that Paramountcy which had been admittedly used to protect the Princes against their people in the shape of suppressing their liberty and progress, should for the time continue for the protection and progress of the people. If the people of the States are backward, it is not because they are different in kind from the people of the direct British parts of India but because they have been groaning under a double yoke. I endorsed also the suggestion that Paramountcy should be exercised in consultation with the National Government.

5. I have written to you on my difficulty on grouping.¹ I need say nothing more on the subject, pending reply to it.

6. Whilst I appreciate your and Sir Stafford's frankness, I would put on record my conviction that independence would in fact be a farce, if the British troops are in India even for peace and order within, or danger from without. The condition of India after the labours of the Constituent Assembly are over will in this respect be no better than now. If the position about the troops persists, "independence next month" is either insincere or a thoughtless cry. Acceptance of "Quit India" by the British is unconditional, whether the Constituent Assembly succeeds or fails in bringing out a constitution. A drastic revision of the attitude is a necessity in every case.

Finally it can in no way be contended that in the face of the troops, there would be natural behaviour in the Constituent Assembly.

7. As to the Interim Government, the more I think and observe, the more certain is my feeling that a proper National Government responsible in fact, if not in law, to the elected members of the Central Legislative Assembly, should precede the summons of the election of members of the Constituent Assembly. Only then, and not before, can a true picture of coming events be presented. The food crisis demands immediate formation of a strong, capable and homogeneous National Government. Without it, deep and universal corruption cannot end

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 19-5-1946.

without it the psychological effect will not be produced in spite of the landing on India shores of expected grain from outside. Every day's delay in forming such a Government is agony added to the agony of famished millions of India. There can therefore be no question of party whether the Government is allowed to be formed by the Congress or the Muslim League. The best and incorruptible men or women from India are wanted for the purpose. I was therefore glad to find that the Viceroy was already moving in the matter as quickly as possible.¹

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp.193-5

3. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,

May 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your two notes.

I am glad you are having some well-deserved rest. I still say don't hurry, don't worry. I shall give you timeby notice. I do not know when I shall be able to leave; not this week, I fear. While there is opportunity, give ample time to your brothers. Of course you will serve wherever you are. I would like you to be by my side but not at the expense of your brothers or your health and not in this heat so long as it is avoidable. Now you stay with Dalip as long as he wants you. And of course you are free to come whenever you want to.

Sudhir is better. Pyarelal must give you news about the Mission.
Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If D. does not return, shall I search for someone?

From the original: C. W. 4177. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7813

¹ For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 20-5-1946.

4. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

N[EW] D[ELHI],
May 20, 1946

BETI A. S.,

I have your letter. I asked Abha to read it to me while I was having my meal. Pyarelal read it. Now I am destroying it. What is there in it to hide? What harm is there if you take your sister-in-law with you to her village and train her? I would like it. Do what you want to do.

I understand what you say about Hanif.

I do not know how long I shall be here.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 518

5. SILENCE DAY NOTE¹

May 20, 1946

When service to the family comes into conflict with public service know that there is something wrong. For true service to the family is never opposed to public service.

I have absolutely no doubt that they the sword can never give you the courage that ahimsa does. This is what we learn from experience.

This is what you both have to boldly say at tomorrow's meeting, provided you have faith in it.

I am firm on what I have said regarding the question of monkeys, etc.² The monkey has no rationality whereas man, however stupid, is a rational animal and, therefore, we may not kill him but may accept death at his hands. Or, say, I do not have the courage to be killed by a monkey or a snake.

The case of the Sikh brother is rather complicated. About the incident at Nankana Sahib I had expressed an opinion at the Shrine

¹ This was addressed to two women.

² Vide "The Monkey Nuisance", 5-5-1946.

itself that the true servant and soldier of Guru Govind Singh will be the Sikh who will wield the sword of non-violence.¹

You may certainly come and stay in the Ashram.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

6. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*²

NEW DELHI,
May 20, 1946

It being my silence day, I only want to say to you that for India it is a day for deep and serious thinking. We should do nothing in haste. For, we are dealing with the destinies of dumb millions. It therefor becomes our bounden duty that, with God as witness, we should think only of the country with its 40 crores of people, not of our petty selves nor of our respective communities or groups. And whatever we decide we should act upon without fear or shame.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 21-5-946

7. *MANGO SEED KERNEL*

A friend has sent me an extract from Current Science showing how mango seed kernel is a fair substitute for cereals and fodder:³

I have known this use from my early youth. But no one seems to have thought of conserving this seed for food. The mango season is upon us and, though much time has been lost, it will be a good thing if every mango seed is saved and the kernel baked and eaten in the place of cereals or given to those who need it. Every ounce of food saved is so much gained.

DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921.

² It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

³ The extract is not reproduced here. It showed how from chemical analysis mango seed kernels had been found to be rich in carbohydrates and fats.

8. A FAIR HIT

A report from New Delhi dated 16th April, published in The Times of India of the 18th says that at a prayer meeting held on Tuesday evening¹ you said:

1. “The machinery and even engineers were all foreign. He had no enmity with machinery. Mills, he said, could not remove the poverty of India, but on the other hand had deprived crores of villagers of their work and practically ruined them. Those Indians responsible for ruining the villages had become foreigners and as such they should live in foreign countries.”

How can you reconcile this statement with the gentlemen who form the Board of Trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund, the primary aim of which is to improve conditions in villages? Majority of these gentlemen are industrialists and owners of mills. Can they, who are responsible for ruining the villages, and still continue to ruin them by their mills, be ever capable of sincere help in improving the condition of villagers?

2. You have so often talked and written against the curse of black market. How many of the trustees of the Kasturba Memorial Fund can lay their hands on their hearts and say they have not dealt in the black market either as buyers or sellers?

This is a fair hit. That mill-owners and such others have joined the Kasturba Trust is a compliment to my ahimsa. Though I express my opinions strongly, there is no sting in them, nothing personal. I have no sense of shame in befriending millowners whose business, I hold, should be stopped, not forcibly but by reason. Education of the public could bring about results which no force can. I must say in favour of the capitalist class trustees that they never interfered with the decision of non-capitalist trustees. Indeed, they have always helped by their knowledge. The combination is good and beneficial to the Trust. Their sincerity cannot be questioned; for, they have faith in their capacity and the modern trend.

As to black market, I do not know that any of the trustees have black market dealings. But should I discover any, I should think twice before inviting them to leave the Trust. They have not imposed themselves on the Trust.

DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

¹ Vide “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 16-4-1946.

9. HYPNOTISM OF ENGLISH¹

The foregoing letter² is from a fellow-worker in the cause. He knows what he is writing about. Nor are the facts referred to by him unknown to the Indian public. The question is how to break the spell that the English language exercise over us. It is an essential part of our struggle for swaraj or else we shall have to revise our definition of swaraj. In slavery, the slave has to ape the manners and ways of the master, e. g., dress, language, etc. Gradually he develops a liking for it to the exclusion of every thing else. When the British yoke is lifted and we are independent, this infatuation with the English language will automatically go. In the meantime, let those who have realized the harm that this infatuation has done to the country, make it a point to use Hindustani or their mother-tongue only.

It is a fact that the editors of English newspapers earn ten times as much as the editors of newspapers in the Indian languages. The remedy for it also lies in our hands. The market value of English will find its natural level, once the British empire over India goes, for the simple reason that India cannot afford to pay on a lavish scale. India is a poor country, and so long as the lot of the poorest of the poor remains unameliorated, we have no right to draw fat salaries. The fact, however, is that it rests with the newspaper-reading public to raise or reduce the prestige and price of the Indian languages newspapers. If they will cease to regard English papers as their gospel and transfer their patronage to Indian language newspapers instead, the proprietors will be compelled soon to take note of the change and adjust their policies accordingly. Something like that is happening already. There was a time when Indian languages newspapers had a poor circulation compared to English. Now the scales are reversed. Indian languages newspapers are increasing both in number and circulation.

But those who are running newspapers in Indian languages also owe a duty in the matter even like the newspaper-reading public. The language of the newspapers in the Indian languages is often poor and the writing appearing in them lack originality. Newspapermen alone can remove these defects.

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.

² Which is not reproduced here

10. NATURE CURE IN KANCHANGAON¹

I settled down and started work in Uruli Kanchan in response to the invitation of the inhabitants there in the hope of making it a model nature-cure centre for the villages of India. The people of the village had promised their co-operation. They were to have provided the land and erected buildings on it. But that has not yet materialized. They have given the money. But that is not enough for buying land and buildings on it. Their active interest in it is more important than mere monetary aid².

According to the reports received from co-workers there, the inhabitants of Kanchangoan have begun to understand and appreciate nature cure. And the workers have developed such self-confidence that they won't mind if I do not return there before June. They say that the people are co-operating with them so whole-heartedly that they can well afford to wait till I descend from Mahabaleswar and Panchgani at the end of the warm season. All this has filled me with hope³.

Nature cure consists of two parts. Firstly, to cure diseases by the taking the name of God or Ramanama and secondly, to prevent illness by the inculcation of right and hygienic living. The report from the village says that the inhabitants are co-operating with them in keeping the village clean. I hold that where the rules of personal, domestic and public sanitation are strictly observed and due care is taken in the matter of diet and exercise, there should be no occasion for illness or disease. Where there is absolute purity, inner and outer, illness becomes impossible. If the village people could but understand this, they would not need doctors, hakims or vaidyas.

In Kanchangoan there are hardly any cows. That is unfortunate. There are some she-buffaloes. But all the evidence that has come to me so far shows that buffalo's milk is no match for cow's in the health-giving quality. The vaidyas specially recommend cow's milk for patients. I, therefore, hope that people of Uruli Kanchan will keep

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 26-5-1946.

² The Hindi here adds: "However, what I propose to write is a different thing."

³ The Hindi here adds: "and I may conclude that the other villages too will appreciate nature cure."

a herd of cows to ensure a supply of fresh clean cow's milk to all. Milk is an absolutely necessity for health.

Then, the sooner the buildings are erected the better. In the first place, it is a question as to how long we ought to go on using Shri Datar's bungalow. Secondly, and that is more important, so long as there is not adequate housing accommodation, proper treatment of patients is not possible. Accommodation for indoor patients is a necessity. I shall always hope that Kanchangoan will become an ideal village. Nature cure implies an ideal mode of life and that in its turn presupposes ideal living conditions in towns and villages. The name of God is, of course, the hub round which the nature-cure system revolves.

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

Harijan, 26-5-1946

11. NATIONAL LANGUAGE OF INDIA

The above article¹ is not in praise of me. What is there to praise if a person performs some service deeming it his duty. Maulana Saheb is a scholar. He knows Persian and Arabic. He, therefore, knows Urdu very well. But he knows that neither Arabic-Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi can be the language of the masses. Therefore, he wants a blend of Urdu and Hindi and speaks a mixture of both. I have requested him to contribute every week a brief article in Hindustani which can serve the readers of *Harijan Sevak* as a specimen of Hindustani. The article in question is the first specimen of this effort.²

NEW DELHI, May 21, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-5-1946

12. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
May 21, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Enclosed you will find an advance copy of the article³ which I

¹ The article by Abul Kalam Azad is not reproduced here.

² The English version of this appeared in *Harijan*, 26-5-1946.

³ The reference is to "An Analysis" which, however, appeared under the date May, 20, 1946.

wrote for Harijan today. If my analysis is wrong in any way you will oblige me by sending your correction. Please don't trouble to read it if you are tired or too busy. Of course you can share it with Lord Pethick-Lawrence.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 192

13. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

NEW DELHI,

May 21, 1946

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. You did well in not coming here. Where is the need to meet a person when there is no work?

Aspire to live up to 125 years. Everybody who serves should have this aspiration. Its fulfilment rests with God.

Succeed in your undertaking there and return soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 4808. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

14. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

NEW DELHI,

May 21, 1946

In the song³ that had been sung at the prayer gathering Gandhiji stated it was said that since God was known as Redeemer he would redeem us some day.

The orthodox conception of redemption is redemption in the

¹ The addressee could not send a personal reply on account of indisposition. Pethick-Lawrence, however, wrote in reply: "I am indebted to you for your friendly remarks about my colleagues and myself and our statement. But you will, of course, appreciate that there are other parts of it with regard to which my views are quite different from your own."

² *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

³ Sung earlier by the Harijan girls of the Balika Ashram

life to come. What I want to tell you is that redemption in that song is promised us here and now, if we fulfil the necessary conditions. They are firstly, self-purification and, secondly, obedience to the Law. It is vain, it is demoralizing to expect that in the life to come to God will vindicate His title as Redeemer by saving us while we continue to carry the load of sin on our heads in this life. A businessman who lies and cheats his simpleminded, ignorant customers cannot hope to be saved.

It has been said that to one who is good the whole world becomes good. That is true so far as the individual is concerned. But goodness becomes dynamic only when it is practised in the face of evil. If you return good for good only, it is a bargain and carries no merit, but if you return good for evil, it becomes a redeeming force. The evil ceases before it and it goes on gathering volume and momentum like a snowball till it becomes irresistible.

So much for the individuals. How could a slave country like India be redeemed? he next asked. His reply was that a slave country owes the continuation of its slavery to the vices which slavery engenders. The way of self-purification, therefore, is also the way of redemption for a slave country. It was no use putting off hopes for redemption to future state. If they failed to gain redemption here they would probably miss it in the life hereafter too.

Let us therefore turn the searchlight inward and purge ourselves of all dross. If we shed our petty quarrels and animosities and forget all communal differences and petty distinctions the foreign troops would find their occupation gone and nobody would be able to keep us in servitude for a day.

The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1946, and Harijan, 2-6-1946

15. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Whilst I thank you for your prompt reply¹ to my letters, you will let me say that it is unfortunate. It has the old official flavour. Has the cry “independence in fact” no foundation?

I adhere to all that I have said in my letter of the 20th. Your

¹ *Vide* Appendix “Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence”, 20-5-1946.

letter is in the best imperialistic style which I thought had gone for ever.

This is from an old friend.

I was deeply grieved to learn about Sir Stafford's illness. Let me hope that he will soon be better.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

16. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,

May 22, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letters are before me.

I follow what you say about Go. Ra.

It is good that Pushpa has come. She could engage herself in work immediately.

Chimanlal's question has been answered.

I have written about returning the money belonging Sir Ganga and others.

It had become unavoidable to admit Anna¹ and family. What you wrote is perfectly all right. I am writing to them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4555

17. LETTER TO HARIHAR AND KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,

May 22, 1946

CHI. ANNA AND CHI. KAMALA,

I have the letters of you both. I was given to understand that you would do any work that Kakasaheb might give you and would even be

¹ Harihar Sharma, *vide* the following item.

prepared to go wherever you were required to go. Of course, if you cannot stay in Kakawadi, you may stay in the Ashram. I have not been able to fully grasp what you now write about the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. If it means that we ought to stay within the Sammelan, I too am guilty. In my opinion, I have only served the cause of Hindi and widened its field by quitting the organization. Write to me again to tell me what you mean. Is my interpretation correct?

Discuss fully the whole issue with Kaka and tell me about the proper course of action. I want you somehow to be at ease.

Krishnachandra is indifferent about you. Talk to him. You have the capacity to mix with people as sugar with milk.

I am not writing separately to Kamala. It seems it would be possible for me to reach Wardha only in August. I want Kamala and the children to keep well. I earnestly wish that you should both lead an ideal life and through it have a good influence on the lives of others. Service is limited by one's capacity.

What the outcome here would be, God alone knows. Are you both learning the Urdu script? Both of you should write to me. Even if I am unable to reply I would like to know your minds.

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

18. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHANDAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have all your correspondence. I have read everything about Shri Srinivasan. I do not like it. I suggest that Viththaldas¹ and Lakshmidas² should be consulted. If they do not know Shri Srinivasan, they should be fully acquainted with his background and if they agree, you may accept the resignation of Bhai Shyamji and appoint Shri Srinivasan for the Bhandar.

In fact, under our new policy it is not imperative to have an

¹ Viththaldas Jerajani

² Lakshmidas Asar

agent. Still, if we find an efficient man who is also devoted to the char-kha, we should accommodate him. It is possible that Harihar Sharma, who is now at Sevagram Ashram, knows Shri Srinivasan and we might inquire from him about the whole story. It may be necessary to inquire from Rajaji also. But all this should be regarded as no more than advice. I am agreeable to Shri Srinivasan's appointment. I think finally the matter will have to be referred to the Trustees.

From a copy of the Hindi:Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

19. ADDRESS TO I. N. A. OFFICERS'

May 22, 1946

Before he begun his speech, Mahatma Gandhiji asked them for an assurance that they would listen to his advice and the gathering gave a unfit reply in the affirmative.

Col. Habibur Rehman, who was in the same plane as Subhas Bose when it crashed, described to Mahatma Gandhi with tears in his eyes the last moment of Subhas Chandra Bose. Mahatma Gandhiji remarked:

You are a true soldier and you should not shed tears like this.

Gandhiji congratulated the I. N. A. officers on their valour and said that he had been greatly impressed by the courage shown by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the I. N. A. For a long time he had been hoping that Netaji was alive and would be amidst them some day but after what Col. Habibur Rehman had said he felt that he was no more. He added:

But he is living among us in his message and the ideal he placed before the world.

Other friends have placed before me the dilemma which, I am told, faces many of you too. The Congress creed is, of course, that of winning swaraj through non-violent and peaceful means but there are many men outside, and even within the Congress, who have begun to doubt whether that policy of the Congress has not exhausted its purpose and now become effete for that tasks that lie ahead, especially in view of the changed and changing times.

¹ Pyarelal's report from Harijan has been collated with the *Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindustan Times* reports. About 60 I. N. A. officers including several members of the Provincial Government of Azad Hind and the Indian Independence League called on Gandhiji in the morning.

You who have served under Subhas Babu, as veteran fighters have proved your mettle on the battlefield. Success and failure are, however, not in our hands, but in God's hands alone. Netaji told you when bidding good-bye to you that, on your return to India, you must put yourselves under the Congress discipline and act according to its policy. Your object, as I have been told, was only to free India, never to help the Japanese. You failed in your direct objective, i. e., to defeat the British. But you have the satisfaction that the whole country has been roused and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of independence. You have achieved a complete unity among the Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians and Sikhs in your ranks. That is no mean achievement. What, however, you realized under conditions of freedom outside India, you have now to sustain and keep alive under Indian conditions. That will be your real test.

If you have imbibed the spirit of non-violence, you will remain free men at heart even here. For instance, no government on earth can make men, who have realized freedom in their heart, salute against their will. If they threaten to kill them they will offer their necks to them, but refuse to submit. The odds are that a soldier's spirit will revolt against such coldblooded murder. Thus, whether they live or die it will be as free men. They will never be slaves. If you will become free men at heart, the whole of India will be free. They might imprison you. You will welcome it or you can tell them that you will be a corpse before they can put you in prison. Both alternatives are open to a non-violent soldier and both call for bravery of the highest order. Our task is no less than to reinfuse life into the 400 millions of India. We have to dispel fear from their hearts. On the day they shed all fear, India's fetters shall fall and she will be free.

Years ago I said at Nankana Sahib¹: "Sikhs have given proof of their martial valour. But the consummation of Guru Govind Singh's idea will be reached only when they will substitute for their kirpans² the sword of the spirit or non-violence." So long as one wants to retain one's sword, one has not attained complete fearlessness. No power on earth can subjugate you when you are armed with the sword of ahimsa. It ennobles both the victor and the vanquished. Netaji has fired you with a new spirit. That spirit can now be kept alive only

¹ On March 3, 1921; "Speech at Nankana Saheb", 3-3-1921.

² Swords

through non-violence.

Above all, you must never beg or throw yourselves on anybody's charity. Because you have risked your lives for India's sake and fought for her on the Imphal plain, you must not expect to be pampered in return. If you do that, you will lose all worth like salt that has lost its savour. You should prefer to earn your bread by the sweat of your brow, but refuse to beg or accept charity. In short, you have to show the same degree of bravery and courage of the non-violent types as you have done in the use of arms hitherto.

India is a very poor country and we should all work for our living. There is plenty of land available for all. If you want land you will have it. You will clear it and turn it into model farms. You have to overcome the inertia of ages which weighs down our masses. That you will be able to do only by setting an example of industry and hand work. You must be able to wield the bucket and the broom with skill and diligence and not consider the cleaning of latrines as dirty or beneath your dignity. Graduation in this work is more heroic than winning the Victoria Cross.

Then followed questions and answers.

Q. How can one who has spent his whole life in fighting take to ahimsa with success? Are not the two incompatible/

A. I do not agree. Badshah Khan is a Pathan. But today he has become a soldier of non-violence. In his land the sword and the gun are considered essential even for settling private disputes. But he has fully imbibed the principle of non-violence. The whole thing depends upon your attitude of mind. Tolstoy too served in the army. Yet he became the high priest of non-violence in Europe. We have not yet realized fully the power that is non-violence. If the Government had not arrested me in 1942, I would have shown how to fight Japan by non-violence.

Even at the time of the threatened Japanese invasion, I preached resistance to the enemy through non-violence. The British did not believe me. They thought how could we fight the Japanese non-violently? But I am telling you I have got faith in my ability to fight non-violently.

Q. Surely, it is no breach of ahimsa to use the sword in self-defence?

A. No, it is not necessary to use force. You should be prepared even to lay down your lives.

Even Wavell, Auchinleck¹ or Hitler does not use the sword without necessity. But that does not make it ahimsa. It is himsa, whatever its justification.

Q. You cannot take the world along with you if you adopt ahimsa. You have to choose the one or the other.

A. There again I disagree. A reformer has to sail not with the current, very often he has to go against it, even though it may cost him his life. You must not be carried off your feet by unthinking, popular applause. The essential part of your message

to the country is not how to wield the sword but how to cease to be afraid of it.

Q. What would you have done if Subhas Babu had returned to you victorious?

A. I would have asked him to make you put away your weapons and stack them before me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-5-1946, The Hindustan Times, 23-5-1946, and Harijan, 9-6-1946

20. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

NEW DELHI,
May 22, 1946

Gandhiji apologized for the delay in the printing and distribution of the leaflet³ and twitted the Imperial City for its dilatoriness. He twitted too the printers of the leaflet for their 'greed' in charging for paper and printing. When he was told that nothing had been charged for printing, he twitted them still for charging the price of paper.⁴

Gandhiji had been told that he had been coming to the prayer meeting late. That was not so, he explained. Only his watch was slow and he kept time by it. Unpunctuality was not his weakness. Still less could he afford wilfully to be unpunctual at the prayer gathering where they assembled for the solemn purpose of renewing their covenant with God.

If we have to catch a train, we try to reach the station well in time because the train waits for nobody. That is even more true of God—

¹ Sir Claude Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief in India

² Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

³ Containing the *bhajan* "Land without suffering and sorrow" sung at the prayer meeting on May 11, 1946; *vide* Appendix "The Hymn", before 16-5-1946.

⁴ Gandhiji was then informed that the paper also would not be charged for.

the wheel of His Law never stops nor slows down.

Coming back to the text of the song that had been distributed, he once again explained in detail the inner meaning of the ideal set forth in it. The conception of a country where there was no suffering and no sorrow, might at first sight strike one as Utopian. Nevertheless, they wanted their country to be such a country and he had even allowed himself to say the other day that the announcement of the Cabinet Mission contained in it the germs of that fulfilment¹.

The poet in that song, had not only set forth the ideal but also mentioned the conditions for its realization. Those conditions were freedom from illusions and regrets, delusion and desire. Such a country, however, was nowhere to be found on this earth. The poet, therefore, in order to be logical and true, had said that it was within us—it was identifiable with the realm of the spirit within. It connoted swaraj, that is to say, self rule or rule over self. A person who had perfect mastery over self could realize in his person the ideal depicted in the song. As he had remarked on the previous day, to a person who is good, the whole world becomes good. If millions did that, the Kingdom of God would be realized on earth. But even if all did not, there was no need for the individual to despair. He could make a beginning with himself straight away in the faith that what he did today the rest would do tomorrow.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

21. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,

May 23, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Don't mind Joshi having left. What led to his leaving was, of course, bad. One is bound to have such bitter as well as sweet experiences. The work there seems to be progressing very well. I hardly get any time to write or dictate letters. The work here and the work for *Harijan* is more than enough for me. But "Nobody can harm him whom Rama protects." A bhajan has been printed for distribution. I shall send you a copy of it.

The path of brahmacharya is as grand as it is difficult. The deeper one reflects over it the more clearly one realizes its grandeur, holiness and purity. I realize that the more important thing is to know how to attain it. After deep thinking I have come to the conclusion that Ramanama is the best thing. But Ramanama must come from the heart and not be pronounced merely with the tongue. It must, of

¹ Vide "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 17-5-1946.

coures, go hand in hand with incessant service. One must eat only to keep the body going. And the quantity of food must moderate. Ramanama is not a substitute for these and other essential conditions. They are, in fact, included in Ramanama. They are even a sign of Ramanama having penetrated one's heart. It is plain, moreover, that unless all attachment vanishes brahmacharya is impossible. Deduce the rest for this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2747. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

22. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Munnalal is now prepared to have a separate establishment and live with you. What is your wish now? Would you like to start as soon as possible or are you content that you have the promise? If you keep good health there and the work is going on well you should not mind waiting a little longer. Don't think of what I would like but state your own independent view.

I am not writing separately to Zohra. I hope she is all right. Look after the women there carefully.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8257. Also C. W. 6981. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

23. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. CHAMP,

I went through the letters you sent. Your reply seems to be correct. I am returning the letters. Who is Naginbhai? What is this you write about Shashikant¹?

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Addressee's son

24. LETTER TO SURENDRA P. BHAGWAT

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI SURENDRA,

I had your letter. I am unable to guide you. Please therefore excuse me.

SURENDRA PURUSHOTTAM BHAGWAT
C/O INAMDAR, MINERVA MANSION
373 SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

25. LETTER TO BHOGILAL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHOGILAL,

It pains me that I have not been able to do justice to you. But what can one who wants to be the servant of the people do? As yet I have absolutely no idea how long I shall have to be here. My heart is in Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. These two months will fortify me for ten months¹. Mahabaleshwar is now out of the question; so I shall not be able to have the benefit of your bungalow and your company. I am looking forward to Panchgani, but we can be sure only when it comes off.

You will have got the telegram I sent you.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Gandhiji had been advised by his doctors to pass two months of the summer at some hill station.

26. *LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE*

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

How are you getting along? It would be good if the workers there could manage the land, the buildings and the cows. My feeling is that we cannot fully develop our activity in the absence of the land and buildings. From the point of view of the climate it would seem the place is undoubtedly good.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

27. *LETTER TO DHIRU*

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

The report about the two patients is encouraging. It would indeed be very good if they were fully recovered.

True, you had asked me something about natural living and truthful living, but I forgot about it. If we go deep into the subject it will be apparent that two are one. While you are treating others you are yourself being cured and this is the beauty of nature cure. It is not a pill you can administer to the patient and be satisfied.

URULI KANCHAN

VIA POONA

[PS.]

Enclosed please find four letters: for Manilal, Balkrishana, Bhagwat and Kanchanbehn.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. *LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT*

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. Things are going on well. It is not certain when I shall be leaving this place. I shall see what happens.

Why 'प्रात्यक्षिक' Is not प्रत्यक्ष enough?

Is 'प्रात्यक्षिक' a Sanskrit word? Or is it used in Marathi only?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 2746. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

29. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,

May 23, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I forgot to write about Keshu. I do not know to whom I may write. What is wrong in Keshu going home? He may exert good influence there. It will not be wrong to write to him to that effect.

At present Aryanayakum³ is not there. Who has been making a demand for money? This question arises from Chimanlal's letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4556

30. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

NEW DELHI,

May 23, 1946

BHAI NANDA BABU,

You have not yet replied to the other letter that Rameshwaribehn⁴ wrote to you. A married woman who worked at Kasturba Harijan Balika Ashram in Delhi has left the job on becoming pregnant. She was a very good teacher. Can you think of any such teacher who can instruct through Hindustani, has a knowledge of the crafts and can teach and also knows and can give lesson in dancing and music? Such an accomplished lady can only be available there. Do let me know if one is available.

¹ *Pratyakshika*, adjective derived from *pratyaksha*, used as a noun

² Literally 'Before one's eyes', generally used as an adverb

³ E. W. Aryanayakum, Secretary, Hindustani Tamili Sangh

⁴ Rameshwari Nehru, Vice-President, Central Board of Harijan Sevak Sangh

My grandson, Prabhudas, has written to Kshitis Babu¹ also.

SANTINIKETAN

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

31. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ²

NEW DELHI,
May 23, 1946

Gandhiji. . . decided that it³ should be sold at the fixed price of one pice each copy and on no account at a fancy price. Similarly, he said that he would hereafter insist on the printer receiving his due charge for printing and stationery. He did not want to be greedy. It was a subtle snare in which humanitarian workers sometimes fell. If he charged more for the copy of the bhajan than its fixed price, the money would become tainted and would hinder instead of helping the cause of the removal of untouchability. Untouchability could not be eradicated by the expenditure of crores rupees. But it could be eradicated in the twinkling of an eye without spending a penny if there was a true change of heart among the so-called caste Hindus. That would elevate both the Harijans and the Savarna..

Today the Savarnas ride on the backs of the so-called untouchables. That degrades them both. For it is nature's law that one cannot degrade another without degrading oneself.

They should not tempt him, said Gandhiji, by offering fancy prices. If anyone wanted to pay the price for more than one copy of the bhajan leaflet, he or she would have to produce a corresponding number of bona-fide purchasers. Just as the leaflet would not be distributed free so it would not be sold for more than its fixed price. The way to earn merit was to translate into their lives the teaching of that bhajan.

Commenting next on the bhajan ⁴ of the evening "Sabase unchi prem sagai" he said that in that song the poet had sung of the bondage of love or ahimsa. There was no bond higher or stronger than that of love. Under the power of Sudhama's love Lord Krishna had accepted the former's gift of broken rice taken out of a dirty rag and had preferred to partake of the simple greens and herbs of Vidura in preference to Duryodhana's rare and luscious fruit. Again, it was return for Arjuna's loving devotion that he had forgotten his royalty and had become Arjuna's charioteer. We are told that

¹ Kshitis Chandra Das Gupta, elder brother of Satis Chandra Das Gupta

² The report in *The Hindustan Times* has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

³ The printed copy of the *bhajan*. All the copies having been sold out a fresh lot was printed.

⁴ By Surdas

it was the mastery of his art that contributed more to Arjuna's victory than the might of the latter's bow. Service of love was the highest service one could render to another. Such service had to be spontaneous. It asked for no consideration or return.

Love becomes a sordid bargain when it asks for return or compensation; it degrades. Spontaneous service of love purifies and elevates.

The Hindustan Times, 26-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

32. DR. MEHTA'S INSTITUTION¹

I have received several questions about Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's institution. Two of them are worth noticing. They are given below:

In order to make the institutions more scientific, more modern and more useful for the public, is it not desirable that some capable enthusiastic nature-cure man or men should be sent abroad for higher studies in nature cure? Would not such experts on their return evolve a system of nature cure suitable for our country and enable it to become popular and stand on its own feet?

You want a simple and cheap method of nature cure for our village. Can the methods described by Kuhne, Just and Kneip, etc., serve that purpose? Can these methods be useful and suitable for village work?

The clinic at Poona could not serve the purpose of village nature cure in the opinion of the Trustees. Therefore, it was closed down and an experiment in village nature cure started at Uruli Kanchan. There the work is going on satisfactorily, though on a small scale. There is nothing there worth seeing as yet. Even the land has not been bought and no buildings have been built.

Now let us take the main question. The tendency of looking to the West in order to make progress in whatever we do, should be checked. If we have to go the West to learn nature cure, it cannot be of much use to India. Nature cure is a thing which anyone can practise in the home. The advice of nature-cure experts should not be necessary for all time. It is such a simple thing that everyone can learn it. If we have to go to Europe to learn to recite Ramanama, it simply will not do. Ramanama is the very foundation of nature cure of my conception. Nor should it be necessary to go across the seas in order to learn the use of earth, water, ether, sun and air. This is self-evident. Whatever other knowledge is required in this direction can be had in our

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

villages. For instance, if herbs are used, they must be village herbs. Ayurveda teachers know all about them. If some Ayurvedic physicians are scoundrels, they cannot become good men and servants of the people by going abroad. The knowledge of anatomy and physiology has come from the West. It is very useful and necessary for all physicians. But there are plenty of means of learning it in our own country. In short, whatever useful contribution to knowledge has been made by the West, it has reached everywhere and can be learnt everywhere. I might add here that the knowledge of anatomy and physiology is not essential for learning nature cure.

The writing of Kuhne, Just and Father Kneip are simple, popular and useful for all. It is our duty to read them. Practically every nature-cure physician knows something about them. Nature cure has not taken to the villages so far. We have not thought deeply and no one has thought of it in terms of the millions. This is just the beginning. No one can say where we shall stand in the end. As in all great and good enterprises, sacrifice and dedication are required to make this successful. Instead of looking up to the West, we should turn the searchlight inwards.

NEW DELHI, May 24, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

33. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
May 24, 1946

DEAR LORD,

The Working Committee passed its resolution¹ this evening. I call it a good resolution. So far as the Congress is concerned, I am free now to leave Delhi. What would you have me to do²?

Hoping you are not finding your labours too exacting.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 197

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution", 24-5-1946.

² For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 25-5-1946.

34. NOTE TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ ¹

[May 24, 1946]²

The credit for Janakimai's³ recovery goes to you. Tell her now that she should not spoil her health again by eating indiscriminately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3059

35. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ⁴

NEW DELHI,
May 24, 1946⁵

A correspondent had written to Gandhiji pointing out how some people superstitiously wrote Ramanama on their clothes so as to wear it "next to the hearts". Other wrote Ramanama millions of times minutely on a piece of paper which they afterwards cut up into small bits and swallowed so that they could claim that Ramanama had entered into them! Another correspondent had asked him whether he had prescribed Ramanama as the sovereign remedy for all ills because Rama was God's anointed and was a descendent of Dasharatha, the illustrious King of Ayodhya. There were people who thought that he was self-deluded and was trying to delude others by adding one more to the thousands of superstitions which filled this superstition-ridden land. He had no answer to such criticism. He only said to himself, what did it matter if truth was abused and fraud practised in its name by others? So long as he was sure of his truth he could not help proclaiming it fear of its being misunderstood or abused.

Nobody in this world possesses absolute truth. This is God's attribute alone. Relative truth is all we know. Therefore, we can only follow the truth as we see it. Such pursuit of truth cannot lead anyone astray.

He reiterated Rama whose name he prescribed as the infallible remedy for all ills was neither the historical Rama nor the Rama of those who used the name as a charm or black magic. Rama whose name he prescribed as a cure-all was God, by taking

¹Eldest son of Jamnalal Bajaj

² The latter is written under another of this date.

³ Addressee's mother

⁴ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

⁵ From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

whose name devotees attained purity and peace, and he claimed that it was the one infallible remedy for all ailments whether mental, spiritual or physical. It was, of course, possible to cure physical ailments by going to doctors and vaidyas. But Ramanama enabled one to become one's own doctor or vaidya and to find the elixir of healing within oneself. Even when the ailment could not be cured, because physically it was incurable, it enabled one to endure it with equanimity and peace of mind.

A person who has faith in Ramanama would not run from pillar to post and dance attendance at the doors of celebrated doctors and viadyas in order to prolong existence anyhow. Nor is Ramanama meant to be taken only when the doctors and vaidyas have failed. It is meant to enable one to do without them altogether. For a believer in Ramanama it is the first as well as the last remedy.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

36. LETTER TO AKBAR CHAVDA

[On or before *May 25, 1946*]¹

CHI. AKBAR,

I have your letter. I am forwarding your letter to Khan Saheb. He left the day before yesterday. You should do just as he says—that will be the right thing. I understand what you say about your not reading the newspapers. It would be better if some time you sent me your full day's time-able so that I could see from it that you really cannot spare any time at all to read the newspapers.

Are you keeping well? I cannot say how long I shall be staying here. Zohra is in a village called [Uruli] Kanchan. Kanchan also is there. Munnalal is with me. If Vasumati is there who is in the Ashram to do the work? Don't you read even *Harijan Sevak*? Or is it that no one sends it to you?

Blessings from
BAPU

GRAMSEVAK
SAMAU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In the source the letter is placed between those of May 24 and 25.

37. SALARY OF M. L. A.S

Q. The monthly salary of an M.L. A. is Rs. 200. He is a mofussil member and, as such, is entitled to a daily allowance of Rs. 15 when the Assembly is in session. Besides that, he may draw conveyance [allowance] of Rs. 2/8 for any day on which he attends the meeting of the Assembly. Moreover, he is entitled to 'travelling allowance' for his journey from the usual place of residence to the city at the rate of one and a half time first-class fare but he cannot draw 'travelling allowance' and 'daily allowance' for the same day.

1. (a) Should such a person as a representative and servant of the poor draw the salary?

(b) Would he be absolved from the wrong if he gave the whole amount to the local Congress Committee or the institution under which he is working for constructive work?

(c) If so, would it not mean that the end justifies the means?

2. He will have to live in the city when the Assembly is in session and has to incur some other expenditure for discharging his duties and responsibilities as an M. L. A.

(a) In the circumstances, may he, consistently with his ideal, draw the daily allowance to meet the expenses?

(b) If so, and if it be not permissible to draw a part of it, should he draw the whole of it and give the balance to the institution under which he is working.

(c) In that case, may he, consistently with his ideal, spend the balance or part thereof for his family, which will have otherwise to depend upon the charity of friends to make the two ends meet?

3. (a) Should he draw the conveyance allowance (meant for his conveyance inside the city for attending meeting) when the daily allowance will be more than sufficient to cover all his expenses including the conveyance?

(b) Should he avail of costly conveyance for attending meetings, if he usually travels in tram-cars and buses?

4. If such a member travels third class on principle, what should he do regarding drawing 'mileage allowance' if it is not permissible to draw at lower rate than one and a half first-class fares?

A. In my opinion, the salary and allowances drawn by the gentlemen of the various Assemblies are out of all proportion to the

services they render to the country. The scales fixed are on the English pattern, not at all compatible with the income of this country—the poorest in the world. Therefore, the answer I suggest is that Ministers should, with the consent of the Assemblies, reduce the whole scale in accordance with requirements and, in the meantime, either the amount taken should be handed to the party to which the member belongs, drawing what the party has fixed or, if that be not possible, drawing what his conscience thinks just for himself and his family and devoting the balance to some items of the constructive programme or some such public activity. The money allowed has to be drawn but nobody is obliged to use it for [him] self except to the extent needed. No question here arises of the end justifying the means.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

38. RIDICULING RAMANAMA¹

Q. The Ramanama bank in Benares and wearing clothes printed with Ramanama is, in my opinion a caricature of Ramanama. Don't you think that under these circumstances your telling the people to take to Ramanama as a sovereign remedy for all ailments is likely to encourage ignorance and hypocrisy?²

A. You are right. There is so much superstition and hypocrisy around that one is afraid even to do the right thing. But if one gives way to fear, even truth will have to be suppressed. The golden rule is to act fearlessly upon what one believes to be right. Hypocrisy and untruth will go on in the world. Our doing the right thing will result in their decrease, if anything, never in their increases. The danger is that when we are surrounded by falsehood on all sides we might be caught in it and begin to deceive ourselves. We should be careful not to make a mistake out of our laziness and ignorance. Constant vigilance under all circumstances is essential. A votary of truth cannot act otherwise. Even an all powerful remedy like Ramanama can become useless for lack of wakefulness and care, and become one more addition to the numerous current superstitions.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946

² Only an extract is reproduced here.

39. NATURE CURE FOR THE POOR¹

Q. Is it not a cruel joke to ask the poor villager to live on orange juice when he cannot afford even ordinary diet? He has to work throughout the day to feed his wife and children. His land and his children mean more to him than life itself. Nature cure is meant for the rich who have plenty of money and time at their disposal.

If you really wish to serve the villagers through nature cure, you should see that the right type of nature-cure homes are started every-where. At these homes the patients should get free food, clothing and bedding. And, if the patient happens to be a wage-earner, arrangements should be made to support his family.

You have said nature cure means reorientation of the way of living. Is it not necessary that education in that direction should form a necessary part of nature-cure treatment?

A. The question betrays the correspondent's ignorance. He has not taken the trouble to read carefully what I have written on the subject. Nature cure implies that the treatment should be the cheapest and the simplest possible. The ideal is that such treatment should be carried out in the villages. The villagers should be able to provide the necessary means and equipment. What cannot be had in the villages should be procured. Nature cure does mean a change for the better in one's outlook on the life itself. It means regulation of one's life in accordance with the laws of health. It is not a matter of taking medicine free from the hospital or for fees. A man who takes free treatment from the hospital accepts charity. The man who accepts nature cure never begs. Self-help enhances self-respect. He takes steps to cure himself by eliminating poison from the system and takes precautions against falling ill in the future.

The central feature of nature-cure treatment is Ramanama.² But it must come from the heart, if it is to be a remedy for all one's ailments³.

Orange juice is not an essential part of nature-cure treatment.

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

² The Hindi here adds: "A man feels secure with Ramanama."

³ The Hindi adds: "And the observance of the laws becomes imperative for Ramanama to come from the heart. In such a situation man becomes free from all ailments. It involves neither any expenditure nor any discomfort."

Right diet and balanced diet are necessary. Today our villages are as bankrupt as we are ourselves. To produce enough vegetables, fruits and milk in the villages is an essential part of the nature-cure scheme. Time spent on this should not be considered a waste. It is bound to benefit all the villagers and ultimately the whole of India.

It is true and nature-cure homes of the right type should be opened in the villages and the cities. God willing, this will be done. The individual should rest content by doing his own duty leaving the rest to God.

NEW DELHI, May 25, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

40. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE ¹

May 25, 1946

I have to answer your letter of 22nd instant which was read to my colleagues. They wanted me to refer at the time of acknowledging your letter to some of the points in it.

1. You yourself admit that your scheme is a recommendation. Therefore at no stage can there be any compulsion read into it. The Congress has never taken the power nor has it any desire to compel a single unit. And I know, as a matter of fact, that neither the Frontier Province nor Assam nor the Sikhs of the Punjab will submit to any compulsion. They have signified their intention of not joining any group whatsoever. All I wish to say is that the scheme cannot be used for the purpose of compelling acceptance by any unit or group. The whole beauty of it resides in its voluntary character which should not be impaired.² But, of course, it will be open to all persons and parties in the Constituent Assembly to reason with any units. Naturally the decision on major communal issues will be guided by the provision thereon of the Statement.

2. As to the last three lines of paragraph 3 of your letter, obviously, adequate provisions for the protection of minorities must be part of the instrument of the Constituent Assembly. But I assume that the Constituent Assembly will be the sole judge of adequacy.

¹ Gandhiji had prepared this draft for Abul Kalam Azad.

² The addressee in his letter had said that grouping was “an essential feature of the scheme which can only be modified by agreement between the two parties”.

3. Willingness to conclude a treaty will always be there. But the treaty must be a voluntary act on the part of Independent India. If it pre-supposes compulsion, there is no Independence.

4. As to the last paragraph of your letter, I can understand the post-ponement of the declaration of legal independence till after the publication of the charter of independence framed by the Constituent Assembly. But I cannot understand the paragraph, if independence in fact does not take place immediately the contemplated interim government is established.

5. Have you any objection to the release to the Press of our correspondence. i.e., my letter of 20th May, your reply of 22nd May, my letter of even date and your reply thereto?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

41. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. KANAM¹,

I have your postcard. I was pleased. You are learning a great deal from Bhansalibhai² and Vinoba. Keep up the progress.

I am very glad that you also take part in the Ashram work now and observe the rules.

It will soon be decided now when I shall be leaving Delhi. If I go to Panchgani come there.

When will you learn the Gujarati script? If you but make up your mind, you will be able to learn it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9521. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

¹ Son of Ramadas Gandhi

² J. P. Bhansali

42. LETTER TO BODHANPRASAD SHRIVASTAVA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BODHANPRASAD,

I got your letter and the towel through Mathura Babu, as also all the news. I am gratified to know that you all love me so much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9301

43. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your letter. You will see the reply in the Harijan issue of the 2nd.¹ To sum up, accept what you get from the Assembly and keeping aside whatever you need for yourself and your family give away the rest for public work.

Now I learn that you are taking Vina² and her husband to Bengal. I am not able to understand all these things. How do you happen to have all this money, and time too? How can one who volunteers to become a servant of India get involved in such activities? It only means that one follows one's own inclination. How can one of us become an exception to this rule?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 10415. Courtesy: Amrita Lal Chatterjee

¹ Vide "Salary of M. L. A.s", 25-5-1946.

² Addressee's daughter

44. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM¹,

I have your letter. I have already written everything. Do everything you can for Roshan². It will certainly be better if you go to settle in the countryside along with Hosa.

Again you are spoiling your health. This is not good. I have written to Hosa³; I hope she got the letter.

Here the work is going on very slow. God alone knows what will happen in the end.

Whatever you do, take it as though it were a command from me.
To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi: G. N. 579

45. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter and the mangoes. Why did you send them? What is the point in sending eatables from Sevagram? The loss is obvious. It shows lack of thought to send a thing from a place where it is very useful to another where it is not needed. And we ought not to do anything without fully thinking over the matter. I ate the mangoes, they were good. But all the fruits that can be had anywhere in India are made available to me. In this situation why the mangoes from Sevagram? Now I hear you send leafy vegetables from there. If you have not sent any, don't do it. What an amount of time is taken up by this? The time we have really belongs to the people. And why should

¹ The superscription and the subscription are in Gujarati.

² Roshnara, Rashid Khan's daughter

³ *Vide* "Letter to Hosa Rashid Khan", 19-5-1946.

we be obliged to the railways for such things? All this is not meant as a rebuke but should be taken only as a caution.

For the last six days Hoshiari¹ and Garaj² have been here. I had told them they ought not to have come here. It was a waste of time and Gajraj has suffered a loss also. She says she will return today.

The programme about my stay here is likely to be settled today.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Hoshiari has left.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1971

46. *LETTER TO LABANYALATA CHANDA*

NEW DELHI,

May 25, 1946

CHI. LABANYALATA,

I got your letter. I have talked to Satis Babu and Profulla Babu regarding the hospital at Abhaya Ashram.³ Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

CAMP BALRAMPUR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Addressee's niece and her son

² *Ibid*

³ In Comilla

47. LETTER TO D. M. BURADE

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

BHAI BURADE,

I have kept back your letter of 20-4-1946. I had thought of publishing it but later decided that it would serve no purpose. Continue silently to influence society through your pure life. The whole account has indeed given me pleasure. May you all live long and remain pure for the rest of your lives.

I expect the work at Gopuri is going on fairly well.

Blessings from
BAPU

D. M. BURADE
GOSEVA SANGH
NALWADI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

48. LETTER TO NARAYANAMURTI

[May 25, 1946]¹

BHAI NARAYANAMURTI,

I have talked to Dr. Pattabhi². You should approach the Provincial Congress Committee. If the book is good, why should they not publish it?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

ANAKAPALLE
VIZ[AGAPATTAM]

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In the source the letter is placed among those of this date.

² Pattabhi Sitaramayya (1880-1959); Member, Congress Working Committee; President, All-India States People's Conference, 1936; President of the Congress, 1948; Governor of Madhya Pradesh, 1952-57

49. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ¹

NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946²

Gandhiji explained the conditions under which alone Ramanama could become an effective remedy for the three-fold malady, to which man was subject. The first condition was that it should come from the heart. What did that mean? People did not mind going to the ends of the earth to find a cure for their physical ailments which were much less important than the mental or spiritual.

Man's physical being is after all perishable. It cannot, by its very nature, last for ever. And yet man makes a fetish of it while neglecting the immortal spirit within.

A man who believed in Ramanama would not make a fetish of the body but would regard it only as a means of serving God. And for making it a fit instrument for that purpose, Ramanama was the sovereign means.

To install Ramanama in the heart required infinite patience. It might even take ages. But the effort was worth-while. Even so success depended solely on the grace of God.

Ramanama could not come from the heart unless one had cultivated the virtues of truth, honesty and purity within and without. Every day at the evening prayers they repeated the *shlokas* describing the man with steadfast intellect. Every one of them, said Gandhiji, could become a *sthitaprajna*—the man with steadfast intellect—if he kept his senses under discipline, ate and drank and allowed himself enjoyment and recreation only to sustain life for service. If one had no control over one's thoughts, if one did not mind, for instance, sleeping in a hole of a room with all doors and windows shut, and breathing foul air or drinking dirty water, recitation of Ramanama was in vain.

That, however, did not mean that one should give up reciting Ramanama on the ground that one had not the requisite purity. For, recitation of Ramanama was also a means for acquiring purity.

In the case of a man who repeats Ramanama from the heart, discipline and self-control will come easy. Observance of the rules of health and hygiene will become his second nature. His life will run an even course. He will never want to hurt anyone. To suffer in order to relieve others' sufferings will become a part of his being and fill him with an ineffable and perennial joy.

¹ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² From *The Hindustan Times*, 26-5-1946

Let them therefore, said Gandhiji, persevere and ceaselessly repeat Ramanama during all their waking hours. Ultimately, it would remain with them even during their sleep and God's grace would then fill them with perfect health of body, mind and spirit.

Harijan, 2-6-1946

50. VITAL DEFECTS

Intrinsically and as legally interpreted, the State Paper¹ seems to me to be a brave and frank document. Nevertheless, the official interpretation would appear to be different from the popular. If it is so and prevails it will be a bad omen. During the long course of the history of British rule in India, the official interpretation has held sway. And, it has been enforced. I have not hesitated before now to say that the office of the law-giver, judge and executioner is combined in one person in India. Is not the State Document a departure from the imperialistic tradition? I have answered 'yes'.

Be that as it may. Let us try to glance at the shortcomings. The Delegation, after a brief spell in Simla, returned to Delhi on the 14th instant, issued their Statement on the 16th, and yet we are far from the popular government at the Centre. One would have thought that they would have formed the Central Government before issuing the Statement. But they issued the Statement first and then set about the search for the formation of the Interim Government. It is taking a long time coming whilst the millions are starving for want of food and clothing. This is defect No. 1.

The question of paramountcy is unsolved. It is not enough to say that paramountcy will end with the end of British rule in India. If it persists without check during the interim period, it will leave behind a difficult legacy for the independent Government. If it cannot be ended with the establishment of the Interim Government, it should be exercised in co-operation with it and purely for the benefit of the people of the States. It is the people who want and are fighting for independence, not the Princes who are sustained by the alien power even when they claim not to be its creation for the suppression of the liberties of the people. The Princes, if they are true to their professions, should welcome this popular use of paramountcy so as to accommodate themselves to the sovereignty of the people envisaged

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

under the new scheme. This is defect No. 2.

Troops, it is declared, are to remain during the interim period for the preservation of internal peace and protection against external aggression. If they are kept for such use during the period of grace, their presence will act as a damper on the Constituent Assembly and is more likely than not to be wanted even after the establishment of independence so called. A nation that desires alien troops for its safety, internal or external, or has them imposed upon it, can never be described as independent in any sense of the term. It is an effete nation unfit for self-government. The acid test is that it should be able to stand alone, erect and un-bending. During the interim period we must learn to hop unaided, if we are to walk when we are free. We must cease from now to be spoon-fed.

That these things are not happening as we would wish is to be accounted as our weakness, be the causes whatever they be, not the cussedness of the British Government or their people. Whatever we get, will be our deserts, not a gift from across the seas. The three Ministers have come to do what they have declared. It will be time to blame them when they go back upon the British declarations and devise ways and means of perpetuating the British rule. Though there is ground for fear, there is no sign on the horizon that they have said one thing and meant another.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

51. *FLAGS AND UNIFORMS*

A correspondent writes:

During the recent election meetings I was astonished at the number of flags—not to speak of the special uniforms worn by the Congress volunteers for the occasion. In these days of cloth shortage, is not the use of cloth for flags and special uniforms a criminal waste?

Flags and uniforms are in order when they are in their time and place. They are easily an abomination when they take the place of bread. Satisfaction of hunger has precedence over everything. Similarly, flags and uniforms cannot replace cloth for wear. Hence, if the correspondent is right, Congressmen and others will have to be strictly

economical in the use of flags and uniforms for demonstrative purposes.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

52. QUESTION BOX

PEACEFUL STRIKES¹

Q. How should a strike be conducted so that hooliganism and violence are avoided?

A. A strike should be spontaneous and not manipulated. If it is organized without any compulsion there would be no chance for goondaism and looting. Such a strike would be characterized by perfect co-operation amongst the strikers. It should be peaceful and there should be no show of force. The strikers should take up some work either singly or in co-operation with one another, in order to earn their bread. The nature of such work should have been thought out beforehand. It goes without saying that in a peaceful, effective and firm strike of this character, there will be no room for rowdyism or looting. I have known of such strikes. I have not presented a Utopian picture.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

WHY DOCTORS?

Q. Why do you go to the doctors for examination and diagnosis and not to the vaidyas?

A. The vaidyas do not possess the knowledge of the human body as the doctors do. The basis of diagnosis in Ayurveda is the theory of *tridosh*². They have not got to the bottom even of that. The doctors are ever carrying on research and making new discoveries. One either goes forward or backward. Nothing remains static in the world. Those who become static, become lifeless. God alone is static, but amazing as it may sound, He is described both as motionless and full of motion.

Moreover, doctors and vaidyas are my friends. The doctors have clung to me. One³ of them has become more than my own daughter.

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 2-6-1946.

² The three disorders in the human system, viz., gas, bile and phlegm

³ Sushila Nayyar

One's own daughter can leave her father; how can one who has chosen to become a daughter? The vaidyas themselves use, though indifferently, the methods of diagnosis used by the doctors or else they advise the patient to go to the doctors for it. The viadyas possess the knowledge of certain drugs which they use effectively.

But the doctors, vaidyas and hakims all slave for money. They do not take to the profession purely from a spirit of service. That some of them have that spirit does not contradict my statement. Nature cure is the only thing which has come into existence purely from the point of view of selfless service. Today even that has become a means of making money. Thus money has taken the place of God. The doctors examine me, but I depend on none but God. He is the Master of every breath I take. If He wills it, He will keep me up to 125 years. If not, He might carry me off any moment, leaving the medical friends staring as helpless spectators.

NEW DELHI, May 26¹1946

WHO IS RAMA?²

Q. You have often said that when you talk of "Rama" you refer to the Ruler of the universe and not to Rama, the son of Dasharatha. But we find that your *Ramdhun* calls on "Sita-Rama", "Raja-Rama", and it ends with "Victory to Rama the Lord of Sita". Who is this Rama if not the son of the king Dasharatha?

A. I have answered such questions before. But there is something new in this one. It demands a reply. In *Ramdhun* "Raja-Rama", "Sita-Rama" are undoubtedly repeated. Is not this 'Rama' the same as the son of Dasharatha? Tulsidas has answered this question. But let me put down my own view. More potent than Rama is the Name. Hindu Dharma is like a boundless ocean teeming with priceless gems. The deeper you dive into it the more treasures you find. In Hindu religion God is known by various names. Thousands of people doubtless look upon Rama and Krishna as historical figures and literally believe that God came down in person on earth in the form of Rama the son of Dasharatha, and that by worshipping Him one can attain salvation. The same thing holds good about Krishna. History, imagination and truth have got so inextricably mixed up, it is next to impossible to disentangle them. I have accepted all the names and forms attributed to God as symbols denoting one formless omnipresent Rama. To me, therefore, Rama described as the Lord of Sita,

¹ As in *Harijanbandhu*; *Harijan*, however, has "27".

² The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 2-6-1946.

name, inscribed in the heart, removes all suffering, mental, moral and physical.

NEW DELHI, May 26, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

53. LETTER TO MARGARET BARR

NEW DELHI,
May 26, 1946

DEAR MARGARET,

Yours of 9-4-1946, I have kept long for use. I have read and reread it. So long as you give rewards you will be giving prizes. The line of distinction is thin. The whole system of examinations has to go before prizes do. The ancient system of saying which teacher taught you and how much was the only right thing. But in this age of competition, this reversion won't answer till people are tired of the thing. Let us silently pray, work and wait. I destroy your letter.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARGARET BARR

MALKI, SHILLONG

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

54. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
Sunday, May 26, 1946

Gandhiji in his discourse after the prayers informed the gathering that he would be leaving for Mussoorie day after tomorrow (Tuesday). He had been advised by his doctors to spend two months of the hot weather at some hill station to enable him to build up sufficient reserve for the rest of the year. He could not do so this year for reasons they all knew. He had decided to go to Mussoorie in preference to Panchgani or Simla, as it was nearer. He would come back when the Congress President or the Cabinet Mission might require him.

Gandhiji said that they had been coming to the prayer gatherings daily in order to join him in reciting Ramanama or rather in learning how to do so. Ramanama could

¹ *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

not be taught by word of mouth. But more potent than the spoken word was the silent thought.

A single right thought can envelop the world. It is never wasted. The very attempt to clothe thought in word or action limits it. What man has ever succeeded in expressing fully thought in word or in action? Then, why not go into perpetual silence, one might ask. In theory that is possible. But it is very difficult to fulfil the conditions by which silent thought can wholly replace action.

He for one could not claim to have attained the requisite intensity or control over thought. He could not altogether keep out useless or irrelevant thoughts from his mind. It required infinite patience, vigilance and *tapashcharya*¹ to attain that state.

He was not indulging in a figure of speech, he continued, but had meant it literally when on the previous day he had told them that there was no limit to the potency of Ramanama. But in order to experience that, Ramanama had to come from a heart that was absolutely pure. He himself was striving to attain that state. He had envisaged it in the mind but had not fully realized it in practice. When that stage was reached, even the recitation of Ramanama would become unnecessary.

He hoped they would continue to recite Ramanama in their homes severally and in company during his absence. The secret of collective prayer was that the emanation of silent influence from one to the other could be of help in their spiritual striving.

The Hindustan Times, 27-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 2-6-1946

55. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Indian Deputation² from South Africa have made a great stir in India. They propose to approach the U. N. O. with a view to enlisting the latter's sympathy. But the legislation is going through. The Indian High Commissioner will be withdrawn as he should be. What little aid he can render is nothing compared to the indignity of representing a country whose inhabitants are to be treated as an inferior race. This new caste is worse than the ancient but dying institution of India which has some redeeming features, even while it is dying. But the new civilized edition has none. It shamelessly proclaims that white civilization requires the erection of legal barriers

¹ Penance

² Led by Sorabjee Rustom; *vide* "Interview to South African Delegation", after 1-4-1946.

in order to protect itself against Asiatics and Africans. The Indians in South Africa are bearing a heavy burden which they are well able to discharge. Satyagraha, the mightiest weapon in the world, was born and bred there. If they make effective use of it, it will be well with the sacred cause they are handling. It is not one of making it easy for a handful, to be permitted to live and trade there if they wear the badge of inferiority called years ago by an Englishman of South Africa “dog’s collar”. The cause is the cause of the honour of India and through her of all the exploited coloured races of the earth, whether they be brown, yellow or black. It is worth all the suffering of which they are capable.

NEW DELHI, May 27, 1946

Harijan, 2-6-1946

56. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,

May 27, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I got your touching letter yesterday when I was busy writing for *Harijan*. Though I read it as soon as the visitors who had dropped in, had gone, I could not before now spare the time to write.

I am returning your letter, as it is marked “very confidential”. However I see nothing in it which the world may not see, if it is curious.

I entirely agree with you [on] what the State Paper demands and commends¹ to is and yet it like everything coming from the British evokes nothing but distrust. And I am sorry to confess that what has happened since the publication of the document has somewhat shaken my trust which the document by itself commanded and still commands. The interpretations put upon it and the declarations since on independence, paramountcy, troops and the proposed disposal of the Baluchistan, election, the uncertainty about the European vote and above all, the waiting policy and the interminable delay about the Interim Government make me wonder whether a satisfactory Interim Government will ever be formed and whether the Constituent Assembly will ever meet. Has even the cry of independence *in action* vanished into thin air?

¹ The source has “commands”

But I shall hope against hope and work for the success of the Mission even in spite of itself, though not hiding from them or the public honest doubt. Trust put on is worse than useless. Trust felt is the thing that counts. Anyway, why worry about trust. Trustworthy action will dispel all mistrust or distrust as the sun dispels morning mist.

This is not to disturb your test. I would have refrained from writing to you, if your letter had not required a fairly full answer.

I am sending an advance copy of my article¹ for the next issue of *Harijan*.

Do be well quickly. 'Be careful for nothing.'

If you want me to do anything, do not hesitate to send a messenger to me. I leave for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I had to finish writing for *Harijan*, before leaving. As I do not want to inflict my writing on you, I am asking Rajkumari to copy this for me. Of course you are at liberty to share this with your colleagues or whomsoever you like.

I am sending a copy of my article to Lord Pethick-Lawrence.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 199-200

57. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,

May 27, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I send you herewith an advance copy of my article for *Harijan*. I hope everything will go well with the Mission.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 198

¹ Vide "Vital Defects", 2-6-1946.

58. A NOTE

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

All Sikhs should realize that the Congress cannot and will not desert those who have stuck to it. They are quite safe with it. But they are not bound to be with the Congress, if they do not wish to. To coquet with one party and then another is bad. They should learn to be staunch and true. Loyalty to the Congress is loyalty to independence. If they do not want it, it is another matter.

From the original: C. W. 4225. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7861

59. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

How are you? And how is the naughty boy? Does he let you have any peace of mind?

I am writing this only to let you know that I am sending a naturopath there to help you. Use his services. For some time I shall have to stay around here. Let us see what happens.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10067. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

60. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
May 27, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

How many Urdu copies do you sell? Do you have anybody there who can write the Urdu script? What facilities do you have for translating articles into Hindustani? Are English articles correctly translated into Gujarati now? How much matter, at the minimum, do you want from here? And what do you want? Will it do if I send only English articles?

Does the office run smoothly? I do receive complaints which indicate that persons who ought to get copies do not receive them. We want our work to be perfect. If it is not perfect we should know [what the deficiencies are] and do our best to overcome them.

I am leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. I shall get about twelve days there. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9967. Also C. W. 6941. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

61. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

NEW DELHI,

May 27, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I read your letter. It is painful. In my opinion Viramma was not raped. Whatever took place must have been with her consent. She might have gone over willingly. I do not find fault with her. How can a poor Harijan girl differentiate between morality and immorality? It seems she has been leading a loose life.

I believe there must be no privacy. It would be good to do away with the partitioning. But it cannot be. We cannot keep the passionate away from passion with the help of external rules. We should so conduct ourselves that contact with us affects their inner self. We are not like that. Accepting this we should not admit other women. Before admitting them, we should tell them what we are and yet what we expect of them. This does not mean that we should not have any rules.

Cariappa appears to be liberal-minded.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4557

62. NOTE TO G. D. BIRLA

May 27, 1946

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

It is interesting to know what Chi. Prabhudas says about the building at Okhla. If what he says is true, even if it is free it will prove

costly. But it seems Bapa, Rameshwaribehn¹ and you need to understand this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8079. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

63. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*²

NEW DELHI,
*May 27, 1946*³

God willing I will be leaving for Mussoorie tomorrow morning. Riots have broken out in some places in India. What should a man of prayer who has faith in the supremacy of God and who recites Ramanama do under such circumstances? It is obvious that one cannot go to all the places where the riots may break out. But one can refuse to encourage them by word, deed or thought. If riots should break out before one's eyes, one should try to prevent them even at the risk of one's life, but never by taking the life of another. As I said yesterday⁴ more potent than the spoken word is the pure thought. Do you believe it? And if so, will you act according to your belief?

From a microfilm of the Hindi: Documents relating to Gandhiji. Courtesy: National Archives of India

64. *LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN DUBE*

MUSSOORIE,
May 28, 1946

BHAI RAMNARAYAN DUBE,

I have your postcard. I shall try to read the book. What do you do? Where did you learn nature cure? Is what you write in the book based on your own experience or culled from other books? Who runs the nature-cure clinic? Please tell me all about Paramahansa Pandit Bhavanishankar Maharaj. I mean that it would be better if I learnt a few things from you before I can safely recommend to anybody the treatment advocated in your book since the reading of it is likely to take some time. A number of books on sale are found to be

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Rameshwari Nehru", 28-5-1946.

² It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out.

³ From *The Bombay Chronicle*

⁴ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 26-5-1946.

practically worthless. The price of the book is indeed very high, which arouses suspicion. Do not worry about my massage. It is being done regularly.

I shall read about the *shatavari*¹ oil.

C/O SHRIHOTILALDASJI

MOTOR PROPRIETOR, ETAH

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

65. *LETTER TO M. S. ANEY*

[May 28, 1946]²

BAPUJI,

I have your letter. Since nothing has yet happened there is no need to hurry. Vallabhbhai will write. He said he would.

Vandemataram

BAPU

BAPUJI ANEY

11 STANMORE CRESELEY

HAVELOCK TOWN

COLOMBO, CEYLON

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

66. *LETTER TO VASUDEV V. DASTANE*

[May 28, 1946]

BHAI DASTANE,

Bapa writes that you have started Harijan work in your area in right earnest and are likely to make a success of it. I do hope you will.

I expect everything else is all right there.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI VASUDEV DASTANE

BHUSAVAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Asparagus racemosus

² In the source this and the following letter are placed among those of this date.

67. LETTER TO JEHANGIR C. PATEL

[May 28, 1946]¹

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I welcome your suggestion. I am glad that you like the work at Uruli. We can induce others only after the tenements at Uruli Kanchan are ready.

I had to leave Bhai Dinshaw at Delhi. I came here today. All is well. I may stay here for about ten days.

SHETH JEHANGIRJI PATEL

PATEL COTTON COMPANY

10 CHURCHGATE COMPANY

FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

68. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,

May 28, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I have your three letters which are all very good. You are doing the Agency work² efficiently. I like what you write about the building. What will it cost? Will it be all right if the Kasturba Gandhi Memorial Fund advances the whole amount on nominal interest? I see nothing wrong in offering money for the building but the parent body cannot make an exception, so I feel that problem can perhaps be solved by offering the money as a loan. Discuss the matter with the people there and let me know what they say. It should not be difficult to clear the debt in ten or fifteen years. The period of the loan may be extended so long as the interest is being paid and in default of interest-payment, the loan will have to be paid up or the custody of the building transferred to the Trust. I shall be able to decide further after I have your reply. In the meanwhile I am sending your letter and a copy of my reply to Bapa.

Now your second letter. What you write about the Assembly is correct, namely that in course of time my views will be appreciated.

¹ In the source the letter is placed between those of May 28 and 31. Gandhiji arrived at Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

² Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust

This is not an opinion I have recently come to; I have been holding it from the beginning. True workers will not enter the Assembly.¹ Keir Hardy was such a person. He commanded respect in the House of Commons. He said that an honest man could not remain a member of the House. And it is true. Morley² had to suffer a fall. The situation in South Africa was no different. It deserves to be noted that there was a great scramble for membership and the candidates spent huge sums. But I don't wish to discuss this matter. After all, what you write in the concluding part of your letter is true. It is good to exercise one's franchise to contact the mass of voters, to show them the right path and to give for this as much time as one can. For me it is enough that for some years the Agents should stay out and devote their time to their work. Until now you have not even touched the villages.

Now your third letter. The problem of Bhangis is a complex one. It is all right to say that they should go on a hunger-strike after having done their work or even while doing it but one cannot work on an empty stomach. What I have suggested³ is that society or say, city-dwellers, should strike against the municipalities—they should go on a hunger-strike also. They can do whatever they want to do. The only condition is that they should do it non-violently. It will have its impact on the municipality as well as on the Bhangis and society will have done its duty. There is also another way. The Bhangis should not strike for accommodation or for wages but they may serve a notice of giving up the occupation. If the Bhangis strike for accommodation or for wages, it may be that in the end the townspeople may themselves take up the scavenging work. I admit that if nobody does anything and the Bhangis do not get justice, then they ought to have the right to strike work. I have explained what the Bhangis, as city-dwellers, should do.

While dictating this I get your fourth letter. It is 8.30 p. m. The wire can go only tomorrow. I think your not being on the Food Board is not going to have any adverse effect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8009

¹ *Vide* "Why Not", 20-4-1946

² Viscount John Morley, Secretary of State for India, 1905-10

³ *Vide* "Sweepers' Strike", 15-4-1946.

69. LETTER TO NYALCHAND M. SHETH

[On or after May 28, 1946]¹

BHAI NYALCHAND,

I have your letter. Maybe I shall write something in *Harijan* about your question². I very well remember the questions asked by Raichand-bhai, but since then I have certainly encouraged the killing of snakes and I have not stopped people from killing them. I am realizing every moment that it is not a simple matter to distinguish between what is dharma and what is not.

Blessings from

BAPU

NYALCHAND MOOLCHAND SHETH

HEMKUNJ

PALACE ROAD

AMRELI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

70. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

[On or after May 28, 1946]

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your postcard. It will not do for you to get tired. Impatience is certainly not going to pay. Sweet is the fruit of patience. It is not worth coming over here. No one knows when we may have to leave this place. I shall be in Mussoorie for a few days only, so by all means go to Sevagram if you wish to go there and join me when I set out for Poona. Anyway you have got to finish your studies. You must not take your mind off your studies. Many people have successfully completed their studies at your age. अजरामरवत् प्राज्ञो विद्यां अर्थं च चिन्तयेत् It means that a wise man should ever go on accumulating the wealth of knowledge.³ I am getting along well. The heat in Delhi is no doubt severe but I could withstand it. The Mussoorie hills are certainly cool

¹ In the source this and the following letter are placed between those of May 28 and 31.

² Vide "Religion v. No Religion", 29-5-1946.

³ Obviously Gandhiji is interpreting the *shloka* in his own way. The purport of the *shloka* is : In pursuing knowledge and wealth a wise man should think that he would never grow old and die; in pursuing dharma he should act as though death had him by the hair.

but the weather is absolutely unpredictable. After the 5th we shall come down any day.

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. TALK WITH A FRIEND¹

[After May 28, 1946]²

An English friend posed to Gandhiji, during his stay at Mussoorie, the question whether the very frightfulness of the atom bomb would not force non-violence on the world. If all nations were armed with the atom bomb they would refrain from using it as it would mean absolute destruction for all concerned. Gandhiji was of the opinion that it would not.

The violent man's eyes would be lit up with the prospect of the much greater amount of destruction and death which he could now wreak.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

72. TALK WITH PRESS CORRESPONDENTS³

[After May 28, 1946]⁴

Your khadi, handicrafts and rural economy programme will have a great appeal for an agricultural country, as for instance, the Balkans. . . But to many of us, as indeed to many of your countrymen, it appears as a brake on progress. Most people think planning and industrialization on a wide scale to be necessary.

How does my programme interfere with the progress of India? India is mainly rural, consisting of 700,000 villages.

The visitor . . . argued that this was unfair to the cities. "What about the big cities like Bombay and Calcutta?" he asked.

On the contrary, the boot is on the other leg. I regard the growth of cities as an evil thing, unfortunate for mankind and the world,

¹ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "The Nightmare"

² From the reference to Mussoorie where Gandhiji reached on May 28, 1946.

³ Reporting this in "Some Mussoorie Reminiscences", Pyarelal says that during his ten days' stay at Mussoorie a few foreign correspondents were able to have talks with Gandhiji during his morning walks.

⁴ Vide 2nd footnote of "Talk with a Friend", after 28-5-1946.

unfortunate for England and certainly unfortunate for India. The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built. I want the blood that is today inflating the arteries of the run once again in the blood-vessels of the villages.

The initial mistake having been made, you do not mean to suggest that all those steps should inexorably be retraced even though it might involve pulling down what has already been built.

Why not? Once we discover that a mistake has been made, the only course open to us is to recognize our error, retrace our steps and begin anew.

Somehow, the belief prevails in the modern world that retracing one's steps in this respect would be incompatible with progress.

What do you do when a ship loses her course on the sea? She does not continue to follow the wrong course. She at once retraces her course and then starts afresh. How often must Columbus have done that or else he would have remained a derelict all the time.

Does that mean that you would depopulate the cities and send all the city-folk back to the villages?

I would not do that. All I want is that they should readjust their lives so as to cease to sponge upon the poor village folk and make to the latter what reparation is possible even at this late hour by helping to resuscitate their ruined economy.

What would you do if you were made a dictator of India for one day?

I would not accept it in the first place, but if I did become a dictator for one day I would spend it in cleaning the stables of the Viceroy's House that the hovels of the Harijans in Delhi are. It is disgraceful that under the very nose of the Viceroy such poverty and squalor should exist as there is in the Harijan quarters. And why does the Viceroy need such a big house? If I had my way I would turn it into a hospital.

And he gave the instance of President Kruger whose residence was not even as good as Birlaji's 'Hermitage' in which he was staying.

"Well, sir, suppose they continue your dictatorship for the second day?" Gandhiji replied amidst laughter:

The second day would be a prolongation of the first.

They next talked of several other things—the national language of India, the

place of English, the administrative problems that would face an independent India, the future of Indo-British trade relations. They then came to non-violence.

“What will be the relations of India with Russia for instance? What if Russia were to attack India?”

Under my dictatorship Russia would find its occupation gone. It will not find it profitable to stay on, even if it came. But, of course, it is too rich a dream to be realized in a day.

The best men in the old generation had their education in England—you for instance. Would you have India, when she becomes independent, send her sons there for study as before?

No, not just now. I would advise her to send them there only after, say, 40 years.

It means depriving two generations of the benefits of contact with the West.

Why two generations? 40 years or even 60 is not too much even in an individual’s life. If there is right living we need not grow old at 60 as unfortunately many do in this country. I repeat that they should go there only after they have reached maturity. Because, it is only when they have learnt to understand the good that is in their own culture that they will be able to truly appreciate and assimilate the best that England or America has to give them. Imagine a boy of seventeen, like myself, going to England—he will simply be submerged.

Then we may expect you in England some time, queried the friend.

Gandhiji replied amid general laughter:

Oh, yes, you may.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

73. TALK WITH A FRIEND ¹

[After May 28, 1946]²

“You have brought us to the threshold of independence, Gandhiji,” remarked another privileged friend who had a talk with him on an evening, “and we cannot feel too grateful for it. You will, of course, give entire credit for it to ahimsa—that being your pet child. But we feel that we have derived more strength from truth than from your ahimsa.”

You are wrong in thinking that in my partiality for ahimsa I

¹Reproduced from Pyarelal’s report “Some Mussoorie Reminiscences”. Gandhiji reached Mussoorie on May 28, 1946.

² *Ibid*

have given to truth the second place. You are equally wrong in thinking that the country has derived more strength from truth than from ahimsa. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced that whatever progress the country has made, is due to its adoption of ahimsa as its method of struggle.

I mean the country has not understood your ahimsa but it has understood truth and that has filled it with strength.

It is just the contrary. There is so much of untruth in the country I feel suffocated sometimes. I am convinced, therefore, that it must be the practice of ahimsa alone, however faulty, that has brought us so far.

Moreover, I have not given truth the second place as you seem to think.

He continued and described how at a meeting at Geneva¹ he had flabbergasted everybody by remarking that whereas he used to say that God is Truth, he had since come to hold that Truth is God.

"Nevertheless, your emphasis is always on ahimsa. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life," argued the friend.

There again you are wrong. Ahimsa is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing truth in human relationships except through the practice of ahimsa. A steadfast pursuit of ahimsa is inevitably bound to truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by ahimsa. Truth came naturally to me. Ahimsa I acquired after a struggle. But ahimsa being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is ahimsa, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end.

Harijan, 23-4-1946

74. MORE SUGGESTIONS

It is a good sign that food shortage is taxing many minds. Suggestions for meeting it come in from all quarters. A friend, who knows what he writes about, sends the following:²

(1) A substantial saving in cereals should be possible by reducing the ration of cereals to non-vegetarians to the extent that it is possible to supplement equal nutrition value by non-vegetarian food.

¹ The meeting was held at Lausanne; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 8-9-1931.

² Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

(2) I expect that a large number of men do manual work find difficulty in satisfying hunger with the reduced rations. . . . It, therefore, follows that to the extent that cereals are reduced to non-vegetarians, animal food, having equal nutrition value, should be substituted and that also for the same cost as that of the cereal reduced.

(3) There is a large damage to crops by deer, rabbit, boar, pig and pigeon Non-vegetarians tell me that these can be used for food. . . . Incidentally, destruction on a large scale of these would be reflected in reduced destruction of field crops.

(4) To save food in order that it will be available for famine areas under the present system of ration appeals to very few. . . . There would be a good psychological appeal if the foodgrains saved are collected and guaranteed to be sent to the famine areas.

Whether the authorities act up to the first or not, it is one which those honest meat-eaters who draw full vegetarian rations can. They can easily part with a portion of their cereals for the benefit of those in need. Mutual aid is the swiftest way of reaching relief to the needy in such cases.

The second follows from the first.

The third is contentious. In a country where all life is largely held sacred and even when it is not, habit has made people reluctant to take any life, the suggestion may be difficult of adoption even by non-vegetarians. But a confirmed respecter of all life though I am, I have no difficulty in recommending for acceptance by meat-eaters the suggestion that the correspondent's wisdom has dictated. I hope to examine an argument in *Harijanbandhu* advanced against the taking of even noxious life without any connection with food.¹

The fourth suggestion, though sound, is not likely to produce any tangible result because of the ruling corruption and the inefficiency and irresponsibility of the Government. The difficulty will only be met when there is a national government which is responsible to the people and to which the people may look forward with confidence. It has been long coming. Will it ever come?

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

¹ *Vide* the following item.

75. RELIGION V. NO RELIGION¹

A correspondent writes:

In the *Harijanbandhu* of the 5th May you have written that your non-violence contemplates destruction of animals dangerous to mankind, such as leopards, wolves, snakes, scorpions, etc.²

You do not believe in giving food to dogs, etc. Several other people besides the Gujaratis look upon the feeding of dogs as a meritorious act. Such a belief may not be justifiable in times of food shortage like the present. Yet we must remember that these animals can be very useful to man. One can feed them and take work out of them.

You had put 27 questions to Shri Raichandbhai from Durban. One of these questions was: "What should a seeker do when a snake attacks him?" His answer was: "He should not kill the snake and, if it bites, he should let it do so."³ How is it that you speak differently now?

I have written a lot on this subject in the past. At that time the topic was the killing of rabid dogs. There was much discussion on the subject but all that seems to have been forgotten.

My non-violence is not merely kindness to all living creatures. The emphasis laid on the sacredness of subhuman life in Jainism is understandable. But that can never mean that one is to be kind to this life in preference to human life. While writing about the sacredness of such life, I take it that the sacredness of human life has been taken for granted. The former has been over-emphasized. And, while putting it into practice, the idea has undergone distortion. For instance, there are many who derive complete satisfaction in feeding ants. It would appear that the theory has become a wooden, lifeless dogma. Hypocrisy and distortion are passing current under the name of religion.

Ahimsa is the highest ideal. It is meant of the brave, never for the cowardly. To benefit by others' killing and delude oneself into the belief that one is being very religious and non-violent, is sheer self-deception.

A so-called votary of non-violence will not stay in a village, which is visited by a leopard every day, will run away and when someone has killed the leopard, will return to take charge of his hearth and home. This is not non-violence. This is a coward's violence. The

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.

² *Vide* "The Monkey Nuisance", 25-4-1946.

³ *Vide* "Questions on Religion", before June 1894.

man who has killed the leopard has at least given proof of some bravery. The man who takes advantage of the killing is a coward. He can never expect to know true non-violence.

In life it is impossible to eschew violence completely. The question arises, where is one to draw the line? The line cannot be the same for everyone. Although essentially the principle is the same, yet every-one applies it in his or her own way. What is one man's food can be another's poison. Meat-eating is a sin for me. Yet, for another person, who has always lived on meat and seen nothing wrong in it, to give it up simply in order to copy me will be a sin.

If I wish to be an agriculturist and stay in the jungle, I will have to use the minimum unavoidable violence in order to protect my fields. I will have to kill monkey, birds and insects which eat up my crops. If I do not wish to do so myself, I will have to engage someone to do it for me. There is not much difference between the two. To allow crops to be eaten up by animals in the name of ahimsa while there is a famine in the land is certainly a sin. Evil and good are relative terms. What is good under certain conditions can become an evil or a sin under a different set of conditions.

Man is not to drown himself in the well of Shastras but he is to dive into their broad ocean and bring out pearls. At every step he has to use discrimination as to what is ahimsa and what is *himsa*. In this there is no room for shame or cowardice. The poet has said that the road leading up to God is for the brave, never for the cowardly.

Finally, Raichandbhai's advice to me was that if I had courage, if I wanted to see God face to face, I should let myself be bitten by a snake instead of killing it. I have never killed a snake before or after receiving that letter. That is no matter of credit for me. My ideal is to be able to play with snakes and scorpions fearlessly. But it is merely a wish so far. Whether and when it will be realized I do not know. Everywhere I have let my people kill both. I could have prevented them if I had wished. But how could I? I did not have the courage to take them up with my own hands and teach my companions a lesson in fearlessness. I am ashamed that I could not do so. But my shame could not benefit them or me.

If Ramanama favours me I might attain that courage some day. In the meantime. I consider it my duty to act as I have stated above. Religion is a thing to be lived. It is not mere sophistry.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

76. *HARIJAN WORK IN BHUSAWAL TALUKA*¹

Shri Thakkar Bapa writes:²

It has been decided to carry on sound and extensive Harijan work in the Bhusawal Taluka. . . . The circumstances are favourable.

What Bapa says is true. By favourable circumstances. Shri Thakkar Bapa probably means the establishment of a Congress Ministry. That does not mean that henceforth reforms will be imposed upon the people. There is the least room for the use of force in such things. An evil like untouchability which has found its way into the very marrow of the people's bones, and that too in the name of religion, cannot be removed forcibly. But an alien government uses its influence to further suppress the suppressed by force. And when it tries to help them from a motive, pure or selfish, that too is done by the exercise of force. The Congress has not established its position through force. It is a purely democratic organization. Therefore, it is hoped that the Congress ministers will educate public measures. This should result in an impetus to reforms like Harijan work in their provinces and the forces standing in the way of such reforms would automatically disappear. Moreover, intensive work in the limited area of the Bhusawal Taluka is likely to prove very fruitful. We cannot reach the whole of India at one and the same time. Wherever the workers have the requisite ability and influence, the work will proceed at a quicker pace. Sound work in a small area is therefore likely to be copied by others and thus lead to an early success. Let us hope that will be the result of the work which has been started in Bhusawal.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

77. *QUESTION BOX*³

Q. What can one do if in spite of putting in a full day's labour, one cannot get enough to eat?

A. The labourer is worthy of his hire. This law is as old as the hills. All useful labour ought to bring in the same and adequate wages to the labourer. Till that time comes, the least that should be done is

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946.

² Only an extract of the letter is reproduced here.

³ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-6-1946

to see that every labourer gets enough to feed and clothe himself and his family. A government that does not ensure this much is no government. It is anarchy. Such a state should be resisted peacefully. Looting of grainshops and rowdyism is not the remedy. It leads to needless loss and death. Even if the authorities give in out of fear it does not really help them or the people. It does not remove anarchy and things remain as they were. A look round the world will confirm what is here stated.

If, in spite of the collections of food grain in the depots, the hungry cannot get it, they can offer peaceful satyagraha. They should not take by force what has not been given to them. They can go on a fast unto death and thus secure relief for themselves and for others. If they have patience, the method suggested by me is sure of success.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946¹

Harijan, 9-6-1946

78. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE²

MUSSOORIE,
May 29, 1946

AM ANXIOUS NOT CAUSE YOU DELAY FROM CONGRESS.
WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO KNOW WHEN MISSION
WILL BE IN POSITION PRESENT FULL PICTURE
IN TERMS OF MY COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION OF
24TH³ AND MY LETTER OF 26TH INSTANT. I ASK THIS
IN ORDER TO ENABLE ME TO CALL WORKING COMMITTEE
IN TIME.

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

¹ Harijanbandhu, however, has "Mussoorie, 27-5-1946", evidently a slip.

² This was drafted by Gandhiji for Abul Kalam Azad.

³ *Vide* Appendix "Congress Working Committee's Resolution", 24-5-1946.

79. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,
May 29, 1946

When he saw some dirty looking boys sitting in front of him, Mahatma Gandhi remarked:

To wear torn and dirty clothes is a sure sign of laziness.

Turning towards the Harijans attending his meeting, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that he was a Harijan himself, and they had come to see him as he was one of them. Mahatma Gandhi further added that he became a Harijan of his own accord, and if more people became Harijans, there would be so many more of them and the blot on Hinduism would be removed. He had come to the conclusion that caste system was very harmful to Hinduism.

How could he feel at home amidst the endless saturnalia of fashions that is Mussoorie?

Gandhiji recalled his previous visit to Mussoorie², which was in connection with the Congress work. This time he had come purely on his own.

As you know I am not even a four-anna member but only a humble servant of the Congress like the unnamed crores who are not on its rolls but serve it all the same humble and quietly to the best of their capacity without expectation of name or reward. And why? Because the thirst for freedom has taken possession of their souls. They do not know how it can be won. But they have heard the Congress is the one organization that has for the last years fighting the good fight that would bring freedom to all without distinction. That is why they are devoted to it. I have come to Mussoorie as one of them, a humble private individual.

He did not want anyone to be bothered with taking care of him.

God alone is my Protector. How can puny man, who is not sure even of his own tomorrow, presume to protect another? I am content to be under God's care. He may protect or destroy. I know He sometimes even destroys to protect.

He had been told before, and again since his arrival at Mussoorie, of the life of the fashionable rich in Mussoorie. Like other Himalayan hill stations, Mussoorie

¹ *The Bombay Chronicle* report has been collated with Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in Harijan wherein he writes: "A deep note of resignation, sadness and introspection ran through Gandhiji's first public utterance at the evening prayer gathering."

² In October 1929.

was no place for the poor.

The poor slave for you. They draw your rickshaws. It hurts me, and it ought to hurt you too, that a fellow human being should pull the rickshaw of a healthy and able-bodied person. I say this not to criticize you but to remind you of those whose very existence you are otherwise apt to forget, but who nevertheless are India. It is up to you to think of them and enter into their lives.

I long for the day when Ramanama would save me from the necessity of having to go to hill station during the summer. Crores cannot go to the hill stations. They are born to live and die on the plains.

I have not come here for pleasure but only under medical necessity so that I might be able to serve you the more. Give me your blessings and let me have little quiet so that I can attend to my work and commune with the Maker undisturbed.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi advised the local rich men to build dharmashalas for the benefit of the poor and the Harijans as was done in Panchgani hills.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-5-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

80. MESSAGE FOR N. R. MALKANI ¹

[Before May 30, 1946]²

That sterilization of lepers is sinful as the disease is not a hereditary one, is the opinion of Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhiji says

If the Congress Party³ was in favour of sterilization of lepers it would be a wrong decision.

The Hindu, 1-6-1946

81. FAITH CURE V. RAMANAMA

Here is fine banter from a friend:⁴

I have read your "Confession and Cure" in *Harijan* of 17-3-'46.⁵ I wonder whether this nature cure has any close relation to what is being called faith-

¹ This was communicated through Amrit Kaur.

² The report appeared under the date-line "Karachi, May 30".

³ In Sindh

⁴ Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

⁵ *Vide* "My Confession and Cure", 6-3-1946.

cure. . . . For smallpox. . . no treatment is given but it is considered Divine Play. We do pooja to Goddess Mariamma and it is almost miraculous to see most of the cases come out successful. For stomach pain, even chronic cases, many make vows before the deity at Thirupathi. . . my mother had the same pain and after her visit to Thirupathi she is now free from that disease.

Will you kindly enlighten me on this and may I ask why people should not have such faith in nature cure also. . . ?

The examples that have been quoted are neither nature cure nor yet Ramanama which I have included in it. But they do show how nature cures without any treatment in many cases. They are undoubtedly cases which show the part superstition plays in Indian life. Ramanama which is the centre of nature cure is the enemy of superstition. Unscrupulous men will abuse Ramanama as they will any other thing or system. Mere lip recitation of Ramanama has nothing to do with cure. Faith-cure, if I know it correctly, is blind cure, such as the friend describes and thereby ridicules the living name of the living God. The latter is not figment of one's imagination. It has to come from the heart. It is conscious belief in God and a knowledge of His Law that make perfect cure possible without any further aid. That law is that perfect mind is responsible for perfect health of the body. A perfect mind comes from a perfect heart not the heart known by a doctor's stethoscope but the heart which is the seat of God. It is claimed that realization of God in the heart makes it impossible for an impure or idle thought to cross the mind. Disease is impossible where there is purity of thought. Such a state may be difficult to attain. But the first step in the ascent to health is taken with its recognition. The next is taken when the corresponding attempt is made. This radical alteration in one's life is naturally accompanied by the observance of all other nature's laws hitherto discovered by man. One cannot play with them and claim to have a pure heart. It can be said with justice that possession of a pure heart should do equally well without Ramanama. Only, I know no other way of attaining purity. And it is the way trodden by the sages of old all over the world. They were men of God not superstitious men or charlatans.

If this is Christian Science, I have no quarrel with it. The way of Ramanama is not my discovery. It is probably much older than the Christian era.

A correspondent questions whether Ramanama avoids *banafide* surgical operations. Of course, it does not. It cannot restore a leg that is cut off in an accident. In many cases surgical operations are

unnecessary. Where they are required they should be performed. But a man of God will not worry if a limb is lost. Recitation of Ramanama is neither an empirical method nor a makeshift.

MUSSOORIE, May 29, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

82. EXCESSIVE PRAISE

Thus an army officer to a friends:¹

It is not a matter for pity if it is true that in all democratic countries politicians are uninterested in the army. The pity of it is that they are wrongly interested in it. The democracies regard army men as their saviours. They bring wealth and subjugate other countries and sustain authority in times of civil disturbance. What is, therefore, to be wished is that democracy, to be true, should cease to rely upon the army for anything whatsoever.

What has the army done for India? It is for that army that the writer pleads. I fear that in no sense has it served India's interest. It has kept millions of inoffensive and disarmed people under subjection. It has impoverished them. It is an army of which the sooner the British part is sent away and better employed, the better for both India and England, and the world. The sooner the Indian part is turned away from its destructive purpose and its talent employed for constructive purpose, the better it will be for democracy in India. It will be a poor democracy that depends for its existence on military assistance. Military force interferes with the free growth of the mind. It smothers the soul of man. Thanks to years of foreign domination brought about by the "highly efficient" army, India, in spite of the efforts of the Mission, might have to pull through a long or short civil war which, I shall hope, will bring to an end all infatuation for armed forces. They are a brutalizing process after you have isolated discipline which should be common for any social order. If free India has to sustain the present military expenditure, it will bring no relief to the famishing millions.

MUSSOORIE, May 30, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

¹ The extract is not reproduced here.

83. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAM

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter written from Indore before you left for Bombay. As long as you rely on anybody except God, there will be nothing but darkness around you. We have not heard of the blind leading the blind. It is an error and ignorant attachment to say that a particular person guides one. That all of us let ourselves be guided, up to a point, by somebody is one thing and to rely upon one person in all matters is another. I see this every moment, and more clearly in your case. My test has no meaning at all. I do not test anybody, nor do I wish to do so. Really speaking I do not know how to test anybody. You can, therefore, stay in Bombay. Kafi Khan can guide you best and you can guide him. After all you are brother and sister and there would be nothing unusual in your guiding each other. Nor is there anything unusual in your trying to help Rashid Khan's widow. If your advice is not accepted in all matters, you should not feel offended. However, how can I fully know the position in your family and its affairs? I am sure, therefore, that you should do what seems best to you. What I have said above concerns the members of the same family. But you have looked upon the Ashram as your family. You may draw from it whatever consolation you can. You need not ask me even for that. You know all the members of that family. You may, therefore, take from each, whatever service you can easily get from him or her. You need not ask me to help you in that matter. You may go to the Ashram whenever you wish to and leave it whenever you feel inclined to do so. When you go to the Ashram, observe its rules during the time you remain there. After leaving it you may follow whichever you can. The others do the same. There is no benefit in carrying with oneself wherever one goes what one finds a burden.

In Borkamata you have created your own family. I did not know about it. Whether to go there or not also rests with you. If I have forbidden you, I withdraw my prohibition. If anything happens there or somebody does not respect your wishes, do not seek my help. I do not even know everybody there.

You have by now written a good many letters. Since you had lost a dear brother, I felt that I should share your sorrow and,

therefore, wrote to you despite pressure of other work. You should not take improper advantage of that now. If you need to write to me on some special business, that would be a different matter. Make your way in life truthfully and with ease and do everything with God alone as witness. Give up your attachment to me. To rely on one human being in all one's affairs is nothing but attachment.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I got Hasa's letter just now. . . .¹

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 520

84. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRINKUMJI

MUSSOORIE,

May 30, 1946

I was pained to read about your health in Manilal's letter. Since I recommend this to everybody, why should I not you? You believe in God not merely with the intellect but with the heart. If this is quite true, instal Rama in your heart and know Him. He will cure you of your disease and, if He does not wish to do that, He will give you peace of mind and your restlessness will disappear. If He alone is to be one's true help, the condition, I believe, is that one may seek no other help except what one gets from pure and moderate food and the five elements. You are, of course, not bound to do a thing merely because I say so. I have writtten what my heart prompted me to write. Do only what your heart accepts. You need not reply to me. Nor need you take the trouble of dictating a letter. I shall ask Sushila, who is accompanying me, to write to you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 211. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ A line following this is illegible.

85. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of both of you. I have written to Mathuradas. I am glad that Sita has passed.

I understand what you say regarding Sorabjee. Between your experience and my inference, experience is always the better guide. you may, therefore, do what you have decided.

You also say that it would be better if some Muslim gentlemen from South Africa could be included. But think over it for yourself.

Your plan that all of you go away leaving Sita at Banaras is also good. I feel somewhat concerned at your departure being repeatedly delayed. But in this matter, too, you should do what you two desire. One should attach no importance at all to separation one's family. It matters little where one's body is. So long as the hearts are one, the body may be anywhere. In the absence of union of hearts, the bodies being even in the same houses means nothing.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now that Sita has passed, why would she care to write?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4981

86. LETTER TO RADHABAI

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
May 30, 1946

DEAR RADHABAI,

It is only today that I am able to take up your letter of 22nd March last.

Of course you are quite right in removing from your typed copies the names of the writers. Two extracts do not require any comment from me. A part of the third I felt deserved some notice. You will, therefore, see it in *Harijan*.

I am afraid that mine in such matters is a voice in the wilderness. It is also ill expressed. But I know that I am voicing the truth. Whilst I

appreciate personal bravery I intensely dislike masses of men turned into a huge mechanical machine for destruction.

Blessings from

BAPU¹

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

87. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

[After May 30, 1946]²

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I shall be happy if you get well completely. After that you may engage yourself in any service you like. My eagerness to press my advice on you has left me, but love remains the same as it ever was. I am trying to overcome my *moha*. You can deduce the rest from the above.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 599

88. *WHOLESALE RELEASES*³

Responsible Ministries in the provinces have naturally meant wholesale releases of political prisoners. These include convicts sentenced for murder, arson, robbery, etc. Correspondents ask how far these releases should be acclaimed by the public as of heroes and martyrs.

It is one thing to release, for a variety of reasons, persons who were convicted of such crimes. It is wholly another thing to praise the acts as of heroes to be received with every mark of honour. I have no doubt that it is thoughtless and wrong. If I am in need of money for a public purpose and commit robbery I do not cease to be a robber, because the robbery committed by me is for public use. This indiscriminate praise of every crime, so long as it is dignified by the

¹ In Devanagari

² In *Bapuke Patra*—8: *Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam* this letter is placed after the letter dated May 30, 1946; *vide* “Letter to Amtussalaam”, 30-5-1946.

³ This appeared under “Notes”.

name of patriotism, is a boomerang bound to return with redoubled force to the nation which will have to pay heavily for it. Independence though it includes the freedom even to commit a crime, may easily prove a curse, if it does not carry a voluntary rigid restraint. The public approbation referred to is wrong education of the people and a harmful preparation for the independence that is coming much sooner than many of us expect.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

89. MINISTERIAL SALARIES

I have to pay heavily for the caution with which I wrote the other day the paragraph in *Harijan*¹ in regard to increase in ministerial salaries. I have to go through long letter bemoaning my caution and arguing with me to revise my view. How can ministers make large increases in their own original fat salaries when the poor *chaprasis* and clerks get an increase which hardly meet the occasion? I have reread my note and I claim that the short note includes all that various correspondents desire. But, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I expand my meaning.

I have been twitted for not referring to the Karachi Resolution. The lower scale of ministers' salaries rests on much higher ground than the authority of a resolution. In any event, so far as I am aware, the Congress has never varied that resolution. It is as binding today as it was when it was passed.

I do not know that the increases in the salaries is justified. But I must not offhand condemn the increase without knowing the case of the ministers. Critics should know that I have no authority over them or anyone else except myself. Nor am I present at all the meetings of the Working Committee. I attend only when required by the President. I can only give my opinion for what it is worth. And, if it is to have any weight, it must be well-conceived and based on ascertained facts.

The question of the hideous inequality between the rich and the poor and the lower services and the higher is a separate subject requiring drastic and well-thought-out method and could not be merely incidental to the lowering of the salaries of the few ministers

¹ Vide "Question Box", 14-4-1946.

and their secretaries. Both subjects require to be dealt with on merits. The question of salaries could be and should be easily disposed of by the ministers concerned. The other is a much vaster subject requiring a thorough overhauling. I would any day agree that the ministers should tackle the subject in their provinces without delay and that the lower ranks should before everything else have their salaries fully considered and increased wherever necessary.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

90. QUESTION BOX

IS LYING EVER JUSTIFIABLE?

Q. What do you say to the following from Bertrand Russell? "I once in the course of a country walk saw a tired fox at the last stages of exhaustion still forcing himself to run. A few minutes afterwards I saw the hunt. They asked me if I had seen the fox, and I said I had. They asked me which way he had gone, and I lied to them. I do not think I should have been a better man if I had told the truth."

A. Bertrand Russell is a great writer and philosopher. With all respect to him I must dissent from the view attributed to him. He made the initial mistake of admitting that he had seen the fox. He was not bound to answer the first question. He could even refused to answer the second question unless he deliberately wanted to put the hunt off the track. I have always maintained that nobody is bound always to answer quetions that may be put to him. Truth-telling admits of no exceptions.

ADDRESSES AND FLORAL TRIBUTES

A correspondent complains:

In many of the provinces there are Congress ministries, and the public is proud of the fact. So when any minister visits any place, the local bodies or local institution show their respect by presenting addresses of value. In almost all the cases, these things become the property of the minister. This practice, in my opinion, is not good. Either this system of receiving addresses must be stopped or the things presented should go, say, to the local Congress Committee. There should be some definite policy regarding the garlanding of the ministers or the Congress leaders. I have seen several cases where these ministers have been honoured with flowers costing not less than 300 to 400 rupees. This is mere waste of money.

A. The complaint is valid. No public servant receive for his own use addresses of the value or costly floral truibutes. These things have become a nuisance, if they are not much worse. The argument is often trotted out that costly frames and flowers put money into the pockets

of artisans. The latter are well able to take care of themselves without the aid of ministers and the like. These gentlemen do not travel for pleasure. Theirs are business tours undertaken often for listening to what the people have to say. The addresses presented to them need not extol their virtues which are their own reward. They should express accurately local wants and grievances if any. In these times the ministers and their secretaries have a hard task before them. Public adulation instead of being a help will become a hindrance.

MUSSOORIE, May 31, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

91. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,

May 31, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your postcard. It is a postcard and you write "private" on it, and that in an obscure corner! It is so private indeed that one realizes what is private only after reading it! What is private in it? I have done all I could, and am still doing, to help you two to live together. Munnalal has even agreed.¹ I think the sooner you start living together, the better for your health. Mind is the chief cause of illness in all cases. It is particularly so in your case. If Munnalal has to stay with Mirabehn, you also will stay with her. If he goes there merely to inquire after her health, there is no point in your accompanying him. If I can help, I will not let go a single opportunity. Keep your mind calm, therefore.

Can you get a house in Uruli Kanchan in which you two can live yourselves? Would you yourself like that? Or would you prefer to stay somewhere near Sevagram? If you write frankly to me I may be able to help you better. There is no cause for embarrassment at all. For the decision that you will live together has already been made and it will be implemented at the earliest opportunity. Have you realized the power of Ramanama? Do you get Harijanbandhu there? Do you get any other journal? Do you read any? How silly of you! How strange that, apart from writing about yourself, you give no other news! I shall be leaving this place in about eight days. I shall go to Delhi.

¹ Vide "Letter to Kanchan M. Shah", 23-5-1946.

I am sending your letter to Munnalal. I have asked him to stay on there so that he may know whether or not he should go to Mirabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8256. Also C. W. 6980. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

92. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Herewith Kanchan's postcard. I have sent her a reassuring reply. I have told her that you two will be living in a separate house of your own. You also should write to her and reassure her.

You ought not write bitter letters to her. All her illness comes from the mind. If she had faith in Ramanama she would not need consolation from anybody else. But the difficulty is that for Kanchan the only Ramanama is yourself. You have, therefore, no choice but to play that part. Even in doing that, however, you will need the support of Ramanama.

I expected a letter from you yesterday, but none arrived. Have you received no reply from Mirabehn as yet? I hope that your condition is good, and so also your health. I may stay here up to the 8th or 9th. There is a pleasant nip in the air.

Has Omprakash left for Sevagram?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8416. Also C. W. 5617. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

93. LETTER TO HOSA RASHID KHAN

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. HOSA,

I have your letter. I like it. I am not happy that Amtul Salaam has left. I know that she can be a great comfort to you. May God grant you peace.

Why did you write to me in English? Do you not know Hindustani? You could have written to me either in the Devanagari or in the Urdu script.

Blessings from
BAPU

BEGUM RASHID KHAN
RASHID NIVAS
INDORE, C. I.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

94. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

Why does your health suffer so often? I have had a lot of correspondence in connection with your case and have also thought at length over it.¹ Devadas feels that something bordering on untruth has crept into your reply. It is not enough to say that they may proceed against you if they want. Is there any proof that you were in the Fort at Delhi?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The addressee who was arrested during the Quit India Movement of 1942 had alleged that he was brought from Nagpur to Delhi “handed over to military custody at the Red Fort. . . and subjected to torture”. G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated March 28/30, 1946 had informed Gandhiji that “after a very thorough examination” it was found that the whole story of Prabhudayal Vidyarthi was completely false. *Vide* “Letter to Prabhudayal Vidyarthi”, 8-6-1946.

95. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA

I have your letter. It is good that you asked for money from your brother. Do whatever you think right regarding the servants.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4558

96. INTERVIEW TO NORMAN CLIFF¹

May 31, 1946

In answer to the criticism that Gandhiji was even more tender towards capitalist exploiters than towards their victims, he told Norman Cliff that if his non-violence was made of that stuff it should be suppressed.

Of course capitalists are among my friends and I take pride in the fact that they accept me as a friend. But I fight them when I feel there is need and no one fights them harder. I fought the mill-owners as I suppose nobdoy had fought them and successfully.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Book I, Vol. I, p. 63

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

MUSSOORIE,
May 31, 1946

Speaking after prayers, Mahatma Gandhi expressed regret that yesterday due to inclement weather the audience had to be satisfied with *Ramdhun* only. He was also sorry that some had to sit or stand on wet grass. It would be good if there was a proper ground where everybody could go and pray in comfort.

He again suggested that Mussoorie should have a place where the poor could come and avail themselves of the benefits of the hill climate whenever necessary.

I myself have become a Harijan by choice. I would love to be in a place where Harijan too can come and dwell. A Harijan by birth

¹ *Of News Chronicle*, London

² The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

may repudiate his *varna* but how can I who have become a Harijan by choice? I have not hesitated to suggest to caste Hindus that today they have all to become *atishudras*, if the canker of caste feeling is to be eradicated from Hinduism and Hinduism is not to perish from the face of the earth.

If there were such a place in Mussoorie itself, where even Harijan would be welcome, he would rather stay there if ever he came to Mussoorie again. In answer to a similar suggestion at Panchani, the people there were planning to have a place of that type. He was glad to inform the gathering that there was some talk already of a committee of the citizens of Mussoorie being formed for that purpose.

What, however exercised his mind even more was the impending famine. He reminded his fashionable audience of the coffin at their feast. As a matter of fact the famine was already in the land. Crores were not getting enough to eat. Rich people were perhaps ready to give money, but no one could eat money. There was not enough food in the country. Whatever there was could not be transported quickly to the deficit areas. Such was the bankruptcy of the Government. Then again there were places where people went hungry in spite of the fact that the food was stored on the spot. Then reason was all-round corruption and the greed of our own people. He appealed to those who were well-off and could afford to get somehow whatever they wanted, to spare every grain of foodstuff that they could. If the people co-operated and there was no black marketing and corruption, possibly there was enough food in the land to enable them to tide over that crisis. There were some who did not agree with him and maintained that if we did not get food from other countries we could not avoid starvation and death. He was not of that opinion. When other countries sent them supplies it would take time for the supplies to reach India in the first instance and even after they were landed in the ports, would take about six weeks to transport them to the needed areas. The only real remedy was self-help and co-operation among all and disappearance of corruption. He appealed to the well-to-do men and women of Mussoorie to save every grain they could for the famishing people. If all voluntarily restricted themselves absolutely to what was needed for their health, they would be well able to tide over their difficulties.

National Herald, 2-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 9-6-1946

98. *LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA*

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]¹

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Only now am I reaching your letter of February 26. Your suggestion that rations, etc., should not be allowed to people whose income exceeds a certain amount is, I am afraid, fraught with danger. Now that there are Congress Ministeries they can adopt whatever measures seem necessary. I think something can be done if they have the will and the competence.

I write this much with great effort. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

99. *LETTER TO BHANUBHAI*

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BHANUBHAI,

I have your letter. Is this your own handwriting? What do you do? How proficient are you? What is your income? Maybe, as you say, one drastic remedy might be to quit the place where you have to face insults. I can understand that those who can put up with insults and preserve their self-respect can stay on. I have passed through such an ordeal. In South Africa all Indians are regarded as untouchables. It is a different thing that people swallow all the bitter draughts when their sensibilities are blunted and they pursue selfish ends. I shall write to you if anything particular suggests itself to me after I get the further details I have asked for.

BHANUBHAI

HARIJAN ASHRAM

WADHAWAN

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ In the source this and the following six letters are placed after those of May 31, 1946.

100. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. It appears to me that your friend erred in undertaking the fast. There is no restriction to fasting undertaken to ward off an illness. It accords with the need of the occasion. Then, you mention no reasons. Unless I know and fully comprehend the reason I don't see what remedy I can suggest. For nature-cure treatment there is not—nor should there be—any need to run around. In nature cure, as I conceive it, Ramanama enjoys the pride of place. It is the focal point. But it is something that needs to be grasped. It is useless for those to whom it does not appeal. Does your friend sleep in the open air? Does he breathe through the nose? Does he take an early morning sun-bath? Does he have hip-bath and friction-bath? You do know both these baths. Does he have abdominal mudpacks at night? Dr. Dinshaw has not yet been able to take up personally the work for the poor and the work he was conducting at Poona has since been suspended. He is himself contemplating reorganizing the activity. But I shall consult him only after I have further details about your friend's case.

Enclosed you will find a letter for Bhanubhai. How do you help him and others in similar circumstances? Since a man like you is available there, it ought to be within your power to dispose of individual cases like this one. Please pass on Bhanubhai's letter to him after going through it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

101. LETTER TO BACHRAJ T. DOSHI

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI BACHHRAJ,

I have your letter. It does not seem likely that I shall be able to reach Panchgani before the 15th of June. Everything is in confusion. Mahabaleshwar is of course out. I am dictating this at Mussoorie. Mussoorie is at a higher altitude than Panchgani. The air is pretty cold. I have nothing to do in Delhi till the 9th or 10th June. So I am staying on here. I came here on the 28th.

If some house is available which can be used as a dharmashala I ought to take up residence there and sticu to the place. If no such house has been secured and if the arrangment is to be postponed till my arrival, I should like to stay at Preston because Gulbai¹ used to live there. But surely it is not for me to make the choice. I would put up at any place which would be convenient and where a party of ten or twelve people could be accommodated. You may take it that whatever is convenient to you will be convenient to me.

I would naturally want to go to Poona direct from Kalyan. I might be inclined to visit Uruli Kanchan for a day or two if it is convenient. It will be enough if you see me only at Poona. For the present you may regard all this as merely a wish. It is in God's hands whether or not it will materialize.

Since Pattanisaheb² is himself staying in the Panchgani Castle the thought of putting up there must be given up. Even otherwise there is always the possibility of members of his family or those of one Prince or another coming to stay. This is another reason why we should give up the idea of Panchgani Castle.

SJT. BACHHRAJ DOSHI
PANCHGANI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

102. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GODBOLE,

Your letter is good. You will find the reply in *Harijan*.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

DR. M. B. GODBOLE
NATURE-CURE SPECIALIST
LAKSHMI ROAD, POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Wife of Dinshaw Mehta

² Anantrai Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar State

103. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

[On or after *May 31, 1946*]

BHAI GOPALSWAMI,

Your letter to Bapa was passed on to me for perusal. You have advised him to refuse help to Soundaram.¹ I don't like it. You should have been more charitable. This is the first experiment of entrusting responsible jobs to women. You should give all assistance to the venture. I can say nothing if it is beyond your power; but why is it so? How can a devotee of Rajaji do such thing? Rajaji is well known for his charitable disposition; he makes friends of foes and does not forsake friends even when they turn enemies. I know of instance of both the types. Devotion can never mean that we may not emulate the object of our devotion. Devotion bereft of any attempt at emulation is no devotion at all. Sometimes the views of our seniors do not agree with our own but we do not leave them for that reason. Why should you be unhappy if Kamalabehn has not been appointed an Agent? The office of an Agent is not for prestige but for service. Cannot one serve without being an Agent? Subbulakshmi was never promised anything. I do not like all that is going on. You also admit that Soundaram is a worthy worker and in addition is a doctor. Her husband also is a worker—enlightened and hard-working. On her appointment, as an Agent therefore, she deserves to be congratulated by you. let us see what happens now. Do whatever is possible independently. The field [of service] is wide enough to accommodate all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Wife of G. Ramachandran

104. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

[On or after May 31, 1946]

BAPA,

Herewith a copy of my letter to Gopalaswami¹ which will acquaint you with my views. You will see that I have not asked him to do anything against his wishes. I have tried to point out to him what I thought was a flaw in his thinking. I expect that if Soundaram conducts herself in a mature way—and I trust she will—everything will end well. You may send a copy to her if you think it right.

SERVANTS OF [INDIA] SOCIETY

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

105. INSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATION ON KHADI²

A khadi worker writes:

I give below a recent conversation between the manager of a Khadi Bhandar and some customers. Should khadi be sold to such persons?

Q. “is this yarn spun by you?”

A. “No I have bought eight hanks for Rs. 10.”

Q. To a second customer: “Are you able to spin all this yarn?”

A. “No. This is spun by my daughter. We shell yarn too at the rate of 12 annas per hank.”

Q. To a third: “You cannot buy khadi unless you produce the requisite quantity of yarn.”

A. “It does not matter. So long as I cannot get the yarn, I will buy uncertified khadi.”

Q. To a fourth: “Why do you buy khadi?”

A. “Because it is easy to procure.”

Q. To a fifth: “You are not a regular wearer of khadi. What will you do with what you have bought?”

A. “Today khadi is looked upon as being in the fashion.”

Q. To a sixth: “You do not spin yourself. From where then comes this yarn?”

¹ *Vide* the preceding item

² The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946

A. "A good friend of mine provides me with yarn."

Q. To a seventh: "Why do you always wear either silk or wool khadi?"

A. "Because I do not have to give yarn for these."

Q. To an eighth: "You have bought a large quantity of khadi. What will you do with it all?"

A. "This will last me two or three years. After that it will be seen whether I can get any or not."

The above questions and answers are revealing. If the new policy in regard to khadi is correct and khadi customers are of the above nature, it proves the necessity for the abolition of the khadi clause from the Congress Constitution. It is worthy of note that the questions and answers concern eight persons. The Charkha Sangh need not cater for the needs of a single one of them. The Spinners' Association exists only for the poor. Those who wear khadi, do so either for the sake of the poor or for winning swaraj or both. The eight customers mentioned above are concerned with neither. If the Charkha Sangh is to prove the rightness of the ideal for which khadi stands, then its workers must be loyal enough to the new policy and not fear even the closing down of the sales bhandars. They must have the strength to bear any consequences in order to set right the mistakes of the past.

The above conversation also holds a warning to the managers of the bhandars to be wide awake. They should become experts in the science of khadi and be prepared to teach customers the inner meaning of khadi with patience and humility. This may take time but it is worth while. If there is faith in the power of khadi I have no doubt that we shall remain steadfast and thereby inspire others the belief also. But if workers themselves lack faith then the claim for khadi will fall to the ground.

I have taken for granted that the conversation has been truly reported.

MUSSOORIE, June 1, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

106. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSORIE,

June 1, 1946

DEAR LORD,

I had thought that your kind letter of the 27th ultimo did not require any answer. But I now see that I must write.

You “look forward” to my return and that of the Congress Working Committee to Delhi before the end of next week. Maulana Saheb was with me yesterday and he told me that it was very difficult to recall the members of the Working Committee before the 9th instant as many of them had appointments, he knew, which they could not very well cancel. He is, therefore, calling the meeting for the 9th instant. I wonder if I might also leave here on the morning of the 9th so as to reach Delhi about 10 a. m. This would not permit me to keep appointments before 2 p. m. that day. Will this do or will you want me before the 9th? If you do I would leave here on the 8th morning.

I hope that you are keeping well and that Sir Stafford is regaining his lost strength day by day.

The weather here is naturally very cool.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 200

107. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

MUSSORIE,

June 1, 1946

DEAR SISTER,¹

Have just got yours of the 25th ultimo.

I do not know that I have kept any letter of yours unanswered except one which demanded no answer.

Your first para is irrelevant. I am neither saint nor sinner. I am just one among millions or milliards, no more, no less. And being

¹ The superscription is in Gujarati.

mere man, I do not distrust the men of the Mission. When and if they prove unworthy of trust, they will lose, not I. Those who never had any trust may lose nothing. Their gain will be to be able to say 'we-told-you-so'.

The constructive programme never stops. It is no makeshift.

I am writing this in Mussorrie, where I have an exceptionally quiet place.

Love.

BAPU

KHURSHED NAOROJI

BHUI, CUTCH

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

108. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,

June 1, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have gone through what you have written about the *asanas*, etc. I had not asked about the number of people that benefited by the treatment. What I want is a clean and concise account of the methods of treatment which you have yourself tried, so that anyone could try them himself. The practice of *Hathayaga*¹ is an ancient one. I have read a book on *Hathayog* in Gujarati. The man who practised it is no more. His later life was not worthy of emulation.² The description of *Hathayoga* exercises is fascinating. Your account of the *Khechari*³ posture is exaggerated. I do not mean to say that *Hathayoga* exercises are something to be shunned but their usefulness is limited. It is essential to understand its true limits otherwise it will do nothing but harm. *Rajayoga*⁴ is regarded as the opposite of *Hathayoga*. For my part, I do not regard the two as opposed to each other. All that is to be found in *Hathayoga* is already included in *Rajayoga*, besides a lot more which is its speciality. An aspirant to *Rajayoga* may have

¹ The superscription is in Gujarati.

² The source is not clear here.

³ A yogic exercise which is supposed to enable one to fly in the air

⁴ One of the various systems of yoga

recourse to *Hathayoga* in the initial stages I call *Rajayoga* by another name, viz., Ramanama.

From a copy the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

109. LETTER TO GURUNATH JOSHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

BHAI GURUNATH JOSHI,

I got your letter. It is good that you wrote, no matter what. In my opinion, you have been guilty of a serious lapse from the moral point of view. This is the one thing that has disgraced many a profession. In theory all professions are supposed to be altruistic, i. e., they are to be pursued with a religious attitude. Pecuniary consideration has no place in a religious attitude. If one pursues any calling in a religious spirit one is sure to earn enough for one's maintenance. But even that is not always necessary. Even if one cannot earn enough one has to keep up one's religious attitude. *Vritti* in this connection should be understood to mean *drishti*, i. e., point of view. You swerved from such an attitude and succumbed to the temptation of injections, etc. Ganeshshastri Joshi, your guru, who initiated you in the Ayurvedic system, has himself told me about the guiding principle of Ayurveda, viz., that Ramanama forms the basis of the system. And utilization of the five elements is symbolic of the permanence of Ramanama. You forgot this lesson. I had told you that in [Uruli] Kanchan village, you had to forget your knowledge of the Ayurvedic medicines, i. e., you were not to make use of them. Your first job was to teach Ramanama. Only those who have spontaneous faith in it and are inspired by it in all their actions can testify to the wonders of Ramanama. For, as I have said, Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for all the three kinds of afflictions. Like the arrow of Rama which is said to have never missed its target, the name of Rama too never fails. All our actions should be inspired by this principle. Lure of wealth is also a kind of affliction for which again Ramanama is the cure. Having yourself failed to imbibe this, how can you expect to treat others by naturopathy? Never mind what has happened; if you now want to come to Uruli Kanchan village, use the great rejuvenating herb that Ramanama is wherever you are. Give up the merest wish of earning wealth through it. Come and see me in Uruli Kanchan village

when I go there after you have completely rid yourself of your infatuation with wealth and have simplified your way of life. Read this letter again and again. Write to me if you don't follow any expression. You can show this letter to Ganeshshastri Joshi and do as he says.

May you always come to good. Forget Veergaon. It is enough to be inspired to¹

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

110. LETTER TO Y. M. PARNERKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946

CHI. PARNERKAR,

Bhai Burade has sent me an article² of yours. Datar Singhji has said the same thing that your article says. Our purpose will not be served by repeating that same thing in different words. Our work will make headway only when we produce results. Therefore, my comments on Rishabhadas's article apply here also. We ought to keep in some big city a sufficient number of all-purpose cows and prove that this is not only proper but also beneficial. The question of interest does not arise. Our success can be demonstrated by showing that it does not entail loss. If we fail to show even this much success our work is never going to make any real progress. We shall achieve nothing by contributing nice articles beautifully written in all the languages of India and by giving them wide publicity. This is universal experience. Today the cow is facing death. That cow's milk is not being appreciated only proves the helplessness of all those 'protectors' of the cow. For this let us not blame the British, nor the Muslims. You may still show me why your article deserves to be published. I shall then consider it again. I think Datar Singhji is doing our work as best as he can. It remains to be seen how far he will be able to go or how long his faith will stand firm.

Bhai Burade writes to tell me that two more articles were sent to Sushila Pai. Being unwell she is in Bombay. I have not looked up the *Harijan Sevak* files. I cannot lay my hands upon the articles. I am writing to Sushilabehn.

¹ Omission as in the source

² On *Sarvopayogi Gai*, the 'All-purpose cow'

I hope you are keeping good health. Your work also, I expect, is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

111. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,
June 1, 1946²

Addressing the meeting, Mahatma Gandhi said that it had given him much pleasure to come there for prayers. He had been told the poor and labouring classes to which he himself belonged lived round about the place and it was difficult for them to come to where he was staying. So he had agreed to hold the prayer meeting in the grounds of Silverton Hotel. He would have loved to walk up to the place of prayer but that was not possible and much against his wish he had to motor down to the place.

The benefit one derived from community prayers had to be experienced rather than described, added Mahatma Gandhi. He said that his experience of nearly 50 years had made him a confirmed advocate of community prayers. The work done by two men together was more than the sum of the output of each separately. Similarly, the benefit derived from community prayers was incalculable.

Gandhiji reminded them about what he had said on the need for having a place for the poor people in Mussoorie. He did not expect them to build palatial buildings, but they should be clean and well planned, so that even a man like him could come and stay there. He could not stand dirty clothes, dirty houses and surroundings and dirty lavatories. There was no reason why the poor should have to put up with dirt.

Their lavatories should be as clean as a bedroom or a library. Defecation was not a dirty process. It was a necessary physiological action of the body as was eating and they should have proper and clean places for it.

There should not be a trace of dirt or foul smell in it. You might think that I am speaking with my tongue in my cheek. The fact is that a meticulous sense of cleanliness, not only personal but also in regard to one's surroundings is the alpha and omega of corporate life. We in India have made a ritual of cleanliness. But we have yet to make good our claim that we possess the sanitary instinct. I have seen how we foul the banks of our holy rivers. The Ganges water is regarded by us as

¹ *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

² From *Hindustan*, 4-6-1946

holy, capable of washing off our sins. The idea is symbolical. Just as water washed the body clean, a devotee prays and hopes for the cleansing of the heart by the water of life. But if we contaminate our holy rivers as we do, how can their water effect inner cleansing?

He had heard that the living conditions of the labourers in Mussoorie were deplorable. They lived in small, overcrowded, dirty and evilsmelling rooms. No one could afford to overlook that. All life was one. If they cleaned their own homes and neglected their neighbours' they would have to pay the price in the form of epidemics and the like. In the West they had been able to rid their countries of plague. He himself had witnessed in South Africa how by prompt and energetic action the Johannesburg Municipality was able to arrest the outbreak of plague so effectively that it never came back. But in India it returned again and again—it had become almost endemic.

The remedy lies in our own hands We must not only observe the rules of health and hygiene in our own persons but we must see that our poor neighbours do so too To neglect to do so is a sin for which we cannot escape the penalty. I do not grudge the rich their riches provided that they do not forget the poor and share their riches with them and provided their riches are not gained at the expense of the impoverishment of others.

The Hindustan Times, 3-6-1946 and 4-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

112. URULI KANCHAN¹

My co-workers from Uruli Kanchan inform me that patients from far distances are coming there for treatment. I have already written in *Harijan Sevak*² that up till now there is nowhere any permanent arrangement for anyone to live and no room for in-patients. I have just heard that some land has been made available but the work of building huts on its remains. There is no house available in the village either where patients from outside could be taken in and, in any event, it has never been the intention to turn a village into a city. The real aim is for every village to have a nature-cure clinic to adorn it just as it should have a school.

Readers should bear in mind that my co-workers in Uruli Kanchan are unable to guide patients through correspondence.

¹ This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 9-6-1946.

² *Vide* "Nature Cure in Kanchangaon", 21-5-1946.

Persons who live far away can carry out their own nature-cure treatment. Who cannot recite Ramanama in his own home? It is also possible for everyone to have sitz baths, etc., wherever he is.

MUSSORIE, June 2, 1946

Harijan, 9-6-1946

113. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM

CARE CUROTRADE

BOMBAY

NO COMING DELHI. HOPING LEAVE DELHI ABOUT
FIFTEENTH.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 521

114. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I am glad that you got the land at last. If all the land has been entered in my name, that is not right. There is no objection, however, if I have been described as a Trustee. I suppose you can easily see the difficulty that you will face if the land has been entered in my name and I suddenly die. In case, however, such a thing does happen, you may use this letter and end any dispute that may arise, telling the people concerned that the land was not my private property but was intended for schemes for helping the people of Uruli Kanchan to preserve good health and for purposes connected with such schemes. After me the Trustees will be Dinshaw Mehta and Jehangir Patel or Balkrishna.

I am returning by registered post the plans received from you. I accept the modifications suggested therein. I see no objection to all the lavatories being fitted with good septic tanks, if that is possible. I suppose you know that if such tanks have not been made carefully or if we do not use them properly, they can be a source of grave danger.

Let Dr. Bhagwat and Bhai Datar meet and discuss this matter further. Balkrishna also knows about both the dangers. I am not happy about the vagueness of my suggestion, but I have not been able myself to come to a definite decision. I discussed the matter with some friends who have experience in this field, but they also could not help me to come to a decision, so [complicated]¹ is the problem. For the present, therefore, abide by the decision of the three persons I have mentioned.

I shall positively have returned there in July. If you have not been able to make much progress by that time, I will take it up when I come there. I shall be in Delhi up to June 15 at any rate. I may [possibly]² remain there even up to the 21st. I shall . . .³ be going to Panchgani thereafter. I must return to Sevagram in August. I am, therefore, afraid that I [shall get]⁴ at the most the month of July [in Uruli Kanchan]⁵. My only consolation [is that you people]⁶ are doing excellent work there, so much so that I sometimes fear whether my presence there might not hamper the modest but beautifully progressing work that you are doing. But I dismiss the fear from my mind with the thought that I will do as God prompts me.

By a fortunate accident both Kanchan and Zohra happen to be there. But they might leave that place any time. The best thing would be that some local woman or women should get trained and start working.

Carry out the modifications in the plan for the building which you have suggested. Personally I like the change in the doors from three feet to four feet, for narrow doors cannot afterwards be widened. I myself have experienced the advantage of wide doorways, namely, that patients' beds, etc., are easy to move in and out through them. But the best course would be to follow Dr. Bhagwat's advice. Everybody has a right to point out to him the advantages and disadvantages of all things but in case of a difference of opinion it is best, in my absence, that his view should be carried out. I cannot from this distance come to any more definite conclusions about the [suggested]⁷ modifications. I understand what you say about the cow.

¹ The source is damaged here.

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ The source is damaged here.

I will reply to whatever questions you ask me about *brahmacharya*. But you should attach importance only to what your heart spontaneously suggests. Vinoba's articles are, of course, fine. But for the person who has unquestioning faith in the power of Ramanama there is no other support but that, for when one has faith in its power Ramanama there is no other support but that, for when one has faith in its power Ramanama ceases to be a matter of reason and becomes solely a matter of the heart. I feel every moment that for such a person Rama is the only King of his heart, and he who has Rama as his Lord cannot waste a single moment of his time. And violation of *brahmacharya* even in thought means for that moment at least the man's attention had wandered, and that, therefore, that moment was wasted.

I am not writing separately to Dhuru today. This is to save time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2745. CCourtesy: Manibhai Desai

115. LETTER TO VINOD¹

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. VINOD,

I have your letter. I take it that you folks don't mean to cheat me. Fulfil therefore all the promises that you have made. You may get away from there only if you can be relieved without difficulty. There is no place where one can find all the circumstances favourable to one.

What you write about staying in Uruli Kanchan is correct. The right thing will be for you to decide about staying at Uruli Kanchan only if you can conveniently get away from your present post and after you have had some experience there in my company. Perhaps the current season will have passed before you are ready. I am myself still held up near Delhi I shall be able to get away only by the end of this month. I must reach Sevagram August.

Please convey my blessings to Chi. Kaku.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ This and the following two letters are in the Devangari script.

116. LETTER TO ASHABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI ASHABHAI,

It is good that you wrote. Discuss the matter also with Sardar. I have already written about it. I can think of nothing more that I should do. Datar Singhji once told me that the *roze*¹ could be domesticated. Even if it were true, I don't think one can keep whole herds of them. Give the matter some more thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

117. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

CHI. SHANKAR,

I have your letter. If you could regularly write such letters *Harijan* [journals] would go on making the improvements you desire. I accept most of your criticism. I don't have the time to answer that part of it which I do not accept. I admit the Gujarati is not as good as it ought to be; and often it is of a very low standard. You may take it that it is the same about your other criticisms.

I do cherish the desire that the Gujarati should at least be of the standard that I have achieved. But we cannot cope with all matters. What we cannot very well cope with we ought to leave alone. I know this will be the first wise step. But since people want to know my views in however inadequate a language I rest content with doing or getting others to do what is possible.

I am glad that you are all well. I have an impression that Manubhai had come to pay me a visit.

Often time solves complicated problems, if only we have the patience. In what sense do you regard yourself as an ignoramus?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Bovine animals in wild state which move in herds and are a constant menace to crops

118. LETTER TO BHATE

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHATE,

I have your letter. I had drawn but a vague likeness of Bhai Datar; I cannot delineate it clearly.¹ I have approved of the amendments suggested and left the final decision to the Doctor, because from this distance I do not want to interfere. Besides, my knowledge is limited.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

119. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

June 2, 1946

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. I did send you a wire but you got it late. It was certainly good that you left. I did not like your going, though. However, on receipt of Ramdas's wire, it was indeed your duty to go. Now go over from there to Maganwadi at the earliest and take Sumitra with you.

See that Usha's health and yours does not deteriorate. In which hospital is Sarita? Who operated upon her? You, at any rate, should talk to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ This sentence is not clear in the source.

120. LETTER TO A. K. BHAGWAT

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI BHAGWAT,

I have your letter. The work is going on well. I think I have already mentioned in *Harijan* the suggestions which you have sent; if I have not I shall do so.¹

I sent a telegram about the building. Your decision must be acted upon in my absence. Listen to everyone. But the final decision should be yours. I do not know enough—nor do I wish—to decide from this distance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 2744. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

121. LETTER TO NARDEV SHASTRI

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI NARDEV SHASTRI,

I was glad to have your letter. I am sorry to know that your health is poor. I am likely to be here for six days. Can you come so soon? Why take the trouble?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

122. LETTER TO RAMSHANKARLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI RAMSHANKARLAL,

I have your letter. Faith that expects reward is no faith. Ramanama is its own reward. Those who have doubts about it have not realized it with their heart. The greatness of Ramanama lies in that it leaves a man content although he may not get what he desired. How

¹ Vide “Uruli Kanchan”, 2-6-1946.

do we know that death did not come to your son as a release? Life and death are not in the hands of man.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

123. LETTER TO PUSHKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

BHAI PUSHKAR,

I have your letter. I do not wish to write anything about Bharat-put. Every good action is its own reward. Have this faith and go ahead.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

124. TALK WITH AZAD HIND DAL VOLUNTEERS

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Seeing about 100 Azad Hind Dal volunteers in uniform who came to salute him . . . Mahatma Gandhi expressed pleasure and said they looked very smart.

When apprised of the working of the Dal in the district the Mahatma asked the volunteers:

Do you want to ask any questions?

A volunteer . . . said, "Sir, . . . please tell us when we are getting swaraj." Mahatma Gandhi laughed heartily and replied:

There is no doubt that we are getting swaraj but when, it is difficult to answer. Anyway it would not be much longer, hence we are eager to establish swaraj as early as possible and trying to do it.

Another volunteer . . . asked, "Do you still hold the same opinion which you expressed recently regarding the Cabinet Mission's declaration?"

Yes, because the Mission's object is good, its members' hearts are sincere and there is a sincere attempt to evolve a workable scheme of Indian independence out of the conflicting interests and party aims. This I say in spite of what the Delegation said. I am primarily

concerned with their main plan. We fail to appreciate the plan because we do not recognize our own weaknesses and failings. We must be bold enough to confess our weaknesses and incompetences.

Another boy . . . said, "If you think that we are still incompetent for swaraj on account of our shortcomings, then the British people will never give it and we will never have it, they being very clever and diplomatic. What is the remedy in that case?"

I do not say we are quite incompetent for independence but whatever I say about our own shortcomings is based on the reading of the mental working and behaviour of a few of our own people.

There are vast numbers, in fact crores, of our people of whom we know nothing. We don't know what they may say or do at a particular moment. Freedom is not a matter of gift nor has the Delegation come here to give us freedom.

It would be too much to expect from them. We have to evolve freedom from amongst ourselves rather out of our own divergences and differences and this is the crux of the matter. They certainly have not come to deceive us this time. This is how I take it.

What is the meaning of your "Do or Die" slogan of 1942¹?

It was taken out of the context. I had also said that we should work for swaraj and die in the attempt for it.

The last question was regarding non-violence.

Mahatma Gandhi said it was in 1920 that non-violence was deliberately adopted as a method of obtaining swaraj but we could not translate it into practice nor could we stick to it steadfastly. We only have the non-violence of the coward and not of the brave. We have not been non-violent all through. The discussion had finished when one of the volunteers fainted and fell down. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi remarked: "You have asked too much and let us finish for today", and left to see the boy.²

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-6-1946

¹ Vide "Speech at A. I. C. C. Meeting", 8-8-1942 and "Message to the Country", 9-8-1942.

² Ramprasad Gorkha, captain of the volunteers, requested Gandhiji to do something for the twelve Gorkhas who were court-martialled and sentenced for mutiny in the Gorkha lines.

125. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,
June 2, 1946

Gandhiji congratulated the audience on the exemplary behaviour at prayer time and thanked workers for excellent loudspeaker arrangements. He reminded them of the debt the Hindu society owed to the Harijans. A sin committed in the name of religion was doubly bad, he added. The least that they could do for them was to subscribe money for their cause. He also asked them to contribute liberally for building better quarters for the labourers and a Harijan dharmashala. He, however, warned them against an enthusiastic beginning and a poor ending.

Ramanama is not for the few; it is for all. He who takes His name lays by a rich store for himself, and it is inexhaustible. The more you draw upon it, the more it increases. It is infinite. As the Upanishad says, you take infinite out of infinite and infinite remains behind.² It is the unfailing panacea for all the ills, physical, mental and spiritual to which man is subject. Rama is only one of the numerous names of God. In fact there are as many names of God as there are human beings in the world. You may substitute Krishna for Rama or you can substitute for it any of His countless names and it will make no difference.

He himself had got the *mantra* of Ramanama, he said, from his nurse when he was a child.

I used to be frightened of ghosts and evil spirits in the dark. My nurse told me, "If you repeat Ramanama all the ghosts and evil spirits will vanish." I accepted her advice with all the unquestioning faith of a child. That cured me of my cowardice.

If that was the experience of a child, how much more would the grown-ups stand to gain by it if they repeated Ramanama with understanding and faith, he asked.

But the condition was that it must come from the heart.

Do evil thoughts possess you, or are you tormented by lust or

¹ The *Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

² The invocatory *mantra* in *Svetasvatropanisad* reads :

"That (the Brahman) is whole.

This (the Universe) is whole.

From the Whole has come out the Whole.

When whole is taken away from the Whole.

What is left is Whole."

greed? Then there is no charm against it like Ramanama. Supposing you are tempted to amass a big fortune by some easy and dishonest means. If you have faith in Ramanama you will say to yourself, 'Why should I amass for my wife and children riches which they might squander away? Why not leave them a legacy in the shape of sound character and sound education and training that will enable them to earn their living by honest industry and body labour?' Ceaseless repetition of Ramanama will dispel your delusion and false attachment and the living realization will dawn on you that you were a fool to hanker after millions for the sake of your dear ones instead of offering them the priceless treasure of His name which frees one from all bondage and wanderings. Filled with the joy of that realization such a person will tell his wife and children, 'I have not brought for you the treasure I had set out for but something infinitely richer.' 'Where is it, show it to us?' they will say incredulously. 'It is the Name which is richer than all treasures' he will reply, 'because it quenches the thirst for all riches. It is enshrined in my heart.'

The Hindustan Times, 5-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

126. ITS LANGUAGE¹

A correspondent writes:²

It would be fitting if our constitution were to be drawn up in our national language. But one difficulty will be that few, if any, of the judges of our High and Federal Courts know Hindustani. They will, therefore, have to have an English translation for their use.

The other question that will arise is whether the members of the Constituent Assembly will know enough Hindustani to grasp its essentials.

This letter appeals to me. Why should our constitution be in English? It should certainly be in an Indian language and, in my opinion, that language can only be Hindustani which crores can easily understand. In addition such an act will electrify the masses. As circumstances are, it is right that the Constituent Assembly should make an English translation of the document and, indeed, there should be translations also in every one of the provincial languages.

The second point raised by the writer is also apt. But since the

¹ This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 4, 1946.

² Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

members of the Constituent Assembly will be chosen by the present legislative bodies, it will be open to the latter to elect, so far as possible, only those persons who are conversant with Hindustani and thus act on the correspondent's letter.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

127. URDU, THE LANGUAGE OF BOTH?¹

1. You are making strenuous efforts to get every Indian, particularly Hindus with whom you naturally come most in daily contact, to learn Urdu. Similarly, is any Mohammedan striving to induce Muslims to learn Hindi? If not, will not the result of your labours be that Urdu will become the language of both and Hindi will remain the medium solely for Hindus? Will not this be a disservice to Hindi?

2. The Urdu equivalent of the Hindi word is invariably given in brackets in the Hindustani Prachar publications, but the converse is not done. Does that not signify a desire to teach Urdu by force to Hindus?

3. There are any number of Persian and Arabic words used in these publications. Do you think they are understood by the general run of people? For example *adab*², *adab*³, *etakad*⁴.

4. If Hindustani is in fact a language, why in your educational readers is there such a difference in terminology in the Urdu and Hindi editions?

5. My fear is that the lakhs of Southern Indians who have so far been trying to learn Hindi will be so scared of the Urdu script that they will learn neither and in the end the work hitherto done by the Hindustani Prachar Sabha will be completely wiped out.

1. Effort are being made that those who are unacquainted with the Urdu form should learn it and *vice versa* with those who do not know the Hindi form. It is true that my contacts are more with Hindi-knowing Hindus. But that does not worry me. Hindus are not likely to forget their Hindi. In fact I believe that their Hindi will be enriched by their knowledge of Urdu. The majority of Indians whether Hindus or Mussalmans, generally know best the languages of their provinces

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.

² Politeness, literature

³ Respectful greetings

⁴ Faith

which contain a large number of Sanskrit words. I myself have neither the fear nor the desire that everyone will, as a result of my efforts, learn the Urdu form to the exclusion of Hindi. Desire or no desire, whatever is natural will happen. The attempt to have a wise blending of the two forms for a national tongue is, in my opinion, a good venture in every way.

2. I have not read all the publications of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. It is commendable if the Urdu equivalents of some Hindi words are given in brackets. This only means that in the opinion of the writers of the books these words are not commonly known. That the Hindi equivalents are not given signifies that those Urdu words have become current coin in Hindi. It is a pity that a learned person like the correspondent should have such suspicions. Suspicion is not an attribute of learning.

3. This does not seem to be a correct charge. And even if it were true, what harm can there be? The introduction of new words into any language enriches it. The words of Latin origin that came into the English language after the Norman conquest added to its virility. Whatever was not good or unnecessary or forced did not remain. The words given by way of example by the correspondent are known to all Hindi lovers in the North and have taken their rightful place in Hindi. It is true that they are new for Southern Indians and therefore their Sanskrit equivalents should be and are given. The truth is that the Hindustani Prachar Sabha has neither antagonism towards one nor partiality towards the other. Both forms are there and will remain and these should not present any difficulty. But, of course, if there is jealousy and antagonism between the two, Hindustani will never come into being. And such an eventuality will be a bad thing for India.

4. Hindustani existed at one time. The present effort is directed to revive it through a wise mixture of Hindi and Urdu and let it grow thereby. Neither Hindi[-lovers] nor Urdu-lovers should sorrow over this. Hindi and Urdu are sisters. What harm, therefore, if they mix with each other? It cannot be a matter of surprise that in this transition stage there should be a difference of terminology in Hindi and Urdu books.

5. My experience is quite contrary to that of the writer. I have not known anyone who has given up learning either script because of the insistence on the Urdu script. Nor do I fear that this will ever be

so.

My appeal to the writer is to divest himself of his prejudices.

MUSSOORIE, June 3¹, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

128. LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

I quote the following letter² for the benefit of colleagues working in *Harijanbandhu*, after omitting the author's name.

If I had the time, I would have given a detailed reply to this letter in *Harijanbandhu* itself. But I have no time for that. I am interested in language as such. What I mean is that whatever language one may speak or write one's pronunciation should be clear and the grammar perfect. I have not been able to reach this ideal in the case of any language. Gujarati being my mother tongue, naturally, I have love for it. But everyone knows how imperfect my Gujarati is. My grammar is weak, my spelling indifferent. What need I say about my Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani? Yet I have allowed myself to be the president of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. I spent years running after English and lived for many years in the country of Englishmen. The English language is glorious in its own place. It is an international language. I am also fond of it. But I am conscious that my knowledge of it is also imperfect.

What could be the reason for such lack of organization? It is obvious. Language too has its own place like everything else.

Language is an adornment in its proper place. It is a vehicle for thought; and not *vice versa*. It is the thought contained in it that adorns the language. Language does not have that power independently. Realizing this I run after ideas and drag the language behind. If the ideas are clear, grammar, spelling, etc., will come round automatically or may be the reader will generously put up with the looseness of language.

At present it is not possible for me to take up this dual responsibility. I can be responsible for my ideas. But if I wait, to adorn my language, *Harijan* would suffer. I manage with the existing

¹ From *Harijan Sevak*. *Harijan*, however, has "4".

² Not translated here. The correspondent had complained of indifferent translation, incorrect transliteration into Gujarati and incompetent rendering of Sanskrit quotations in *Harijanbandhu*.

means. If I were to examine [my work] from the point of view of the language I would envy so many journals. Not one issue of *Harijan* would stand comparison with some other journals. I should be happy if the language of all the issues of *Harijan* was chaste. This is the reason why I have published the foregoing letter. Writers and translators of *Harijanbandhu* should read and ponder over it to polish their language with due perseverance and render their versions and translations as perfect as possible. The criticism made by the writer is friendly and the readers should take it in the same spirit and make whatever improvements they can.

A well-wisher like this correspondent should not rest content with criticizing the work but should from time to time offer suggestions from which others can learn. The late Sastriar had done it and I had published his article.¹

In the end I should like to say that an incorrect translation of a Sanskrit quotation must not go. But sometimes though the original may be quoted the purpose is better served by including a Gujarati rendering at the same time. I could not find time to examine whether it was so in the present case².

The correspondent should be tolerant of the pronunciation of foreign languages. Where the spelling does not correspond to the pronunciation, the translator would follow the spelling and this should be the normal practice. If it were not so the translator would be overburdened. As regards proper names, utter chaos prevails. When they are transliterated either into Gujarati or into any other Indian language the safest way seems to be to conform the pronunciation to the spelling.

MUSSOORIE, June 3, 1946

Harijanbandhu, 16-6-1946

¹ Vide "The Schoolmaster Abroad", 13-2-1933.

² The correspondent had criticized the English rendering of the Sanskrit quotations in Sushila Nayyar's article "Meeting Sastriar" published in *Harijan* 28-4-1946.

129. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I am repeating what I have said. Make yourself fit in body and mind. Know that Ramanama is the supreme remedy for this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/O] SGT. SURESHWAR ACHARYA
SHRINRISINHA ASHRAM
BHOOTADINO JHANPO
VADODARA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

130. LETTER TO MANKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI MANKAR,

I got the news of Sheth Lallubhai's passing away from your letter. He did much work of compassion for animals. Sooner or later we shall all pass away. Let us hope God will send someone worthy to fill his place. In the meanwhile you for your part should go on pursuing your dharma and add lustre to the work.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

JIVADAYA MANDAL
148 SARAF BAZAR
BOMBAY 2

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

131. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I got your letter only today. I had been waiting for it. It is good that Sir Stafford is all right. I think now there is no point in your coming here. We are to reach there on the 8th or the 9th. At the most you would get two days or three. Moreover, how can you leave Sir Stafford? Today I am observing silence and so am writing this myself. I assume you will be able to make out my handwriting.

Why does Golbehn have to wait for money? I do not like the idea of the Trust spending[money] on the land or the building at Simhagarh. I would like you to run your own affairs smoothly. But I shall be agreeable to whatever is agreed upon by you and Jehangirji. I would not regard it as wrong if you took what you needed for Gulbai. We will discuss this further when we meet.

I am returning the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

132. LETTER TO BRIJMOHAN

MOSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

BHAI BRIJMOHAN,

I could reach your letter only today. The letter and the rejoinder will appear in *Harijan Sevak*¹ without your name.

Why this fear?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. BRIJMOHAN, PH. D.

P. O. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Vide "Urdu, the Language of Both", 16-6-1946.

133. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,
June 3, 1946

I am glad to learn that the question of improving the living conditions of labourer and building a dharmashala for the poor is engaging the active attention of some of the prominent residents of Mussoorie. But I am sorry to hear that even in a matter which should be common concern there is party feeling. If this news is true the work will never succeed. On one pretext or the other there will be increasing strife but I sincerely hope that the news is quite incorrect. In my opinion the work should be entrusted to a committee composed of influential persons who can command public confidence and are above party strife. Such persons are to be found everywhere and Mussoorie should be no exception to the rule. I hope such a committee will soon be appointed and it will bring the good work to fruition.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 5-6-1946

134. MINDFULNESS THE REMEDY

The realization that the mere desire for truth and non-violence is not sufficient to make people non-violent made me think that. . . a way must be taught, which would enable people to rebuild themselves fundamentally. . . .

External observance like prayers, handicrafts, etc., are not the efficient means for truth and kindness. . . . Only by inner and well directed effort can a man rebuild himself. . . I have in mind the way of mindfulness, recommended by Buddha. . . He has gone to the point of saying that this way can bring a man to perfection in seven days. . . .

The way of mindfulness consists in being constantly observant, conscious, attentive, watchful, awake, uninterruptedly aware of the mental and emotional content of our consciousness and of its expressions through the body. . . .

You can easily try it out on yourself. Within a week you will be convinced that Buddha has left with us a toll of unparalleled efficacy for rebuilding ourselves truly and permanently. . . .

¹ It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

Thus writes Mr. Frydman¹, better known to the public as Bharatanand. I reproduce it for what it is worth. I have not fallen in love with it because this too has caught on. If it was a seven days' work, why is it that it has so few witnesses in the world today? In so far as it is an aid, it is in general vogue and takes its place among the other remedies, whether it is called mindfulness vigilance or meditation. It does not take the place of prayer or the *mala*,² or any other outward practice. It is in addition to these outward observances so long as the latter are not for show. Indeed, prayer is purely an inward act. Those who found in Ramanama the talisman knew mindfulness and found by experience that Ramanama was the best of all the remedies adopted for the practice of Truth and Non-violence.

MUSSOORIE, June 4, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

135. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MOSOORIE,

June 4, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Mr. Herbert Fischer, a German of Friends' Settlement, Itarsi, is known to me. He was for some time in the Village Industries Association in Wardha. His wife is a lady of Jamaica but in India, also of Friends' Settlement. I understand that Mr. Fischer and his wife are due to be sent to Germany in virtue of some plan. Mr. Fischer is now in a concentration camp in Satara. I wonder if it is possible for him to meet me before being sent to Germany.³

I wonder, too, if this matter falls within the Viceroy's department or whether I should write to some other [authority].

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 84

¹ Maurice Frydman. Only extracts from his letter are reproduced here

² Rosary

³ Herbert Fischer and his wife were allowed to meet Gandhiji before leaving for Germany.

136. LETTER TO ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI AIYER

MOSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SIR ALLADI,

Rajaji has sent me your opinion which I have read with the attention it demands.

Hope you are gaining by your stay in Bangalore.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR ALLADI KRISHNASWAMI
TATA SILK FARM AREA
NEAR SOUTH END ROAD
BASAVANGUDI, BANGLORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

137. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALCHARI

MOSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

MY DEAR C.R.,

Your letter with enclosure. I drink in all you say or send. There are obvious diffucilties. But I am hoping that they can be got over.

I have sent a short note to Sir Alladi.

How is your son? What is or was the matter with him?

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

138. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

MUSSORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. You are doing good work. Why do you not do spinning? You ask me to send you the list of books. When you read the books available on the khadi science you will learn many new words, you will learn Gujarati and Hindi technical terms and you will also learn how much meaning is contained in khadi.

Show this letter to Vinoba and Bhansali and listen to what they say about khadi and ponder over it. We should voluntarily and strictly follow the rules of an institution where we go, whether as guests or inmates. That is what discipline means. The term for discipline in Gujarati and Hindi is *shista*, which however does not convey the full meaning of the English word. Work done without discipline even if it is on a massive scale, is washed away. The way the planets go round the sun is discipline. If any planet, out of mischief, were to start going faster or rush too near to the sun, it would not only burn up but would destroy the whole solar system. From this you may estimate the value of discipline.

It is certainly good that the Chimur people¹ have been released. They deserved to be released. But to command all that they did would amount to commending violence. It would mean that we accepted it. Now that they have all been released, uncle Bhansali should understand this and make our Chimur friends understand.

I believe I shall be going to Panchgani after the 15th of this month.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Kanu Gandhi Paper. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹Who were convicted for the Ashti-Chimur disturbances during the 1942 movement and whose death sentences were commuted to transportation for life.

139. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You must have returned from Samastipur. I got Mirabehn's letter yesterday in the evening. It is clear from it that it is no longer necessary for you to go to her Ashram. She says she does not need anybody now.

You must have received Kanchan's letter to me which I had sent to you. As I was dictating these lines, I was given your letter received yesterday. I am of the view that you should go to Uruli Kanchan. It should not be difficult for you to secure a house at Uruli separately. You will have *satsanga*¹ there. Balkrishna is already there. Kanchan has been rendering very good service there. If you go there and if you can exercise control over yourself, she may work with redoubled zeal. But I do not wish that you should go there purely with that aim. I am not very eager that she should go on with the work she is doing. My only desire is that you should start living together and lead a happy exemplary life. For this, you may stay where you like and do what work you like. I do wish, of course that both of you, living together, should associate yourselves with any one of my activities. I would certainly like that. But my wish and approval is a secondary consideration. I shall reach there by the 9th the latest. But you need not wait for me. I would rather that you went to Kanchan by the first train. I can fully realize Kanchan's agony. I am returning your letter.

I do not think it is your duty to visit Balvantsinha's village; but you should go there if you do not go to Kanchan immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosure: 1 letter

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8397. Also C. W. 7215. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

¹ Association with good persons

140. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter. It was good you discharged your responsibility in regard to the buildings. But I am constantly approached for help in building houses. Why should you find a job tedious if you know it? I don't want to assign the job to you if it hurts you. What other work would have yourself like to have?

I see that both of you have a great responsibility in the case of Jivaram¹. It is quite all right that you make him sit in cold water. Do you keep his feet out [of water]? Do you give him friction-bath? If you can do it the benefit may be miraculous. It is described in Kuhne's book which we have there. It might perhaps be better to put a mud-pack on his head instead of applying a wet bandage.

I shall reach Delhi on the 9th or earlier.

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

141. LETTER TO SARALABEHN A. SARABHAI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The case of the late Manibehn indeed evokes sympathy. As long as ignorance persists such cases are bound to happen in the world. Our duty is only to remove the ignorance. By this I don't mean mere knowledge of the letters, but improvement of the mind. I should welcome book knowledge to the extent it is incidental to such improvement.

I do not feel like writing anything in this regard in *Harijan*. All the same I have it in mind and if anything strikes me I shall write.

While staying in Gulmarg do whatever work you can.

Neither I nor anybody else had ever expected you to devote your whole time to the Kasturba Turst², or stay on in Gujarat for that

¹ Addressee's son

² The addressee was Agent of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust in Gujarat.

purpose. For me it was—and is—enough that you do what you do thoughtfully, careful and effectively.

I hope you are getting full benefit of the air at Gulmarg, and that it is not affected by the commotion in Kashmir.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. SARALABEHN
HUT NO. 46, GULMAR
KASHMIR

For a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Paper. Courtesy: Pyarelal

142. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

MUSSOORIE,

June 4, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. That you have realized your mistake regarding the mangoes is enough.¹ Vigilance alone will enable us to lead a good life.

Hoshiari wrote that after her brother's marriage she would go to the Ashram. I could have no further talk with her. At Delhi I did not get time even to lift up my head. I could hardly talk to her about Gajaraj. I asked her to shake off the tendency to run after me. As a result she went home. I feel she can make little progress in the Ashram. If she returns to the Ashram, it should be with the idea of not leaving it and of reforming Gajaraj. I have observed that Hoshiari has herself spoiled Gajaraj. The poor girl knows no better. What could she do? Gajaraj meanwhile is being spoiled more and more.

It is very good that you make your strings locally. And Anantramji writes that you are also improving the garden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 1972

¹ Vide "Letter to Balvantsinha", 25-5-1946.

143. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your postcard. You may certainly stay on for your brother's marriage. There is no absolutely duty to return to the Ashram. But if you want to go now, you must not return home. You will progress only if you go with the intention of inculcating in Gajaraj the habit of sleeping separately, so that he studies well. If you cannot do this, live in your village, serve your presents and learn what you can. Make a good farmer of Gajaraj.

Your brother may come only after I reach Delhi. I shall reach there in two or three days.

C/O SHRIBALVANTSINHA

KHURJA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

144. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL

MUSSOORIE,
June 4, 1946

BHAI GOVINDLAL,

I got your letter. It is good. It will be published in *Harijan Sevak* without your name.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRISADAN

15 NARAYAN DABHOLKAR ROAD

MALABAR ROAD

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

145. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,

[June 4, 1946]²

Gandhiji spoke of the poor rickshaw-pullers and load-carriers there. They should be everyone's concern. They made life possible for the wealthy and yet the latter, while willing to take from them even the inhuman service of rickshaw-pulling, did not care to see where and how they lived, what they ate and what they earned. He had heard that these poor men lived in tiny rooms without adequate light and air; they did not want to reveal how many herded together into one room lest they should be evicted or fined. They were dirtily clad as could be seen from the little crowd of them that had come to attend the prayers that evening. But perhaps they had not the wherewithal to afford a change of clothes. They might be like the woman in Bihar, when he first went there, who, when asked to wash herself and her clothes, said to Ba: "How can I bathe when I have not another sari to put on?" It was the benden duty of those to whom God had given more than their needs to spend the extra money on those who were in want. He had been told that the Congress Government was now in power and would see to it that labour quarters everywhere were rebuilt. If they did so it would be a good thing. It would be no more than their bare duty. That would not, however, exonerate rickshaw-riders from their duty. Doctors had told him that these poor people pulled these vehicles for four years or so and the work was so hard they died soon after of lung and heart trouble. How could the users be so callous as not to see that rickshaw-pullers were properly housed and sufficiently paid and clothed and not overworked.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

146. HINDUSTANI CRITICIZED

Shri Jivaji Desai has sent me samples of some criticisms of the edition in Urdu script of *Harijan Sevak* from both Hindi and Urdu newspapers. They have made fun of its Hindustani. Hindi critics opine that the articles are deliberately filled with unnecessary Urdu words and Urdu critics complain of the use of Sanskrit words which Muslims cannot understand.

I am glad of these criticisms. Thus, why should the paper be called *Harijan Sevak* instead of *Harijan Khidmatgar*? Why *Sampadak* and not 'Editor' or *Mudir* and so on? Lovers of Urdu believe that

¹ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² The source reports this after the speech of June 2 and before that of June 5.

Hindustani and Urdu are synonymous. Lovers of Hindi feel the same conversely even when it is written in the Urdu script. Presumably they hope that this criticism will go home and make me give up the Urdu script in sheer despair. But the hope is not likely to be fulfilled. In fact neither Urdu or Hindi is to be termed Hindustani. Though not in vogue today Hindustani is a wise mixture of the two. If newspaper and other critics will exercise a little forbearance they will presently see that it is not difficult to understand what is Hindustani as distinguished from Hindi and Urdu. I admit that those who write for *Harijan Sevak* are still struggling but they are determined to reach the desired goal. Readers must bear kindly with what may today seem a hotch-potch of the two forms. If God spares my life I hope to prove to the readers of *Harijan Sevak* that Hindustani can be as sweet as either Urdu or Hindustani can be as sweet as either Urdu or Hindi. The seeming quarrel of today will shortly disappear when it is realized that the two forms are sister and that through their joint effort will come into being a stately language which will serve the crores of India.

In the interim, I hope, critics will point out what to them may appear as mistakes. Taken in a friendly spirit such criticism will help to improve the language of *Harijan Sevak*.

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

147. TRUE BUT NOT NEW¹

Maulvi Hamidullah Sahib of Lucknow came to see me in Mussoorie and handed two of his pamphlets. They are an attempt to prove the necessity of making obligatory up to the high school standard a knowledge of both Hindi and Urdu and the Nagari and Persian scripts, whether for boys or girls. The idea appeals forcibly to me. My effort has always been directed to this end. Time was when Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Babu Purushottamdas Tandon were working for the same objective but alas! we did not meet with success. Nevertheless, I neither abandoned hope nor effort and the result was the creation of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha. The Maulvi Sahib's request, therefore, is nothing new for me.

If the U. P. Government is able, with the general consent, to

¹ This appeared under "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946, under the date June 6, 1946.

make the attempt, they will have rendered a great service. I am of the opinion that in all the provinces where Hindi or Urdu is the mother tongue, a knowledge of the other should be made compulsory. I have no doubt that the natural outcome of such a step will be the easy birth of Hindustani, in which the two will blend into one. The present controversy between the two sisters will then cease. Another advantage that will accrue is that tuition up to the high school will be in the national language instead of English.

MUSSOORIE, June 5, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

148. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 3rd instant.

In accordance with your advice I am staying in Mussoorie until the afternoon of the 8th, reaching Delhi about 11p.m. that night. This enables me to have the next morning's treatment without bustle and hurry so as to be ready for the Working Committee meeting the same afternoon.

This will be given to you by our mutual friend, Horace Alexander.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 201

149. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have received your telegram. I can see that you are not at all willing to leave Bombay. It would become a little cooler there during the monsoon but I do not think it can be of much benefit to one in your situation. There are hill-stations like Kasauli, Dharampur, etc., in the mountain ranges of Simla. If you spend two years there, even that

would help. And those hill-stations provide fairly good facilities. Of course there are many inconveniences and so one has to consider it carefully. But if you are calm and cheerful within, I have nothing to say.

I shall leave here on the 8th so that I can be ready for the 9th. Let us see what happens. As the reciting of Ramanama is for you, so it is for me and everybody else. That medicine is constantly working, but only those who know it can profit from it.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

150. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. It is good that you acquired the bungalow.¹ I take it that Sjt. Shantilal will pay for the repairs. How will you meet the expenditure on its upkeeps and repairs already undertaken? I would prefer also that you and Bachhraj² suggested who should be the trustee. I can, if you ask me, choose a name from amongst those you may suggest, otherwise I see nothing wrong in the two of you deciding upon someone and implementing your decision. I don't want to add this one to my many tasks. It is a different thing that I may do it if I can without special effort. Now that the bungalow has been acquired, if I can spend part of the season at panchgani I ought to stay in the place, oughtn't I? The chief consideration, however, should be that really poor people, Harijans or others in similar condition, should be able to utilize it. Think of a policy which will make this possible and have the rules formulated. I should like to make use of the building whenever I come but the really needy should be constantly using it. I am of the opinion that middle-class people should have no place in it. Please send me a plan of the premises and description of its

¹ For the proposed dharmashala at Panchgani

² Bachhraj Tribhuvandas Doshi

surroundings.

I am enclosing a copy of this to Bhai Bachhraj.

MOHANLAS MOTICHAND SHAH

GADHADA

KATHIAWAR

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

151. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

The representation by the workers of the firm of Mukund has just reached my hands. I am sending it to you. Is there any truth in it? They have also sent me a wire. I have paid no attention to it. How can I study all this? I don't have the time either. But is there any truth in what they say in the notice?

Janakibehn should now be perfectly all right. It seems this task has been well accomplished.

BACCHARAJ [&] CO.

MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

152. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I had Sir Datar Singhji's article¹ on dualpurpose cows revised. As it is now I do not find any cause for complaint. I have even sent the thing for printing. If in some places they have single-purpose cows I see no harm in it. Think over what I have written to Rishabhadas. I have written something to this effect to Parnerkar² also; see that.

¹ The article was published in *Harijan*, 23-6-1946, under the title "Development of Dual-Purpose Cattle in India".

² *Vide* "Letter to Y. M. Parnerkar", 1-6-1946.

Dadaji is still going strong. Can Anasuya¹ help you in cow-protection work or is it that you cannot spare her from household work?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 9129

153. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. A farmer has to face Nature's vagaries. Even then he is the mainstay of the world. So I am glad that you both² are working together. Nobody can compete with Balvantsinha in hard work. I have often seen it.

For your peace of mind now I can think of no other remedy except Ramanama. It has been proved by experience. There are two conditions to it.

(1) It should proceed from the heart.

(2) The rules that I have enunciated for its repetition should be observed.

They are so simply that they can be observed easily. It is all given in a *Harijan* issue.³

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 132

154. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

MUSSOORIE,
June 5, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I am enclosing a letter from Dr. Brijmohan about Hindustani. You will find my reply to it in *Harijan Sevak*⁴. But it will be better if you write to him because you are likely to have much information

¹ Addressee's wife

² The addressee had been assisting Balvantsinha in farm work at the Ashram.

³ *Vide* "Faith Cure v. Ramanama", 30-5-1946.

⁴ *Vide* "Urdu, the Language of Both?", 31-6-1946.

which I don't have.

I am sending herewith a copy of my article.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashivad, p. 310

155. SILENCE-DAY NOTE

June 5, 1946

Is he here to day?¹

Is the machine there?

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10522

156. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

MUSSOORIE,

June 5, 1946³

His remarks⁴ were taken to heart by one of the workers who has in charge of the meeting. On Subsequent inquiry Gandhiji learnt that the information which he had received was of doubtful authenticity. As a satyagrahi he felt he had fallen from grace in accepting a statement made to him without full scrutiny and by basing his public remarks thereon. Making a public confession of his mistake in his address after the prayers on the following day, he stressed the importance of speaking only when necessary and uttering every word after the most careful thought.

A satyagrahi cannot afford to be credulous or to be careless in his speech. There is a Sanskrit verse saying that not to begin is the first sign of wisdom, but once you begin a thing you should do it well.

It would have been best not to have made use of the unsifted information. But having done so I should end it well by making the admission that on inquiry I found that the accusation could not be

¹ S. M. Iyengar had come, with a letter of recommendation from B. C. Roy to show Gandhiji "his new method of spinning and the wheel he had devised".

² Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

³ The source reports this before the speech of June 7, 1946.

⁴ Made during the previous day's speech when it was reported to Gandhiji that some rickshaw-pullers were turned out of the prayer gathering because of their dirty clothes.

supported.

There is a great piece of sculpture in Japan depicting three monkeys. One of them is shutting his mouth with his hands, the second is shutting his ears and the third is shutting his eyes. The lesson of the first one is not to speak unless absolutely necessary and then too, to weigh every word before speaking. The message of the second is not hear evil things, of the third not to let one's eyes wander here, there and everywhere.

Therefore, when going along the road, one should either contemplate the beauty of nature or else fix [one's] gaze on the ground before one. He carried about the three gurus with him wherever he went and he advised them all to bear their instructions in mind.

Harijan, 16-6-1946

157. TELEGRAM TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

June 6, 1946

LAXMIDAS

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

YOUR	TWO	WIRES.	SORRY	ABOUT
MARUTI'S	DEATH.	HOPE	LAXMI	WILL
AND	COME	HARIJAN	ASHRAM.	WRITING
LAXMI. ¹			YOU	AND

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Lakshmi M. Sharma", 6-6-1946.

158. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BIRLA HOUSE, MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

The enclosed has been sent to Gandhiji by the father of the interned writer¹.

Gandhiji wishes me to ask you if from your exact knowledge of the working of the administration you can say whether anything can be done to enable the young man to fulfil what appears to be his laudable wishes?²

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 85

159. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I shall be glad if Jaisukhlal and you come. If both of you can live happily away from me and you get educated and become wise there is nothing special to be gained by coming to me. If there has been any misunderstanding the fire of time will melt it away provided we let it do so. From your doings³ there which you describe it seems that you are spending your time well. By goondas you seem to mean the bad boys you have to come across. Your way of dealing with them may be said to resemble partly of Draupadi. The method worth emulating is that of Sita. Though, of course, both have been counted among the [five] *satis*.⁴ It is worth thinking over why Draupadi, though she had five husbands, was and is regarded as a *sati*. But I leave that question aside. If your answer to the goonda meant nothing more than what you did, if your heart was full of anger, then you may be said to have replied to the goonda with the violence on your part. If you think over the meaning of whipping out the sandal from your

¹ Dr. Suresh Chandra, who was interned in Germany

² In a letter dated July 27, 1946, C.W. B. Rankin replied that the internee, released in the middle of May, had been asked whether he wished to be repatriated to India and a reply from him was awaited.

³ The addressee had punished a boy who was teasing girls.

⁴ Ideal wives; the most well-known in tradition are Anasuya, Parvati, Savitri, Sita and Draupadi.

foot and throwing it at him or striking him a few times with the sandal in your hand and the goonda becoming cowed down, you will realize what you did. Since you resorted to physical force in a crowded square the other people also would take courage and the goonda being a coward at heart, would be cowed down and run away. If taking off the sandal was a sign of compassion on your part then I would regard even your hitting the man with it as an act of ahimsa. Ahimsa has its roots in the heart. And its result should be that the other person submits, not to physical force, but to soul-force because he is overwhelmed by the power of compassion behind the physical punishment. I will give you an instance of this from my own life. Miss Schlesin¹ in her folly started smoking a cigarette in my presence. I slapped her and threw away the cigarette. For the first time she cried before me and apologized and wrote to me afterwards saying that she would never do such a thing again and that she had recognized my love I have narrated this incident in my autobiography.² There have been many other similar incidents in my life. Others also may have similar experience about which we do not know. Did the goonda recognize the love in your heart? Do not be decided whether your action was inspired by violence or non-violence. Ordinarily whipping out sandals is no sign of culture or ahimsa. It is a sign of impulsiveness, that is, of lack of culture. But in your case, the action may have been a sign of ahimsa. Still you alone can testify which is the truth; or, may be God. However, after analysing your action in such detail, I only wish to compliment you. For I do not mind even if your action was violent. It is enough for me that you were not cowed down. I assume that you wish to cultivate ahimsa, and therefore, even if it was an act of violence, you will try and learn ahimsa from it. I, therefore, gladly gave your letter to every-body to read. Akha Bhagat³ has said: "Live as you like but realize Hari anyhow." Accordingly, if you learn to practise pure truth and pure ahimsa even while living there I will believe that you have learnt more than what you would have by staying with me and learning them under my guidance.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

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

¹ Sonja Schlesin Gandhiji's assistant in South Africa

² The incident, however, is not reported in the *Autobiography*.

³ Saint-poet of Gujarat

160. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHARMA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI¹,

You are now a widow. If you have learnt anything from me, there is no difference between a wife and a widow, truly understood, for sooner or later everyone has to die. The soul does not die. Marriage is not of bodies, and if it is [regarded as such] it is wrong. If one could marry a body, why don't we marry a dead body or, say, a stone? A marriage takes place between two souls and the soul never dies.

Moreover, you have your children. You should bring them up with care and lead an absolutely chaste life. If you conduct your life with restraint you will not feel any loss. In fact you will have gained something through the loss.

Laksmidasdada² has asked you to go and live in the Harijan Ashram. Do as he says. In it lies your highest good. If you live in the Ashram it will be like being among your own family. Surrounded by them you will always be protected. You are a good girl, so if you will wisely devote yourself to the work of service that you have taken up you will shine and do good to many others. You yourself once wrote to me, didn't you, that with the Sardar's help you had acquired a house of your own. If so, make all arrangements about it as Lakshmidasdada advises, so that you will have nothing to worry about. What are your liabilities? What has Maruti³ left you? Who are your friends, men as well as women? You did write something about your sister Mani, but I have forgotten it. Let me have all the information in detail.

I take it that you are calm. Don't give yourself up to grief. Be cheerful at heart.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ A Harijan girl whom Gandhiji had adopted as his daughter when he was at the Sabarmati Ashram

² Lakshmidas Asar

³ Maruti Sharma, addressee's husband

161. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. It seems Maruti passed away suddenly. You did right in having asked Laksmi to come to the Ashram. It will be very good if she goes and lives there and then she should also participate in the training. I shall know more when your letter comes. I have written a letter to Lakshmi. I am enclosing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

162. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. The handwriting does not look like yours. If it is I will say you have improved it a lot.

I don't remember anything about any freedom I might have given you in regard to your mode of life there. If I did, you should have asked me to give it in writing. Human memory has ever been infirm. And [mine] has now become quite weak. I do remember, however, that whatever I might have said I qualified it with the condition that whatever you did should be with the consent of Chimanlal or Krishnachandra. That is because I do not have, nor do I want to have, any exclusive right. How could I then make any concession independently? Whatever I might have said earlier, make a note of what I am now writing and conduct yourself accordingly. I only wish your good. Now indeed you have realized that your upbringing had not been perfect. Whatever might have become aware of things. You cannot therefore behave irresponsibly on the strength of your wealth. Besides, the money that you have should be regarded as a sacred trust and spent accordingly. At the Ashram it would become you to live in poverty as the others do; only then can you be

accommodated. You cannot spend your money in such a way that it corrupts others. I cannot tolerate it, nor should the Ashram. You should therefore sit down with Chimanlal and Krishnachandra and organize your life as they advise and make yourself one with the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk. Only then will you be happy, and make your children happy too. It would not befit you to behave in any other way. Although Ratilal is alive, I am sure you never let yourself forget that you are as good as a widow. If you cannot act in this way, if you are made of an altogether different stuff, you had better leave promptly; go and live where it suits you.

As I don't know when I shall be reaching there, I have written at length. I know yours is a difficult task.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

163. LETTER TO SAMBHAJI

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

BHAI SAMHAJI,¹

Manjulabai and others whose land Government has acquired for the main road to the Ashram ought to be exempted from land-tax pertaining to that portion and the amount inadvertently paid ought to be refunded. There can be no doubt about it. If you will see to it, I need not spend my time on it. If the job is beyond your power, do write to me and also tell me if what I believe is correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO BALVANTISNHA

MUSSOORIE,
June 6, 1946

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

I have your letter. What you say is quite correct.² We should not

¹ Jamnlal Bajaj's agent in Sevagram

² Sevagram was faced with scarcity of foodgrain.

underrate the gravity of the situation. He who abstains from doing a thing merely because it does not seem important enough eventually fails to accomplish anything at all. You have to fulfil the promise you have given.¹ I am herewith making a beginning to do what needs to be done. Enclosed you will find a letter to Sambhaji.² Read it and if you find it all right send it on to him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen p. 378

165. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

MUSSOORIE,

June 7, 1946

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have your letter. I think you are now out of the wood. It is therefore my greatest desire that you should forget me. I shall be happy if you follow the example of Kunvarji³ and others who do not come to me for comfort but who do come and see me when I am in the neighbourhood. You should also do the same thing.

Men do have ups and downs in their health and this will always be so. I was not therefore surprised that you fell ill. Everything will be well if you but see Rama in everyone. I am not writing separately to Kunvarji. It is he who has become your real relation.

Blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDASBHAI

C/O SHRI KUNVARJIBHAI

ADARSH DUGDHALAYA

MALAD, BOMBAY, (B. B. & C. I. RLY.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 2722

¹ To obtain help from Jamnalal Bajaj's firm

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ Kunvarji Parekh, son-in-law of Harilal Gandhi

166. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. I will not reply at length. You may ask what you please when we meet. I assume that Sita's problem will be solved.

I think I shall leave Delhi before the end of this month. Everything may be over even before the 15th.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILA GANDHI
KHIMJI JIVA SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO.6
BANGANGA, WALESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4982

167. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. It is quite interesting. It will save your time if you don't take so much pains over writing letters now. If you send to the newspapers a report with the kind of particulars you have given me, or if you send me a copy of any such report appearing in a newspaper, I will know what is happening. Even your quarrelling pleases me. You may, therefore, quarrel but should go on doing your work and learn from me whatever I may have to teach.

Why did you get your letter-heads printed in English?¹ Why not in the Devanagari and Urdu scripts, or, if you do not like that, in Devanagari only. For whom did you get them printed in English?

I am surprised to learn that Manibehn Namavati² refused to give you the details. Shall I ask Manibehn about it?

¹ The addressee had a few letter-heads printed in English for addressing heads of some institutions which she wanted the camping girls to visit.

² Who ran a Khadi Bhandar in Bombay for a number of years with the help of women

After Delhi my programme is to go to Poona and, if possible, to Panchgani from there. Wherever I may be you are free to come and see me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10447. Also C. W. 6886. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

168. LETTER TO HUSSAIN

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI HUSSAINBHAI,

I have your letter of May 22, 1946.

You are needlessly worried. Why should such a large and educated community as the Shias feel helpless?

Your son had been to see me in Delhi. I appeased him by exchanging a few pleasantries. More when we meet some time.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

PRESIDENT

ALL-PARTIES SHILA CONFERENCE

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BAPA,

I got your postcard dated 2-6-1946. Can I help agreeing with you? You have fixed for the 25th and at the Bharat Sevak Samaj—I shall be present there. You will not send for me before 2 o'clock, will you? I do have a hope that I shall be leaving Delhi towards the middle of this month. But it is all in God's hands.

“Bharat Sevak Samaj” sound quite appropriate. You should therefore have your letter-heads, etc., printed in India's sovereign language, Hindustani, i.e., in the Urdu and Devanagari scripts. You

may if you like have them in English for foreign countries. Have a rubber-stamp for the stationery that has already been printed in English. You cannot do this all by yourself. Do it if you can carry your co-workers with you. If not, whatever Gokhale's¹ fate decrees.

Blessings from

BAPU

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY

POONA 4

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,

June 7, 1946

CHI. RAMESHWARI,

I know Ratnamayidevi very well. I have no objection to your taking her in. I do not know myself who is a Gandhian. Gandhism is a meaningless word for me. An ism follows the propounder of a system. I am not one, hence I cannot be the cause for any ism. If an ism is built up it will not endure, and if it does it will not be Gandhism. This deserves to be properly understood.

I like your work, it is neat and clean. It is you who have built up the Balika Ashram you conduct it and I would be pleased if Ratnamayidevi gave you full satisfaction.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8010. Also C. W. 3110. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

171. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

MUSSOORIE,

June 7, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter. All your questions are such that you should find the answer there itself. For example, the problem of Harihar

¹ Gopal Krishna Gokhale, (1866-1915); the most outstanding of the moderate leaders; President, Indian National Congress, 1905; founder of Servants of India Society; 1905; member of the Imperial Legislative Council, 1902-15

Sharma. What should I—or could I—do about it from here? I realize it was a mistake on my part to have invited him to the Ashram. Even then I have included in my letter¹ to him all that you wrote. If you approve of this letter, pass it on to him. It was all right that you gave him coffee. Continue to give him some. If, however, we are required to give to all whatever is given to one, it will lead to the breakdown of the Ashram. Why, I should myself disband it. It is our duty to offer things according to a man's needs. I have often said that the Ashram should be like a hotel. The difference is that the boarders in a hotel can ask for anything they like and on payment they get it. Whatever we would give a person taking into consideration his bodily needs should be in the nature of a medicine. If we give quinine to one man, can everyone ask for it? We must not regard quinine and coffee from different angles. We have to offer rice to a South Indian, bread to a Punjabi, fish to a Bengali, beer and beef to an Englishman. It is another thing that we may not give meat and fish even as medicine, generally not even rice. But if we admit such persons then it becomes our dharma to let them have [what they need.] But we may offer all the four things to all four of them at the same time. Now meat and fish are out of the question, but how can we refuse to give wheat, rice, coffee, tea, etc., which we have once given? Think over all this and do as you deem proper.

As for prayers, everywhere I am sticking to the old order, but if you think it right to have some change at the Ashram you may not make it. For that consult the old colleagues like Chimanlal, Balvantsinha, etc., or postpone it till I reach there.

I have written to Champabehn². I understand what you say about mango seeds, and also about dogs and mice.

Do what is proper about wood.

I propose to reach there in the beginning of August.

If Lilavati is there tell her that if she wants to abide by my word she has my permission. If she wants to act within the limits imposed by time, she hasn't much time, has she? She will have to think over all this herself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4559

¹ Vide "Letter to Harihar and Kamala Sharma", 22-5-1946.

² Vide "Letter to Champa R. Mehta", 6-6-1946.

172. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL NEHRU,

I have your letter to Pyarelal. What I want to know is mentioned in the third paragraph, viz., what treatment, tried by you, do you suggest for the ailment? I shall be glad to have something on this so that I can understand things better.

Blessings from
BAPU

1 WARRIS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

173. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

MUSSOORIE,
June 7, 1946

Apologizing for the delay in his address at the end of the prayers, Gandhiji told the audience how pleased he was that Kanu Gandhi had started the prayers without waiting for him.

It should be the rule that prayers must not be delayed for anybody on earth. God's time never stops. From the very beginning wheel of His time has gone ceaselessly on. As a matter of fact there is no beginning for Him or His time.

God is not person. No one knows what His watch is like. No one can describe Him as no one has seen Him. He is the Law and the Law-giver combined into one. The author of the Vedas, after the profoundest search has described Him as *neti, neti* (not this, not this). He moves all and yet no one can move Him. Not a blade of grass moves without His will. For Him there is no beginning and no end.

Everything that has a beginning must end. The sun, the moon and the earth must all perish one day even though it might be after an incalculable number of years. God alone is immortal, imperishable. How can man find words to describe Him? How can anyone afford to miss the time of offering prayers to Him whose watch never stops?

¹ The report in *National Herald* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

Kanu Gandhi knew all that and knew that any waiting for him would hurt. So he had started the prayers on time. Gandhiji had felt ashamed of disturbing the meeting by walking up to the dais when the prayer was going on. If others came late during the prayers he inwardly fretted: why did they not stand at the far end of the gathering instead of walking in and disturbing the meeting? He would have liked to wait outside but he knew that people were waiting for him. They might feel worried over his absence. Therefore, he had dared to walk to the dais and take his seat there though not without trembling. His car had not failed him. But he could not rudely tear himself away from his visitors.

He wanted them all to learn a lesson from the incident. If they kept the time for the prayers the habit would be reflected in all that they did.

A man who works regularly in a systematic fashion never feels overworked or tired. He knows his limits and is able to do in fair time, all that he undertakes. It is not hard work that kills a man, but irregularity or lack of system.

National Herald, 8-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 16-6-1946

174. DURING MUSSOORIE SOJOURN

During the prayer meeting in Mussoorie I suggested that the gay people of the place might well think of the poor among them, and make their living comfortable, clean and hygienic as also enable the poorest of all classes to find an abode where it would be possible for them to receive the benefit of the hill climate. Both the suggestions have been taken up with enthusiasm. An influential committee has been formed to carry out the idea of a dharmashala or *musafarkhana*. I write this note to suggest that much the most important things would be to have a committee of workers or even one worker who would make it his business to run the guest house in a becoming manner. Seeing that the place will be free of rent it will be no small task to choose the guests who may occupy the premises. Care will have to be taken to exclude those who are at all able to pay a reasonable rent. The visitors must be those who have nothing wherewith to pay. If the place is to be kept absolutely clean, there will have to be rules to be rigidly enforced in the interests of the visitors themselves. And yet the occupants will have to be treated with perfect courtesy. They must never be allowed to feel that poverty is a crime. Every third-class traveller knows that the poor receive rough treatment in the railway carriages and at railway stations. It is a sad commentary that in this

poor country where according to books poverty carries with it a certain dignity, in public places the poor are treated almost with contempt and they are made to pay for receiving it. It is in this unfortunate atmosphere that this guest house is to be built. Let the committee seek out from now an ideal caretaker who will answer the requirements of the office which are undoubtedly onerous. If such a person is found, the project is bound to be a pattern for all such places on hill stations.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

175. TAKE CARE OF PENNIES

I have discovered honourable members of Assemblies using most expensive embossed note paper even for private use. So far as I know, office stationery cannot be used for private purposes such as writing to friends or relatives or for letters from members of Assemblies to constituents outside matters of public business. So far as I know, this is a universal objection in every part of the world.

But for this poor country my objection goes deeper. The stationery I refer to is too expensive of us. Englishmen belonging to the most expensive country in the world and who had to flourish on the awe they could inspire in us introduced expensive and massive buildings for offices and bungalows requiring for their upkeep an army of servants and hangers-on. If we copy their style and habits we will be ruined ourselves and carry the country in this ruin. And what was tolerated in the case of the conquerors will not be tolerated in ours. There is, too, paper shortage. I am of opinion, therefore, that all these expensive habits should be given up. Hand-made paper with ordinarily printed letter-heads in Nagari and Urdu should be used. The embossed stationery already printed can easily be cut up and put to better use, and should not be used up under cover of economy. Surely village products cannot be made to wait till the expensive and possible foreign stuff is used up. Popular Governments should signalize their advent by adopting popular measures and inexpensive habits.

MUSSOORIE, June 8, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

176. LETTER TO PRABHUDAYAL VIDYARTHI

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946

CHI. PRABHUDAYAL,

I have your letter. You must produce some proof of your having been in the Delhi fort.¹ It baffles me to see a poor man getting away after telling a big Government “to do as it likes”. You are a votary of truth. Think over it again. If you have for some reason been guilty of untruth, there is no harm in admitting it. What more can I say?

You may certainly go to Basti if you must.

I do not consider it necessary for you to stay with me in connection with your case. I shall not send my final reply to the Government till I hear from you. I am thinking of writing only after having your reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

177. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MUSSOORIE,
June 8, 1946²

Mahatma Gandhi held his last prayer meeting in Mussoorie this evening. He told the audience about the work that has been done in connection with two points raised by him, namely, erecting a dharmashala for the poor and building better quarter for the coolies.

As regards the latter, it had been decided that the project was too big for individual effort and that the U. P. Government should be approached. There were plenty of rich people in Mussoorie; it was their duty to see that the coolies had better quarters.

As for the dharmashala, a committee had been formed and money collected. When the dharmashala would materialize rested with them, Gandhiji added. He had suggested that the dharmashala should be such that a person like him could stay there without any hesitation. All that was required was a clean well-ventilated building. He would much rather stay in a place built for the poor. Such a building would be an

¹ Vide “Letter to Prabhudayal Vidyarthi”, 31-5-1946.

² From *The Hindustan Times*, 10-6-1946

inducement for him to come to Mussoorie again. Someone had taken exception to the word dharmashala. The critic said it meant a place for the Hindus only. That was not his conception. Hindus, Muslims Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews—all should be able to come and stay there provided they were poor. They would have to cook thier own food. And so for Harijans, for him everybody was a Harijan. He had said that a religion which made distinctions of high and low was no religion. He had suggested that all of them should become Harijans voluntarily and among Harijans too, Bhangis. Lord Shiva was called *Bhangi*¹ because he had the intoxication of the good of the creation. Therefore by becoming Bhangis, they would become servants and lovers of humanity. The service rendered by the Bhangis was the most useful for humanity. So there could be no discrimination against Harijans in the dharmshala that was contemplated. Another friend had written to him that there were already several dharmashalas in Mussoorie, one for Arya Samajists, one for Sikhs and so on. Why add another when even those in existence lay vacant for most of the time because they were meant for one sect or another? The dharmashala of his conception would be open to all without any discrimination of caste, colour or creed. If they were not prepare for that he would advise them to dissolve the committee and return to their respective donors the money that had been collected .

Friends had warned him against coming to Mussoorie, the seat of fashion and frivolity, Gandhiji contined. He did not grudge the amusement provided it was innocent. If their enjoyment was tainted, they would never be able to build the kind of place that he had suggested and keep it up. As such, they would have no time to think of the poor. The management of such a dharmashala would be even more difficult than building it. They would have to be ever watchful so that it served the purpose for which it was built. Otherwise, he would feel sorry for the money wasted. They had attended the prayers for several days. If they had really come to hear Ramanama in their hearts, they could certainly do what he had asked in the name of Rama and His creation. He also expected them to offer prayers in their own homes regularly, morning and evening. There was no need for them to learn the Sanskrit *Shlokas* if they did not wish to; Ramdhun was enough. The essence of all prayers was to establish God in their hearts. If they succeeded in doing that, all would be well with them, with the society and the world.

The Hindu, 10-6-1946

¹ One who partakes of bhang, an intoxicant

178. NOTES

NO PUBLICITY REQUIRED¹

A Brahmin correspondent asks me to publish the fact that he has become a Harijan and wants to eliminate his name as a caste Hindu from the census too. This is a sequence to my having asked all caste Hindus to look upon themselves as Harijans of the so-called lowest stratum. But what is the point in giving publicity to an inner change? The real proof is for the convert to practise the change in his daily life. He will, therefore, mix freely with Bhangis and take an active part in their life. If possible, he will live with them or get a Bhangi to live with him. He will give his children in marriage to Harijans and on being questioned he will say that he has become a Harijan of his own free will and will register his name either as a Harijan or Bhangi in the census when he has to classify himself. But having done so he will on no account arrogate to himself any of the rights of Harijans as, for example, he will not enter his name as a voter on their list. In other words, he will undertake to fulfil all the duties of a Harijan without seeking any of the rights that pertain to them. So long As separate voting lists are maintained he will cease to be a voter.

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1946

PETROL AND THE BLACK MARKET²

A correspondent writes as follows:

Owing to lack of time it is not always possible to do all the necessary touring by rail. Workers have, therefore, to travel long distances by car. As petrol is rationed and the required quantity is not available recourse is had to the black market. It is either bought through someone or the taxi-driver is commissioned to obtain it from the black market and payment per mile is given to him according to the price paid for the petrol.

Is it right for workers to use a car under these circumstances?

It is possible that if they do not, they will have to cut down their touring which will seemingly be harmful to the work. Am I right in believing that there is no alternative?

I am of opinion that the worker who believes in truth should not use a car under these conditions. Even if he is not a believer but tries to render services thoughtfully he should not do so. If he does he

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 16-6-1946.

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhhu*, 16-6-1946.

knowingly encourages black marketing and nothing but harm can come of such action. I go further and say that to use a car at all times for services is wrong in itself.

NEW DELHI, June 9¹, 1946

DECIMAL COINAGE

It seems that I inadvertently allowed to be printed in the last paragraph of Shri K. Mashruwala's article² on this subject the statement that a second instalment would follow showing how, if at all, decimal coinage without loss to the poor could be promulgated. As a matter of fact I do not think the time has come for a serious consideration of the contemplated reform. I am quite clear that however attractive any scheme of decimal coinage may be, it should not be considered before there is an independent national government. Therefore the publication of any such scheme is wholly premature. There are many more pressing, urgent problems occupying the best minds of the country. Surely the country can easily wait for a more fortunate moment for a proper understanding of a scheme before legislation on the subject is undertaken. If England has waited for years and is still waiting, why should poor famishing India have a radical reform in courage sprung upon it without the man in the street being instructed in the pros and cons of the subject? It is not a matter which has nothing to be said against it. It will certainly not add one grain of corn to the existing stocks. Whether a rupee is to contain 100 cents or 64 pice is a problem that can await solution for a happier day. Democracy demands patient instruction on it before legislation. Hence I intended to erase the announcement of the second article in order to avoid raising a hope I had no desire to satisfy.

NEW DELHI, June 9, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

¹ *Harijan*, however, has "10".

² For Gandhiji's comments on it, *vide* "The So-Called Decimal Coinage", 3-5-1946.

179. LETTER TO MANIBHAI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. Is it you and your people who have given the name “Nijadham”¹ or is it really the name of Shri Datar’s bungalow?

Do you collect mango seeds and utilize the kernel or do you throw them away?

We do not have magic wand which will put a stop to drinking, gambling, prostitution and gangsterism. But I do believe that if we have the required strength of character, even these things will come to an end. You should keep a track of those who drink and then do whatever you can in the matter. You should also inquire carefully who comprise the drinking party, where the drinks come from, etc. I think something can be done if you examine the facts closely, for example, who are the gangsters, what do the gamblers bet upon, whether there are regular houses of ill fame or what other arrangement there is and all other things.

I understand what you say about the building. Do whatever is possible. The time for my return to that side is drawing near. Would it be all right if I pay only a flying visit to Uruli Kanchan? I think I should not at present interfere with the good work that all of you are doing. Think over this and other factors and let me know.

We arrived here from Mussoorie at 1 a. m. today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 2743. Courtesy: Manibhai Desai

180. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

DELHI,
June 9, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your two letters. The first frightened me. The second is good. I presume that the latter is final. We are sweating in the heat here. You are breathing cool air there. We shall now shortly reach

¹ Literally, ‘one’ own abode’, in the sense of the abode of God

Poona. So be patient and go on doing your work. I shall be happy only when you start living with Munnalal. I shall go there first if Manibhai so desires; otherwise I shall arrive via Panchgani. If this is not possible, you may come to Poona where we can talk. Others do not give the news which you have conveyed in your letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8255. Also C. W. 6979. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

181. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

June 9, 1946

I have been in your midst for several weeks with short breaks. It hurts me that you have not yet learnt to observe perfect silence without being requested. It is an indication that Ramanama has not gone to your hearts. There is no power greater than God in the world.

You would expect me to say something. I too wish to tell you something, but just as a cook never puts half-cooked dishes before guests, I too would not place before you things that are still half-cooked. This, however, I may tell you, that you must not give up hope till the last. We must realize that if we achieve nothing ultimately is because of our own shortcomings. Nobody can prove himself right by pointing to others' faults. We can improve ourselves by acknowledging our own faults. If I realize that I am crooked, I shall become straight. It will only be false pride if I fancy that I am straight and the entire world is crooked. That is why I say that, if we achieve nothing, it will be because we do not deserve it. We have been carrying on this fight through non-violent means, but we could not generate enough power to induce others to play straight with us.

We—Hindus and Muslims—I must say have been quarrelling amongst ourselves and if we look to the British to unite us it will be a great blot on our civilization. Who is a Hindu? Who is a Muslim? Why this distinction? Let us all pray to God that wisdom may dawn on us so that we may be united. If this happens we shall easily arrive at some settlement with the British. You must remember that this is being said

¹ The report in *Hindustan* has been collated with the version in *Harijan Sevak*.

today by the same man who had told you that, so long as the British remained, unity between the two of us would be difficult to achieve. But that was only a proclamation of our weakness. I fail to see why we have become so mad, why we have become so uncivilized. But let us not despair. Leave it to God. Let destiny take its course. All will be well if God helps us.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 10-6-1946, and *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946

182. *THE UNKNOWN*

Some learned men describe Him as Unknowable, some others as Unknown, yet others as 'Not This'. 'The Unknown' is good for the present purpose.

When yesterday (9th June) I said a few words to the prayer audience, I could say nothing more than that they should pray for and rely upon the strength and the guidance that this big X could give. There were difficulties to be overcome by all parties in the great Indian drama that was being enacted before them. They were all to rely upon the Unknown who had often confounded man's wisdom and in the twinkling of an eye upset his tin-pot plans. The British party claimed to believe in God, the Unknown. The Muslim League did likewise. They delighted in saying *Allah-o-Akbar*¹. The Congress naturally had no single equivalent cry. Nevertheless, if it sought to represent the whole of India, it represented the millions of believers, no matter to what compartment in the House of God they belonged.

At the time of writing, in spite of my irrepressible optimism, I am unable to say decisively that at least in political parlance, the thing is safe. All I can say, therefore, is that if, with the best efforts of all the parties, the unsafe happens, I would invite them to join with me in saying that it was as well and that safety lay in unsafety. If we are all children of God, as we are, whether we know it or not, we will take in good part whatever happens and work with zest and confidence for the next step whatever it may be. The only condition for that zest is that each party does its honest best for the good of the whole of India. For that is the stake and no other.

NEW DELHI, June 10, 1946

Harijan, 16-6-1946

¹ God is great.

183. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, June 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

This¹ for the ensuing *Harijan*. I thought you and Sir Stafford would like to see a copy.²

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 202

184. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am desired by Gandhiji to send you the enclosed copy of a cable³ just received from South Africa.

Gandhiji hopes that the information is wholly unfounded.⁴

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 10-6-1946.

³ From Sorabjee Rustomjee. According to the source "The Government of India had . . . decided to apply economic sanctions against South Africa. In pursuance of it they had given notice terminating the trade agreement with South Africa after June 26, 1946. It was . . . reported . . . that in anticipation of the termination of the trade agreement South Africa was trying to obtain from India hessian and gunny bags in excess of the quota sanctioned under the trade agreement and that a special steamer was being chartered for this purpose."

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-6-1946.

185. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
June 10, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I read your letter. I understand what you say regarding your sister-in-law's domestic problems. You are right when you say that I also am a human being and cannot know anybody's heart. Perhaps I do not know my own. God alone knows what is in anybody's heart. That is exactly why I told you to do what seemed best to you.¹ After all I don't know your sister-in-law. I don't know Amtul nor Kafikhan and others. You know them all. You may, therefore, go wherever you like. That you have spoiled your health again shows that you have not accepted God as your guide. What, then, can be done?

I am well. I am hoping to go to Poona in two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 522

186. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

Silence Day, [June 10, 1946]²

I have no news to give even today. As I had told you yesterday, so long as we believe that whatever happens is God's doing, we shall have no cause for worry. The only condition is that, whatever we do, we should do with God as our witness. It is He who runs the world and we reap the consequences of our actions. Therefore, ours is only to obey His law and then be indifferent as to the result.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 23-6-1946

¹ Vide "Letter to Amtussalaam", 30-5-1946.

² In his "Weekly Letter", from which this is translated, Pyarelal states that it being his silence day Gandhiji's written message was read out at the meeting. The silence day fell on June 10.

187. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ¹

NEW DELHI,
June 11, 1946

Expressing his regret for the delay in attending the prayers Gandhiji said:

Unfortunately owing to Maulana Saheb's illness the Congress Working Committee meeting which was to be held here was held at his place. On momentous occasions like this it is necessary that as many members as possible should attend the meeting. Maulana Saheb's presence, he being the President of the Congress, was absolutely essential. In order that we may not be deprived of his advice the meeting was held at his residence. I could not, in spite of all efforts, disengage myself in time and was ten minutes late. Since the Divine Clock stops for no one's sake, I am glad that the prayers were begun according to schedule without waiting for me.

I am sorry that even on the third day I cannot give you any definite news whether the talks² on the British proposals have broken down or not. All I can say is that the Congress Working Committee³ is striving its utmost to prevent a breakdown.

As long as there is life there is hope too. It is easy to destroy but to build is a slow and labourious process. Besides, the prestige of the Cabinet Mission is at stake. They cannot afford a breakdown. If the aim of all the three parties, the Congress, the Muslim League and the Mission is the same, viz., the independence of India, the present dialogue should not end in failure. But we must be patient. The independence of 400 millions is no conjurer's trick. The fact that the Congress Working Committee even at this stage is giving it the most serious consideration shows how anxious it is to avoid a breakdown, if it is humanly possible without sacrificing honour or the interests of India's dumb millions. If, however, in spite of our efforts to avoid it the talks in the end do break down, we should not despair. Those who have faith in God will leave the result to Him. In the event of a breakdown I shall report it to you without reservation and in the plainest of words.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 12-6-1946

¹ The meeting was attended among others by Sir Stafford Cripps and Lady Cripps.

² For an official version of the interview as recorded by Lord Wavell, *vide* "Interview with Lord Wavell", 11-6-1946.

³ *The Hindustan Times* report here has "the three parties concerned".

188. TELEGRAM TO LADY CRIPPS

[After June 11, 1946]¹

LADY CRIPPS
CARE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

REGRET NOT MEETING YOU AGAIN AND SEEING YOUR
DAUGHTER. HAPPY YOU HAD SATISFACTORY TIME CHINA
AND THAT BOTH ARE QUITE WELL. MY LOVE WHOLE
FAMILY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy:
Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

189. TALK TO A FRIEND²

[Before June 12, 1946]³

A nameless fear has seized me that all is not well. As a result, I feel paralysed. But I will not corrupt your mind by communciating my unsupported suspicions to you.

Harijan, 23-6-1946

¹ From the reference to Gandhiji's meeting with Lady Cripps, which presumably took place on this date; *vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 11-6-1946.

² Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in which this is reported before the speech of June 12, 1946.

³ *Ibid*

190. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,

June 12, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

From you, almost straight away, I went to the Working Committee which, owing to his illness, was held at Maulana Saheb's quarters. I gave them the gist of our conversation, told them that I gladly endorsed your suggestion about the parties meeting to fix up names subject to the provision that no party should talk of parity,¹ you should invite them simply to submit to you a joint list of the Cabinet of the Provisional Interim Government which you would approve or, if you did not, you would invite them to submit a revised list bearing in mind your amendments, that the list should represent a coalition Government composed of persons of proved ability and incorruptibility. I suggested too that in the place of parity there should be active enforcement of the long-term provision in your joint Statement² that in all major communal issues there should be communal voting to decide them. I suggested also that in the event of absence of agreement between the parties in spite of all effort, you should examine the merits of the respective lists of the two parties and accept either the one or the other (not an amalgam) and announce the names of the Interim Government but that before that final step was taken you should closet yourselves until a joint list was prepared. I told the Working Committee that you had seemed to endorse my suggestions.

I told them further that, so far as I knew, it was a point of

¹ In his letter to Lord Wavell dated June 8, M. A. Jinnah had claimed that the Viceroy had given him "the assurance that there will be only twelve portfolios, five on behalf of the League, five Congress, one Sikh and one Christian or Anglo-Indian". During the meeting with the Cabinet Delegation on June 8, the Viceroy said that "he had given no assurance to Mr. Jinnah" but he thought that "the 5 : 5 : 2 ratio as the most hopeful basis of settlement" and that he was working on that basis. He told them that M. A. Jinnah "had taken a very strong line about the Interim Government and had said that the Muslim League would not be prepared to come in except on the basis of 5 : 5 : 2 distribution of portfolios, between the Muslim League, the Congress, and the minorities". This parity between the Congress and the Muslim League was wholly unacceptable to the Congress.

² Of May 16, *vide* Appendix "Statement of Cabinet Delegation and Viceroy", 16-5-1946.

honour with Congressmen that there could be no joint consultation in which Maulana Saheb was not associated with the talks. You said it was a sore point with Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah and I replied that the soreness was wholly unwarranted and that the Congress could not be expected to sacrifice its faithful servant of twenty-five years' standing whose self-sacrifice and devotion to the national cause had never been in question. But I told you that your great experience and ability to handle delicate matters would show you the way out of the difficulty.

Finally, I told the Committee that I drew your attention to the fact that the European vote which was being talked of was unthinkable, in connection with the Constituent Assembly and nothing but a public declaration by the European residents of India or one by you on their behalf could make possible the formation of the Constituent Assembly. I gathered from you that the question was already engaging your attention and that it should be satisfactorily solved.

Probably you have already moved in the matter of the joint talk. Nevertheless, I thought that I owed it to you and the Working Committee to put on record what I had reported about our talks. If I have in any way misunderstood you, will you please correct me?

I may say that the Working Committee had its draft letter ready but at my suggestion it postponed consideration of it pending the final result of your effort adumbrated in this letter. The draft letter takes the same view that I placed before you yesterday on parity and the European vote and their election as members of the contemplated Constituent Assembly.

I close with the hope that your effort will bear the fruit to which all are looking forward.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 204-5. Also The Transfer of Power, 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 877-8

191. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL¹

18 HARDING AVENUE,

NEW DELHI,

June 12, 1946

DEAR LORD WAVELL,

I am sorry for the slight delay in answering your letter² of today's date. Your invitation to me to see you today at 5 p. m. in order to confer with you and Mr. Jinnah about the Interim Government placed me in a somewhat difficult position. I would gladly meet you at any time, but our official spokesman in regard to such matters is naturally our President, Maulana Azad. He can speak and confer authoritatively, which I cannot do. It is therefore proper that he should be in charge on our behalf of any authoritative³ conversations that might take place. But since you have asked me to come I shall do so. I hope, however, that you will appreciate my position and that I can only talk⁴ without authority, which vests in our President and the Working Committee.⁵

From a facsimile: *Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*, p. 35. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 886

¹ The draft of the letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to Lord Wavell bears corrections in Gandhiji's hand.

² In which the addressee had written : "It is not my intention to discuss any question of principle such as "parity" or otherwise, but to concentrate upon what I know to be our common objective, that is, to get the best possible Interim Government drawn from the two major parties and some of the minorities. . . ."

³ This word is added by Gandhiji.

⁴ What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

⁵ During the interview Jawaharlal Nehru presented a list of 15 names with the following composition : 5 Congress, 4 Muslim League, one non-Indian Christian, one Sikh and one Congress woman.

M. A. Jinnah, in reponse to a similar invitation, had expressed the desire to see the Viceroy "alone".

192. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

[June 12, 1946]¹

DEAR FRIEND,

I promised to send you a copy of Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy's address². I do so herewith.

I have not yet traced Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address referring to the way the Interim Government, if formed, would work.³ But I have got the Muslim League Council's resolution⁴. I send a cutting of it herewith. It speaks volumes for me.

On top of this comes the interview given by the President of the European Association.⁵ I spoke last evening at the prayer meeting without knowing anything of the latter which I hold to be a dangerous statement. It fills me with distrust of the future well-being through the proposed Constituent Assembly.

I suppose the *Statesman's* leading article today represents the general British attitude in India. The article is headed "Slow Motion". "Deliberation, wariness, sobriety in an approach to great decisions are proper; but not swither and loquacity or delays due to mere tactical manoeuvring." All this is a prelude to what I consider an unwarranted attack on the Congress. If you of the Mission and the Viceroy share the view, you should really have no dealings with the Congress, however powerful or representative it may be. Naturally you should be the sole judges of what the Congress has appeared to you to be like.

¹ From the contents this letter appears to have been written after Gandhiji's interview with the addressee in the evening on June 12, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-6-1946. This is also confirmed by the reference to this letter in the letter to the addressee dated June 13, 1946; *vide* Appendix "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 13-6-1946.

² Against grouping of Assam with Bengal in Group C under the Cabinet Mission's Statement of May 16, 1946

³ Presumably the reference is to M. A. Jinnah's statement, viz., that he would use his position in the Interim Government to "water the seeds of Pakistan". Gandhiji had referred to it in his talk with the addressee, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-6-1946, also Appendix "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 13-6-1946.

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-6-1946.

For my part, as a detached observer, as I hold myself to be, I think that the Congress has not been procrastinating. It has been extraordinarily prompt in its dealings in connection with the work of the high mission which you are shouldering. But my purpose in writing this letter is to tell you that it will be wrong on my part if I advise the Congress to wait indefinitely until the Viceroy has formed the Interim Government or throws up the sponge in despair. Despair he must, if he expects to bring into being a coalition Government between two incompatibles. The safest, bravest and the straightest course is to invite that party to form a government which, in the Viceroy's estimation, inspires greater confidence. Then there is a possibility within 24 hours of forming a National Government. If, however, no party inspires confidence such a declaration should be made and the Viceroy should run the Government in the best way he knows. But the Congress Working Committee should not be delayed indefinitely. As for me, I would gladly stay behind if you want me to. But I feel that I shall be a useless adviser. I can only advise out of the fulness of trust. I become paralysed when distrust chokes me.

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I would be an unworthy friend if I disguised my feelings. You should know me as I am. Hence these tears.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 209-10

193. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

NEW DELHI,

June 12, 1946

Gandhiji began his after-prayer address by introducing Khwaja Abdul Majid to the audience as an old and dear friend of his. He recalled how during the Khilafat days he had once stayed at Khwaja Saheb's house. Swami Satyadevi was with him. He was an orthodox Hindu and would not eat or drink from a Mussalman's hands. Khwaja Saheb had employed a Brahmin to render all those services to him. It had affected Swamiji deeply. Khwaja Saheb was one of the earliest to join the nationalist

¹ Finally, however, on the advice of friends this letter was not sent; *vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 13-6-1946.

² *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

movement and take to khadi and he had stuck to it ever since. There were many such great men in the various communities. This treasure of goodness did not lessen by exercising goodness in all walks of life.

Referring to the political situation he said he was still not ready to say anything. There was, however, one thing to which he was free to draw their attention. He had called the Cabinet plan good and he still held to his opinion with the interpretation he put upon it.

The Constituent Assembly has to be formed by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. The Government of India Act of 1935 has given a number of seats in the Legislatures to the Europeans. For instance, in Bengal alone there is a solid block of 25 Europeans. In Assam there are 9. Quite a number of them are multi-millionaires or their representatives. They are foreigners, members of the ruling race. As such they can have no place in the Constituent Assembly as candidates, nor can they as voters return members. The Cabinet plan has said clearly that Indians are to form India's constitution.

Lawyer friends had told Gandhiji that if the matter were taken to a law-court the verdict would surely be against the Europeans. But from the papers he had gathered that they intended to exercise the right, which they thought they had.¹ Till now they had used their vote to uphold the British power and acted as a wedge between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He appealed to them, therefore, apart from the question of legalities, to abstain from interference. No Congressman would wish to drag them to the law-court. They should recognize the signs of the time and make a voluntary declaration that the newspaper report was wrong and that they had no wish to interfere in the affairs of Indians which ought to be settled by Indians themselves and that they would not exercise their votes for the selection of candidates for the Constituent Assembly, nor would they stand as candidates. They should no longer impose themselves upon India. Whatever they might have done in the past, they should alleviate communal bitterness, not accentuate it. They should wish India to win her freedom as early as possible. Such a statement would be graceful for the Europeans.

It was up to the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy, concluded Gandhiji, to see that this foreign element was not used to affect the elections in any way whatsoever.

The Hindustan Times, 13-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

¹ C. P. Lawson, M. L. A. (Central), President, European Association, was reported to have said : "Europeans are not intransigent . . . they would consider favourably any proposal accepted by both the major political parties to amend or alter the effect of the Cabinet Mission's plan in respect of the European voters.

194. MUCH IN LITTLE

In Mr. Mahadev Desai's book on the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation, I find your speeches made in several places in Travancore. You have spoken of the *Ishopanishad* and said that if the first verse alone survived and all the rest of the Hindu scriptures were destroyed, it would alone save religion from extinction. Perhaps you know that that verse was a turning point in the life of Devendranath Tagore, the Poet's father. Young Devendranath was in a mood of great depression when his father died leaving the family estate highly encumbered. One day while in this mood a piece of printed paper was wafted by a passing breeze to where he was sitting, he picked it up. It was in Sanskrit which he had not learnt then. He took it to the family pundit who read it out. It was the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. "Nectar poured into my soul," says the Maharshi in his autobiography.

The phrase about enjoying by renunciation puzzled me for long. One day (or night to be correct) it flashed on me that the phrase but expressed a daily experience. What greater enjoyment is there than renouncing something one values to one—person or cause—which one holds dear.

The above letter from Shri K. Natarajan was received by me about three months ago. I had hoped to deal with it in these columns much earlier but could not. Nothing, however, is lost, for the subject-matter of the letter is an evergreen. I try to the utmost of my ability to live the meaning that, in my ungrammatical way, I have ascribed to the *shloka*. Not being a reader of books, I never knew the instance that Shri Natarajan quotes from Maharshi Devendra's life. It fortifies my belief that the first *mantra* of *Ishopanishad* is all that undiluted Hinduism—in other words, for me, religion—can have to give. The recitation of the 18 chapters of the *Gita* is finished in one week at the morning prayer and so it has gone on now for some years from week to week. The *Gita* is a commentary on the first verse of the *Ishopanishad*. And I feel, not without diffidence, that the interpretation that flashed on Shri Natarajan's mind reveals but the partial truth. As I understand it, his interpretation is only the well-worn doctrine of self-sacrifice which is undoubtedly a common enough experience. Take only one instance. Many a mother sacrifices all for her children. But the *mantra* referred to here was not revealed to confirm the truth of that practice, well known even during the remote times when it is said to have been given. To live up to that verse means the new birth enunciated in the New Testament, or *Brahmasamarpana* (dedication to God) as taught in Hinduism. The verse, therefore, seems to me to mean only one thing. Recognize that everything you fancy

everything you fancy you have is God's and from God and take only what you really need for life. In other words, in the language of the *Gita* it teaches the doctrine of uttermost detachment. Then only is life worth living.

NEW DELHI, June 13, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

195. QUESTION BOX

A correspondent writes:

Supposing that in a Government or private godown foodgrains are being allowed to rot while people are starving because none are available in the market, what are workers to do? Would it be permissible to resort to something in the nature of your Dharasana salt raid in order to save the people? Otherwise, what alternative is there to either looting or dying like dumb cattle, of both of which you disapprove?

A. It should be common cause that looting in itself can never do any good. Wherever it is claimed to have done so, the good consisted only in drawing the attention of the authority to a crying want. The way of voluntary fasting that I have suggested¹ is the most efficient because it is good in itself and good also as an effective demonstration. It is good in itself because the people who voluntarily fast exhibit strength of will which saves them from the pangs of hunger and wakes up public conscience as also that of the authority, assuming that the latter can have any conscience at all.

So far as the Dharasana salt raid² is concerned, apart from the fact that there were, according to my conception of it, several mistakes made, it was a perfect thing of its kind and a heroic struggle in which the sufferings undergone were bravely borne. But the distinction between it and loot should be clearly borne in mind. The Dharasana Salt Works were conceived to be national property. The intention there was not to seize the property by force. The fight was to assert the right of the nation to the possession of all salt yielded by land or sea in India. If the raid had succeeded, that is to say, if the Government had yielded, they would have done so to the nation's sufferings which the raid and the like involved. And, as a matter of fact, the sum total of the sufferings undergone by the people on a nation-wide scale did result

¹ Vide "Question Box", 29-5-1946.

² The reference is to the Salt Satyagraha of 1930.

in what is known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact¹. Thus it will be seen that between the loot that the correspondent has in mind and the Dharasana raid there is no analogy whatsoever.

June 13, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

196. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,

June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Lord Lawrence conveyed your thanks to me last night when he invited me to see him.²

Please believe me when I say that I have never been guilty consciously of doing anything for thanks. "Duty will be merit when debt becomes donation" and why thank at all when my advice is not followed out? You are a great soldier—a daring soldier. Dare to do the right. You must make your choice of one horse or the other. So far as I can see you will never succeed in riding two at the same time. Choose the names submitted either by the Congress or the League. For God's sake do not make an incompatible mixture and in trying to do so produce a fearful explosion. Anyway, fix your time limit and tell us all to leave when that limit is over.

I hope I have made my meaning clear.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 206. Also *The Transfer of Power, 1942-47*, Vol. VII, p. 910

¹ Of 1931; *vide* "Provisional Settlement", 12-3-1931.

² *Vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946.

197. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote to you a long letter yesterday¹, partly in fulfilment of my promise to send you a copy of the Rev. Nichols-Roy's address and, if I could trace it, Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah's address. I have not been able yet to lay hands on the reference I told you I had heard read to me. But I got the Muslim League Council's resolution² which speaks volumes, at any rate, for me. Both these things, without my letter, I handed to Sudhir Ghosh to be given to you.

The letter I withheld at the instance of Agatha Harrison, Horace Alexander and Sudhir Ghosh who thought that it was likely to produce an effect contrary to what I had expected. I did not share their view because we have known each other for so many years. I lay no stress upon the fact that we have known each other for such a long time for we have had no contact for years after our meeting during the stirring days of the Suffragette Movement.³ The bond that was then created could not, I felt, be easily snapped and so I presumed to write frankly to lay bare my mind to you. That I felt was due to you if I was to be a friendly adviser to the Mission which you are leading. Nevertheless I yielded to the advice of the three friends. I have told them that they are at liberty to describe to you the whole of the conversation between them and me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 208-9

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946.

² *Vide* Appendix "Resolution of Muslim League Council", 6-6-1946.

³ Gandhiji has come to know the addressee through Lady. Pethick-Lawrence whom he had met at a Suffragette meeting during his visit to England in 1906. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence", 12-11-1945.

198. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

Sudhir told me something of the storm that is brewing within you. I met your good wife the day before.

I would ask you not to worry. You are handling the most difficult task of your life. As I see it the Mission is playing with fire. If you have courage you will do what I suggested from the very beginning. Even when the Parliamentary Delegation came¹ before you I said then, "You will not be able to have your cake and eat it. You will have to choose between the two—the Muslim League and the Congress, both your creations." Every day you pass here coquetting now with the Congress, now with the League and again with the Congress, wearing yourself away. [This] will not do. Either you swear by what is right or by what the exigencies of British policy may dictate. In either case bravery is required. Only stick to the programme. Stick to your dates even though the heavens may fall. Leave by the 16th whether you allow the Congress to form a coalition or the League. If you think that the accumulated British wisdom must know better than these two creations of yours I have nothing to add. But I have fancied that you are not cast in the mould. If so, keep to your passage for the 16th and take your poor wife with you to England and bury yourselves in private life unless the brave British announcement made is fulfilled to the Indian hope. A word to the wise.²

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 207

¹ The British Parliamentary Delegation, consisting of Prof. Richards, Lord Charley and Reginald Sorenson had arrived in India on December 5, 1945 and met Gandhiji on January 23 and 24, 1946 at Madras. *Vide* "Discussion with Members of Parliamentary Delegation", 24-1-1946.

² In reply the addressee wrote the same day : "I am afraid you, like some others of us, are feeling somewhat impatient! But I always remember you advised me to show 'infinite patience' in dealing with these difficult matters. Certainly I shall never put my desire to return home and rest before my determination to leave nothing undone which may help a solution of the difficult problems here. I can assure you neither I nor my colleagues lack courage to act but we want to temper that courage with prudence. I still have great hopes that before we leave India, we may have helped towards a settlement of the problem."

199. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
June 13, 1946

Remarking on the size of the prayer gathering on Thursday evening, which was large than usual, Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech asked whether it was due to the fact that he had spoken on a political topic on Wednesday and they had come in the expectation of satisfying their curiosity as regards the political situation. If that was so, it was wrong. The only urge which should prompt people to come to the prayer gathering was the desire to know the Maker and attune themselves with Him.

On Wednesday, Gandhiji said, he had criticized the conduct of the European Group for wanting to exercise a right which did not legitimately belong to them, but today he proposed to say something in criticism of “our own conduct and behaviour”. He had been telling his audiences what their duty was in this hour. As a firm believer in the utility of community prayer, he had been making them sing *Ramdhun* in the mass. But were they following it in their daily lives? To repeat Ramanama and to follow the way of Ravana in actual practice was worse than useless. It was sheer hypocrisy. One might deceive oneself or the world but one could not deceive the Almighty.

Today, in the West people talk of Christ, but it is really Anti Christ that rules their lives. Similarly, there are people who talk of Islam but they really follow the way of Satan. It is a deplorable state of affairs.

We are afraid of people professing religions other than our own. We think that they will crush us, forgetting that no one can crush us if we have made God our refuge. The hymn that has just been sung describes how God has redeemed sinners. How much more, then, would He do for His devotees? But they must be devotees of God in the true sense of the term.

If people followed the way of God, continued Gandhiji, there would not be the corruption and profiteering that were seen in the world today. As it was, the rich were becoming richer and the poor poorer. Hunger, nakedness and death stared one in the face. These were not the marks of the Kingdom of God but that of Satan, Ravana or Anti-Christ. They could not expect to bring the reign of God on earth by merely repeating His name with the lips. Their conduct must conform to His ways instead of Satan’s.

The Hindustan Times, 14-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

¹ *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal’s version in his “Weekly Letter” in *Harijan*.

200. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ¹

NEW DELHI,
June 14, 1946

Mahatma Gandhiji said that he still could not tell them what was taking place behind the scenes. But he wanted to say that the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy were working away at it from morning till night. They were attempting what could well be considered impossible.

I have often written that true Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be expected while the third party is there. The slaves and their master are both in an unnatural state. They cannot act and think naturally.

But suppose a mother sees that her child is dying, still she does not give up hope. She keeps on trying the prescriptions of vaidyas or hakims till the last moment.

Similarly the Mission does not wish to give up striving. They are trying to bring the Congress and the League together. They are striving with the Europeans to do the right thing. The Europeans have said they are going to exercise their right, which is not theirs at all. But if the Congress and the League appealed to them they might consider their request. There is no question of going to them with the beggar's bowl. They have no place in the Constituent Assembly according to the legal interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's paper.

To enslave another country is unnatural. Merely by making up a pious resolve they will not get off India's back. The British cannot succeed in doing so. Corresponding action is required. They are striving and there is no reason for India to doubt their *bona fides*. Their task is difficult. The Congress, the League and the British are all labouring under unnatural conditions.

The Hindustan Times, 15-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

201. HALLUCINATION ²

We are afflicted by many superstitions, obsessions and hallucinations. They are entirely the creation of the mind, but so long as they are not exorcized they continue to afflict us. We may take for

¹ *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

² The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-6-1946, under the date June 16, 1946.

a snake a piece of rope and dislocate our wrist in striking at it. Similarly, we may take a non-poisonous snake for a poisonous one and lose a friend by ignorantly destroying it. Who has not heard stores of people mistaking a respectable citizen for a thief and killing him in a paroxysm of fear? Instances of Harijans being foolishly held responsible for the outbreak of plague in villages and being lynched for it are unfortunately not uncommon. In the same way I would regard it as the height of superstitious ignorance for educated people or students to refuse admission in hostels to Harijans. In this connection I would particularly invite the attention of all students and superintendents of hostels to the leaflet issued over the signatures of Shris Parikshitlal Majmudar and Hemantkumar Nilkanth for their careful perusal, reflection and action. In that leaflet they seem to have made an exception in the case of hostels which are specially reserved for certain castes and sub-castes. In my opinion, even in these hostels Harijans ought to be freely admitted if only to prove that those castes or sub-castes have banished untouchability from their minds for good.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

202. WHAT HAS THE CONGRESS DONE?¹

A Harijan from Gujarat writes:

The elections have made it clear that only two parties count in India today, the Muslim League and the Congress. The elections have also shown that most of the Harijans are with the Congress. The Ambedkarites have won very few seats. What is the place of Congress Harijans in the Congress? Why are not Harijan candidates made to stand for election to the various committees of the Congress? When they do stand, why are caste Hindus allowed to oppose them? Is it right to keep Harijans out on the plea that the caste Hindus are more capable? The Congress has been working for the Harijans for a long time. Why has it not yet succeeded in educating them sufficiently and making them capable?

There is ignorance and sting in this letter. They are excusable. We should understand the spirit behind it. The very fact that the Congress has won so many Harijan seats shows that it must have

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 23-6-1946.

served them to win their confidence. They form an indivisible part of Hindu religion and Hindu society. If this part breaks or leaves the Hindu religion or Hindu society, the latter would perish. What the writer wants to say is that the caste Hindus have not done their duty towards the Harijans to the extent that they should have. If the caste Hindus would become Bhangis of their own free will, the distinction between Harijans and caste Hindus would automatically disappear. There are various divisions amongst the Harijans too. They should all go. All should be of one caste, that is, the Bhangi. A Bhangi is the servant of the whole of humanity, not only of the Hindus. When we become Bhangis of this description all divisions would disappear. Who can be master where all are servants?

But today it is a mere dream, it is an objective. But no Society can exist on mere dreams or objectives. It must be solid work. The Congress makes no distinction of caste and creed. It must pull up those who are down in the dumps and those who are up in the air must come down. Thus the golden mean would be found. People cannot live in the bowels of the earth or in the sky. They all must live on the fair earth. Equality of all is the Congress pledge. Congress has not fulfilled it as yet. The columns of the *Harijan* show that so long as it is not fulfilled the Harijans would have every cause to complain.

To the correspondent I would say this. To whom does he owe the ability to write this letter in a good hand? Which organization has done more for the Harijans than the Congress? It is true that the Congress has not done all it should. Much remains. Equally true is the fact that none has done as much as the Congress. Therefore, the Harijans must be patient. There is no doubt that there is a limit to one's patience. But the limit has not been reached.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

203. ANIMAL SACRIFICE ¹

A correspondent writes:²

If what the writer says is true, it is indeed, in one sense, a matter of shame for every Hindu. But no sin can be wiped out by mere condemnation by word of mouth. Nor does the guilt of the whole body absolve the individual from his duty. Therefore, in my opinion, the responsibility of working for the reform rests, in the first instance, on the correspondent, secondly on the people of the place where the animal sacrifices are held, then on the Ruler of the State and his people and after them in turn on Karnataka, Madras Presidency and the whole of India. Only if all, in their respective places, take up the work systematically—and systematic work can only succeed if run on the basis of non-violence—can the evil that has been handed down through the ages be wiped out of existence.

Therefore, it is the correspondent who must make the beginning. I have written enough previously as to how the work of reform should be undertaken.

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

204. QUESTION BOX

BHANGI STRIKES

The same writer, who has asked the question about the propriety of looting,³ asks also what the poor sweeper is to do when everything else fails. He indignantly asks:

Is the Bhangi to continue his service on starvation wages, living in dirt and squalor?

A. The question is appropriate. I claim that in such cases the proper remedy is not a strike but a notice to the public in general and the employing corporation in particular that the Bhangis must give up the sweeping service which consigns those reserved for that service to

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 23-6-1946.

² The letter, not reproduced here, informed Gandhiji about the animal sacrifices in Mysore by Harijans as well as priests who also indulged in drinking and beef-eating on such occasions.

³ *Vide* "Question Box", 13-6-1946.

a life of starvation and all it means. There is a wide distinction between a strike and an entire discontinuation (not suspension) of service. A strike is a temporary measure in expectation of relief. Discontinuance is giving up of a particular job because there is no expectation of relief. Proper discontinuance presupposes fair notice on the one hand and prospect of better wages and freedom from squalor and dirt on the other. This will wake up society from its disgraceful slumber resulting in a proper scavenging of the over-growth that has smothered public conscience. At a stroke the Bhangis will raise scavenging to a fine art and give it the status it should have had long ago.

UNLAWFUL PEEP BEYOND

Q. "Ah, Christ that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be."
What would you say?

A. The poet expresses in the above the cry of many an anguished heart. Nevertheless the truly detached mind does not care to know the beyond. In other words, it is wrong to have the desire. Therefore, the following from the well-known hymn of Cardinal Newman represents the reality:

"I do not ask to see the distant scene,
One step enough for me."

NEW DELHI, June 15, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

205. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

VALMIKI MANDIR, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

His Excellency I have no doubt has seen from the papers that the passive resistance movement on the part of the Indians there has commenced against the Anti-Asiatic Act recently passed by the South African Union Legislature. Is it too much to expect His Excellency to

support and express his approval of the movement, as did Lord Harding¹ on a similar occasion in South Africa during his Viceroyalty?²

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 95

206. LETTER TO BRIJLAL NEHRU

BHANGINIWAS, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

BHAI BRIJLAL,

I have your questions. I began to write down the answers but realized that I could answer them only light-heartedly. Writing for the sake of fun is beyond the scope of *Harijan*. Let us not therefore have the kind of fun for which neither of us cares. There can be no place for such questions in the kind of selfless work that you are doing. Anything that has intrinsic worth would not look up to the State.

You are slow in sending me what I asked from you.³ This irks me.

It would be better if you presented *Hathayoga* based on your experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ On November 24, 1913.

² The addressee's reply dated June 18, 1946, *inter alia* read : "The Government of India have already given notice of the termination of the Trade Agreement with South Africa, and have called back their High Commissioner for consultation; they have also decided to refer the dispute to U. N. O. H. E. agreed with all these decisions.

H. E. has every sympathy for the Indian case and has done all he can to support and further it, but he thinks it would be a mistake for him to make any public declaration on the subject, and that it might do more harm than good to the cause of Indians in South Africa."

³ *Vide* "Letter to Brijlal Nehru", 1-6-1946.

207. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
June 15, 1946

The Sikh Conference held at Amritsar has resolved to raise a united voice as also to support the Congress. The Sikhs have elected Niranjana Singh Gill as their leader. I learnt the lesson of unity while I was out of India and I believe that whatever religion we may profess we are all Indians. I want to repeat what I had told the Sikhs at the time of the Nankana Sahib tragedy that the greatest bravery lies in non-violent satyagraha. Experience has only confirmed this belief of mine.

The Bhangis in India are free legally to reside wherever they like. In South Africa all the Indians in the eye of the law are untouchables. Our compatriots in South Africa have begun their battle of satyagraha. What savarna Hindus are doing in India is being done through the laws in force in South Africa. That is why I say that although we have God's name on our lips in actual practice we ignore Him. This is true in the political field also. I, therefore, appeal to you to reform yourselves whatever others may do. If the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians live peacefully as brothers in the Kingdom of God I would not mind whether the Constituent Assembly come into being or not. If we can only do so the rest will follow on its own.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 16-6-1946

208. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

DELHI,
June 16, 1946

CHI. LILI,

I have your postcard of the 11th. You did well in not coming just for a couple of days.

I am glad that you have passed your examination. I have no doubt that if you work with the same confidence you will succeed

¹ A deputation of Sikhs which had come to have talks with the Congress Working Committee attended the prayer meeting in the evening. Prof. Jodha Singh sang a *bhajan* of Guru Nanak.

right through your finals. You can then serve to your heart's content.

Blessings from

BAPU

PAREL

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

209. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS¹

NEW DELHI,

June 16, 1946

Gandhiji looked cheerful and in answer to a question by a correspondent said:

Go to the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He will be able to give you news.

The Hindustan Times, 17-6-1946

210. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

June 16, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi said that in the announcement² that he had sent invitations to 14 individuals by their names to help him to form his Cabinet, His Excellency the Viceroy had stated that his attempts to bring the two major parties together having failed he had to devise some way of removing the deadlock.³ The failure was nothing to be surprised at.

What is surprising is that instead of following the democratic procedure of inviting the one or the other party to form a national government, the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission have decided to impose a government of their choice on the country. The result may well be an incompatible and explosive mixture. There are, however, two ways of looking at a picture. You can look upon it from the

¹ Gandhiji had a 30-minute interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence in the afternoon before attending the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 16-6-1946.

² For the text of the Statement, *vide* Appendix "Lord Wavell's Statement", 16-6-1946.

³ This sentence is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows is reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

bright side or you can look upon it from the dark.

Gandhiji has declared that he believes in looking at the bright side and has invited others to do likewise.

Thus regarded, what appear to be blemishes in the Viceregal statement, would be seen to be really its beauty.

It might however be, that there was no bright side. Then the Mission would stand exposed. They would lose nothing by trusting. He had suggested to the Working Committee some¹ tests by which the Statement might be tested.² He held the view firmly that fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the Congress acceptance. But he could not say whether they would be agreeable to either party. It was, therefore, very difficult to say with certainty what the Congress Working Committee would decide. One thing, however, he could say without hesitation. At no stage had the Congress showed any dilatoriness. It was a democratic organization and could not carry things by an executive fiat like the Viceroy for instance. It could proceed only by consulting and satisfying even the weakest minority whom it claimed to represent.

You should bear with the Mission too. They have inherited the traditions of Imperialism which they cannot outgrow all at once. And poor India has to suffer. We must not blame them, however, for not throwing it overboard overnight. Let us trust their *bona fides*. Let us not act upon mere suspicion. But let us all join in the prayer that God may bless all the parties with wisdom and cleanness of heart.³

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 23-6-1946

211. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL⁴

[June 17, 1946]⁵

The League being avowedly a Muslim organization could not include any non-Muslim representative in its list; (2) the Congress as a nationalist organization must have the right to include a Congress Muslim in its list; (3) the League could not have any say in the selec-

¹ *The Bombay Chronicle* here adds "internal".

² *Vide* "Note to Amrit Kaur", 17-6-1946.

³ Gandhiji then introduced Khan Abdus Samad Khan, President of the Baluchistan Anjuman-e-Watan, as also the Chief of the Namdhari Sikhs.

⁴ After reporting the prayer speech of June 16 Pyarelal introduces this as follows : "At night [Gandhiji] woke up at half past one and dictated for the Working Committee the draft of a letter to the Viceroy."

⁵ *Ibid*

tion of any names outside those belonging to its quota of five Muslims. This would mean that, in the event of a vacancy occurring among the seats allotted to the minorities, the Congress alone would have the right to select names to fill up the vacancies as it claimed to represent all sections by right of service; and (4) in action, the Interim Government should be regarded as being responsible to the elected representatives in the Assembly.¹

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 219

212. THE EUROPEAN VOTE

No less a person than the President of the European Association has exhibited the lion's paw.² That seems to be the naked truth. That the Europeans will neither vote nor offer themselves for election should be a certainty, if a Constituent Assembly worthy of the name is at all to be formed. The British power in India has four arms—the official military, the official civil, the unofficial civil and the unofficial military. So when the ruling class speaks of the unofficial European as not being under their control, it is nonsense. The official exists for the unofficial. The former would have no work if the latter did not exist. The British gunboat came in the wake of British commerce. The whole of India is an occupied country. We have to examine in this light the exploits of the European President. In the intoxication of power he does not seem to have taken the trouble to ascertain whether the State Paper has provided for the legal power for his community to vote or be voted for in the proposed Constituent Assembly. For his and his constituents' edification I have secured the opinion from the leader of the Bar in Delhi. It will be found in these columns.³

Did the President condescend to inquire of the Mission what his moral and legal position was? Or, did he hold them cheap because he represented the real Imperialism which the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy representing British Labour were struggling to discard?

¹ The Congress Working Committee, however, in its afternoon session next day put Gandhiji's draft "practically into cold storage". On June 18 a tentative decision accepting the scheme of the Interim Government was taken by the Congress Working Committee but it was not communicated to the Viceroy.

² *Vide* 2nd footnote of "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 12-6-1946.

³ Appearing under the title "Legal Opinion on the European Vote" it stated : "that paras 18 and 19 are subject to the statements as to formation of Constituent Assembly made in paras 3 and 16 which give the right of making the constitution to Indians alone and not to those who are not Indians.

It is the straw which shows the way the wind is blowing.

This unseasonable performance of the European Association is to my mind the greatest disturbing factor to shake the faith in the reality of the Mission work. Has the Mission come before its time? Will the gun-protected Europeans of India silence their guns and stake their fortunes Andrews-like, purely on the goodwill of the masses of India? Or, do they expect in their generation to continue the imposition of foreign rule on India?

How can they say they “are not intransigent”? The statement reeks of intransigence. They have a loaded communal franchise, glaringly in Bengal and Assam. What right had they to be in the Assemblies at all? What part have they played in the two Assemblies save to embarrass the people of Bengal and Assam by dividing the communities? This ‘load’ was not imposed upon them. It would have redounded to their honour if they had repudiated it. Instead, they welcomed the ‘white man’s burden’. And even now, at the hour of the dawn, they would graciously contribute to constitution-making! ! ! Not everyone who says ‘I am not intransigent’ is really so; he only is who says nothing but lets his deeds eloquently speak for themselves.

They have been made to look so foolish in their latest statement¹ as to say that they would refrain from voting for themselves but would use their vote for electing their henchmen wearing the Indian skin! They would, if they could, repeat the trick which has enabled them, a handful, to strangle the dumb millions of India. How long will this agony last! Do the Mission propose to bolster up this unholy ambition and yet expect to put to sea the frail barque of their Constituent Assembly? Indians cannot perform the obvious duty of the Mission for them.

NEW DELHI, June 17, 1946

Harijan, 23-6-1946

¹ Presumably the reference is to the statement of June 16, 1946 which *inter alia* read : “The European party in the Bengal Legislative Assembly announce today that they will not nominate for election to the Constituent Assembly and will not vote for an European to sit in the Constituent Assembly. They will agree to use their votes in accordance with any agreement reached between the two major parties.”

213. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR

DELHI,
June 17, 1946¹

You have to conceal nothing. Tell him he has surpassed himself (which I feel I did) in trusting against himself the Mission's word and looking at the bright side wherever it was not dark on the face of it. He put before the packed prayer audience the brightest side and asked them to trust till trust would be folly if not crime. And relate the three easy tests of which the first was for Badshah Khan for the moment to decide.² The two demanded immediate redress from them. They³ would not tolerate removal of a non-League Muslim and even then a man like Zakir Hussain, nor could they allow Sarat Babu's name to be removed without the Congress being satisfied of the correctness of removal.⁴ The Viceroy could not be allowed to act imperiously at the very threshold. Do this only if he opens the subject. If he talks only gossip you will talk a few minutes and come away. In no case will you talk without mastery of what you may talk. You can also say that they must hasten not slowly but quickly if they want to avoid the railway strike which evidently a truly national government can avoid if anybody at all can.

From the original: C. W. 4228. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7864

214. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING⁵

NEW DELHI,
June 17, 1946

Gandhiji regretted that he could not as yet give any definite news to the people. He could not say whether the conditions⁶, which according to him were

¹ From a note by the Addressee which read : "Delhi, 17-6-46. Before going to see Lord Pethick-Lawrence."

² Regarding the inclusion of Abdur Rab Nishtar's name in the Muslim League's list

³ Congress Working Committee

⁴ Sarat Chandra Bose's name in the list suggested by the Congress was rejected by the Viceroy on the ground that he had been in touch with the Japanese during the war, and was replaced by that of Hare Krushna Mahtab. On the insistence of the Congress, the Viceroy however agreed to accept it during an interview with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru on June 18.

⁵ It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

⁶ *Vide* the preceding item.

necessary for accepting the proposals of the Cabinet Mission, would be fulfilled or not. He was definitely of the opinion that the fulfilment of those conditions was essential for the acceptance of the proposals by the Congress. But he could not say whether the Congress would be in agreement with those conditions or not.

Whatever happens, I hope, ultimately it will be all for the good.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 18-6-1946

215. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

Congress is a national organization and it should not give up its national character. In view of that character it must have a right to put forward its claim to suggest names of six Congressmen in the list of fourteen. Amongst the Congressmen there must be one nationalist Muslim and one woman.

In my opinion no [healthy] precedent can be established so long as the communal ratio is insisted on in [forming] the Cabinet. If the Congress asks for representation for six of members it has every right to do so. Congressmen will not be joining the Cabinet in their individual capacity.

In conclusion I can only say that the Congress will lose prestige if it ceases to have a national character.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 19-6-1946

216. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 18, 1946

The expectant crowd that attended Mahatma Gandhi's evening prayer today was again sorely disappointed when he told them that he had nothing decisive to tell them as to the result of the talks Maulana Azad had with the Cabinet Mission.

A man of prayer must, however, know no disappointment because he knows that the times are in His hands who is the Arch-planner and does everything in His good time. A man of prayer,

therefore, waits in faith and patience always.

Making the theme of his after-prayer discourse the song that had been sung at the prayers, he explained how that song gave the allegorical story of the struggle between the elephant king (Gajendra) and the Graha (the alligator).

It is taken from the classical episode of “Gajendra Moksha” from the *Bhagavata*. The original is a piece of rare poetical merit, combining as it does the melodious music of verse with loftiness of the sentiment which it embodies. That is the test of all great pieces of art. I must combine beauty with use. Cattle might be satisfied with filling their bellies with fodder but man likes his food to please the eye as well as provide nourishment.

In the allegory of Gajendra and Graha the elephant king is seized unawares by the crocodile as he goes to have a drink of water in the river and is dragged down. The more he struggles the deeper he sinks. A stage is, however, reached when despairing of his physical prowess he throws himself on God’s grace entirely and invokes his aid and the Lord of Dwarka comes in the twinkling of an eye and rescues him.

The moral of the story is that God never fails His devotees in the hour of trial. The condition is that there must be a living faith and the uttermost reliance on Him. The test of faith is that having done our duty we must be prepared to welcome whatever He may send—joy as well as sorrow, good luck as well as bad luck. We will be like King Janaka who, when informed that his capital was ablaze, only remarked that it was no concern of his.¹ The secret of his resignation and equanimity was that he was ever awake, never remiss in the performance of his duty. Having done his duty, he could leave the rest to God.

And so a man of prayer will in the first place be spared mishaps by the ever merciful Providence, but if mishaps do come he will not bewail his fate nor lay the blame on God but bear it with an undisturbed peace of mind and joyous resignation to His will.

The Hindustan Times, 19-6-1946

¹ मथिलायां प्रदीप्तायां न मे दहति किञ्चन — *Mahabharata*, *Shantiparva*, Ch. 178, 2

217. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

Bapu gave a final notice to the Working Committee today that if they agreed to the non-inclusion of a nationalist Muslim and the inclusion of the name of N. P. Engineer, which the Viceroy had foisted upon them, he would have nothing to do with the whole business and leave Delhi.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

218. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

If I were appointed dictator for a day in the place of the Viceroy, I would stop all newspapers.

He added with a smile and a wink:

With the exception of *Harijan* of course.

Incidentally he remarked that if he had to rename his weekly he would call it not *Harijan* but “Bhangi” i. e., sweeper, that being more in tune with his present temper and the need of the hour as he understood it.

Deprecating these reports² as irresponsible and mischievous, he reminded the fraternity of the Press of Cardinal Newman’s hymn: “Lead Kindly Light”, the Gujarati rendering of which was sung at the prayers. Contrary to the teaching of that hymn they always hankered after the “distant scene”, letting their fertile imagination supply what was beyond their ken of knowledge. As an illustration of the infinite harm that might result from such irresponsible journalism, he remarked that, if the people were to believe what had been appearing in the Press about his part in the deliberations of the Working Committee, Hindus would be right to execrate him as the enemy of their interests. It was further being made to appear, he observed, that his was the only intransigent voice in the Working Committee. He wanted them to dismiss all that as pure imagination. He appealed to newspapermen to put a curb on their pen. Failing that it was up to the public to shed their craving for ‘potted’ news and to cease to patronize papers that purveyed it or at least cease to be misled by what might appear in them.

¹ *The Hindustan Times* report has been collated with Pyarelal’s version in his “Weekly Letter” in *Harijan*.

² In the Press about what was supposed to be taking place in the Congress Working Committee

Gandhiji remarked that it was wholly untrue that the delay in arriving at a final decision was due to divisions in the Working Committee. Differences of opinion were inevitable in a living organization. He himself did not know what the final decision of the Working Committee was going to be. It was but natural that there should be more Hindus on the Congress register than Muslims, as the Hindu population preponderated in India. But the Congress could not by any stretch of imagination be called a Hindu organization. Its President Maulana Azad had occupied the Presidential chair for a longer period than any other in the Congress history. He was held in equal respect by all those who claim to be of the Congress. The Congress had constituted itself into a trustee, not of any particular community, but of India as a whole. In an organization like that it always became the duty of the majority to make sacrifices for the minorities and backward sections, not in a spirit of patronizing favour, but in a dignified manner and as a duty.

In the eyes of the Congress, Hindus and Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians and Sikhs are all Indians and therefore equally entitled to its care. The Congress has no sanction except that of non-violence. Unlike the Viceroy, who has the entire armed force of the British Empire at his back, the Congress President can rely only on the united and whole-hearted co-operation of all the communities and classes to give effect to India's will to independence. The Working Committee is, therefore, anxious that we should accept responsibility at the Centre only with the unanimous goodwill of all the communities. That is why they were giving such anxious thought to all the various interests which they claim to represent. They have to adjust conflicting claims and interests and that is a ticklish job. They do not want to make the Interim Government an arena of unseemly quarrels among themselves or with members of the Muslim League.

The Hindustan Times, 20-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 30-6-1946

219. MESSAGE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE¹

NEW DELHI,
June 19, 1946

I have never been to America but give my love to the American people.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-6-1946

¹ Dr. E. Stanley Jones and Dr. R. D. Bisbey, American Missionaries, called on Gandhiji after the evening prayer. Dr. E. Stanley Jones, who was leaving for America the next day, asked for a message for the American people.

220. INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS¹

NEW DELHI,
June 20, 1946

Bapu again urged upon him that the Cabinet Mission must choose between the one or the other party, not attempt an amalgam; the Cabinet Mission were pursuing a wrong course. Cripps was apologetic. It would be difficult to begin anew after having come so far; Jinnah would not listen, and so on. In the end Bapu told him that in that case the Cabinet Mission could go the way they liked; he would have nothing to do with it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

221. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
[*June 20, 1946*]²

Much as he would have liked to share with them all that was taking place in the Working Committee and in the course of his talks with the Cabinet Mission, he was not free to do so, said Gandhiji. When there was anything worth knowing he would tell them. They should not run after ‘potted’ news served by the commercialized daily Press. There were two kinds of curiosity, he remarked—healthy and unhealthy. One should always be curious to know one’s duty at every step. But the itch for news was a kind of mental dissipation debilitating to the mind and spirit, unless it was properly curbed.

Commenting upon Mira’s song which was sung at the prayer he said that in that song the devotee asks the should to drink deep of the nectar of God’s name. Physical food and drink result in satiety and if over-indulged in illness. But the ambrosia of God’s name knows no such limit. The deeper one drinks of it the more the thirst for it grows.

But it must sink deep into the heart. When that happens all delusion and attachment, lust and envy, fall off from us. Only one must persevere and have patience. Success is the inevitable result of such effort.

The Hindustan Times, 21-6-1946

¹ For a note by Sir Stafford Cripps on this interview, *vide* Appendix “Interview with Sir Stafford Cripps”, 20-6-1946.

² The source reports this under “Tuesday”, i. e., June 18. Exhaustive reports of the speech of June 18, which appeared in the papers the next day, have the *bhajan* with Gajendra and Graha as its theme. The *bhajan* referred to in this speech is different and since there are no other reports of the discourse given on this date, it is likely this was delivered on June 20.

222. NOTES'

IMITATION

Q. You have averred that a person who gives up eating meat in mere imitation of you cannot be said to be doing the right thing. Are you not wrong in holding this view?

A. I see nothing wrong in what I said.² If a person may change his practice in imitation, it is equally possible for him to revert to the original practice in imitation.³ The gist of what I said was that nothing should be done without being well weighed and thought out and without deep conviction. Thoughtless imitation is the sport of little minds and may lead a man into a ditch with disastrous results.

HARIJAN COLLECTIONS

Q. You collect funds for Harijans wherever you go. According to Press reports, you sometimes receive large sums for that purpose. What is the total amount that you have collected? How is it spent? Are the accounts inspected or audited by anyone? I do not mean to suggest that the funds are being misused, but it ill becomes you to keep the people in the dark about these things.

A. The question hardly calls for a reply. But there must be many uninformed people like the correspondent. By itself the question is legitimate. The answer is simple. All Harijan collections made by me are handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Shri Thakkar Bapa is the guardian of the fund. It is spent according to the direction and with the sanction of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Some of it is spent according to my instructions, but it has to be for the service of the Harijans only. Similarly for other funds, donations are sent to be spent at my discretion. Strict account is kept of every pie and the income and expenditure accounts are duly audited and certified from time to time.⁴

WHY THIS ANTIPATHY?

Q. Simple-minded Jains take you for a Jain, and you are not ashamed to be regarded as such. And yet, you seem studiously to shun the very mention of Mahavira in the columns of

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.

² *Vide* "Religion v. No Religion", 29-5-1946.

³ The Gujarati here adds : "Such a person can be said to belong neither here nor there."

⁴ The Gujarati here adds : "All this is published from time to time. I think no further clarification is possible."

Harijan. Is this becoming for a Mahatma like you?

A. The above is the gist, in my own words, of a correspondent's question. The reader can infer from it what the original must be like. I plead guilty to the charge of not being a Jain. But possibly I am a better informed devotee of Mahavira than many who claim to be Jains.¹ If, however, I am not a devotee of Mahavira Swami, he or his devotees stand to lose nothing thereby. I alone will be the loser.² I suggest that we merely betray our weakness when we resent the indifference of our neighbours about those whom we revere and idolize.

NEW DELHI, June 21³1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

223. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,

June 21, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

You will remember the case of Shri Haridas Mitra of Calcutta.⁴ His death sentence was commuted by H. E. and notified to me in Sir Jenkins' letter of 1st November, 1945.

Many things have happened since. As would appear from Mr. Carden Noad's petition dated 4th June, 1946, his incarceration has now become an anachronism.⁵

Shri H. Mitra's wife, a niece of the late Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, writes to me about his incarceration. I wonder if his continued imprisonment can be justified when other similar imprisonments have been cancelled.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 52-3

¹ The Gujarati here adds, "and daily visit their places of worship".

² The Gujarati here adds : "Nothing more need be said in answer. In fact what I have said above is also only to open the eyes of the blind followers."

³ From *Harijanbhadu*; *Harijan* however has "25".

⁴ *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 17-4-1946.

⁵ *Vide* "Letter to C. W. B. Rankin", 26-6-1946.

224. LETTER TO R. N. BANERJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

DEAR SHRI BANERJEE,

Thank you for your D.O. No. 459-46/PA.¹ of the 18th June which I read out to Gandhiji. I shall be grateful if you will be kind enough to let me know what the monthly quota of hessian and gunny bags exported to South Africa is and when it is to be stopped. In spite of the economic sanctions adopted by the Indian Government do arrears have to be made good?

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 91

225. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

N. D.,
June 21, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. Brajkrishna spoke to me about the girl. I said that he should have direct dealings and not involve me in the matter. Then I forgot it altogether. Do not drag me into it. Dilip must make the choice, certainly not I.

I am interested in your recovery. I would rather consider how best you can recover fully. That is something on which my mind can work, not on matters like betrothal, etc.

Things here are becoming complicated.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

¹ Which *inter alia* stated : "The stocks of hessian and gunny bags, referred to in the telegram, are not in excess of the quota which can be exported to South Africa up to date. The stocks may contain some arrears of previous quotas, but do not contain any quantity in excess of such quotas."

226. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu's draft¹ was again discussed in the Working Committee. Bapu warned the members that they would not gain anything by entering on their new venture on bended knees. He reiterated his opinion that if the Cabinet Mission did not accept their conditions, it would be better to let the Muslim League form a nationalist Government at the Centre during the interim period.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 222

227. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
June 21, 1946

Bapu told the Sardar that negotiations for the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Cabinet should be conducted not by the Maulana Saheb but someone else as the Maulana Saheb being himself a nationalist Muslim might feel it embarrassing to carry the insistence to its logical end.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 223

228. DRAFT REPLY TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU²

[June 21, 1946]³

I and all are of opinion that your presence here is essential above everything else. Remember that you are under an organization

¹ *Vide* "Draft Letter to Lord Wavell", 17-6-1946.

² Jawaharlal Nehru along with Asaf Ali had proceeded to Kashmir to arrange for the defence of Sheikh Abdullah, President, Kashmir National Conference and his colleagues, who had been arrested by the State Government for demanding a democratic set-up. At Kohala, on the border of Kashmir State, an order was served on Jawaharlal Nehru prohibiting his entry into the State. On his refusal to obey the order he was arrested and detained in a dak-bungalow.

In response to Abul Kalam Azad's urgent summons to return to Delhi the addressee on June 21 replied : "In view of the grave discourtesy offered to me . . . I am . . . unable to return untill full liberty of movement . . . is accorded to me. I request the Working Committee to proceed without me."

In reply to it Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of Abul Kalam Azad.

Presumably this was the reply referred to by Gandhiji in his speech at the prayer meeting as having been sent telegraphically; *vide* the following item.

³ *Ibid*

which you have adorned so long. Its needs must be paramount for you and me. Remember also that your honour is ours and your obedience to the Congress call automatically transfers to it the duty of guarding your honour. The Committee is also solicitous equally with you about Sheikh Abdullah's case and the welfare of the Kashmir people. Therefore I expect you to return in answer to this. You will tell Maharaja Saheb that as soon as you are freed by the Congress you will return to Kashmir to retrieve your honour and fulfil your mission.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. II, p. 346

229. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

Friday, June 21, 1946

The rule should be that during the prayers everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. There should be an atmosphere of solemnity during the prayer time, but no moroseness or gloom. Prayer should make them forget their troubles and they should all feel cheerful.

I cannot tell you about the Working Committee's deliberations even today. You should forget about it. The only curiosity worth having is to know God and have real knowledge.

You must be all anxious to have news of India's Jawahar (jewel) and of the treatment meted out to him in Kashmir. Some say he has been injured, some say he has been insulted and so on. You should believe none of these reports. A telegram has been received during the session of the Working Committee today saying that he is well and cheerful. I am not yet in a position to give my estimate of the situation arising out of the action taken by Pt. Jawaharlal or the Kashmir Government. For that I must meet and hear Pt. Jawaharlal first and know the story of the Kashmir Government's doings.

Though now a prisoner of the Kashmir Government Panditji is certainly under the Congress discipline. He is a member of the Congress Working Committee and the President-elect of the Congress. His name is on the list of the proposed cabinet to be formed by the Viceroy for the interim period. Therefore, his presence in Delhi is

¹ The Hindi report in *Hindustan* has been collated with *The Hindustan Times* report.

most essential at the present juncture. The Working Committee cannot take the momentous decisions on the problems with which it is faced in his absence, if his presence could be secured. The pillar of the Congress is held up in Kashmir. What can Maulana Azad do? He does not control the army or the reins of the government. He has no authority except being a prime servant of the Congress. The Congress President has, therefore, sent Pandit Nehru a wire through the Kashmir Government to return to Delhi. The Maulana Saheb has also sent a message to the Viceroy to put him in telephonic communication with Panditji and, if permitted by the Kashmir Government, also to make arrangements for his quickest return to Delhi. The Viceroy has already contacted the Resident in Kashmir with instructions to send Panditji to Delhi. His arrival is awaited for taking decisions of far reaching consequences.

The Working Committee is anxious to come to a decision on the formation of the Interim Cabinet as soon as possible after thoroughly considering all the pros and cons. If the Congress were to help the Viceroy form the proposed Government which is suicidal to its interests what would be the worth of its 60 years' standing? Short of committing suicide the Congress is offering every possible co-operation in the formation of the Interim Government.

News has come that the railway strike has been put off for the time being. It is wrong if the railwaymen think that the Congress has stood idly by during the crisis. The Congress has been active behind the scene.

Referring to the start of the passive resistance struggle of the Indian community in South Africa, Gandhiji described how some white people there had taken the law into their own hands and were harassing the passive resisters who were fighting for their self respect and the honour of India.

The Union Government seems to be just watching while the whites commit mischief. It is wrong. It is bad enough to pass an unjust law, but it is worse to let white people take the law into their own hands. They ought to realize that Indians are in no way inferior to them. The latter cannot submit to segregation. The only way open to them to obtain redress is through satyagraha. They are offering it against the offending law by setting up tents in the prohibited areas. Some white men have vowed vengeance against them. They have been daily raiding their tents, and terrorising them. Some women are also among the resisters. But they have bravely told the men that they will

stand by them and share their vicissitudes. It is no small thing in South Africa. The movement is being led, according to the papers, by Dr. Dadoo and Dr. Naicker. It was the duty of the Government to stop this hooliganism of the whites. They can take action against the passive resisters according to law. What is taking place there today is worse than martial law.

I do not say these things to incite you to anger against the whites of South Africa. If you do that you will be unworthy to take part in the prayers. I want you to go home and pray that God may give strength to our brethren and sisters in South Africa, who are fighting for the honour of India, to face all hardships bravely, secondly that He may show light to the whites so that they may cease to inflict inhuman atrocities and the eyes of the Government there may be opened so that they may treat Indians as fellow human beings. The whites of South Africa too are our brethren, being children of the same God.

When we have the control of India's affairs in our own hands such things will become impossible. A free India wedded to truth and non-violence will teach the lesson of peace to the inhabitants of South Africa. But it is for you and the Congress to decide whether a free India will follow the path of peace or the sword. It is bad enough that the small nations of the earth should denude humanity of its precious heritage. It would be awful if a subcontinent of some four hundred millions were to take to gunpower and live dangerously.

The Hindustan Times, 22-6-1946, and Hindustan, 22-6-1946

230. LETTER TO LAKSHMI M. SHRAMA

DELHI,

June 22, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have your letter of the 17th. Your dharma has now become clear. What is destined cannot be averted. It remains for us to think what we must do now. I cannot see very clearly what it should be. And in any case for that I should have you with me, which at the moment I am not in a position to arrange. Lakshmidasdada is already there. The Sardar is also sure to go there. I should like you to place yourself in Lakshmidasdada's care. In my view you should now have no need for land. You should regard the Ashram as your place, your home. The responsibility for maintaining you and bringing up your children and

educating them should rest with the Ashram. You should serve by engaging yourself in the Ashram activities as much as you can. Then it will not be for you to bother about the expenses and other things. But for this to happen you ought to observe the Ashram rules. You should merge yourself in the Ashram as sugar dissolves in milk, you act according to Lakshmidasdada's advice.

Show this letter to Lakshmidasdada so that he can guide me.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMI MARUTI

SABARAMATI ASHRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,

June 23, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi announced to the gathering that as a disciplined soldier of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal had decided to return from Kashmir immediately in obedience to the Congress President's instructions, reserving to himself the freedom to go back to Kashmir later.¹ His honour, said Mahatmaji was the honour of the Congress.

He was glad to tell them, Mahatmaji continued, that according to the latest reports received from South Africa, the police there had surrounded the camping ground of the satyagrahis, and had given notice to the white population that baiting of the passive resisters² would not be allowed. The passive resisters were not criminals but respectable citizens. They were fighting for the vindication of their rights. As self-respecting people they preferred imprisonment to segregation in ghettos. They would resist injustice and oppression with their last breath.

It was open to the South African Government to visit them with the penalty of law or to abrogate the Segregation Act that was contrary to the dictates of humanity. But it would be a dark blot on the history of the white civilization if lynch law was allowed to have its course in South Africa. He hoped that the South African Government and the civilized conscience of mankind would not allow that. The whites outside South Africa should not allow themselves to be carried away by any misleading propaganda, but should exercise a restraining influence on the South African whites.

¹ *Vide* "Draft Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 21-6-1946.

² *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-6-1946.

Repeating the advice he had given yesterday about keeping the eyes closed during the prayers, Gandhiji recommended the practice of giving rest to the eyes by keeping shut at times. It would invigorate the eyesight and help them too to turn the gaze inward. He deprecated the craze for the outward scene which had made the modern man convert night into day.¹

The Bombay Chronicle Weekly, 23-6-1946

232. YARN EXCHANGE ²

Shrimati Annapurna Devi³ sends me the following account⁴ of work carried on by her in Madhi, near Bardoli:

I should like to tell you about the hank shop which we started over a year ago with a view to popularizing the idea of yarn currency. . . . We have been selling articles of daily use such as soap, oil, salt, *gur*, chillies, ground-nut, etc., in exchange for yarn. The stock of hanks increased from 43 in May to 233 in September

Children of 10 years of age who attend my school run this shop. . . .

NEW DELHI, June 23, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

233. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

[June 23, 1946]⁵

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

Chi. Chimanlal writes and tells me that you are having prolonged fever. If so, you should rest and go for a change of air. Sevagram may perhaps suit you. I hope to reach there on or before the 7th [August]⁶. I will go to Poona on the 28th.

I hope Sharda and Anand are fine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 10085. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

¹ Gandhiji kept his eyes closed during the 15 minutes he spoke.

² This appeared under "Notes". The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 30-6-1946.

³ Annapurnadevi Mehta

⁴ From which only extracts are reproduced here

⁵ From the postal cancellation mark

⁶ Vide "Letter to Manibhai Desai", 2-6-1946.

234. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In the Working Committee meeting in the afternoon Bapu put forth his emphatic view that the Congress should keep out of the Interim Government but go into the Constituent Assembly as it was purely an elective body whose representative character was admitted even by the British Government. The Viceroy could not interfere with its working—he could not even sit in it as a matter of right. If the worst came to the worst, it could be turned into a rebel body. . . . In the alternative, he saw no possibility of giving a fight, as the requisite atmosphere of non-violence was not forth-coming. Personally, he could not even think of launching civil disobedience, etc.

While he was proceeding in this strain, Rajendra Babu read out a telegram which he had received from Assam¹.

. . . On reading the text Bapu exclaimed:

Even the Constituent Assembly plan now stinks. I am afraid we cannot touch it.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 223-4

235. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ²

NEW DELHI,
June 23, 1946

In his remarks after the prayers, Gandhiji told the gathering that they would all be happy to learn that Pandit Jawaharlal—thanks to the assistance of the Government—had returned from Kashmir last night and that the reports about his having received bayonet wounds and so on were unfounded.

He was also happy to inform them that 16 passive resisters in South Africa had been arrested by the South African Government. A satyagrahi breaks laws repugnant to his self-respect and invites the penalty, which he faces cheerfully. Prison-going is not a matter of sorrow to him but of joy. A satyagrahi does not expect preferential

¹ Drawing attention to the form which the Viceroy's Reform Office had issued to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly. Among other things it required the candidates to declare that they would be "willing to serve as representatives of the Provinces for purposes of paragraph 19 of the statement" of 16th May of the Cabinet Mission. A similar message was received from Bombay. *Vide* also the following item.

² It being a Sunday a big crowd attended the evening prayers.

treatment in prison, but he does expect humane treatment. At the same time he must be prepared to face the worst. He hoped that the passive resisters in South Africa would prove themselves to be ideal satyagrahis in every respect.

Referring to his previous statements about the State Paper of May 16, that it was the best document that the Cabinet Mission could produce under the circumstances, if it bore the interpretation he gave it, he said that he adhered to that view so far as that Paper was concerned.

But as an old maxim says, the corruption of the best is the worst. A single drop of poison can convert a pot of nectar into a fatal draught.

He had commended the State document because of its voluntary character. But he had only an hour ago made a discovery which had come to him and the members of the Working Committee as a rude shock. A telegram from Assam had drawn attention to the fact that under Rules of Procedure for the election of members to the Constituent Assembly that had been issued from the Viceroy's office to the Speakers of the various Provincial Assemblies, no one could stand as a candidate unless he signed a declaration that he would abide by clause 19 of the State Paper of May 16. As they all knew, clause 19 referred, among other things, to grouping.

It was true that there was no legal sanction behind the document and therefore if anyone signed that declaration and afterwards did not abide by it he did not incur the penalty of law. Nevertheless, the undertaking would be morally binding and its breach would amount to bad faith, and those who were prepared to sacrifice honesty would make sorry architects of India's future.

It grieved him to see that the Constituent Assembly was being killed by the underlings of the very people who had given it birth. He exculpated the authors of the State Paper unless he found that they had known that such instructions were issued.

No one, not even the framers, had any right to interpret the State Paper in their own way, said Gandhiji. It could only be interpreted by a properly constituted court of law. The document had to be interpreted and applied as a whole. He still clung to the hope that it was only an error, and would soon be rectified. Then and then alone would it be possible to decide whether the Constituent Assembly was worthy of the name. If they participated in it, it would be for the sake of gaining India's independence. If they decided against it, it would still be in the same cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-6-1946

236. NOTE TO SUDHIR GHOSH ¹

June 24, 1946

As you have been go-between I suggest that you too should be present if they don't mind. Ascertain from them.

From a facsimile: *Gandhi's Emissary*, between pp. 212 and 213

237. INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION²

June 24, 1946

. . . Gandhiji was observing his silence. . . I read out what he wrote. . . Cripps explained briefly what he had told me the previous day; on the first piece of paper Gandhiji said:

I understood from Sudhir something quite *different*. I understood that you proposed to scrap the whole plan of Interim Government as it has gone on up to now and consider the situation *de novo*.

. . . I had to intervene to explain that Sir Stafford was not really saying anything different. Sir Stafford himself explained at some length that what they meant was that if the Congress accepted the long-term plan of Constitution-making, even if it was unable to accept the short-term plan of an interim coalition Government, then what would remain was the acceptance by both the Congress and the Muslim League, of the Constitution-making plan and, in terms of the commitment made by them, a Government representative of both would be got together—at a suitable date; if the Congress rejected both then Mr. Jinnah could ask them to go ahead with a Government representing those who had accepted the 16th May (Constitution-making) proposal, i. e., only the Muslim League.

. . . Gandhiji wrote down. . .

Then if you say that you will form a Government out of the acceptances it won't work, as far as I can see. If you are not in a desperate hurry and if you would discuss the thing with me, I would gladly do so after I have opened my lips, i. e., after 8 p. m.³ Meanwhile you should have, if you do not mind, the (Congress) Working Committee[']s letter of rejection of the proposal contained in the

¹ This was written before Gandhiji went to see the members of the Cabinet Delegation along with Vallabhbhai Patel at 7 a. m.

² As recorded by Sudhir Ghosh, who accompanied Gandhiji.

³ Gandhiji met the members of the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy again at 8 p. m. For an official report of the interview, *vide* Appendix "Interview with Cabinet Delegation", 24-6-1946.

Viceroy's letter¹ of 22nd instant. In my opinion that letter puts a new appearance on the Interim Government. The object of the Working Committee so far as I know is to help the Mission, not to hinder it except when its project results in the Working Committee committing suicide. Sudhir's talk led me to see light through the prevailing darkness. But is there really light?

As to the Constituent Assembly, I was quite clear up to yesterday afternoon that the Congress should work the Constituent Assembly to the best of its ability. But the rules I read yesterday have revolutionized my mentality.² There is a serious flaw. I accuse nobody. But a flaw is a flaw. The three parties must not work with three minds and hope for success.

Sir Stafford Cripps explained that it was the Mission's intention to rectify the "flaw" as Gandhiji called it. Thereafter Gandhiji wrote:

Then you should not isolate a particular section from the whole. Why not say 'under the State Paper as a whole'?

Sir Stafford Cripps said that clarification could certainly be made.³ Gandhiji scribbled his last remark:

However, I would gladly discuss this question also with you in the evening. I am sorry to cause you all this trouble. I only hope that you perceive my object in all this effort.

Gandhi's Emissary, pp. 171-3, and from facsimiles, between pp. 212 and 213

238. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL—I

June 24, 1946

After the meeting⁴, . . . on the way the Sardar asked Bapu: "There is a meeting of the Working Committee; what am I to tell them?" Bapu answered that he was not satisfied with the talk with the Cabinet Mission. The Sardar was irritated. "You raised doubts as regards para 19. They have given a clear assurance on that. What more do you want?" Bapu scribbled in reply:

During our meeting when Cripps said to me that if we were apprehensive about the wording of the instructions issued by the Reforms Office they could delete the reference to para 19 and

¹ *Vide* Appendix "Letter from Lord Wavell to Abul Kalam Azad", 22-6-1946.

² *Vide* 1st footnote of "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 23-6-1946.

³ For the demi-official statement regarding this, *vide* Appendix "Grouping Clause Controversy", 25-6-1946.

⁴ With the Cabinet Delegation; *vide* the preceding item.

substitute in its place the words “for the purpose of the declaration of the 16th May”, Lord Pethick-Lawrence immediately intervened and said: “No, that presents difficulty.”

The Sardar dissented. Bapu asked Sudhir. Sudhir confirmed Bapu’s version but added that his own impression was that they were prepared to concede what Bapu had asked for.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 225-6

239. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING—I

June 24, 1946

The Sardar said that they were under a promise to give their decision to the Cabinet Mission that afternoon. Bapu dissented. In a series of scribbled slips he suggested that they should postpone their decision till he met the Cabinet Delegation in the evening and obtained further clarification from them. Finally he scribbled:

There is no question of my feelings being hurt. I am against deciding this issue today but you are free to decide as you like.¹

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, p. 226

240. DRAFT LETTER TO LORD WAVELL ²

June 24, 1946

I have just received the telephone message sent on your behalf asking me to communicate immediately the decision of the Congress Working Committee in regard to the proposals for the Provisional Government.³ The decision was in fact taken yesterday but we felt that it would be better if we wrote to you fully on all aspects of the proposals made by you and the Cabinet Delegation. The Working Committee have been sitting almost continuously and will be meeting at 2 p. m. again today. After full consideration and deliberation they have been reluctantly obliged to decide against the acceptance of the

¹ At noon someone from the Viceroy’s House rang up . . . to say that the Working Committee’s reply should be sent at once. . . . Bapu on being informed of it drafted a short interim reply to be sent straight away and suggested that the Cabinet Delegation should be informed that a detailed letter would follow. For Gandhiji’s draft, *vide* the following item.

² Gandhiji drafted this on behalf of the Congress President.

³ Afterwards it was learnt that the overzealous official who had sent the telephone message, had acted without authority.

Interim Government proposals as framed by you. A detailed and reasoned reply will follow later.

The Indian Annual Register, 1946, Vol. I, p. 173

241. DISCUSSION AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING—II ¹

June 24, 1946

Their recommendation will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. We shall have no authority even to order a constable if there is a row in the Constituent Assembly. This is a dangerous situation. There must be the imprimatur of the Parliament and real power in the Central Government before we can make anything of the Constituent Assembly. The imprimatur of the Parliament would clear the way for the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly (by making the issue adjudicable) in case he wants to refer a point of major importance to the Federal Court for decision.

In the course of the discussion that followed, the Sardar pressed with great vigour his view that the explanation given by the Cabinet Mission in regard to the form issued by the Reforms Office was quite adequate and the Congress could not postpone giving its decision forthwith without damaging its prestige. Bapu scribbled.

My mind is in a fog. . . . It centres round the insertion of reference to para 19 . . . and the meaning of “scrapping the whole plan” (of the Interim Government).²

I have asked Rajen Babu and Sarat Babu as lawyers whether the candidates, after acting according to the instructions given to Governors, can afterwards disregard them.³

If the answer is yes then my mouth will be shut although I find a

¹ The meeting of the Working Committee was held in the afternoon. Gandhiji asked Pyarelal to read out the note he had written for the Congress Working Committee.

² The following four paragraphs are from a facsimile of the Hindi which, it would appear, were scribbled by Gandhiji in the course of the discussion that followed.

³ According to the source “the opinion of Sarat Bose was that reference to para 19 in the instructions did not take away from the members liberty of action since their acceptance of the State Paper was subject to the legal interpretation of the clauses in dispute. Rajendra Babu’s opinion was that para 19 did not make grouping compulsory. It only gave Provinces freedom to form groups as was clear from the language of the document itself.”

great danger in joining [the Constituent Assembly].

You examine all the instructions. There are other things in it which irk me. Now I think the point will also be raised that the State Paper should bear the imprimatur of the Parliament.¹

Whatever the Cabinet Mission may say or write it will remain in their mouths or on the printed paper. They have opened here a Reform Office. Whatever they do and the interpretation they put will be final. The Government office not being in your hands you cannot have control over it. You should consider all this. You should do nothing in haste. I shall be meeting them today or tomorrow after which I shall be able to enlighten you as I shall be better informed. Today's interview has not produced a good impression on my mind. Because of my silence I could not myself ask questions. So I do not blame these people. I am in a very delicate position. I see darkness where four days ago I saw light.

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 226-7, and from a fascimile of the Hindi, between pp. 288 and 289

242. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ²

NEW DELHI,

June 24, 1946

News has been received from South Africa that hooligans have attacked the satyagrahis again. A reverend English clergyman tried to dissuade them but without success. No satyagrahi was seriously hurt. The police, according to *Reuter*, have not arrested any of the hooligans. Let us put up with these things patiently. It is also reported that the satyagrahis have not retaliated. This is pure satyagraha. If the satyagrahis remain firm till the end they are sure to come out victorious.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-6-1946

¹ Regarding this Jawaharlal Nehru "felt that it would be a 'limiting process' and restrict the scope of interpretation".

² It being Gandhiji's silence day his written message was read out after the prayers.

243. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL—II ¹

June 24, 1946

On returning from there the Sardar again asked Bapu: “Were you satisfied?” Bapu replied:

On the contrary my suspicion has deepened. I suggest that hereafter you should guide the Working Committee.

The Sardar replied: “Nothing of the sort. I am not going to say a word. You yourself tell them whatever you want.”

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I. Book I, p. 227

244. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS ²

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

June 24, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

My whole heart goes out to you Lady Cripps. I would far rather not write this note. But I must. In spite of the readiness, as it seems to me, of the Working Committee to go in for the Constituent Assembly I would not be able to advise the leap in the dark. The light that Sudhir enabled me to see through the prevailing darkness seems to have vanished. There is nothing but a vacuum after you throw all the commitments on the scrap heap, if you really do intend to do so. I could not very well press for fuller information at our talk.³ The instructions to the Governors, innocuous as they have proved to be, have opened up a dreadful vista. I, therefore, propose to advise the Working Committee not to accept the long-term proposition without its being connected with the Interim Government. I must not act against my instinct and shall advise them to be guided solely by their own judgment. I shall simply say that [the] conversation gave me no light to dispel the darkness surrounding me. I shall say I had nothing tangible to prove that there were danger signals.

¹ Introducing this the source says : “At 8 p. m. when Bapu’s silence ended, he and the Sardar met the Viceroy and the members of the Cabinet Delegation.” For an official report of the meeting, *vide* Appendix “Letter from Lord Wavell to Abul Kalam Azad”, 22-6-1946.

² According to *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, Book I Gandhiji wrote this at 10 p. m.

³ Earlier in the evening

I am sorry to send you this letter. But I just thought it was my duty to put before you my feeling before sharing it with the Working Committee which meets at Maulana Saheb's house tomorrow at 6.30 a. m.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 212

245. TRIBUTE TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN ²

[Before June 25, 1946]

Jayaprakash is an outstanding general in India's fight for freedom. Any country will be proud of such jewels among men. Like Jawahar and Subhas, he too is impatient to a degree, but this is a virtue considering the prevailing circumstances. I adore Jayaprakash.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-6-1946

246. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

I admit defeat.³ You are not bound to act upon my unsupported suspicion. You should follow my intuition only if it appeals to your reason. Otherwise you should take an independent course. I shall now leave with your permission. You should follow the dictates of your reason.⁴

Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 227-8

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Working Committee Meeting", 25-6-1946.

² This was sent to Rashtriya Vidyalaya, Panchmarhi, which was bringing out a Jayaprakash number of its handwritten journal.

³ Earlier Gandhiji had asked Pyarelal to read out the note which he had written to Sir Stafford Cripps last night. *Vide* "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 24-6-1946.

⁴ According to the source a hush fell over the gathering. Nobody spoke for some time. Abul Kalam Azad then asked, "What do you desire? Is there any need to detain Bapu and further?" Gandhiji returned to his residence.

The Working Committee met again at noon and addressed a letter to the Cabinet Mission, rejecting the proposal for the formation of the Interim Government at the Centre and accepting the long-term plan with its own interpretation of the disputed clauses. On request from its members Gandhiji attended the afternoon session of the Working Committee. At noon the Cabinet Delegation invited the members of the Working Committee to meet them.

247. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

You could not come. Even if you had managed to come, you could only have had a glimpse of me from a distance. What would have been the virtue in that? I approve of your returning soon¹. What seems to be happening is excellent. You should participate in it wholeheartedly. Do not worry about the children. I understand that Sushila is staying back for the present. You should plunge [in the struggle] with the faith that God is her real guardian.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANILAL GANDHI
C/O BACHHRAJ & CO.
MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD
BOMBAY (FORT)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4983

248. LETTER TO DINANATH

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946

BHAI DINANATH,

I shall never forget the services you all rendered me and my companions with such single-minded devotion regardless of whether it was day or night. God will reward you all for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ To South Africa

249. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ¹

NEW DELHI,
June 25, 1946²

Gandhiji drew attention to the demi-official statement³ that had appeared in the Press that the instructions issued for the election of candidates for the Constituent Assembly did not bind them to anything in clause 19 of the Statement. This was clear in the declaration quoted in the papers. He was sorry, said Gandhiji, that he had not seen it before he made his Sunday's speech.⁴ He was glad to say that his fears on that score had proved groundless. He felt he owed it to the Delegation to own his mistake, however *bona fide* it was.

He referred to the report of the deliberations of the Working Committee that had appeared in the newspapers. It was true that the Working Committee had decided to reject the proposals put before them for the formation of a provisional government for the interim period. But they had decided to go into the proposed Constituent Assembly. There were several flaws in the proposal for the Constituent Assembly, he said, but the Working Committee had reasoned that after all, it would consist of the elected representatives of the people. So, after considering every aspect of the question, they had decided that it should not be rejected.

The papers had also reported, proceeded Gandhiji, that the Working Committee's decision had been taken in the teeth of his opposition. That was a misleading statement to make. The fact was that for the last four or five days his mind had been filled with a vague misgiving. He saw darkness where he had seen light before. He knew that darkness indicated lack of faith in God. One whose being is filled with God, should never experience darkness.

Be that as it may, said Gandhiji, the fact remained that he did not see the light just then. What was more, he could not explain or give reasons for his fear. He had, therefore, simply placed his misgiving before the Working Committee and told them that they should come to a decision independently of him. Those whose function was to give a lead to the country could not afford to be guided by another's unreasoned instinct. They could not guide the destiny of the country unless they had the capacity to think for themselves and convince others by reason. The members of the Working Committee, he concluded, were the servants of the nation. They had no other sanction except the willing consent of the people whom they tried to serve. The latter would remove them whenever they liked. His advice to the people, therefore, was to follow

¹ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-6-1946

³ *Vide* Appendix "Grouping Clause Controversy", 25-6-1946.

⁴ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 23-6-1946.

the lead given by the Working Committee. He would tell them when he saw the light. But so long as darkness surrounded him in anything, nobody should follow him in it.

Harijan, 30-6-1946

250. WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

According to *Reuter* picked Indians, men and women, headed by Dr. Naicker, commenced satyagraha (in South Africa popularly known as passive resistance) on June 14th in respect of the Segregation Law of the Union Parliament of South Africa. The same agency further reports that neither the Government nor the Municipality had taken any action against the passive resisters but that some 'whites' of Durban had taken the execution of the law into their own hands by raiding the camp at night, cutting down tents swiftly and carrying them away. "A band of 100 young white men broke through the cordon of 50 Indian passive resisters, pulled down the tents and dragged them away torn. Some camp stretchers were smashed and blankets and pillows removed. Two women resisters were involved in the melee. They are stated to have been kicked but not injured.

The papers report that after three days of hooliganism the Borough police had posted themselves near the scene of passive resistance and warned the hooligans against molesting the resisters and terrorizing them into submission. This is heartening news. Let us hope that it can be taken at its full value and that the protection means fullest protection against lawlessness, sporadic or organized. Organized popular lawlessness is known as lynching, so shamelessly frequent in America.

Before the Segregation Law was passed, white men, known to be respectable, had carried anti-Asiatic agitation to the point of frenzy. Not satisfied with their triumph in having legislation compelling segregation passed probably beyond expectation, the more advanced section among the agitators have become the executioners of their own laws. They do not know that they are thereby defaming the white man's name! ! !

My appeal to the white men and women who have regard for laws for which they have voted is that they should create public opinion against hooliganism and lynch law.

Passive resistance is aimed at removal in a most approved

manner of bad laws, customs or other evils and is designed to be a complete and effective substitute for forcible methods including hooliganism and lynch law. It is an appeal to the heart of man. Often reason fails. It is dwarfed by self. The theory is that an adequate appeal to the heart never fails. Seeming failure is not of the law of satyagraha but of incompetence of the satyagrahi by whatever cause induced. It may not be possible to give a complete historical instance. The name of Jesus at once comes to the lips. It is an instance of brilliant failure. And he has been acclaimed in the West as Prince of passive resisters. I showed years ago in South Africa that the adjective “passive” was a misnomer, at least as applied to Jesus. He was the most active resister known perhaps to history. His was non-violence *par excellence*. But I must no longer stray from my main subject. It is the resistance of the Jesus type that the white hooligans are seeking to thwart. Let us hope that our countrymen’s heroic resistance will not only shame the hooligans into silence but prove the precursor of the repeal of the Law that disfigures the statute book of South Africa. In concrete form, what pure suffering, wholly one-sided, does is to stir public opinion against a wrong. Legislators are, after all, representatives of the public. In obedience to it they have enacted a wrong. They have to reverse the process when the same public, awakened to the wrong, demands its removal.

The real ‘white man’s burden’ is not insolently to dominate coloured or black people under the guise of protection; it is to desist from the hypocrisy which is eating into them. It is time white men learnt to treat every human being as their equal. There is no mystery about whiteness of the skin. It has repeatedly been proved that given equal opportunity a man, be he of any colour or country, is fully equal to any other.

Therefore, white men throughout the world and especially of India should act upon their fellow men in South Africa and call upon them not to molest Indian resisters who are bravely struggling to preserve the self-respect of Indians in the Union and the honour of their motherland. “Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.” Or, do they take in vain the name of Him who said this? Have they bani-shed from their hearts the great coloured Asiatic who gave to the world the above message? Do they forget that the greatest of the teachers of mankind were all Asiatics and did not possess a white face? These, if they descended on earth and went to South Africa, would all have to live in the segregated areas and be classed as

Asiatics and coloured people unfit by law to be equals of whites.

Is a civilization worth the name which requires for its existence the very doubtful prop of racial legislation and lynch law? The silver lining to the cloud that hangs over the devoted heads of our countrymen lies in the plucky action of Rev. Scott¹, a white clergyman, and his equally white fellow-workers, who have undertaken to share the sufferings of the Indian resisters.²

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

251. DR. LOHIA'S CHALLENGE

It would appear from newspaper reports that Dr. Lohia³ went to Goa at the invitation of Goans and was served with an order to refrain from making speeches. According to Dr. Lohia's statement, for 188 years now, the people of Goa have been robbed of the right to hold meetings and form organizations. Naturally he defied the order. He has thereby rendered a service to the cause of civil liberty and especially to the Goans. The little Portuguese settlement which merely exists on the sufferance of the British Government can ill afford to ape its bad manners. In free India Goa cannot be allowed to exist as a separate entity in opposition to the laws of the free State. Without a shot being fired, the people of Goa will be able to claim and receive the rights of citizenship of the free State. The present Portuguese Government will no longer be able to rely upon the protection of British arms to isolate and keep under subjection the inhabitants of Goa against their will. I would venture to advise the Portuguese Government of Goa to recognize the signs of the times and come to honourable terms with its inhabitants rather than function on any treaty that might exist between them and the British Government.

To the inhabitants of Goa I will say that they should shed fear of the Portuguese Government as the people of other parts of India have shed fear of the mighty British Government and assert their fundamental right of civil liberty and all it means. The differences of religion among the inhabitants of Goa should be no bar to common civil life. Religion is for each individual, himself or herself, to live. It

¹ Rev. Michael Scott

² An advance copy of this was sent to Lord Wavell.

³ Ram Manohar Lohia

should never become a bone of contention or quarrel between religious sects.

NEW DELHI, June 26, 1946

Harijan, 30-6-1946

252. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,

NEW DELHI,

June 26, 1946

DEAR MAJOR RANKIN,

I got your letter last evening and am sending you a copy of the memorial in the case of Haridas Mitra.¹

Mr. Carden Noad in his letter to Gandhiji of the 7th instant says:

“I enclose a signed copy of the new memorial. A signed copy has been sent to the Viceroy.”

It must have been lost in the post. He has been wired today to send a copy direct to H. E. also. In the meantime please put the one I send you before the Viceroy.²

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 54

253. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DELHI,

June 26, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your hesitation in writing it. It was justified. However, when it becomes absolutely necessary to write you need have no compassion [for me]. I will remember the two things you have mentioned and try to write about them in *Harijan*.³ Send me if you have a list of the persons who wear khadi made from their own yarn or who have agreed to do so. Let me also know the result of the appeal to be issued this time.

¹ The addressee had stated that Carden Noad's petition had not been received "in this office nor in any of the Departments concerned". *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 21-6-1946.

² G. E. B. Abell in his letter dated June 28, 1946, replied that "the memorial submitted by Mr. Carden Noad is under consideration".

³ *Vide* "Khadi Mad", 29-6-1946.

You say in the statement that, with God's grace, the scheme will be fulfilled, but I have deliberately scored out these words. There are two reasons: one, that you have not indicated the criterion of its success. And when you make a positive statement without indicating such a criterion, who can know what you mean by success? And secondly, even if we are entitled to make such a positive statement we should forgo that right. If you have in your mind a criterion of success, you should indicate it in your statement and say as under:

‘God willing, this resolve will be fulfilled.’

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8633. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

254. *LETTER TO MANU GANDHI*

DELHI,

June 26, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter of the 15th three days ago. But I am able to reply to it only today. After discussing the courage that you had displayed you asked me whether I would call it violence or non-violence. I should advise you not to bother about that question.

If we go on reflecting over the meaning of ahimsa, we shall but act non-violently when the occasion arises. We should not mind whether other people regarded it as non-violent or not. The effect of such action depends not on what others think about it but on what is in our minds. We do not know our minds ourselves, but, assuming that we do, if the mind says that in abusing or slapping a person we acted non-violently, it would be for us a non-violent action. Whether in fact it was non-violent God alone can know. The other party and the spectators also can judge it from the effect of the action on the former.¹ But why need you go into all such subtleties? And why should I take you into them? You did right in not publishing my letter. It ought not to be published. There is no harm in your having shown it to the *Nagarsheth*² The important thing is to watch the effect

¹ The boy who was punished later turned up to apologize and promised to behave. *Vide* “Letter to Manu Gandhi”, 6-6-1946.

² Leader of a town's business community

of the work that you are doing there. If you persevere in it I shall regard it as part of your education.

I am glad that Umiya's¹ suggestion has been accepted. I do not know who is the Principal of the Science College at the Banaras Hindu University. Even if I knew I would not write to him. The Birla brothers have played an important part in establishing the University and they know many persons there. If Shankarlal writes to him the work will be done. If you experience any difficulty regarding the expenses, write to me. I am returning the wire received by you.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

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

255. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

DELHI,

June 26, 1946

BROTHER MAHMUD²,

I had a fairly long talk with Rajendra Babu about you. Some poisonous propaganda is going on in the newspapers. He told me it is particularly in the *Dawn*. All this troubles me. My advice is that you should issue a public statement. In that you should point out that all of you are like one family, that all are under the Congress discipline and the Chief Minister as well as the other ministers are also under the Congress, and that other ministers are responsible to the Chief Minister. As long as you are in the Ministry no Hindu-Muslim problem can come up in Bihar, much less in the Ministry. It does not mean that there is no difference of opinion but it does not take the form of Hindu-Muslim quarrel. You have to be in the Ministry come what may. The fact is that we should all be large-hearted. This letter is not written in the presence of Rajendra Babu. He is going today. I have only given my opinion. Only Rajendra Babu can do the right thing. In the end do as he says.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G. N. 5096

¹ Addressee's elder sister

² Minister, Development and Transport, in the Bihar Ministry

256. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

NEW DELHI,
June 26, 1946

Gandhiji asked about the rumours of war with Russia. I said there was a good deal of talk about war but perhaps it was only talk. "You should turn your attention to the West," I added. He replied:

I? I have not convinced India. There is violence all around us. I am a spent bullet.

Since the end of the Second World War, I suggested, many Europeans and Americans were conscious of a spiritual emptiness. He might fill a corner of it.

But I am an Asiatic. A mere Asiatic.

He laughed, then after a pause:

Jesus was an Asiatic.

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 454

257. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

[*June 26, 1946*]²

The Working Committee have come to a decision after much deliberation. Their one concern is the good of India. I want you to deduce from it that you should have faith that whatever is done in good faith will ultimately result in good. The last sixty years' unbroken record of the Congress service warrants such faith on your part.

A man or woman who serves India with all his or her heart stands on a par with the tallest Congressman. In God's eyes the service of the humblest will rank equal with that of the highest in the Congress organization provided there is the uttermost dedication to the cause.

Harijan, 7-7-1946

¹ Reproduced from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

² From the reference to Congress Working Committee's decision regarding the proposals of the Cabinet Delegation, which was taken on June 25, 1946.

258. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR¹

June 27, 1946

YOUR HIGHNESS KNOWS THAT AT THE REQUEST OF MY WORKING COMMITTEE PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU SUSPENDED WORK OF HIS MISSION IN KASHMIR AND GAVE US THE BENEFIT OF HIS PRESENCE. MY COMMITTEE STILL UNABLE SPARE HIM FOR SOME TIME. MEETING A.I.C.C. FIXED FOR SIXTH JULY BOMBAY. I WOULD THEREFORE ASK FOR FURTHER POSTPONEMENT OF TRIAL SHEIKH ABDULLA OTHERS PENDING PANDIT NEHRU ABSENCE. I HAD INTENDED TO COME KASHMIR IMMEDIATELY TO SEE WHETHER I COULD BE ASSISTANCE TO STATE BUT URGENT CONGRESS WORK PREVENTS ME FROM GOING KASHMIR IMMEDIATELY.

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

259. TELEGRAM TO DADOO AND NARANSWAMY

June 27, 1946

SORRY ABOUT VIRAMMA'S² DEATH. CONDOLENCES FAMILY.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

260. TELEGRAM TO CARDEN NOAD

June 27, 1946

CARDEN NOAD

ENQUIRY REVEALS HARIDAS MITRA'S MEMORIAL NOT REACHED VICEROY. SENDING MY COPY TODAY. PLEASE SEND ONE ALSO DIRECTLY.³

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Addressed to Hari Singh, this was drafted by Gandhiji for Abul Kalam Azad.

² A passive resister in South Africa, wife of C. K. Thambi Naidu.

³ *Vide* also "Letter to C. W. B. Rankin", 26-6-1946.

261. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,

June 27, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 5-6-46 arrived here on the 22nd. Gandhiji is so very overburdened that he literally does not get time to look at his post. I read out your kind thoughts to him day before yesterday and he has asked me to acknowledge your letter with thanks. You will understand that he is too busy to write himself.

The three months since the British Cabinet Mission came out have been long and anxious. It is with sorrow that Gandhiji has had to admit— as you may have seen in the press—that his mind is clouded with doubt. Where there was light there is darkness at the moment. Things have not gone as we hoped they would. Circumstances have tipped the balance on, as we think, the wrong side. However, as Gandhiji says, if we have the requisite faith and our own actions are motivated by pure impulses, we must believe that whatever happens is for our ultimate good.

It was good to hear of Devdas's valuable work from you. He ought soon to be out here again. Gandhiji is amazingly well. Louis Fischer who sees him after four long and difficult years finds him better than in 1942.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

A. K.

THE REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
10 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

262. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji has asked me to send you copies of two cables¹ received today from Durban. Please be kind enough to place them before His Excellency.

We leave for Panchgani tomorrow evening, I hope. It will, as you say, be nice to have a “breather”.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 97

263. LETTER TO JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

NEW DELHI,
June 27, 1946

CHI. JALBHAI,

I have your letter of the 7th. I got the cheque and the letter from Mr. Doull both of which I am returning with my endorsement. I expect it will clear all of Sorabjee's² dues and I hope no further debt will be incurred. Both of you brothers should now lead a simple life and prove your worth and also be worthy of Sheth Rustomjee³.

I have been daily saying something about what is happening there at present. And I am also doing whatever I can. Our brothers and sisters who are offering satyagraha will remain steadfast to the last and will bring credit to the Indians there as also to India.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JALBHAI RUSTOMJEE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* Appendix “Extracts from Cable from South Africa”, after 25-6-1946.

² Addressee's brother

³ Parsee Rustomjee, addressee's father

264. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

June 27, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I got your letter. I intend to leave here tomorrow evening. I reach Poona some time on Saturday. A telegram will be sent to Dinshaw. Enquire at his place. I hope you are both happy.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

265. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

NEW DELHI,

June 27, 1946

The South African satyagraha was again the theme of Gandhiji's talk after the prayers today. The whites there were becoming more and more frenzied in their hooliganism and seemed to be determined to cow down the satyagrahis who were behaving in a calm and dignified manner. The Indians in South Africa were a little over two lakhs only. They were a mere handful in the midst of the overwhelming majority of white men and Negroes.

Imagine what it must mean for men like Doctors Naicker and Dadoo to be required to live in special locations. I want you all to continue your prayers to God to enable our brethren to remain steadfast till the end and to vouchsafe wisdom to the whites. Let me repeat that prayer from the heart can achieve what nothing else can in the world.

Two months' mountain air² seems to be necessary to keep me going for the rest of the year. It is surprising, the difference it makes. But I am not altogether sure whether it is not Ramanama really that is responsible for the marvellous result.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-6-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

¹ The report in *The Bombay Chronicle* has been collected with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

² Gandhiji was to leave the following evening for Panchgani.

266. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
June 28, 1946

Gandhiji paid tribute to the courage and suffering of the passive resisters without retaliation in the midst of the hooliganism which was daily increasing. He was born in India but was made in South Africa of which he knew practically every province. He had passed there twenty years of his life at its meridian. He knew the white men of South Africa. He loved them as well as his countrymen. He felt ashamed, he said, of the hooliganism of some of them. He had the fear that this hooliganism had the sympathy of the mass of the white men of the Union. Hooliganism would not flourish without such silent sympathy. He fondly hoped that as the white men realized the deep strength and sincerity of satyagrahis, they would begin to respect them and transfer their sympathy to the suffering passive resisters. He asked the gathering to offer their heartfelt prayers for God's mercy on the hooligans. He did not want to send money to their countrymen. Money could not give them victory. They had money enough. But a time might come when it would be their duty in India to offer non-violent resistance of the purest type for the sake of their brethren. He could not tell how. India was fast becoming the storehouse of the honour and dignity of the human race. It would be in the fitness of things if it fell to their lot to help the struggle of gallant resisters of South Africa. But for that the way must be clear before them. He felt that he would know when it was clear. Meantime he invoked the sympathy of the Viceroy and the white men and women of India to do their portion of duty.

Taking stock of his nearly three months' communion with them (with only two breaks) he asked them to preserve and enlarge the most precious part of what he was leaving behind, viz., the practice of common prayer. He did not mind whether they recited the prayer verse or not. What was absolutely necessary was that all the members of their families should daily assemble at a convenient time and observe at the most five minutes silence with concentration on God within.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-6-1946, and *Harijan* 7-7-1946

267. KHADI MAD ¹

The Rajkot Rashtriyashala appeal about the Charkha Jayanti of this year is as follows²:

Narandas Gandhi is khadi-mad. There are two ideas governing my conception of a yarn bank. First, that all yarn in whatever quantity, of whatever quality and from wheresoever it comes should be collected in one place. From there it should be sent to the weaver in such a condition as will enable him to weave it with the same speed as he weaves mill yarn. For this purpose all yarn has to be doubled and twisted. Yarn that has not been subjected to this process should not really be reckoned as yarn. There will thus be two kinds of yarn, one doubled and twisted and one single. The former will have a higher value. It will, of course, take time to achieve this desideratum. In the meantime, yarn will have to be separated and the single thread doubled and twisted and then woven into cloth at the yarn depot or wherever it may be suitable.

The second thing to remember is that just as gold and silver emerge as coins from a mint, so khadi alone should emerge from a yarn bank. Not until such time as this happens will the defects in hand-spun yarn be removed and the quality of khadi improved beyond expectation. This work cannot be accomplished by compulsion. Khadi must be selfless, true and of a scientific mind for the easy, quick and voluntary achievement of this noble end.

To achieve it is the real goal of the Charkha Sangh. It will not matter if, in working up to this end, all the sales bhandars have to be closed and khadi-wearers reduced to a handful. Even so, there will be no shame attaching to the endeavour. On the other hand, if khadi is sold as a symbol of hypocrisy and untruth it will drag the names of both the Charkha Sangh and the Congress in the mud and khadi will no longer be able either to deliver swaraj or be the mainstay of the poor. Unbelievers will ask: 'Then why take so much trouble over khadi? Why not let it remain as one of the many occupations of village India, instead of being fad of non-violence?' Those who are khadi-mad must learn the secret of the science of khadi and be

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946

² The appeal by Narandas Gandhiji is not reproduced here. It exhorted people to celebrate Gandhiji's birthday, Bhadrapad Vad 12 according to the Vikram calendar, by contributing yarn.

prepared even to die for it and thereby prove that it is the true symbol of non-violent swaraj.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 29, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

268. *LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI*

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,

June 29, 1946

MY DEAR MALKANI,

In English for your sake. Sterilization is a dreadful process. I share Jagadisan's opinion¹. Therefore the dropping is good for whatever cause induced. Study the subject well and follow your own opinion.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 946

269. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

June 29, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

Can I point out a mistake when I see one? I had ordered you to do what you wished. You acted on the advice and I observed what you did. I showed my dislike of your engaging in gossip.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 730

¹ T. N. Jagadisan, who had been supervising the Kasturba leprosy work since May, 1945, had strongly criticized the proposed bill in the Sind Assembly for sterilization of lepers as "both unintelligent and harsh" and had suggested that the only way to control leprosy was to segregate infective cases of leprosy,

270. TALK WITH NORMAN CLIFF ¹

June, 29, 1946

CLIFF: Discussions are now over. Can you talk about them?

GANDHIJI: Off the record—yes. If you want at any time to give anything to the Press you will, of course, let me see it first.

CLIFF: Are you feeling happy about the result the developed so far?

GANDHIJI: I cannot say that I am either happy or unhappy. But I am not satisfied. It is an indifinable feeling and I therefore asked the Congress Working Committee not to be guided by my instinct. While I have no distrust of the four actors (three Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy) I have a distrust of the way things have gone. It has all been artificial and unnatural. My feeling is not by way of underrating the greatness of their task. I have great regard for their industry in prosecution of the ideal they have set out for. And yet I see that what I said at the very threshold of their career has proved true. I told them they were unaware of the difficulties they would have to sur-mount. They do not even know them now. It is no fault of theirs. They have done a faithful job and yet a bad one. They themselves are not satisfied. They are still probing. They do not know how to handle things. They have been brought up in one school of thought. With the greatest stretch of honesty they cannot think otherwise.

CLIFF: Can any Englishman then understand?

GANDHIJI: Yes, for example Andrews who realized that though he had the greatest measure of success he could not quite reach there. His success lay in knowing his limitations. He copied everything Indian in order to become Indian. Curiously enough and yet not curiously he shared his innermost thoughts with me and not Gurudev. Such was his love and reverence for the poet that he remained Gurudev for Andrews throughout. I first met Charlie in South Africa. He was a scholar. I am none. My knowledge of English literature is nil. He was a philosopher—unlike me, a man of action—and yet I took to him as perhaps I have not taken to any Indian. One day he asked for a gift. It was that I should call him Charlie and that I should allow him to call me Mohan. I readily agreed but told him that it would be harder for

¹ Norman Cliff sent to Sir Stafford Cripps a report of this talk, which took place on the train. The latter wrote to Gandhiji on July 20, 1946, regarding certain points mentioned in this talk. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* Vol. LXXXV, "Letter to Sir Stafford Cripps", 7-8-1946.

me to fulfil my part of the contract as I had always kept a respectable distance from friends! Andrews found in me not only a live Hindu but a live Christian. That was the secret of his nearness to me. He shared with me his innermost thoughts on religion. And he said that he must at bottom remain a true Christian if he was to be a true Hindu and Muslim.

The mission, I have said and I repeat, have done their best. But the best falls far short of India's needs or India's best. Take the food problem. I claim to know more than anyone about it for I have sunk myself in the masses. But the English do not understand what they should do if the masses that are sinking may live. India is being robbed of millions of pounds by Britain. An economist has only today written that the Congress ministries want to do things for village India but cannot. India should never remain naked for want of cloth. She grows enough cotton for her requirements. But it is a money crop and therefore exported. And the same in other things too. All is taken from the villages for rich city people and Britain.

CLIFF: For this very reason, do you not see independence in taking over power at the Centre in the Interim Government?

GANDHIJI: It looks nice and sweet put like that. But where is the power in the Interim Government as proposed? The dice were so heavily loaded against the Congress that it was impossible for them to come in. If I could form a live Central Government and thereby serve the masses I would seize the opportunity. A pure Muslim League Government would have been better than the so-called coalition they tried to form. I do not know what happened. But things seemed to go from bad to worse. Was it that secret force of the I. C. S. as before working in order to torpedo everything? The Simla Conference broke down last year. The Viceroy admitted that the Congress acted on the square. He took the blame on him-self then. All the minorities were in tune with the Congress. If the League were not willing to shoulder the burden I advised giving it to the Congress. I consider it was sound advice but it was not accepted and hence the mess that we now are in. You should know that the League is today what the Congress was at one time. All their leaders are titled men. It has not yet been through the pain and travail that the Congress has been through before it could call itself the people's representative.

But even I am still working to make things a success. I cannot today support my instinct with reason. I own my defeat. And yet I

must tell the truth. I may not hide my innermost feeling, if I am to be a friend and adviser to either or both sides.

CLIFF: Don't you feel it is natural that the members of the Mission might find your attitude a little difficult to understand?

GANDHIJI: I have accepted my defeat before them too. I said to them, "I struggle to lay bare my whole soul before you." I am still advising. But I am filled with misgivings. I have to walk with the utmost caution. For failure now will be a great human tragedy.

CLIFF: Success or failure of the Constituent Assembly will surely depend on the spirit of those who go into it. Will it not?

GANDHIJI: Yes. But it may be that one or [the] other party or none goes into it. I would have you remember that a Mussalman does not become a non-Indian by changing his religion. It is [a] most fantastic claim. My son became a Muslim for a little time for purely sordid reasons¹. Did he lose his nationality? I am perhaps a better Mussalman than many a Hindu convert to Islam. This whole idea is wrong *au fond*. The British, imagining that they can bring the League and [the] Congress together, are attempting the impossible.

CLIFF: I am surprised that you with your boundless faith in human nature believe that the above is an impossibility. All things are possible with God.

GANDHIJI: If you think deeply enough, you will see that I am quite consistent. My faith in human nature is quite consistence with my holding that men with diametrically opposite views cannot coalesce. I have called Pakistan a sin. Can I cooperate to make sin a success? God cannot belie Himself. Truth cannot work for untruth. That all things are possible with God cannot be used to make God break His law.

I have said and I think rightly that the connotation of Independence of India as meant by the British, the Muslim League and Congress is different. The Muslim League independence means splitting India first and independence after. The Congress stands for immediate unconditional independence for the whole of India. If the Constituent Assembly is to be worthy of its name, it must be a sovereign body with the right thing as well as the wrong. It may not be hedged in with conditions.

CLIFF: But you do recognize and respect the British concern for minorities?

¹ In 1936; *vide* "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", 30-5-1936 and "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936.

GANDHI: I do not admit its claim to do so. It is an unconscious relic, if you like, of Imperialism. You had independence even when you heaped disabilities on Roman Catholics. Which outsider dared to interfere with your independence? What right have the English rulers who have deliberately sown the seeds of discord and brought about these interminable dissensions into our structure now to concern themselves with our difference so called? Not until and unless you discard this 'white man's burden' notion will you be able truly to assist India.

CLIFF: It is very difficult for us everywhere, e. g., in Egypt.

GANDHIJI: You will find greater and greater difficulty as time goes on. The British Labour Party has my full sympathy. Of course, if the mind of the English people in general has been changed as Laski¹ and others tell us and Britain will be content to be dubbed 'little England' and get off the backs of others, it may be different. Otherwise the Labour Party will throw itself into the arms of Churchill for whose courage and resourfulness I have the utmost admiration.

I do not want Britain to leave India because of her helplessness. I flatter myself that we have come thus far through even our limited non-violence. I do not look with equanimity to India coming into her own by brute force. If Britain would play her part nobly, the growing hatred may give place to friendship.

CLIFF: Can there be a future step in London?

GANDHIJI: Of course. My only fear is that the imperialistic character of the Labour Government will prevent them from doing right at any cost. They want to please all parties. This is an impossible task. They have to dare to do the right even though they displease some. This cannot be done in the imperialistic way.

CLIFF: Surely then there is all the more reason for settling things in India for our own no less than for your sakes?

GANDHIJI: You are right. How to do it in the right way is the question. My fear is that may fail in spite of themselves.

CLIFF: Cannot a *via media* be found?

GANDHIJI: They are struggling. I am struggling. My helping hand is still there in spite of misreading by them of the situation here. But I confess I am just now at sea and darkness surrounds me.

CLIFF: Your misgivings are not due to a fundamental distrust of Britain doing

¹ Harold Joseph Laski

the right thing?

GANDHIJI: No. But I have a fundamental distrust of their doing it *at any cost*. I said that the statement they issued¹ was the best they were capable of but it was not intrinsically the best. Then at the outset it bore three interpretations. The Congress put one, the League another and the authors a third one. That makes it a dangerous document.

CLIFF: But why not interpret it only as they do? They are the best judges of what they meant.

GANDHIJI: The law rightly does not accept the intention of the farmer of a law outside what the text bears.

CLIFF: Could not the document be reworded in order to make the intention clear?

GANDHIJI: That is impossible. It would mean perpetual changing and chopping.

CLIFF: Would you submit to legal interpretation?

GANDHIJI: Yes, of course.

CLIFF: Would not interpretation in spirit be better than in letter?

GANDHIJI: All these are questions for the court to decide.

CLIFF: Am I right in thinking that the immediate problem is still the Interim Government and that the main obstacle there is the rejection of Congress' right to nominate a Nationalist Muslim?

GANDHIJI: Yes. But the question of a Nationalist Muslim is a side-issue now that a far more general right has been conceded to the Quaid-e-Azam.²

CLIFF: Would the issue not be solved if the Congress' right to nominate anyone were conceded but they were asked not to exercise that right?

GANDHIJI: A right is negated if it cannot be exercised at the crucial moment. The Congress is reduced to a caste Hindu body according to Jinnah's wholly wrong appraisal of it. Such an admission belies all its past history.

CLIFF: Isn't self-denial one of your fundamental beliefs?

GANDHIJI: (Roaring with laughter) Satan also quotes the scripture!!!

¹ On May 16, 1946

² In his letter to M. A. Jinnah dated June 20 Lord Wavell had *inter alia* stated:

(1) Until I have received acceptance from those invited to take office in the Interim Government, the names in the statements cannot be regarded

All I want is that what I have said should go deep enough into your soul so that you may be able correctly to interpret me.

Gandiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 363-7.

271. MARRIAGES BETWEEN HARIJANS AND NON-HARIJANS¹

A friend from Patidar Ashram, Surat, writes to Shri Narahari Parikh:²

If Harijan girls are to marry caste Hindus it should be on condition that the couple will devote their lives to the service of the Harijans. . . If caste Hindu girls live amongst Harijans as Harijans, Harijan sisters will be able to learn a lot from them.

If an educated Harijan girl marries a caste Hindu, the couple ought to devote themselves to the service of Harijans. Self-indulgence can never be the object of such a marriage. That will be improper. I can never encourage it. It is possible that a marriage entered into with the best of intentions turns out to be a failure. No one can prevent such mishaps. Even if one Harijan girl marries a caste Hindu with a high character it will do good to both the Harijans and caste Hindus. They will set up a good precedent and if the Harijan girl is really worthy, she will spread her fragrance far and wide and encourage others to copy her example. Society will cease to be scared by such marriages. They will see for themselves that there is nothing wrong in them. If children born of such a union turn out to be good, they will further help to remove untouchability. Every reform moves at the proverbial snail's pace. To be dissatisfied with this slowness of progress betrays ignorance of the way in which reform works.

It is certainly desirable that caste Hindu girls should select Harijan husbands. I hesitate to say that it is better. That would imply that women are inferior to men. I know that such inferiority complex is there today. For this reason I would agree that at present the marriage of a caste Hindu girl to a Harijan is better than that of a Harijan girl to a caste Hindu. If I had my way I would persuade all caste Hindu girls coming under my influence to select Harijan husbands. That it is most difficult I know from experience. Old prejudices are difficult to shed. One cannot afford to laugh at such

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

² Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.

prejudices either. They have to be overcome with patience. And if a girl imagines that her duty ends by marrying a Harijan and falls a prey to the temptation of self-indulgence after marriage, the last state would be worse than the first. The final test of every marriage is how far it develops the spirit of service in the parties. Every mixed marriage will tend in varying degrees to remove the stigma attached to such marriages. Finally there will be only one caste, known by the beautiful name Bhangi, that is to say, the reformer or remover of all dirt. Let us all pray that such a happy day will dawn soon.

The correspondent must realize that even the best of my wishes cannot come true on the mere expression. I have not succeeded in marrying off a single Harijan girl to a caste Hindu so far after my declaration. I have a caste Hindu girl who at her father's wish has offered to marry a Harijan lad of her father's selection. The lad is at present under training at Sevagram. God willing, the marriage will take place after a short time.

[ON THE TRAIN TO] POONA, June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

272. SELF-RESTRAINT IN MARRIAGE¹

The same correspondent² from the Patidar Ashram, Surat, who put a question to Shri Narahari Parikh, has also asked the following:³

It is deplorable that the correspondent seems to take it for granted that the main thing in marriage is the satisfaction of the sexual urge. Rightly speaking, the true purpose of marriage should be and is intimate friendship and companionship between man and woman. There is in it no room for sexual satisfaction. That marriage is no marriage which takes place for the satisfaction of the sex desire. That satisfaction is a denial of true friendship. I know of English marriages undertaken for the sake of companionship and mutual service. If a reference to my own married life is not considered irrelevant, I may say that my wife and I tasted the real bliss of married life when we

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 7-7-1946.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ The question is not reproduced here. The correspondent had maintained that "one cannot expect anything other than hypocrisy in the guise of celibacy in marriage". Adverting to Indumati and A. G. Tendulkar who were married earlier he stated "it is good that the particular bridegroom made it clear later on that he could not deny to his wife the right of motherhood".

renounced sexual contact, and that in the heyday of youth. It was then that our companionship blossomed and both of us were enabled to render real service to India and humanity in general. I have written about this in my *Experiments with Truth*. Indeed this self-denial was born out of our great desire for service.

Of course, innumerable marriages take place in the natural course of events and such will continue. The physical side of married life is given pre-eminence in these. Innumerable persons eat in order to satisfy the palate but such indulgence does not therefore become one's duty. Very few eat to live but they are the ones who really know the law of eating. Similarly, those only really marry who marry in order to experience the purity and sanctity of the marriage tie and thereby realize the divinity within.

The correspondent does not seem to be conversant with the full details of the Tendulkar-Indumati marriage. The vow of sexual restraint was an outcome of mature deliberation. The text was written in Hindustani.¹ The papers put in their own English translations of it. The original provided for sexual intercourse if the wife desired progeny. This much is certain that both desired to observe restraint even after marriage. The union was for promotion of joint service. They had known each other for many years. Shri Indumati's parents gave their consent to this marriage after much testing. Then jail life prolonged the agony. Both parties as well as their elders were keen that the ceremony should take place in Sevagram Ashram, where Shri Indumati had lived for some time and derived solace. I am unaware of their whereabouts today. I have no reason to suspect hypocrisy in the transaction. But even if it is discovered, it would not prove that the vow of *brahmacharya* in married life is at fault. The fault lies in hypocrisy. An English poet has well said, "Hypocrisy is an ode to virtue."² Wherever there are true coins, counterfeit ones will also be found. Where there is virtue there will be hypocrisy, i. e., vice masquerading as virtue. How tragic and surprising that a virtuous action should be sought to be stopped because of the fear of hypocrisy!

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA, June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

¹ Vide Appendix "Marriage Rites", 18-8-1945.

² Due de la Rochefoucauld : "Hypocrisy is the homage paid by vice to virtue."

273. WHY KILL? ¹

The following suggestion has been received from Aligarh:²

You write: "We have to kill monkeys, birds and animals which ruin the crops, or else keep someone who will kill them for us." My uncle has been able to keep monkeys off his field by using strong electric light at night. Why cannot this method be given a wider trial?

At first sight the suggestion seems attractive but on deeper thought one finds that it won't work. I might be able to protect my own field in this manner, but what of those round about? It will not be right for me selfishly to save my crops at the cost of others. That will be violence in the name of non-violence. For instance, we will throw a snake or rubbish from our own yard into that of our neighbour without compunction. True ahimsa demands that if we must save the society as well as ourselves from the mischief of mon-keys and the like, we have to kill them. The general rule is that we must avoid violence to the utmost extent possible. Non-violence for the society is necessarily different from that for the individual. One living apart from society may defy all precaution, not so society as such.³

June 30, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

274. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING⁴

POONA,

June 30, 1946

Addressing the gathering which had come to attend the prayers today, Gandhiji told them it was wonderful how he had been able to maintain his health in spite of the extremely heavy work in the broiling heat of Delhi. He attributed it to the miraculous power of Ramanama.

Again, it is though the grace of God that I am with you today. An accident had taken place in the middle of the night, while I was fast asleep. Some persons had placed boulders on the rails between

¹ The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 7-7-1946.

² Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

³ The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

⁴ The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

Karjat and Neral and but for the presence of mind of the engine driver, the train would have been derailed and no one could say who would have survived to tell the tale.¹ But no one can kill you unless God wills it.

This is perhaps the seventh occasion when a merciful Providence has rescued me from the very jaws of death. I have injured no man, nor have I borne enmity to any. Why should anyone have wished to take my life is more than I can understand. But there it was. Such things happened in every country. Why not in India too? But the world is made like that. Man is born to live in the midst of dangers and alarms. The whole existence of man is a ceaseless duel between the forces of life and death. Even so, the latest accident strengthens my hope to live up to 125. Ramanama is my only strength and refuge. You should join me in reciting His name and install Him in your hearts if you want me to continue to serve you. God makes crooked straight for us and sets things right when they seem to go dead wrong.

The Hindu, 2-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 7-7-1946

275. A REMARK²

[On or after *June 30, 1946*]³

I see now how splendid I shall look when I am dead. I have already known how I shall look before my death. Such is this lucky age!

From a facsimile of the Gujarati: *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, between pp. 176 and 178

276. ATOM BOMB AND AHIMSA

It has been suggested by American friends that the atom bomb will bring in ahimsa (non-violence) as nothing else can. It will, if it is meant that its destructive power will so disgust the world that it will turn it away from violence for the time being. This is very like a man

¹ On alighting from the train Gandhiji personally thanked the engine-driver, L. M. Pereira and the guard.

² On the night of the accident while the repairs were being carried out for over two hours, unaware of the mishap Gandhiji slept peacefully. He wrote this remark on his photograph taken while he was asleep. *Vide* the preceding item.

³ *Ibid*

glutting himself with dainties to the point of nausea and turning away from them only to return with redoubled zeal after the effect of nausea is well over. Precisely in the same manner will the world return to violence with renewed zeal after the effect of disgust is worn out.

Often does good come out of evil. But that is God's, not man's plan. Man knows that only evil can come out of evil, as good out of good.

That atomic energy, though harnessed by American scientists and army men for destructive purposes, may be utilized by other scientists for humanitarian purposes is undoubtedly within the realm of possibility. But that is not what was meant by my American friends. They were not so simple as to put a question which connoted an obvious truth. An incendiary uses fire for his destructive and nefarious purpose, a housewife makes daily use of it in preparing nourishing food for mankind.

So far as I can see, the atomic bomb has deadened the finest feeling that has sustained mankind for ages. There used to be the so-called laws of war which made it tolerable. Now we know the naked truth. War knows no law except that of might. The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms but it resulted for the time being in destroying the soul of Japan. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is yet too early to see. Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner. We can but solve the mystery by deducing the unknown result from the known results of similar events. A slaveholder cannot hold a slave without putting himself or his deputy in the cage holding the slave. Let no one run away with the idea that I wish to put in a defence of Japanese misdeeds in pursuance of Japan's unworthy ambition. The difference was only one of degree. I assume that Japan's greed was more unworthy. But the greater unworthiness conferred no right on the less unworthy of destroying without mercy men, women and children of Japan in a particular area.

The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love. Counter-hatred only increases the surface as well as the depth of hatred. I am aware that I am repeating what I have many times stated before and practised to the best of my ability and capacity. What I first stated was itself nothing new. It was old as the hills. Only I recited

no copy-book maxim but definitely announced what I believed in every fibre of my being. Sixty years of practice in various walks of life has only enriched the belief which experience of friends had fortified. It is however the central truth by which one can stand alone without flinching. I believe in what Max Muller said years ago, namely, that truth needed to be repeated as long as there were men who disbelieved it.

POONA, July 1, 1946

Harijan, 7-7-1946

277. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am engulfed in work. Yesterday I started silence at 9. I have seen the Ministers.

Jawaharlal is coming here on the 4th. He still insists on my attending the meeting¹ Aruna² had already been to tell me. I sent her on to Maulana. If I must come I should be put up only in the Bhangi quarter. It had better be the same locality where I was taken earlier. I hesitate to say 'the same house'. The people of the house must not be driven out. Please consider all this and do what is proper. You may also consider whether I must come and let me know.

I did not like what you said to me. I questioned Pyarelal and told him to write down what he said and send it to you. He did not read in anything I said the meaning that you do. He said what he said from his own observation. But what I said had—and still has—a more profound import. It was nobody's fault. The fault lay with the circumstances. What can you or I do about it? You have to go by your experience, I by mine. You know I have not been able to understand certain things you have done—for instance, the expenditure on the election. This is an old issue, but I feel things went too far this time. This I. N. A. business also I did not relish and I do not like the way

¹ Of the Congress Working Committee and A. I. C. C., scheduled to be held in Bombay from July 5

² Aruna Asaf Ali, member of All-India Congress Socialist Party

you lose your temper in the Working Committee. Then on top of it we had this affair of the Constituent Assembly. I am not complain-ing, but I can see that we are heading in different directions. Why should I grieve? I certainly shall not complain. But we must see things as they are.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 306-7

278. *LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI*

POONA,

July 1, 1946

BHAI MORARJI¹,

I was somewhat alarmed on hearing about [the incidents at] Ahmedabad.² I was aware of the *Rath-yatra*³ day. They must have anticipated a skirmish. Why did the police not take precautionary measures? Does not the police now belong to the people? Why did they not seek the people's co-operation before hand? Our real defence force ought to be the people. Why call the military for such tasks? The people ought to have been forewarned that they would not get the help of the military. The State too may not rule with the help of the military. This could not be. Now realize your mistake and start afresh. Withdraw the military if you can. If you find it risky to withdraw the military immediately let them do policing. They may not carry rifles, and if they carry bayonets these should be used sparingly. Don't mind if a few have to die. They have been trained to act like monkeys. Under your administration they should cease to be monkeys and become human beings. Think about all this. Don't do anything only because I am saying it. Do what you are convinced about. Remember one thing, viz., the [British] Government's rule will take

¹ Minister of Home and Revenue in the Government of Bombay

² Communal riots had broken out in Ahmedabad on July 1.

³ *Ashad Sud* 2, on which day images of gods are taken out in a procession

deeper root the more use you make of the military. Till now it has only been shaken, it may soon entrench itself-securely. Well, “a word is enough for the wise.”.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI

POONA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

279. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

POONA,
July 1, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

Your letter shows lack of thought and reasoning. I cannot fulfil your desire. Bhulabhai was a brilliant man. He became a lawyer of eminence here itself. Bal went to the U. S. A. after completing his studies here. I have sent no one abroad as you suggest. Lilavati is a widow. On growing older she thought of becoming a doctor. Others helped her while I only gave my approval. Let us see when you prove your worth. So far you have only shown your ability for cramming. There is nothing to becoming a barrister. Do whatever you can here itself and assimilate it. How many like you are able to go to England? Your father cannot provide the money and it is not right that he should beg for it. From every point of view I am against your going to England, and I shall not ask anyone for money for your sake. I advise you to restrain this desire of yours. Make whatever progress you can while remaining here. What more shall I write?

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

Show this to Ramdas and Nimu. I am returning your letter. Let them see that too.

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

280. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

POONA,
July 1, 1946

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I do not like to preside over any meeting. I am now tired of these things. I have already explained this to you. Invite Bapa or somebody else. Please excuse me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

281. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

POONA,
July 1, 1946

Gandhiji said that it grieved him to tell them that the hooliganism of the white men of South Africa was daily growing worse. The relieving feature, however, was that the courage and renunciation of the satyagrahis was rising to the occasion. One of the sisters, Dr. Goonam, had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. The trying Magistrate had reduced the term to four months. Dr. Goonam had objected to it saying that she wanted no favour on the score of her sex. Her offence, if it could be so called, was exactly the same as that of the men satyagrahis. But the Magistrate would not listen to her objection. Satyagrahis were being recruited in large numbers. He hoped and prayed, said Gandhiji, that the satyagrahis would continue to be strong and firm and that their struggle would be crowned with success.

Concluding, he asked them never to forget that God was the sole rock and refuge of a satyagrahi.

The Hindu, 3-7-1946

282. NOTE TO PYARELAL

[After July 1, 1946]²

I think I can go through it just as it is. If I cannot I shall return it. There is so much else going this time that it is better not to send this. I must give it adequate time. And tomorrow there is much else I

¹ It being Gandhiji's silence day, his written speech was read out after the prayers.

² This was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 1, 1946.

have to write. You must get into the habit of getting the matter ready early. You will have seen for yourself how I have revised it. It could be made much shorter, more interesting and more precise. That cannot be done now. If you keep it for next week and work on it early then it can be done. I shall also help.

BAPU

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

283. *LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA*

POONA,
July 2, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter of May 27, 1946. If I started writing private letters to everyone there would be no end to it. Besides, why the insistence on privacy? If you have any mental weakness some day it is bound to come out. Or you will become a hypocrite.

The Ashram is not intended for comfort. For that you should go to some other place. I personally do not run the Ashram. For the present, therefore, there is nothing for you but to do as Krishnachandra says or leave the place.

You need not become an ascetic but at least become like an ordinary human being who does not make a show of his wealth. Otherwise, forget your relationship with me.

I have been noticing for a long time that you yourself are the cause of your frequent illness. You ought to know that you have no business to eat rice and *mung*. The diet for you is milk, boiled vegetables, fruit and curd. About the rest you may speak to me if you are still at the Ashram when I come there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 8760

284. LETTER TO BAKSHI TEK CHAND

POONA,
July 2, 1946

BHAI BAKSHI TEK CHAND,

Rajkumari showed me your letter. There is no need to consult any other lawyer in Bombay. It is enough that you are there. I remember Dr. Gopichand had written to me. But I have forgotten what the letter contained. When I go to Sevagram I can look for it. Whatever the case, draft a short deed and sent it.

Nothing much of importance can be done about the matter today because the communal harmony generated during 1919-20 does not prevail at present. Hence, our duty today is to protect the property and use it in a manner that does not lead to friction. It should also be kept clean. Anyhow you have been there from the very beginning and you have been the chief worker. Hence, write to me whatever thoughts occur to you. I shall no doubt be seeing Jawaharlal and others but they will be so busy with other things that it may not be possible to exchange views on this matter. If I am able to do anything I shall write to you again.

I appreciated very much your views on the issue that came up during the Cabinet Mission's visit. Similar views were expressed by others. I am making use of them all.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

285. LETTER TO AGNIBHOJ

POONA,
July 2, 1946

BHAI AGNIBHOJ,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to me. I think the C.W.C. is seized of the matter. I would say this much that either untouchability will be eradicated through a change of heart in the caste Hindus or the sin that is being perpetrated in the name of religion will destroy Hindu society.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

286. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 2, 1946

God is not a person. He is the all-pervading, all-powerful spirit. Anyone who bears Him in his or her heart has access to a marvellous force or energy as effective in its results as, say, electricity, but much subtler.

In explaining the significance of Ramanama was he propagating a species of superstition, he asked. “No” was his reply. Mere repetition of Ramanama possessed no mysterious virtue as such. Ramanama was not like black magic. It had to be taken with all that it symbolized. Rather, it was like a mathematical formula which summed up in brief the result of endless research. Mere mechanical repetition of Ramanama could not give strength. For that one had to understand and live up to the conditions attaching to its recitation. To take God’s name one had to live a godly life.

Mathatma Gandhi said that the outbreak of communal riots in Ahmedabad had pained him deeply and he had told Mr. Morarji Desai, Bombay’s Home Minister, who had come to see him before his departure for Ahmedabad, that he (Mr. Desai) must go to meet the flames under the sole protection of God, not that of the police and military. If need be, he must perish in the flames in the attempt to quell them as the late Mr. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi had done.¹

¹ In March, 1931. *Vide* “Speech on Kanpur Riots, Subjects Committee Meeting, Karachi”, 27-3-1931, “Telegram to Balkrishna Sharma”, 1-4-1931 and “Notes”, 9-4-1931.

The Following paragraph is translated from Pyarelal’s Gujarati article “Three Pure Sacrifices” *Harijanbandhu*.

Two Hindu workers and a Muslim worker set out to quell the riots and died in the effort. I am not unhappy at their death. I do not weep for them. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi laid down his life similarly in the Kanpur riots. Friends had warned him: “Do not go in to the riot-affected area. The people there have gone mad. They will kill you.” But Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was not to be daunted. He was confident that his going would stop the riots. He went there and died at the hands of those who had gone mad. I was happy at his death. I do not say all this to excite you. I want to make you understand that if you but learn how to die all will be well. If enough young men like Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Vasantrao¹ and Rajab Ali² came out, riots could be banished for ever.

Gandhiji also stated that the Congress Ministry in the Province was there to serve all the communities, but the Ministers could not serve them unless they had the willing co-operation of the people.

In Ahmedabad, went on Gandhiji, the pride of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, where he had rendered yeoman’s service to the Municipality, Hindus and Muslims had always lived together in peace. But of late, they seemed to be dehumanized.

Today Hindus and Muslims have gone mad and are stabbing each other. How shameful and tragic it is! If one of the communities gives up the madness the conflict will cease immediately.³

All the deaths in Ahmedabad were not the result of firing. Many were the results of stabbing and the like. It was a shame that they had to call for the help of the police and the military to prevent them from flying at each other’s throats.⁴

But you must realize that by seeking the help of the police and the army we become their slaves. If we want to have true independence, we should stop relying on them and relying solely on God should learn how to die. That is all we have to do. Many people know how to die after killing others but we have to die without killing anyone.

If one side ceased to retaliate, the riots could not go on. What did it matter if even a few lakhs were killed in the right manner out of the 40 crores of Indians? If they could learn the lesson of dying without killing, India which was celebrated in legend history as *Karmabhoomi*—the land of duty—would become a virtual Eden, the image of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

The Hindu, 4-7-1946, and *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946

¹ Vasantrao Hegishte

² Rajab Ali Lakhani

³ This paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.

⁴ The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.

287. DISTINCTION BETWEEN HINDI AND URDU

Shri Ram Naresh Tripathi is well known to me. One day he came to see me at Mussoorie. I had feared that he would reproach me for my propagation of Hindustani. But when I talked to him I found the reverse. He told me that if I cherished the hope that Hindustani would emerge from a blending of Hindi and Urdu, Urdu would be of more help. Only I should become as fully aware of the attempts to distort Urdu by giving it a new look as I am of the attempts to distort Hindi. Hindustani would then come of itself. I asked him to give me illustrations to help me understand what he meant. When he tried to think he found some difficulty in doing so. I then asked him to explain in writing. The result was the following letter which he wrote to me:

Pujya Bapu,

You had asked me to explain to you the structural difference between Hindi and Urdu. But it seems to me a matter of experience. I cannot clearly define it. I can venture a suggestion though. Get a paragraph from *Harijan* translated into Hindi and Urdu by two competent writers. You will know the difference between the structure of the two languages.

I had told you that Urdu was more refined than Hindi. I will give you an example. Here is a sentence from a well-known Hindi writer: समझमें न आने से घबराहट-सी होने लगती है।

In Urdu लगती cannot be used. It is either होती है or पैदा होती है. No good Urdu writer will ever use an incorrect idiom. If he does so he had to be prepared to engage in a stiff battle. There is no movement for refining Hindi. But rather than such a movement being started it would do Hindi much more good if Urdu books and writings were published in the Devanagari script. In this way Hindi would be benefited by the struggles of the Urdu writers and poets over the last several centuries to improve and polish Urdu. This would automatically transform it into Hindustani.

This letter deserves consideration. I am a lover of languages but I am not a linguist. My knowledge of Hindi is barely satisfactory. I did not learn Hindi from any books. I did not have the time for that. My son Devdas who, with my encouragement and my blessings, went to Madras to learn Hindi, knows it far better than I do. There are many others also whom I can name. My knowledge of Urdu is even less than my knowledge of Hindi. I have known the Nagari script

from my childhood. I have learnt the Persian script with considerable effort. As I have not had the practice, I am able to read it only with some difficulty. I manage somehow to write it. Thus my knowledge of Urdu is very rudimentary. What I do have is love and an impartial attitude. Therefore, if God wills it and if I get help from scholars of the two languages, my venture will succeed. I published Tripathiji's letter only with the idea that he and other would help me in this effort.

Another lover of Hindi also tells me that hardly has there been such work done for Hindi as there has been for Urdu. If only people would not indulge in a tug of war but would realize that the two languages have a common root in the speech of the millions of our villagers and that it is for this that our scholars and poets have to work, we could quickly march forward.

POONA, July 3, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 14-7-1946

288. *LETTER TO C. R. ATTLEE*¹

POONA,
July 3, 1946

DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I wonder if you can remember an Indian being introduced to you by the late Mr. MacDonald². That was the present writer. On the strength of that slight acquaintance, I make bold to introduce to you my young friend Shri Sudhir Ghosh. He makes a reliable and steady bridge between Great Britain and India. He loves both passionately. He has made wide British connections. And he made himself a willing instrument in the hands of your Mission. At their instance he goes to England. I have wished godspeed to his self-imposed mission. He thinks he will interpret India as he knows it. Incidentally he has to interpret me to the best of his ability. To interpret a person is much more difficult than to interpret organizations. God bless his effort and give his tongue the right word.

¹ The letter was forwarded by the India Office to the addressee on August 3.

² James Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of Britain, 1924, 1929-31 and 1931-35

I hope the great weight you are carrying sits lightly on you.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE PRIME MINISTER
LONDON

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 4. Also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 220

289. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. KANAM,

I have your letter. I was very glad that you wrote in the Gujarati script. Make it a regular habit. There is room for improvement in your hand-writing. It is, of course, better than your Devangari. But you must improve in this respect as you improve in knowledge. When the writing is heavy, it comes out on the other side and therefore you cannot write on both sides.

You have given me plenty of news in your letter. Continue to write thus.

I hope to reach Sevagram in the first week of August. My plan to go to Panchgani has been upset. I hope nevertheless to pay a flying visit there.

Rasik's ideas improved day by day and he rose very high. I have the same hopes of you. Rasik had almost reached the apex in thought when he passed away. May you reach the apex and may you live 125 years.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 9522. Courtesy: Kanu Gandhi

¹ Even though advised against it by the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, the addressee met Sudhir Ghosh and replying to this on August 14 wrote : "Thank you for your letter introducing Mr. Ghosh. I much enjoyed a talk with him. I trust that a complete settlement between our two countries may be attained. I think that the last time we met was in the House of Commons with George Lansbury. I trust that you keep well."

290. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI JAISUKHLAL,

The letter written in English and dated June 29 seems to be from you, although you never write to me in English. Which other J. K. Mehta could it be? Anyhow I take it you are a Gujarati. I would be shocked if Gujaratis started writing to me in English.

Why must you see me in Poona? Write whatever you like about the Constituent Assembly. I can have no leisure at all. Some new task or other always turns up demanding undivided attention. Hence I have not the heart to let anyone come from Bombay. If you are the same old Jaisukhlal, I may let you come so that I can see for myself that you are hale and hearty. Yet I am not sure and if you are not the same old Jaisukhlal, why should I trouble you to come?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIJ. K. MEHTA
TAGORE ROAD
SANTA CRUZ

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. How can I express to you all my views? Whatever I have done, I have done with proper consideration and with Dilip's interest in mind. I think I have come to understand Kusum. Had it been necessary to intervene, I would certainly have done so. I have also met him. Now let things take their own course. Ultimately God alone knows what is good and what is bad.

Improve your health.

You did well in not writing about politics.

We may meet. Indications are that I may be coming there. If so, I shall be coming on the 5th.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

292. *LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON*

POONA,
July 3, 1946

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM¹,

I have your affectionate letter. It is all to the good that I rarely read any newspapers. How can I find the time? If I happened to read them I wouldn't believe you could have said so. Now, I shall be more careful.

I understand what you say about the Assembly under swaraj.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABU PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON
SPEAKER BHAVAN
BANDARIA BAGH
LUCKNOW

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

293. *LETTER TO THANMAL SOUCHETI*

POONA,
July 3, 1946

CHI. THANMAL,

I got the sad news of Sheth Pratapmal's death. May everyone get a father like yours. He made such sacrifices and yet how silently

¹ (1882-1962); Speaker, Legislative Assembly, U. P., 1937-39 and 1946-50; President of the Congress, 1950, but resigned soon after; Vice-President, Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

he rendered service! May you grow as selfless as he was and continue his tradition.

Blessings from
BAPU

THANMAL SOUCHETI
C/O SGT. CHANGNIRAM PRATAPMAL
SOJAT RAOD, MARWAR

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

294. INTERVIEW TO JOACHIM DIAS AND CHANDRAKANT KAKODKAR ¹

POONA,
July 3, 1946

Do not bow before the Portuguese Government. Remember that 40 crores of Indians are behind you.²

Q. Our fight against the Portuguese imperialism is for the present to obtain civil liberties. Hence, what is the type of satyagraha that we should offer?

A. You have to resist through civil disobedience every attack on civil liberties. But you should define beforehand what the civil liberties are for which you are fighting. You cannot ask for anything to which you have no moral right. Moreover, your movement should be strictly non-violent.

Q. The Colonial Administration of the Portuguese Government demands previous permission for meetings; but we want the right of calling meetings even without serving notice.

A. You should have every right to call meetings without notice. No self-respecting person can tolerate any hindrance to his doing what is morally just. We are free men and we want to hold meetings peacefully. For this we cannot give any previous notice. Hence you should hold meetings without giving any notice.

Q. In case we call a meeting and address the people and are arrested, and police allow us to go away saying we should come back on any fixed day, are we to agree to it? Or should we refuse to quit the police premises, or should we come out and defy their bans again?

A. The police who have the right to arrest you also have the

¹ President and Member of the Executive Committee of the Goan Youth League

² This Paragraph is from *The Hindu*.

right to let you go. Hence you should go out if you are allowed to do so. You should not insist on being kept under arrest. But once you go out you can defy the ban again. In case any day is fixed for your reappearance before the police, you are bound as gentlemen to do so.

Q. How should people act when a satyagrahi is arrested?

A. There should be no demonstration or disturbance of any kind if a satyagrahi is arrested. The people should be peaceful and offer themselves either individually or collectively to be arrested. I am not for hartal and such other things if anyone is arrested. After all you should know that a satyagrahi courts arrest of his own accord, and if the people wish to do anything at all, it should be to follow his example. As for demonstrations, etc., they will come at a later stage.

Q. How to defy the pre-censorship of Press?

A. This is really difficult but there are two solutions which I can offer. The first one is the one followed by me in South Africa. It is to issue handwritten bulletins which volunteers should sell openly. These bulletins should contain defiant news exposing the Government. It is better if the people who write out, sign their full names at the bottom of each bulletin. If many of you join together it won't be difficult to take out several copies. Let the Government arrest the people concerned, others can continue the work. The other way open to you is to get printed matter from outside and distribute it openly.

Q. How to defy the ban on organizations?

A. Start as many organizations as you like and begin working in their name.

Q. How should people react in case the Government takes recourse to shooting, etc.?

A. It is better to die bravely than exist under such repugnant conditions. Let the people say: 'All right, shoot us!'

Q. How should a satyagrahi keep up his morale when subjected to torture?

A. The satyagrahi must not wince. He should submit to every form of torture.

Q. What should be the attitude of a satyagrahi towards the Catholic Church in Goa when it becomes an active agency of oppression in the hands of the Portuguese rulers?

A. It is better to leave religion alone. But if it really plays into the hands of oppressors, then it is your duty to oppose it in the same way as you would oppose any oppressive regime. But be against it

only to the extent to which it hinders your cause.

Now I have answered all your questions, and I want that you should show your courage and should not allow the movement to fizzle out. Even if no one is prepared for sacrifice it is the duty of anyone who feels the wrong to oppose it without waiting for others to follow. [If] you rot in prison, the eyes of the others will be opened some time or other. As for myself I would not have remained for a moment in Goa without breaking such inhuman laws.

You have all my blessings and I promise you I will exert all my influence to see that the Indian National Congress is interested in Goa and that Goa comes on the map of India. Only show courage; I admire it.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946, and C. W. 11018. Courtesy: U. R. Rao

295. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ¹

POONA,
July 3, 1946

Addressing the prayer gathering today, Gandhiji referred to the situation in Ahmedabad, and stated that the latest report was that the situation was well in hand. Shri Morarji Desai had invited the representatives of Muslims, Hindus and others to a joint conference at Ahmedabad and had told them that he was prepared to withdraw the police and military if they so desired. But the latter, he heard, had unanimously replied that they were not prepared to take the risk. The result was the police and military were there. The authorities had promulgated a curfew order for three days to be enforced day and night. Therefore although as a result, the disturbances had been arrested, the peace that was seen in Ahmedabad today was the peace of the grave.

It was something, he added, of which no one could be proud. How he wished that both the Hindus and Muslims would combine and dispense with the help of the police and military for purposes of keeping them from mutual fight. The State could not suddenly disband them, but they could certainly reserve them for purposes of regulating the traffic, municipal sanitation and growing more food to combat the famine. He reminded them that so long as they depended upon the help of the police and military for maintaining law and order, real independence must remain a mere idle talk. They daily joined him in prayers. The essence of prayer was reliance on God and utter fearlessness.

Gandhiji said that he would not say that the situation in South Africa was

¹ The source reports the speech in two parts under two different headings. These have been collated here.

deteriorating. But it was certainly becoming graver. The Government repression was becoming worse. That was, however, part of the bargain. A satyagrahi breaks the law and welcomes the penalty.

Referring to the arrest and conviction of Parsee Sorabjee to three months' rigorous imprisonment, he described how as a young lad of sixteen he had given proof of unusual courage in the course of the satyagraha movement which he conducted in South Africa. A mounted policeman threatened to overrun the passive resisters. Sorabjee held the reins of the horse and told the policeman that he could not frighten the satyagrahis into submission by such tactics.¹ He was a worthy son of a worthy father, the late Parsee Rustomjee, both for his bravery and munificence.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Rev. Scott of Johannesburg whose Christian conscience had revolted against the inequality of the segregation law and the ill-treatment to which the passive resisters were being subjected. As a protest against it, Rev. Scott had decided to cast in his lot with the satyagrahis and share with them the indignities to which they were being subjected. It was no small thing for a white man to identify himself with coloured people in South Africa. If the satyagrahis remained free and non-violent till the end, all would be well with them. He had already told the audience their duty in this connection, that is, a heart-felt prayer to God to give strength to the satyagrahis and light to the whites.

The Hindu, 5-7-1946

296. LETTER TO SUJATA

[After July 3, 1946]²

CHI. SUJATA,

I received your letter of July 3. I could not write to you then. I did not recognize the girl at first. Later I recognized her. She gave me your second letter. I am glad that you are working in the villages. May you be successful. Talk to Lavanyalatabehn about the aid from the Kasturba Trust. The Kasturba Trust confines itself to poor village women and their sons and daughters. There is also an age bar.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayar and Dr. Sushila Nayar

¹ According to *Satyagraha in South Africa* General Lukin was about to order his soldiers to open fire on the striking labourers when Parsee Sorabjee seized the reins of the General's horse and appealed to him not to order firing and persuaded the labourers to go back to their work.

² Inferred from the reference to the addressee's letter of July 3, 1946.

297. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
July 4, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am enclosing a copy of a cable¹ received this morning by Gandhiji from H. H. the Aga Khan.

Gandhiji would like to know if H. E. can do anything to help in the matter of the air passage for Ashwin Chawdhuri which the Aga Khan wants.²

I hope you are enjoying your respite from the heat.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 98

298. LETTER TO KAMALA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KAMALA (ANDHRA),

Your question is harmless. But we have to save ourselves from our sins. We spoil the dogs. If we do not kill them we ourselves will die. The society can never go that far. Therefore this kind of violence becomes inevitable. there are so many other acts of violence which we must eschew. Only then can a question such as yours arise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 5905. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

¹ The Aga Khan in his cable from Nairobi had said : "Sorabjee arrested. Most important Ashwin Chawdhuri proceed New York explain our case public opinion. Unless he gets proper air priority impossible. Am doing my best from here but position unsatisfactory. Kindly intervene. Get Ashwin Chawdhuri air priority arranged through Indian Government. Approach Bhopal, Jinnah. Please have united front.

² The addressee replied on July 9 saying : "I am . . . asking Common wealth Relations Department on His Excellency's behalf to ascertain the exact position from the High Commissioner's Office."

299. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
July 4, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

There is no point in the questions which you have asked. A man who is wicked by nature will show his wickedness on any occasion. If such a rule is to be framed, it can have no room for exceptions.

I shall answer the rest of your questions when I go there in August.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 4560

300. LETTER TO G. D. TAPASE

POONA,
July 4, 1946

BHAI TAPASE¹,

I have your English letter. Why in English? Write in Hindustani, Marathi or any other Indian language.

I have gone through the Bill. I see no difficulty about it and I think no Harijan worker will have any objection to it. But the painful thing is that custom transgresses the law. Untouchability has found refuge more in custom than in law.

In fact, as far as I know, there is absolutely no basis for untouchability in law but under the present judicial system, however evil it may be, custom acquires the strength of law. Take, for instance, the "age of consent"². Now a days the Government has even stopped enforcing it because people no longer abide by it. It means that a law which is ahead of public opinion ceases to be observed. Nevertheless a Bill has to be brought up. Its implementation will depend largely upon the courage of caste Hindus and Harijans. Your law pundits will have to be careful of the word 'Harijan'. It is an apt expression, sweet but now embittered by many people.

¹ Minister, Industries, Fisheries and Backward Classes in Bombay

² The expression within quotation-marks is in English. The reference is to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act.

There seems to be an error in sub-clause 4 under IV B. You may look up [the passage] “But not caste therein,”¹ etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. TAPASE, MINISTER

POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

301. NOTE TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[On or before *July 5, 1946*]²

Please write to Shriman about the technical point you have raised and he will consult me. I will go through the papers and give my decision. Technically, of course, you are right. What I wrote for Gujarat cannot, technically, be applied to other provinces. The exemption is intended only for those who already know Hindi; it does not apply to anybody who may seek admission to the Sammelan³ [examination] now and later to the Urdu Anjuman⁴. The former contains the word “Hindi”. But now we cannot retain that word. It is on this issue that I resigned.⁵ People do not still seem to have realized that Hindi which excludes the use of the Urdu script and Urdu diction cannot be called a national language. The Congress has purposely adopted the word Hindustani and its decision is perfectly correct.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10810

302. LEFT-HANDED COMPLIMENT

I am writing this letter with a hope of getting proper and immediate response from you. Along with the whole of India I am well aware of your sweet will and affinity towards the Mehtar Community. Your *Harijan* has obliged us to a great extent by enabling us to see through your heart. Especially the recent *Harijan* have emphatically revealed your thoughts about the Mehtar Community.

¹ The expression within quotation-marks is in English.

² The postal cancellation mark bears the date 5-7-1946.

³ Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

⁴ Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu

⁵ On July 25, 1945, *vide* “Letter to Purushottamdas Tandon”, 25-7-1945.

I now wish to reveal my interrogatory heart in order to be well nigh to your feelings towards us and to be definite about our position in the muddled and complicated Indian political field.

By the time you will receive this letter it will be the last date of filling in nomination forms for the candidatures for the Constituent Assembly, which has, it is learnt, to be completed by the end of this month. Congress is proposing particular M. L. As and non-M. L. As for the same. It is believed that Scheduled Castes are also to be represented (adequately?). But is there any proposal from you or from Congress to elect adequate or at least some members from the Mehtar Community who, I am sure, will discharge their duty of citizenship and pick up their legitimate share in the future constitution of Free India?

2. Generous as you are towards us, may I assure myself and my community that Mehtar seats in the Constituent Assembly will not escape your notice?

3. Who will be the components of the Advisory Board? Caste Hindus or Minorities including (?) the Scheduled Castes?

4. Will the advice or proposals of the Advisory Board be binding to the Constituent Assembly? I think they will not. If so, what sense is there in appointing such a Board, which will be nonentity if the Constituent Assembly were not to pay heed to its advice? Is it not merely for the appeasement of the weak minorities?

You might say you have been [doing] and will do everything for us, but I wish to say 'let us be with you when everything for us is to be done. Let us be represented democratically.'

I strongly hope that my questions will be fully and satisfactorily answered by you with an obligation of immediate reply to me. I further humbly request you to be good enough to publish your answers in your weekly *Harijan*.

Hope to be excused for troubles.

I have reproduced the foregoing in order to show what havoc dangerous knowledge of English has produced in our society. This is a specimen not of English nor yet of Indian English. It is bookish English which the writer probably half understands. I suggest to him that if he had written to me in the national language Hindustani or in his provincial language, it would not have evoked an unfavourable response from me.

The writer has paid me a left-handed compliment and that perhaps in order to teach me how to express my love for the Bhangi, otherwise known as Mehtar. The writer is a discontented graduate,

setting no example or a bad example to Bhangis. He has isolated himself from them, though he professes to represent them.

He will certainly become my teacher if he will be a graduate in the art of being a good Bhangi. I very much fear that he does no scavenging himself; he does not know what scientific scavenging is. If he became an expert in the art, his services would be wanted by all the cities of India. When Bhangis really rise from the slumber of ages, they will successfully sweep the Augean stables everywhere and India will be a pattern of cleanliness and there will be in India no plague and other diseases which are the descendants of filth and dirt.

In the place where I am living in Bombay, my room and the adjoining lavatory are fairly clean, but I am in the midst of suffocating dirt. I have had no time to examine the tenements in front of me. They are as crowded and as dirty as the ones in the quarters where I was living in New Delhi. Had my graduate fellow Bhangi been an expert in the art, I would, without doubt, have requisitioned his services as my guide and helper.

As it is, not only have I no use for him, I have to risk his displeasure by telling him that he should not think of the Constituent Assembly or other assemblies. Let those go to them who are wanted there. Instead of getting rid of the wretched caste mentality, he argues that any Harijan is not good enough for the purpose but preference should be given to the Mehtar caste. I suggest to him that it is a harmful method, doing no good to anybody.

Anyway, he has expected the impossible from me. I am not made for these big institutions. I have never interested myself in the periodical assembly elections. I have not attended Working Committee meetings where they make these selections. What I know of the present selections is from the newspapers. I have become a Bhangi because I think that that is the vocation of every Hindu, that the hoary institution of untouchability as we know it today in its ugly shape will die a decent death only when the Hindus will be casteless by becoming Bhangis from the bottom of their hearts. That cannot be done by aspiring after the membership my correspondent has in view.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946
Harijan, 14-7-1946

303. 'ALL ABOUT BHANDARS' ¹

An article under the above caption appeared in the *Khadi Patrika* of 3rd June. As it is important I give it in full below:

It is our intention to make rapid changes in the running of our bhandars. In spite of the condition of yarn currency attaching to the sales of khadi, Bombay people have not yet taken to spinning. Most of the yarn given in exchange for cloth is bought. From the 1st of July, we shall give only Rs. 2 worth of khadi for one hank and, as a result, the sales of khadi will go down. One of the main reasons for khadi sales is that mill-cloth is rationed. Many persons who ordinarily wear mill-cloth are almost forced, as it were, to buy khadi. We take a statement from every customer as to whether the yarn given in is self-spun or spun by a member of the family or staff. But we have regretfully to admit that many customers do not appreciate their responsibility in the matter of making accurate statements. This irresponsible attitude is not in the best interests of khadi. Khadi production aims at self-sufficiency of village India. Other provinces will, therefore, now provide less and less cloth to our bhandars. The use of the words 'sale of khadi' is really inconsistent with the ideal. In the circumstances it is imperative for us to make timely changes in the running of bhandars. From July 1st we are closing two branches in Matunga and Dadar. For the last three months we have been giving training in Matunga in all the processes of khadi. In Dadar, there was some sale of khadi too, but these activities must now come to an end. In Girgaum, in the Khadi Printing Shop, the A. I. S. A. was running a training centre too. This shop will now be handed back to the trustees of the Khadi Printing Shop who will continue to give instruction in all the processes of khadi as well as arrange for some sales.

The reduction of work involves dispensing with the services of fifteen workers.

Ever since the new policy came into vogue, Gandhiji has been saying that the make-up of the bhandars must be changed. In order to fall into line we arranged facilities for teaching and weaving in some places but such outward changes have not connoted the real change. We felt that a change in our mental outlook is what was most needed. Therefore, examination of workers and such other reforms came into force.

Nevertheless all the changes mentioned above have not enabled us to gain our object. At the time when customers looked upon khadi as being in the fashion, bhandars were purely commercial depots. Today the bhandar desires

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 14-7-1946.

to bring about a change in the mentality of the khadi-wearer. It no longer desires to remain a sales depot. It desires to become a centre for imparting knowledge in all the processes of khadi manufacture. It desires to become a centre of attraction for weavers and other craftsmen. To this end we must continue undeterred to bring about the necessary changes and *pari passu* change the outlook of Bombay khadi-wearers. Then only will bhandars reflect the reality. We expect the customers of Bombay to remain loyal to us in our endeavour.

Readers will note that the success of the purpose, as expressed in the article, rests on the faith, intelligence and capability of the workers.

BOMBAY, July 6, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

304. LETTER TO J. J. SINGH ¹

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

DEAR SINGH,

Our mutual friend, Mr. Louis Fischer tells me that your persistent labours were solely responsible for the passage of the Indian Immigration Act. I congratulate you on your successful labours. You will, perhaps, oblige me by sending me a copy of the Act.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times Weekly, 27-4-1969

305. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your postcard. Today we have come to Bombay. As far as I can see Manilal will now plunge into the struggle. We should wait to see its outcome and you should not therefore leave in a hurry. It will be proper to take Arun and Ila along with you when you wish to go. And about this too you should decide for yourself. Anything that

¹ This was reproduced by the addressee in his article entitled "Mahatma Gandhi—Some Reminiscences" wherein he says : "I received Gandhiji's letter in Hindi with a translation in English written by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur."

you do will meet with my approval. I am not competent to make the final decision. You know the children's attitude better than anyone else. Mind you, this time it will be your responsibility to coach them well in Gujarati. If there is anything particular to discuss we shall discuss it when you come to see me although you may stay only for two or three days.

I hope you are all keeping well. I shall return to Poona by the 9th at the latest. I shall be busy with the meting which is scheduled to go on till the 12th. On the 13th I shall go to Sasvad. To Panchgani on the 14th, where I shall stay till the 29th. Then Poona. I propose to be in Sevagram by 7th August.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICAN STRUGGLE¹

BOMBAY,

July 6, 1946

This meeting of the A.I.C.C., while it is grieved that it has become imperative for the Indian settlers in South Africa once more to offer Satyagraha in the land of its birth against a law imposing on them a colour bar far more sinister than the one against which they had put up a brave fight between 1907 and 1914, congratulates the handful of satyagrahis on their brave but unequal action against heavy odds.

This meeting is pleased to find that doctors and such other men and women are at the head of the gallant struggle and that among them are represented Parsis, Christians, Muslims and Hindus. This meeting is also pleased to find that a few white men like the Rev. Scott² have thrown in their lot with the satyagrahis.

This meeting condemns the action of some white men in resorting to the barbarous method known as lynch law to terrorize the satyagrahis into submission to the humiliating legislation. It is worthy

¹ For Gandhiji's speech on the resolution, *vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C.", 7-7-1946.

² Rev. Michael Scott, a white clergyman who had stood up against the inequality of the segregation laws and the ill-treatment of Indian settlers in South Africa.

of note that a large part of the Indians are born and bred in South Africa, to whom India exists only in their imagination. These colonial-born Indians have adopted European manners and customs and English has become like their mother tongue.

This meeting notes with great satisfaction that the Indian resisters are keeping their struggle free from violence in any shape or form and conducting it with dignity and without rancour and that they are thus suffering not only for their self-respect but for the honour of India, and by their heroic resistance setting a noble example to all the exploited people of the earth.

This meeting assures the Indian settlers of South Africa of India's full support in this unequal struggle and is firmly of opinion that persistence in it is bound to crown their effort with success.

This meeting appeals to His Excellency the Viceory to use all his endeavours and ensure that of the British Government in aid of this struggle and invites the European residents of India to raise their voice in protest against white hooliganism and the anti-Asiatic and anti-colour legislation of South Africa.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

307. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

BOMBAY,
July 6, 1946

At the end of the prayer, Gandhiji asked how many Harijans were present in the hall. Not a hand went up. It was a great disappointment for him, Gandhiji said. He had come to live in a Harijan quarter because he had become a Bhangi. But there was not even one Harijan there.

I blame you and not those who are absent.

The reason for their absence is that the so-called caste Hindus have kept down the so-called untouchables for ages and that too in the name of religion. This hall is meant for the use of Harijans. Non-Harijans can come only by grace. Those who come here should make it a point to bring at least one Harijan each. If they befriend the Harijans, untouchability will disappear in the twinkling of an eye.

But he was grieved to find that they had not really done so. There were Harijan Barristers and lawyers. Even today, they could not live in the bungalows on Malabar

Hill. There was a Harijan volunteer girl working in his camp. She was studying in the B. A. class. There was nothing in her appearance to distinguish her from other girls. Why should the knowledge that she is a Harijan make her an untouchable to be treated differently from other girls?

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he was embarrassed by the care and attention that was being lavished on him by those who were in charge of the management of the camp. Yet he was finding his stay very taxing. There was so much dirt and filth about the place. Dr. Dinshaw had told him that the lavatories were so dirty that he could not use them. There were so many flies about the place that he was anxious that he (Gandhiji) might catch some infection and get killed. He himself was not worried about that. Although the two doctors with him looked after him, he did not depend on anyone except God. The Almighty would take care of his health. But his companions did not have that faith in God.

He had brought with him a big party, Gandhiji went on. They were there to render personal services and to help him with the editing of his weeklies and his correspondence. He was anxious for them. He himself had been given a good clean lavatory. But all the party could not use it. He had been thinking that if he came here again, he should stay here all by himself. He was occupying the house of the overseer. He had been wondering why those in charge of sanitation, that is, the Municipality and the P. W. D., should put up with this filth. What was the use of his coming and staying there if it could not induce them to make the place healthy and hygienic?

What was the connection between all this and the prayer, asked Gandhiji. A man who did not observe the rules of external cleanliness could not pray for internal cleanliness. If the object of their attending the prayer was idle curiosity, they had committed a sin by coming. If they had come to join in the prayer, they must pray for inner and outer cleanliness. To say one thing and to do something different would be deception. No one could deceive God, because he was omnipresent and omniscient.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

308. *SPEECH AT A. I. C. C.*¹

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I have often said that man plans but the success of his plans depends not on him but on the will of Providence which is the supreme arbiter of our destinies. Unlike you, I am [here] not in my own right but on sufferance. I have been told that some of my previous remarks about the Cabinet Mission's proposals have caused a good deal of confusion in the public mind. As a satyagrahi it is always my endeavour to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I never wish to hide anything from you. I hate mental reservations. But language is at best an imperfect medium of expression. No man can fully express in words what he feels or thinks. Even seers and prophets of old have suffered under that disability.

I have not seen what has appeared in the papers about what I am supposed to have said regarding the Cabinet Mission's proposals. I cannot read all the newspapers myself. I content myself with perusing only what my co-workers and assistants may place before me. I hold that I have lost nothing thereby. Because of what has appeared in the Press, an impression seems to have been created that I said one thing at Delhi and am saying something different now. I did say in one of my speeches at Delhi in regard to the Cabinet Mission's proposals that I saw darkness where I saw light before.² That darkness has not yet lifted. If possible it has deepened. I could have asked the Working Committee to turn down the proposals about the Constituent Assembly if I could see my way clearly. You know my relations with the members of the Working Committee. Babu Rajendra Prasad might have been a High Court Judge, but he chose instead to act as my interpreter and clerk in Champaran.³ Then there is the Sardar. He has earned the nickname of being my yes-man. He does not mind it. He

¹ On June 26 the Congress Working Committee had passed a resolution in New Delhi expressing willingness to "join the proposed Constituent Assembly with a view to framing the constitution of a free, united and democratic India" and demanding the formation of "a representative and responsible Provisional National Government" at the earliest possible date.

Gandhiji spoke on the motion moved by Abul Kalam Azad seeking ratification of the resolution of June 26 and the one on satyagraha in South Africa.

² *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 25-6-1946.

³ In 1917

even flaunts it as a compliment. He is a stormy petrel. Once he used to dress and dine in the Western style. But ever since he decided to cast his lot with me my word has been law to him. But even he cannot see eye to eye with me in this matter. They both tell me that whereas on all previous occasions I was able to support my instinct with reason and satisfy their head as well as heart, this time I have failed to do so. I told them in reply that whilst my own heart was filled with misgivings, I could not adduce any reason for it or else I would have asked them to reject the proposals straightway. It was my duty to place my misgivings before them to put them on their guard. But they should examine what I had said in the cold light of reason and accept my view-point only if they were convinced of its correctness. Their decision, which they have arrived at after prolonged deliberations and which is almost unanimous, is before you. The members of the Working Committee are your faithful and tried servants. You should not lightly reject their resolution.

I am willing to admit that the proposed Constituent Assembly is not the Parliament of the people. It has many defects. But you are all seasoned and veteran fighters. A soldier is never afraid of danger. He revels in it. If there are shortcomings in the proposed Constituent Assembly, it is for you to get them removed. It should be a challenge to combat, not a ground for rejection. I am surprised that Shri Jayaprakash Narayan said yesterday¹ that it would be dangerous to participate in the proposed Constituent Assembly and therefore they should reject the Working Committee's resolution. I was not prepared to hear such defeatist language from the lips of a tried fighter like Jayaprakash. One line from a song composed by the late Choudhary Rambhaji Dutt has always made a very deep appeal to me. It means: "We will never be defeated—nay, not even in death." That is the spirit in which I expect you to approach this resolution. A satyagrahi knows no defeat.

Nor would I expect a satyagrahi to say that whatever Englishmen do must be bad. The English are not necessarily bad. There are good men and bad men among the English people as among any other people. We ourselves are not free from defects. The English could not have risen to their present strength if they had not some good in them. They have come and exploited India, because we quarrelled amongst ourselves and allowed ourselves to be exploited.

¹ At the A. I. C. C. meeting

In God's world unmixed evil never prospers. God rules even where Satan seems to hold sway, because the latter exists only on His sufferance. Some people say that satyagraha is of no avail against a person who has no moral sense. I join issue with that. The stoniest heart must melt if we are true and have enough patience. A satyagrahi lays down his life, but never gives up. That is the meaning of the "Do or die" slogan. That slogan does not mean 'Kill or be killed'. That would be wilful distortion and travesty of its true meaning. The true meaning is that we must do our duty and die in the course of performing it if necessary. To die without killing is the badge of a satyagrahi. If we had lived up to that ideal we would have won swaraj by now. But our ahimsa was lame. It walked on crutches. Even so it has brought us to our present strength. I know what happened in 1942. You will perhaps say that it was sabotage and underground activity that had brought the country to its present strength. It cannot be denied that sabotage activity was carried on in the name of the Congress during the '42 struggle but I deny *in toto* that the strength of the masses is due to that. Whatever strength the masses have is due entirely to ahimsa however imperfect or defective its practice might have been. Our ahimsa was imperfect because we were imperfect, because it was presented to you by an imperfect being like myself. If then, even in the hands of imperfect instruments it could produce such brilliant results, what could it not have achieved in the hands of a perfect satyagrahi?

In 1942 our people showed great valour. But greater valour will be required of us before our goal is reached. We have done much, but more remains to be done. For that we must have patience and humility and detachment. You should try to understand what happened in 1942, the inner meaning of that struggle and the reason why it stopped short where it did.

This is no time for dalliance or ease. I told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that he must wear the crown of thorns for the sake of the nation and he has agreed.¹ The Constituent Assembly is going to be no bed of roses for you but only a bed of thorns. You may not shirk it.

That does not mean that everybody should want to go into it. Only those should go there who are especially fitted for the task by virtue of their legal training or special talent. It is not a prize to be

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President of the Indian National Congress.

sought as a reward for sacrifices, but a duty to be faced even like mounting the gallows or sacrifice of one's all at the altar of service.

There is another reason why you should join the Constituent Assembly. If you asked me whether in the event of your rejecting the proposed Constituent Assembly or the Constituent Assembly failing to materialize, I would advise the people to launch civil disobedience, individual or mass, or undertake a fast myself, my reply is 'No'. I believe in walking alone. I came alone in this world, I have walked alone in the valley of the shadow of death and I shall quit alone when the time comes. I know I am quite capable of launching satyagraha even if I am all alone. I have done so before. But this is no occasion for a fast or civil disobedience. I regard the Constituent Assembly as the substitute of satyagraha. It is constructive satyagraha.

The alternative is constructive work which you have never done justice to. If you had, you would have today got the Constituent Assembly of Jayaprakash's dream instead of the present one. But a satyagrahi cannot wait or delay action till perfect conditions are forthcoming. He will act with whatever material is at hand, purge it of dross and convert it into pure gold. Whatever may be the defects in the State Document of May 16th, I have no doubt as to the honesty of those who have framed it. They know they have got to quit. They want to quit in an orderly manner. And to that end they have produced the Document they could under the circumstances. I refuse to believe that they came all the way from England to deceive us.

A polish lady¹ has sent me a note just today saying that all Europeans had received secret instructions to leave India as the British army would no longer be able to give them adequate protection. If it is so, it is a sad reflection on us. We would be unworthy of the name of satyagrahi if even an English child did not feel secure in our midst. Even if we succeed in driving out the Europeans by these tactics, something worse will take their place. Our Quit India Resolution² has no malice about it. It only means that we will no longer be exploited.

Let us not be cowardly, but approach our task with confidence and courage. Let not the fear of being deceived dismay us. No one can deceive a satyagrahi. Never mind the darkness that fills my mind

¹ Wanda Dynowska; *vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.

² *Vide* Appendix "C. Rajagopalachari's Formula", before 5-8-1942.

He will turn it into light.¹

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the draft resolution on the satyagraha movement now being carried on by Indians in South Africa. He said that the Indians in South Africa were being ill-treated not because they were not whites but because they were considered as coolies. The Indians in South Africa spoke English and many of them were doctors and lawyers. In spite of all this, the South African whites looked upon them as coolies and called them as such. The Indians, of course, were in a minority and yet they were putting up a brave fight. They had no swords or guns but they were determined to resist the anti-Indian laws by soul force, which was the only force available to satyagrahis. Durban owed its present prosperity to the Indians. The South African whites had agreed to give the Indians the vote though not as equals but as inferiors.

The white civilization in South Africa could not be kept alive by such means. Mahatma Gandhi wondered how a brave man like General Smuts who had praised the Indians of their elementary rights.²

Commenting on the doings of the white hooligans who were said to have beaten to death an Indian, whom they mistook for a satyagrahi, Gandhiji remarked:

It is a sad event. Nevertheless, I feel happy. A satyagrahi must always be ready to die with a smile on his face without retaliation and without rancour in his heart. Some people have come to have a wrong notion that satyagraha means only jail-going, perhaps facing lathi blows and nothing more. Such satyagraha cannot bring independence. To win independence you have to learn the art of dying without killing.

I venture to submit that a civilization which needs such barbarous legislation for its protection is a contradiction in terms. The Indians are fighting for their honour. The land in South Africa does not belong to the whites. Land belongs to one who labours on it. I would not shed a single tear if all the satyagrahis in South Africa are wiped out. Thereby they will not only bring deliverance to themselves but point the way to the Negroes and vindicate the honour of India. I am proud of them and so should you be.

His object in speaking to them, he continued, was not to move them to tears or to incite them to anger and vituperation against the whiter. Rather they should pray to God to guide the whites aright and grant strength and courage to their brethren to remain steadfast to the end.

The South African struggle may appear to be insignificant

¹ The report up to this point has been reproduced from *Harijan*. What follows is from *The Hindu*.

² What follows is from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 14-7-1946.

today but it is charged with momentous consequences. Satyagraha is today being tried in the land of its birth. The success of a handful of Indians, mostly descendants of indentured labourers, has excited the jealousy of the whites of South Africa. And they are now subjecting them to unspeakable indignities. They are sought to be segregated into ghettos and further humiliated by being offered an inferior franchise. That all this should happen under the imprimatur of Field Marshal Smuts fills me with shame and humiliation. Our sins have a strange way of coming home to roost. We turned a portion of ourselves into pariahs and today the whites of South Africa are doing the same to our compatriots there. Let us purge ourselves of this curse and bless the heroic struggle of our brethern in South Africa. They do not need our monetary help. But they need all our sympathy and moral support.¹

The Hindu, 8-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946 and 21-7-1946

309. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

BOMBAY,
July 7, 1946

I am glad the weather having cleared, it was possible to worship God in the open air. I hope you will cultivate the habit of collective prayers. I would like to impress upon you the need for learning Hindustani, our national language. Without a national language we could not call ourselves as of India.

The Hindu, 9-7-1946

310. NOTE TO BHIMSEN SACHAR

[After July 7, 1946]³

Why does Sudarshan not make a written statement denying the accusation and saying his conduct has been pure? If he does not say even that much, how can I write that the report I have received is false?

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ After Gandhiji's address the debate was resumed. Prominent among those who opposed the resolution were Jayaprakash Narayan, Achyut Patwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali, members of the Congress Socialist Party. The resolution was then put to vote and carried, 204 voting for and 51 against.

² As Gandhiji was observing silence his written speech was read out.

³ This was in reply to the addressee's letter of July 7, 1946.

311. INTERVIEW TO "DAILY HERALD"¹

[On or before *July 8, 1946*]²

Gandhiji was gloomy about the world situation. He thought that there would be another war in less than ten years' time.

As for the atom bomb Gandhiji did not agree with the correspondent's suggestion that its frightfulness would force non-violence on the world. On the contrary Gandhiji's view was that the "Violent man's eyes light up with the prospect of much greater amount of destruction and death which he would now wreak."

Gandhiji told the correspondent that "there would be no real freedom in India until the untouchables were free". He, however, pointed out that untouchables suffered from no legal disabilities like the Negroes in the United States and the Indians and other Asiatics in South Africa.

The Hindu, 11-7-1946

312. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Kind friends have inundated me with messages of congratulation on my providential escape from what might have been a nasty train accident.³ As it is not possible to send individual acknowledgment, I hope the senders of messages will accept my thanks through the Press.

The Hindu, 8-7-1946

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING⁴

BOMBAY,
July 8, 1946

Speaking at the prayer meeting this evening, Mahatma Gandhi congratulated the audience on their exemplary silence during the prayer.

Gandhiji drew pointed attention to the insanitation of the *chawls* around. Dr. Shushila Nayyar and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta had inspected the *chawls* at his request. They

¹ This was given to Petar Strusberg, *Daily Herald's* correspondent in India.

² The report appeared under the date-line "London, July 8".

³ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 30-6-1946.

⁴ The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

had reported to him that the filth and dirt that they saw were unbearable. In several places, the drain pipes were choked, with the result that they did not function properly. In other places, the drains overhead were leaking to the discomfort of those living below. There was great scarcity of water. Excepting for two or three hours during the day, the taps were not running. Flush latrines were worse than useless under such conditions. It was a wonder to him how anyone could use such filthy latrines. The arrangement for collection and disposal of refuse were most unsatisfactory. The open refuse tins emitted a foul smell.

The overcrowding in the *chawls* was appalling. It was the duty of those in authority to improve the sanitary conditions of the *chawls* and if the municipality failed in its duty, it was the right of the people to demand redress even by offering satyagraha. The owners of the *chawls* and the overseers and the managing staff should all do their utmost to rectify the wrong.

Gandhiji felt ashamed and hurt to find that his residence was being guarded by the police day and night. It was a matter of shame for them also. They should tell the police that he was in their charge and that they would look after him. The Harijans had cause to feel bitter about the caste Hindus and therefore, against him too, thought he had become a Bhangi. If they were angry with him also and vented their anger on him, he would feel no rancour against them. He had been doing his utmost to explain to the caste Hindus and the Harijans their respective duties. The Harijans, however, could well feel bitter towards him, because with all his efforts, untouchability had not disappeared root and branch. When he came again, he would like to have cleanliness all round and not merely in his room. And he would like to do without police protection. He had no desire to become a burden to them, the dwellers in the *chawls*.

The Hindu 10-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 14-7-1946

314. THE REAL DANGER

As during the two days of the session of the A. I. C. C. in Bombay I listened to some of the spirited speeches against the Working Committee's resolution submitted the A. I. C. C. for ratification, I could not subscribe to the dangers portrayed by the opposition. No confirmed satyagrahi is dismayed by the dangers, seen or unseen, from his opponent's side. What he must fear, as every army must, is the danger from within.

Opposition, however eloquent it may be, will defeat its purpose if it is not well informed, balanced and well based and does not promise action and result more attractive than what is opposed. Let the opposition at the late meeting answer.

My purpose here is merely to point out the danger from within. The first in importance is laziness of mind and body. This comes out of the smug satisfaction that Congressmen having suffered imprisonment have nothing more to do to win freedom and that a grateful organization should reward their service by giving them first preference in the matter of elections and offices. And so, there is an unseemly and vulgar competition for gaining what are described as prize posts. Here there is a double fallacy. Nothing should be considering a prize in the Congress dictionary and imprisonment is its own reward. It is the preliminary examination of a satyagrahi. Its goal is the slaughter-house even as that of the spotless lamb. Jail-going is, instead, being used as a passport to every office accessible to the Congress. Hence there is every prospect of a satyagrahi's imprisonment becoming a degrading occupation like that of professional thieves and robbers. No wonder my friends of the underground variety avoid imprisonment as being comparatively a bed of roses. This is a pointer to the pass the Congress is coming to.

The friends who opposed the resolution on the British Cabinet Delegation's proposals do not seem to know what they are aiming at. Is independence to be bought at the price of a bloody revolution as was, say, the French, the Soviet or even the English? Then frank and honest work has yet to begin. They have to tread a very dangerous path in openly making the Congress such an institution. My argument has no force if subterranean activity is a doctrine of universal application and is now being employed against the Congress. The very thought repels me. I should hope for the sake of my own sanity that the thought is devoid of any foundation. Then it is clearly their duty to say to the Congressmen that now that there is Congress Raj or Representative Raj, whether of the Congress variety or the Muslim League, they must set about reforming it in detail and not condemn it *in toto*. Total non-violent non-co-operation has no place in popular Raj, whatever its level may be.

Who is responsible for the mad orgy in Madura and, coming nearer, in Ahmedabad? It will be folly to attribute everything evil to British machinations. This senseless theory will perpetuate foreign domination, not necessarily British. The British will go in any case. They want to go in an orderly manner as is evident to me from the State Paper or they will go and leave India to her own fate assuming that India has forsaken the path of non-violence with the certain result of a combined intervention of an assortment of armed powers. Let the

opposition say to the Congressmen what kind of independence they want. Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. They recite the formula almost parrot-like. Or, their notion of independence is fully expressed in saying that they mean by it Congress Raj. And they won't be wrong. They have left further thinking to the Working Committee—a most undemocratic way. In true democracy every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself. How this real revolution can be brought about I do not know except that every reform like charity must begin at home.

If then the Constituent Assembly fizzles out, it will not be because the British are wicked every time. It will be because we are fools or, shall I say, even wicked? Whether we are fools or wicked or both, I am quite clear that we must look for danger from within, not fear the danger from without. The first corrodes the soul, the second polishes.

BOMBAY, July 9, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

315. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU'

July 9, 1946

YOU NEED NOT STAND. SARDAR HAS SEEN THIS.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

316. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP BOMBAY,

July 9, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I quote below from a letter of a Polish lady² whom I have known for years:

¹ This was in reply to a telegram of July 8, 1946 from the addressee, a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, which read : "Working Committee has nominated me for Constituent Assembly. Kindly wire C/o Postmaster if this has your approval."

² Wanda Dynowska; *vide* "Speech at A. I. C. C.", 7-7-1946.

There are now about 5,000 Polish evacuees in India. They have been supported first by the Polish and then by the British Government. Now it is reported that they will be taken over by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. About 3,600 of them will soon be joining their families, also soldiers in Britain. About 1,400 have been evacuated, we do not yet know where. There is a tendency on the part of the Indian Government to evacuate all the Europeans from India in a hurry. Even those of the Poles who are working in different parts of India and require no charity and who are quite useful to the country in their present jobs will be compelled to leave India, much against their will. Among other reasons, the Government representatives give the unwillingness of Indians to have foreigners in their midst. Out of the 5,000 Poles here, only 77 are reported to be ready to return to Poland in her present position of utter slavery and terrorist regime.

You will oblige me if you could kindly inform me whether there is any truth in the statement of my correspondent.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 87

317. SUCCESS OF THE NEW TEAM

The success of the new team¹ depends as much upon the manner in which it carries out the work as upon the manners of the old. If the new team breaks with the old, it is bound to fail even like a son who repudiates the inheritance left by his father. It is also bound to fail if those who have retired do not help their successors in every possible way. They were selected by Maulana Saheb not in order to give them importance but by reason of their services in their own provinces. A servant does not cease to be a servant when he gives place to another for the sake of accession of new blood or some other similar and cogent reason. It is to be hoped therefore that the old ones will give the new ones the full benefit of their experience.

The most striking change is the retirement of the General Secre-

¹ On July 9 Jawaharlal Nehru had announced the formation of the new Congress Working Committee which included : Abul Kalam Azad, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Govind Ballabh Pant, C. Rajagopalachari, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Sarat Chandra Bose, Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Rao Saheb Patwardhan, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, Pratep Singh, Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar.

tary who had held the post for an unbroken period of ten years. His help will be required constantly by his successors¹ who are new to the office and the new members of the Working Committee. I know they will get all the help they need from Acharya Kripalani. It is a good thing a woman fills for the first time in the history of the Congress the post of General Secretary. Shrimati Mridula Sarabhai was one of the pupils of Acharya Kripalani in the initial stage of the career of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Therefore, she will have full guidance from her *acharya* in the difficult task to which she is called.

To those to whom the change may give cause for misgivings, I would say that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself makes a firm and stable bridge between the old and the new, assisted as he will be by some of the ablest members of the old team. No one need therefore entertain any fear of a break with the past. A healthy circulation is as necessary for the body politic as for the individual.

POONA, July 10, 1946

Harijan, 14-7-1946

318. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²

POONA,

July 10, 1946

I know what is taking place there because in a way I belong to South Africa, having passed 20 years of the best part of my life there. It was there that satyagraha was born. The West is passing through a purgatory today. The vanquished lie prostrate at the feet of the victors. But those who have won the war have found that they are no more victors than those who have lost it. Yet it is not in the World War II that the Western civilization will have met its grave. It is being dug in South Africa. The white civilization in South Africa looks black in contrast with the coloured or the Asiatic civilization which is comparatively white. If our people remain steadfast and non-violent till the end, I have not a shadow of doubt that their heroic struggle will drive the last nail into the coffin of Western civilization which is being found out in its true colours in South Africa.

¹ Viz., Mridula Sarabhai and Dr. B. V. Keskar

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The speech was also reported in *The Hindu*, 12-7-1946.

The whites in South Africa are becoming like brutes. Eastern and Western cultures are pitted against each other. And what a contrast they present! The whites have enacted savage laws to force the Indians to live in ghettos. Field Marshal Smuts is a great philosopher. He calls me his friend. He has nothing to say against Asiatic culture. But he has to take measures to safeguard the white civilization. He told me that he did not look down upon coloured people. The fact that Mrs. Subbaroyan, when she went to England for studies stayed in Field Marshal Smuts' house supports that statement. But, said the Field Marshal, in spite of the absence of prejudice, he was bound to protect Western culture in South Africa and he hoped that an understanding man that I was, I would appreciate it.

Gandhiji failed to understand how a culture or civilization worth the name could require legal protection. The Indians were resisting the ghetto law in a civil, i. e., non-violent and therefore civilized, way. They welcomed the penalty for the breach of law which could not be morally defended. But the white hooligans too were breaking their own laws. Theirs was criminal disobedience. It was a matter of pride for India that the children of indentured labourers and traders—many of them descendants of Harijans—were proving themselves such brave satyagrahis. As against this the whites were resorting to lynch law. He remarked:

After all civil resistance had its birth in Asia. Jesus was an Asiatic. If he was reborn and went to South Africa today and lived there, he would have to live in a ghetto.

He hoped that as in 1914, Field Marshal Smuts would at long last realize that he could not persecute the Indians in South Africa for ever and come to an honourable settlement with them when he had tried them through and through. A committee of white men had been formed in South Africa to express sympathy with identify themselves with the cause of the Indian passive resisters there. There was something of that kind in his time also. But this time it seemed to be on a bigger scale. If this becomes extensive and the hooliganism is stopped and anti-Asiatic laws are repealed, there is hope of a blending of Eastern and Western cultures. Otherwise South Africa may prove to be the grave of Western civilization.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

319. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[After *July 10, 1946*]¹

CHI. SUSHILA,

There was nothing from you yesterday. Shirin checks the blood-pressure in the morning. It was 170/100; at midday it dropped to 155/90; yesterday it was 135/100. It seems to have subsided now. Not a drop of rain. Everybody is distraught. Unemployment is rising.

The Working Committee meets from today. Let us see how much time I am required to devote to it. Amtussalaam is expected about the 12th. Rani Vidyavati of Hardoi is arriving today. Of course, Rajkumari is coming.

Sankaran is all right.

The two men to be sent to Panchgani are ready. One is from Nalwadi and the other is a new arrival. I shall dispatch either of them today or tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

320. AN APPEAL

[After *July 10, 1946*]²

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Thanks for the second purse from you. We are still short by a little amount, but I am told it will be made up in a couple of months or so.

I regard your contribution as the least you could do. I need your full assistance in the great task we have taken up here, which is no less than the all-round development of Uruli—physical, mental and spiritual. In this venture I need help from all, the old and the young, men and women and children too. We must forget the differences of caste and creed. Only then shall we be free from the three-fold

¹ This is written on the back of a note dated July 10, 1946.

² This appeal is scribbled on the back of a letter dated July 10, addressed to Amrit Kaur.

torment. The seven hundred thousand villages of India will have some hope if Urulikanchan accomplishes this task.

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

321. LETTER TO S. RIDLEY

NATURE CURE CLINIC,

POONA,

July 11, 1946

DEAR MR. RIDLEY,

I am sorry that I am able only today to deal with your kind letter of 5th ultimo about sterilization of lepers. All the major principles mentioned in your letter are certainly commendable. Sterilization stands apart. Being a permanent disablement, it seems to be a highly deplorable measure. Its total effect on the delicate human system is still unknown. Man, in his hurry to secure immunity from outside, ignores the effect of his action on fellow man. I therefore, incline towards Dr. Cochrane's view that the real remedy lies in people gaining the right knowledge about leprosy and over-coming their hereditary but understandable repugnance towards lepers, whose power of infecting their neighbours is probably no greater than that of many other infectious cases. However, I am in touch with those who are in charge of the Sind Bill.

Yours sincerely,

S. RIDLEY, ESP. I.C.S.

COMMISSIONER, N. D.

COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW

AHMEDABAD NO. 4

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

322. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI AND MADHURI DESAI

POONA,

July 11, 1946

CHI. DHIRU AND MADHURI,

I was hoping to come and see you during my stay in Bombay but it could not be done. So I contented myself with sending you a

message through Nathubhai from Bori Bunder. I did not wish to come on a condolence visit, but wanted to clear a misunderstanding you are reported to harbour. Both of you are reported to believe that I was the cause of Bhulbhai's early death. This is wholly untrue. The belief does no justice to Bhulbhai. I was in fact his well-wisher. I believe that Bhulabhai had accepted the usefulness of my advice. Even if this is doubted there can certainly be no doubt as to the soundness of my advice. I should like both of you to realize this. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Bhulbhai Desai Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

323. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

POONA,

July 11, 1946

BROTHER RAJBHOJ,

I was glad to see your letter written in Marathi. But there is still one complaint. You could have written independently in Marathi. Instead, you have translated the letter from English. If any translating has to be done it should be done from Marathi into English, not from English into Marathi.

At the moment the work is so heavy that it is difficult to find time for a meeting. Still it should be all right if you come tomorrow between 8.30 and 9 p. m.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Marathi: G. N. 781

324. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,

July 11, 1946

Giving the latest news from South Africa to the prayer gathering, Mahatma Gandhi said that men and women from Johannesburg had gone to Durban to offer satyagraha. It was good news. Victory was sure if they kept up that spirit.

Referring next to the meetings of the A. I. S. A. and the Kasturba Trust which he had attended in the afternoon, Gandhiji mentioned that the A. I. S. A. had distributed five crores of rupees on an average of Rs. 25 lakhs per year among the poor spinners and weavers. It had done a lot, but compared to the task before it, its achievement appeared insignificant. It had to clothe the whole of India with khadi as was the case once upon a time. Not only did India produce enough cloth for herself, she was also able to export it. There were no mills in India then. He said:

I might say that every woman had her own mill in the charkha and the *takli*.

Modern mills were evolved from the charkha. Man was a mixture of divine and devilish forces. The force behind the spinning-wheel was divine, devoid of any trace of exploitation. The foreigner saw the hidden possibilities that were in it and, by the application of steam and electricity, created mills and used them as instruments of exploitation of the simple races of the earth.

This represented the power of the devil. There were so many cloth-mills in India and yet India went about almost naked. There was scarcity of cloth all over the world. The Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic Dr. Sultan Sjahrir, had informed Pandit Nehru that they had surplus rice which they would gladly send to India to help meet the threat of famine. In return, they wanted no money, but would be glad to have cloth as they were suffering from cloth shortage themselves. They had neither cloth-mills nor had they taken to the wheel. Pandit Nehru had broached the matter to some mill-owners who gladly gave quantities of cloth for despatch to Java. If out of the 40 crores of India, even 20 crores in her seven lakh villages took to spinning for one or two hours a day, they could not only clothe the population of the villages but even supply cloth for the cities. The conviction had dawned upon him even before he came to India that the revival of hand-spinning alone could restore India to its pristine glory. He had since compared the spinning-wheel to the central sun round which the solar system of village economy revolved. It provided the golden bridge between the rich and the poor.

To meet the crisis that faced them, said Gandhiji, he suggested that the popular Ministries should make a declaration that the villagers must produce their own cloth. They would be supplied with cotton, which they must spin and make into cloth. This would enable them to have cloth almost free of cost as it were.

The All-India Spinners' Association is likely to draw up a scheme for the expansion of the khadi industry in the country and place it before the popular Ministries. If the Ministers realize that there is no other way to clothe the naked in India, the scheme will go ahead without any difficulty.

Today, the city-dwellers complained that they could not get khadi at khadi bhandars, that they were asked to make partial payment in yarn spun by themselves. If they understood the new spirit behind the khadi drive, these complaints would

disappear. There was nothing to prevent the city-dwellers from producing their own khadi in the same way as the villagers were expected to do.

As for the Kasturba Trust its work was still more difficult than that of the A.I.S.A. They had collected one and a quarter crores of rupees, but the money had to be spent on the welfare of women and children in the villages. Take for instance maternity work in the villages. The village midwives were ignorant and dirty. The village women were more hardy than city women. Still the laws of Nature could not be defied. To teach clean methods to the village midwife was not an easy job. It was a matter of adult education and everyone knew that adult education was a much harder task than the education of the children. He could spend away the one and a quarter crores today by raising one or two big hospitals of the city type. But that would not be rendering real service to women and children in the villages. The money was collected in the name of woman who had become a villager and who died with her heart in the villages. He was not prepared to squander away that money anyhow. He knew that the public were becoming impatient. They felt that the work was progresing too slowly. But he wished to tell them not to lose patience. The work was going on slowly but surely. They were moving in uncharted waters. They must proceed with caution.

The Hindu, 13-7-1946

325. LETTER TO MANILA GANDHI

POONA,
July 12, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Sushila has come here alone to consult me. I have advised her that she should miss the ship which sails on the 18th and await your letter. Whether to take the children along has to be thought about. This too you are in a better position to do. I should myself like them to stay on here. There are difficulties of course. So the right thing will be for you to consider the situation there and decide. I do see the need for Sushila's presence there.

I see from Sundaram's letter that both Sita and Sumitra are in Kashi at present.

Sushila is leaving today for Bombay., She will be there for a day and then go to Akola.

I am leaving for Panchgani tomorrow for a fortnight. Then by August 7, I shall be in Sevagram. My health is fairly good. I say some-thing every day about the situation in South Africa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4984

326. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
July 12, 1946

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

As you know, with the consent of you people (Holding Trustees) about 10 or 12 lakhs of rupees of the Kasturba Trust are at present lying in the fixed deposit account with the Central Bank and the United Commercial Bank. The Central Bank pays $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent interest for a period of 12 months and the United Commercial Bank $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. Since the Trust is meant for philanthropic work I would like the Banks to pay to the Trust what they realize by way of interest from loans to the Government or from other sources. It means the Trust must get at least 3 per cent interest. I am writing to Sir Homi Mody about the interest from the Central Bank, and to you about the interest from the United Commercial Bank. It would be good if you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Bank, gave 3 per cent interest.

Tomorrow I am leaving for Panchgani. Please send the reply there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: C. W. 8050. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

327. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 12, 1946

Gandhiji talked to the audience about the conditions of Indians in Ceylon this evening. He had visited Ceylon years ago.¹ If Kashmir with its snow-clad Himalayas was the diadem of Mother India, then Ceylon was the emerald pendent of the necklace round her neck. It was rightly described as Ceylon the Golden. Indians had played an important part in developing Ceylon. The Ceylonese had got a sort of constitution

¹ In November, 1927

now. There was nothing wonderful about it. But they felt that the Indians should be turned out of Ceylon. The Indians had gone there as labourers. They worked under the most difficult and unhealthy conditions. They worked for Ceylon and settled down there. It was hard for them to leave that country now, and they wanted equal citizenship rights with the Ceylonese.

The Ceylonese case was that the Indians could not ride two horses at one time. If they were Indians, they should return to India. If not, they should become Ceylonese nationals. There were others who were not prepared to have the Indians in Ceylon in any circumstances. It was strange. The Indians and Ceylonese were brothers. A narrow strip of water separated India from Ceylon. A strong man could swim across the channel. They were both coloured people. The Ceylonese followed Buddhism and the birth-place of Buddhism was India. How could such a quarrel between Indians and Ceylonese be tolerated? They all wished them to bridge the gulf and become one. The A. I. C. C. had passed a resolution appointing a committee of four to go into the matter. It consisted of the Congress President, Shri C. Raja-gopalachari, Shri Ramachandran, and Shri Aryanayakum. The Indian labourers in Ceylon had gone on strike. The Congress had advised them to give it up. They did not wish to embarrass the Ceylonese. They wanted a brotherly settlement.

What was their duty in the matter? —Gandhiji asked the gathering. They should all pray to God to show light to both. It was their duty to know how their brothers overseas were faring. That is why he had told them all about the Indians in Ceylon. In the end, he asked them to keep up the habit of praying regularly both in the morning and in the evening after he had gone away from Poona.

The Hindu, 14-7-1946

328. LETTER TO PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

There was a discussion about Bhai . . .¹ in the Charkha Sangh meeting. I knew nothing about the matter. I saw the letter. You have needlessly taken the matter to heart. Whatever institution we might be in, our decisions can be changed, they are subject to criticism. Why should we be sensitive about it? No one had anything else in mind beyond what was said. Nothing that was said warranted your tendering resignation. The Sangh having expressed its opinion has even left

¹ The name is omitted in the source.

the decision to you. It shows that there was no question of the trustees going to the court or anything else. You should have forbearance. You are a devotee of khadi and a dedicated worker; how can a *sevak* be so sensitive? Now that you have the right opportunity to serve khadi, avail yourself of it fully.

Owing to my bad handwriting I am dictating this. I hope you will have no trouble in following it. If you have any difficulty in replying in Hindustani you may do so in English.

I shall be in Panchgani up to the 28th. After that till the 4th August I shall be in Poona and then at Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

329. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

PANCHGANI,
July 13, 1946

In the song that has just been sung,² the world has been aptly described as the valley of sorrow and suffering. God alone enables us to brave it all. The poet, however has proceeded to call the world an illusion and a dream. Joy or what men call happiness may be, or really is, a dream in a fleeting and transitory world, where everything is like a dissolving phantasmagoria. But we cannot dismiss the suffering of our fellow creatures as unreal and thereby provide a moral alibi for ourselves. Even dreams are true while they last and to the sufferer, his suffering is a grim reality. Anyway, whether the world be real or unreal, we have certain duties in life which must be faced, understood and duly performed while we are in this world.

Mahatma Gandhi said he was grateful to God for being able to come to Panchgani again this year although he was not able to come earlier because of his stay in Delhi on account of the Cabinet Mission. This annual short stay at the hill station enabled him, he added, to store up enough energy for carrying on his heavy work during the remaining months. From his experience of the last three years he found it beneficial to plan staying about six months on the side of Poona from

¹ The report in *The Hindu* has been collated with Pyarelal's version in his "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*.

² By the Parsi girls of the Batha High School where the prayers were held

February to August and in Sevagram during the rest of the year.

He could not leave Sevagram altogether because of his close and fairly long association with various activities there, but he also wanted to devote some time to his newly found nature-cure centre at Uruli Kanchan and had therefore planned to spend some time there.

The Hindu, 15-7-1946, and *Harijan*, 21-7-1946

330. KHADI IN TOWNS

Your scheme for making village India self-sufficient in the matter of clothing has hit town lovers of khadi pretty hard. You have gone so far as to say that sales bhandars may close as such and that townsfolk may even revert to the use of mill cloth.

While there is no quarrel with the new ideology and the consequent basic change in the running of bhandars nor with the introduction of a certain quota of yarn currency for purchasing khadi, I would like you to solve the difficulty of town buyers who must use only khadi.

Let the readers fully understand the so-called new plan for khadi. I call it so-called, because what is being done is the logical step, if khadi is to clothe the villagers, as from the very start it was intended to do. Khadi was never meant merely for the townspeople, it was never meant to bleed the villagers as they are being bled so that the townspeople can live. Khadi was from its inception conceived for the sake of reversing the order though never to bleed the townspeople. To reverse the order was to restore the natural relation. Towns there were before the British arrival. Things were bad enough then. Now they are much worse. Towns became cities. The latter, in spite of their Indian millionaires, lived mainly for the British masters. Khadi was to undo the grave mischief. Mill cloth is the symbol of the slavery of village India as khadi is or should be the symbol of its freedom, both economic and political. If it cannot be that, it is meaningless. Therefore, any healthy change undergone in the process of khadi development is to be welcomed.

The defect in the existing development, good though it appeared, was not good enough for the villagers who spun yarn and wove khadi but did not use it themselves. They neither understood nor appreciated the dignity and value that its use carried.

The fault was not theirs. The workers themselves did not. The town-dwellers had to wear khadi and do the penance. They were

willing to buy penance for a few extra rupees which they could easily spare and be called patriots into the bargain. But how could the Charkha Sangh (called in English All-India Spinners' Association) belie its faith by ignoring the very foundation of khadi? And so it is employing its resources to making the villagers khadi-clad. It naturally begins with the spinners and weavers of hand-spun. If the move succeeds, as it is bound to, there will be after a time, ample khadi in the city and town markets. Then the only cloth available in India will be khadi. The A. I. S. A. is diligently working at the consummation. If its researches show that khadi has no such potentiality, it will have no hesitation in declaring its insolvency. Let the reader remember that it is a science which deals with the psychology of forty crores of people in the machine age. Thus considered, it is a tremendous problem, though at the same time fascinating and interesting. The very defeat, if defeat it is to be, will itself be no defeat. Let it be understood that it is not an attempt to go back to the dark ages when the charkha was the symbol of the slavery of the masses. Surely it will be a triumph of human understanding, i. e., of the soul of India, when India makes an effort through the charkha to break her bonds asunder. The freeman eats the same bread as the slave. The one eats the bread of freedom, the other of slavery.

But if the city-dwellers and the town-dwellers would learn the glad tidings that the charkha has to give, they will willingly employ their leisure time in carding, spinning, and weaving rather than in gambling on the race course or drinking and idling away their time in their clubs. And their children? Why —they could spin for their parents, for the liberty of India and have education of the type that India wants. I was in Rome¹ and Mussolini's officials took pride in showing the graceful manoeuvres of the little children who were being taught all naval tricks. And do the English children do otherwise than learn in their mother tongue what England needs? It is only reserved for India to teach her children the foreigners' language and through it, such things as the latter need. Who but a foreigner has devised the education code?

The A. I. S. A. sales depots will be used for a better purpose than before. They will teach the people, who, I hope, will flock to them, all the tricks of spinning and weaving. If they do, they will have all the khadi they need. Where there is a will, there is a way.

¹ In December, 1931

Lastly, let the reader know too that nowadays khadi like mill cloth is scarce. Let me not go into the reason why.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

331. JEWS AND PALESTINE

Hitherto I have refrained practically from saying anything in public regarding the Jew-Arab controversy. I have done so for good reasons. That does not mean any want of interest in the question, but it does mean that I do not consider myself sufficiently equipped with knowledge for the purpose. For the same reason I have tried to evade many world events. Without airing my views on them, I have enough irons in the fire. But four lines of a newspaper column have done the trick and evoked a letter from a friend who has sent me a cutting which I would have missed but for the friend drawing my attention to it. It is true that I did say some such thing in the course of a long conversation with Mr. Louis Fischer on the subject.¹ I do believe that the Jews have been cruelly wronged by the world. "Ghetto" is, so far as I am aware, the name given to Jewish locations in many parts of Europe. But for their heartless persecution, probably no question of return to Palestine would ever have arisen. The world should have been their home, if only for the sake of their distinguished contribution to it.

But, in my opinion, they have erred grievously in seeking to impose themselves on Palestine with the aid of America and Britain and now with the aid of naked terrorism. Their citizenship of the world should have and would have made them honoured guests of any country. Their thrift, their varied talent, their great industry should have made them welcome anywhere. It is a blot on the Christian world that they have been singled out, owing to a wrong reading of the New Testament, for prejudice against them. "If an individual Jew does a wrong, the whole Jewish world is to blame for it." If an individual Jew like Einstein makes a great discovery or another composes unsurpassable music, the merit goes to the authors and not to the community to which they belong.

No wonder that my sympathy goes out to the Jews in their

¹ According to the newspaper cutting Louis Fischer had quoted Gandhiji to the effect that the Jews had a good case but he hoped the Arabs too would not be wronged.

unenviably sad plight. But one would have thought adversity would teach them lessons of peace. Why should they depend upon American money or British arms for forcing themselves on an unwelcome land? Why should they resort to terrorism to make good their forcible landing in Palestine? If they were to adopt the matchless weapon of non-violence whose use their best Prophets have taught and which Jesus the Jew who gladly wore the crown of thorns bequeathed to a groaning world, their case would be the world's, and I have no doubt that among the many things that the Jews have given to the world, this would be the best and the brightest. It is twice blessed. It will make them happy and rich in the true sense of the word and it will be a soothing balm to the aching world.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

332. QUESTION BOX

Q. Is it possible during prayers, for thousands who assemble at your prayer gatherings, to concentrate their minds on anything whatever?

A. I can only answer yes. For, if I did not believe in mass prayer, I should cease to hold public prayers. My experience confirms my belief. Success depends upon the purity of the leader and the faith of the audience. I know instances in which the audience had faith and the leader was an impostor. Such cases will continue to happen. But truth like the sun shines in the midst of the darkness of untruth. The result in my case will be known probably after my death.

A wag asks three questions in this matter. One requiring an answer runs: "Is not political education infinitely superior to the religious?" In my opinion, political education is nothing worth, if it is not backed by a sound grounding in religion by which is not meant sectional or sectarian belief. Man without religion is man without roots. Therefore, religion is the basis on which all life structure has to be erected, if life is to be real.

THIEVING

Q. What is the employer to do when an employee of his is addicted to stealing and is not amenable to correction whether it is by way of entreaty or the cane?

A. It may well be that the others too are addicts though they may not be found out. Observation would show that we are all thieves,

the difference being that most of us are tolerant towards ourselves and intolerant towards those that are found out and are not of the ordinary run. What is a man, if he is not a thief, who openly charges as much as he can for the goods he sells? If the reply be that the buyer is a willing dupe, it begs the question. In reality the buyer is helpless rather than willing. The stealing referred to is one of the symptoms of a deep-seated disease of society. It is symptomatic of the eternal strife between the monied few and the many paupers. Therefore, my advice to the employer will be to remove all temptation in the way of the thief, to treat him as if he was his own brother and, when he refuses to yield to any treatment, however humanitarian it may be, to ask him to go his way. Let the employer always ask himself whether he would treat his own brother in the same way at the given stage.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

333. "A DIRTY HABIT"

A sister writes:

For some years I have been trying to help people to understand the danger of spitting everywhere. The filth and the dirt is so bad on account of spitting and cleaning noses everywhere that one does not know where to begin. Even small boys, girls, educated men and women, apart from illiterate folk spit on railway platforms, carriages, trams, outside shops, in corridors outside their houses and everywhere. Our country is getting dirtier and dirtier and diseases are spreading all over. Will not volunteers come forward for spreading the message of cleanliness?

Promiscuous spitting is a bad habit on which I have commented often enough. It is all part and parcel of the incredible ignorance that exists in our land among all classes of people in regard to the elementary laws of sanitation and hygiene. It is a habit which we must give up, if we would avoid certain diseases. My correspondent's suggestion is certainly commendable.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

Harijan, 21-7-1946

334. KASTURBA MEMORIAL TRUST ¹

Some people complain that the funds of this Trust are not being spent fast enough and that no one knows how they are being spent. The complaint is baseless on both counts. The thing is that even though the donations to the Trust came largely from the cities, the aim has throughout been for the money to be spent in the villages, and in the interest of village women and children. Therefore, those who do not see the Trust accounts would not know how the money is spent in villages. The critics are all city-dwellers. Villagers neither read the newspapers nor care about how the money is spent. If any work is done in their own village they can see it for themselves. Anything done for the city-dwellers is widely publicised. If a building or a statue is being made, there is a discussion in the papers about how it is being made. Then when it is completed its opening or unveiling ceremony is performed with much fanfare so that people would know that the purpose for which the money was collected had been accomplished. There cannot be any such advertisement of the work which is being done for women in villages. Therefore, for the time being the newspaper readers will have to be content with just knowing through whom the work is being carried on. When some work has been done in a few thousand out of the seven lakhs of our villages and the women and children of these villages have been prepared everyone will come to know of it. Take just one example. Training is being given to village women as midwives. Nurses are being trained to work in villages. If this information is not enough, what more can one say?

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kasturba Trust held recently at Poona, budgets were passed for the holding of training camps in several of the twenty-one provinces. But the women trained in this way have to go to villages. City-dwellers can know about them only if they are paraded in the cities. But this is not intended, nor would it be proper. There is another thing. The work to be undertaken in the villages is of a new kind and has to be taken up from the beginning. Therefore, the progress would perforce be slow as it has been in the case of khadi and other village industries. We paid very little attention to the villages. It is so even today. When city-dwellers turn their attention to the villages, things will be different. So

¹ A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 21-7-1946.

long as this does not happen neither the newspapers will notice the work of organizations of this kind nor city-dwellers will take much interest in it.

There are occasions when it is not wise to spend the money as soon as it is collected, when wisdom in fact lies in spending it slowly and with care, as it has been in the case of the Kasturba Trust. The donors may be numbered in thousands, but the field in which the money is to be spent is 1900 miles long and the population to be served numbers forty crores. Time was needed to decide how to work and where. Time was also needed to find workers. And now that the workers are found time is being spent on training them. Therefore the donors must have confidence that the Trustees will neither spend money uselessly nor shirk spending from laziness when it is necessary to spend.

Ever since the committees were constituted, there have been complaints that they have not been constituted from among the donors and where donors have been taken on the committees their numbers are too few. The fact is that donors are not always the best judges of how and on what the donations should be spent. Suppose, for instance, a number of persons together donate a sum of ten crore rupees for the construction of a pond. But having done this, what else can they do about it? The money donated must pass into the hands of those who know how to make a pond. Only such people will form a committee and spend the money. Many such instances could be cited. In the first instance the committees formed by the trustees were formed in this manner. Later it was realized that whatever work women could do, should be got done by them and not by forming committees of them but through them as agents. Only thus can women be trained and the entire organization passed into their hands. In this way the responsibility of the work will rest with them. Efforts towards this end are underway. It was bound to take time and it will still take time. Difficulties are many, but it is hoped that ultimately the work will grow and women too will have been prepared to shoulder the burden. Only experience will judge of the result.

PANCHGANI, July 14, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 21-7-1946

335. LETTER TO SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT

PANCHGANI,
July 14, 1946

BHAI DIKSHIT,

I have a letter from Ratnamayibehn. It makes me happy as well as unhappy. Unhappy because the fear which I had and which I had expressed has proved true. And I am happy at the frank admission of weakness. If you even settle down in your present sphere of work and achieve success in it, I shall be satisfied. To have confidence about something which is beyond our attainment is also a fault, it is a sign of pride.

“All creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?”¹

Send this letter or a copy of it to Ratanamayi as I am not writing to her separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT
C/O Nagpur Times
NAGPUR

From the Hindi original: Sita Charan Dikshit Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

336. DISCUSSION WITH NIMBALKAR ²

PANCHGANI,
*[July 14, 1946]*²

N. What would you have us do next?

G. You should give proof of the same courage and bravery here that you people displayed on the battlefield. There was perfect unity in the ranks of the I. N. A. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis; all communities were like blood brothers. There was no high or low, no untouchable. Demonstrate that unity here. But I am afraid you will not be able to do so.

¹ *Bhagavadgita*, III. 33

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". Captain Nimbalkar of the Indian National Army had come from Satara to meet Gandhiji on this date.

N. Yes, we cannot, so long as the British power rules over us.

G. Well, there is a lot that can be done in spite of the British. I have voluntarily become a Bhangi. Who can prevent me from doing so? Shah Nawaz¹ today is an Indian first and an Indian last. Nobody can prevent him from doing so. In fact, wherever he goes, he puts up with his Hindu friends. But even so, he realizes that he cannot achieve here what he could outside India. The I. N. A. men on returning to their homes take the complexion from their environment. They shed what they had learnt outside and it is difficult to prevent them from falling into the old rut.

Again, if you expect India to spend lakhs on you, that is not right. You should be like Garibaldi's² soldiers who were promised by their leader only "blood, toil and tears". They tilled the land and supported themselves when not engaged on the battle-field. No one paid them a salary. You have been trained by the British who spend lavishly. If you expect medals like Victoria Crosses and such prizes as the British can give, you will be disappointed. The starving millions of India cannot afford that. You have to become one with them and serve them. Today the man in the street is terrified of the military. The military man acts like a bully and there can be no appeal against his high-handedness. You have to prove that you are friends and servants of the people, so that they will not be awed by you.

N. We befriend the people here as we did outside India.

G. That is good. But I tell you, your leaders are finding it difficult to control the I. N. A. men in India. There are petty jealousies and rivalries. 'If A can get something, why not I?'—that is the kind of feeling coming uppermost. It was different abroad. You had a very capable leader in Netaji. In spite of our sharp differences I have always admired his burning patriotism, courage and resourcefulness.

N. You have no idea of the deep love and admiration he had for you. What should be our contribution in the next struggle for independence?

G. The struggle for independence is going on today. It has never stopped. But, if my will prevails, it will be a non-violent struggle. The lesson of the last 25 years of training in non-violence, has gone home to the masses. They have realized that in non-violence they have a weapon which enables a child, a woman or even a decrepit old man

¹ One of the three officers of the I. N. A. who were tried for treason but later released

² Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-82); Italian General who liberated his country

to resist the mightiest government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap. *Per contra* I have seen the Zulus in South Africa with Herculean bodies tremble before a white child. White soldiers could go into the the Zulu kraals and shoot men, women and children sleeping in their beds. There was no resistance in the Zulu and the physical strength could not make up for it.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

337. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

PANCHGANI,

[July 14, 1946]²

Poverty, remarked Gandhiji, had a dignity in our country. The poor man was not ashamed of his poverty. He preferred his hut to the rich man's palace. He even took pride in it. Though poor in material goods, he was not poor in spirit. Contentment was his treasure. He might as well say to himself, 'Since we cannot all become rich and own palaces, let us at least pull down the palaces of the rich and bring them down to our level.' That could bring no happiness or peace either to themselves or anyone else, and God would certainly be not the friend and helper of the poor of such description. Poverty, in the sense of inequality of material possessions was there in every part of the world. That was perhaps in a certain measure inevitable, for all men are not equal either in their talents or the measure of their needs. Even in America which was fabulously rich and where Mammon had taken the place of God, there were many poor. Poet Malabari had come across some relatives of Shah Alam³ begging in the streets of Rangoon. He had written a beautiful poem about it which had sunk into Gandhiji's heart. The substance of it was that he alone is rich who has God for his friend and helper. In India there was a particular type of man who delighted in having as few needs as possible. He carried with him only a little flour and a pinch of salt and chillies tied in his napkin. He had a *lota* and a string to draw water with from the well. He needed nothing else. He walked on foot covering 10-12 miles a day. He made the dough on his napkin, collected a few twigs to make a fire and baked his dough on the embers. It was called *bati*. He tasted it and found it most delicious. The relish did not lie in the food but in the appetite that honest toil and the contentment

¹ Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", from which this is extracted, reports it as "second day's discourse" at Panchgani. Gandhiji had reached Panchgani on July 13, 1946.

² *Ibid*

³ His successor Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor, was exiled to Burma.

of the mind gave. Such a man had God as his companion and friend and felt richer than any king or emperor. God was not the friend of those who inwardly coveted others' riches. Everyone could copy that example and enjoy ineffable peace and happiness himself and radiate it to others. On the other hand if one hankered after riches, one had to resort to exploitation, by whatever name it might be called. Even then the crores could not become millionaires. True happiness lay in contentment and companionship with God only.

Harijan, 21-7-1946

338. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

DEAR KHURSHEDBEHN,

Though you have said your last letter does not need any reply, in my opinion it demands one.

I see that your *ahimsa* and mine are poles asunder. I have great regard for Jaiprakash but not for his views. Aruna allows herself to be my daughter. She is a brave woman. But views like hers would take the paupers to future starvation and death. That I commended their names and others to J.'s¹ attention was not because of their views but in spite of them in the hope that responsibility under J. would show them the error of their ways. But they chose the opposite course. I shall now watch their course. They are all a power.

I shall hug my darkness, not their light. There is, therefore, hardly any chance of my following them.

I wish you well. May God be your protection and guidance.

I write this to make my position clear. I love you too well to keep you in the dark about it. How I wish I have misunderstood you. You had made your position clear the other day when you met me for half a minutue. Your letter under reply clinches the matter.

Of course you are at liberty to show this to our Socialist friends.

Love.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru's

339. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. VALJI,

I have gone through your draft. It is a good summary. You have given better treatment to the vows than to the constructive programme. The latter lacks life. Maybe the original itself lacks it.

It would be quite wrong to give to this writing the title “Mohan Samhita”. I do not see the quality of a *Samhita*¹ in it. A simpler title would be more becoming. Truly speaking what Manu Subedar wants is something much better. It has to be something original. He is not likely to want a mere summary. Probably what he has in mind is a booklet or two based on all my writings. You should show him your draft and find out. It is the title that I strongly object to. ‘Mangal-prabhat’ and ‘A Summary of Constructive Programme’ would be a better description of what you have written.

I hope you are well. It would be morally wrong to neglect your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Should I send the draft and the books with somebody or bring them with me when I come there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7500. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

340. LETTER TO LILAVATI K. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have already written to Munshi² to come whenever he likes.

I like the idea of students being obliged to devote a few years to teaching. It is obvious that they should be qualified for the job. If a

¹ A treatise of laws and rules

² K. M. Munshi, addressee's husband

few years' conscription [for military training] is all right, why not for the noble work of education?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

341. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have gone through both your letters, that is, I had them read out to me. Sushila Pai read them out while I span. I think I have replied to all your questions. There was no censure of you in my misgivings. It was your naivete. All I want is that you should be careful. Non-violence of the coward is worthless. In a brave person non-violence is an adornment, in a coward it can be a defect. Remember the saying "a helpless man becomes a saint". I admit this is not so in your case.

To overcome one's nature and to weed out subtle defects, striving and company of good men are required.

It is useless to work among the labourers or in an institution. If your health permits it will be best to remain with me. If not, we shall see.

I am returning both the letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2498

342. TESTIMONIAL TO SARDAR SINGH

PANCHGANI,
July 15, 1946

During my stay at Bhangi Niwas in Delhi, Sardar Singh used to drive the car with devotion—so said all those who used the car. As for me, I think I had no occasion to enjoy a ride in that car.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

343. TESTIMONIAL TO AMAR SINGH

[July 15, 1946]¹

During the whole of my stay at Bhangi Niwas in New Delhi, Bhai Amar Singh always brought the car on time and drove me very carefully and with great love. He was always available, whatever the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

344. TESTIMONIAL TO HARE RAM

[July 16, 1945]

When I was in New Delhi Bhai Hari Ram rendered all service willingly and with great care. It was rendered not by a mere servant, as it were, but in the spirit of pure devotion.

Blessings from
BAPU

BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ This and the following testimonial are written on the same sheet as the preceding one.

345. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY ¹

DELHI,

April 14, 1946

When God cares, why should we be full of cares?

April 15, 1946

More people die of worry than of natural causes.

April 16, 1946

Better to die once than to die daily.

April 17, 1946

When a man has lost patience, he should resort to silence, and speak only when he has calmed down.

April 18, 1946

When man realizes himself, he is saved.

April 19, 1946

When our outer life gets the better of our inner life, the result is bound to be bad.

April 20, 1946

One man's cruelty is the measure of another man's gentleness.

April 21, 1946

It is useless to recite Ramanama without acting in a manner worthy of Rama.

April 22, 1946

Perfection is only an ideal for man; it cannot be attained, for man is made imperfect.

April 23, 1946

Sacrifice with regret is no sacrifice.

April 24, 1946

When the inner lamp burns, it illumines the whole world.

April 25, 1946

How is it that a precept regarded as applicable to others appears inapplicable to oneself?

¹ At the request of Anand T. Hingorani, Gandhiji on November 20, 1944 started the practice of writing a thought for each day and continued it for about two years. These thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, namely, July 15, 1946.

April 26, 1946

When all forsake you, God shall still be with you.

April 27, 1946

What more do you want when the heavens are within you, and even God Himself?

April 28, 1946

Sweet are the fruits of patience.

April 29, 1946

Why should I depend upon anyone for my own affairs?

April 30, 1946

With whom will you be angry? With yourself? Do that every day. With others? Why need there be any reason for that?

May 1, 1946

We cannot act or even think, in two opposite ways at the same time.

SIMLA,

May 2, 1946

The nearer we approach our ideal, the more truthful we become.

May 3, 1946

To have good thoughts is one thing; to act upon them is another.

May 4, 1946

The benefit of solitude can be realized only by experience.

May 5, 1946

Faith is that which remains unshaken even in the face of adversity.

May 6, 1946

Noise does not overcome noise; silence does.

May 7, 1946

Fewer people die from disease than from fear of disease.

Gurudev Jayanti, May 8, 1946

He who has divine endowment in him becomes thereby immortal.

May 9, 1946

To gain immortality through divine endowment is not a big thing. To fulfil our obligations in daily life is.

May 10, 1946

He who is not disturbed by bad news will not be elated by good news.

May 11, 1946

If the courage to endure everything with goodwill is lacking, goodwill becomes a lame virtue.

May 12, 1946

We are no better than any other—this thought is full of truth and humility.

May 13, 1946

It is very difficult to confess one's error; but then there is no other way of cleansing oneself.

KALKA,

May 14, 1946

It is not the whistle that moves the train but the power harnessed in the steam.

NEW DELHI,

May 15, 1946

God is everywhere. Even so, if we really wish to feel His being, we must remove the ego and make room for Him.

May 16, 1946

When the self dies, God fills the void.

May 17, 1946

He who looks for faults in others cannot see his own.

May 18, 1946

On the one side, truth; on the other, Dominion over the Earth. O my heart, thou shalt choose the Truth and reject the Dominion.

May 19, 1946

Being a slave to fear and selfishness is the worst form of slavery.

May 20, 1946

When everything belongs to God what shall we offer to Him?

May 21, 1946

If we call God our Redeemer and let our indolence grow, we are committing a sin.

May 22, 1946

Debts are redeemed by deeds, not by words.

May 23, 1946

What is in the mind must come out, sooner or later.

May 24, 1946

[Ramanama] is the only unfailing remedy for man's threefold ills.

May 25, 1946

He who seeks refuge in Ramanama, has Ramanama installed in his heart and is duly rewarded.¹

May 26, 1946

Pure thought is far more potent than speech.

May 27, 1946

Restlessness and impatience are two diseases and both shorten life.

MUSSOORIE,

May 28, 1946

He who lacks peace and firmness cannot realize God.

May 29, 1946

If we do not forsake our ideal, the ideal will never forsake us.

May 30, 1946

To remain entangled in things physical and aspire for self-realization is like asking for the moon.

May 31, 1946

The soul dries up without the company of the good.

June 1, 1946

Our personal cleanliness counts for little if our neighbours are not clean.

¹ This is in Gujarati.

June 2, 1946

What is true of outer cleanliness is true of the inner too. If our neighbour is unclean inside, it will affect us also.

June 3, 1946

Bravery is not the monopoly of any one person; it is latent in all, only they are not aware of it.

June 4, 1946

To speak the truth, you have to weigh your words again and again.

June 5, 1946

A man of knowledge attains peace only through renunciation.

June 6, 1946

If we are late for a train, we miss it. What if we are late for prayer?

June 7, 1946

When a man's mind is filled with the Light of Heaven, all obstacles in his path vanish.

NEW DELHI,

June 9, 1946

Life is not a bed of roses; it is full of thorns.

June 10, 1946

No joy can compare with the joy of doing one's duty in silence.

June 11, 1946

Steadfastness in meditation indicates depth of thought; it also makes for purity and maturity of thought.

June 12, 1946

A calculating mind cannot attain self-realization.

June 13, 1946

What shall we call a person who, in the name of Rama, acts like Ravana?

June 14, 1946

One is a servant of him for whom one works, not to whom one pays only lip service.

June 15, 1946

When we give something, we must give the truest part of ourselves.

June 16, 1946

Knowing that everything has two sides, let us look at the bright side alone.

June 17, 1946

When attachment is present, the performance of even a pure deed involves manipulation.

June 18, 1946

When man smites, it is God who comes to our rescue.

June 19, 1946

How can a man who turns night into day be non-attached?

June 20, 1946

He who wants to drink of the nectar of Ramanama must purge himself of lust, anger and the like.

June 21, 1946

Even if he be your relation, do not try to hide his faults.

June 22, 1946

Evenmindedness is the best of all wisdom.

June 23, 1946

Even nectar turns into poison if poison is added to it.

June 24, 1946

Man must never suppress his inner voice even if he stands alone.

June 25, 1946

Intuition is lame if it is not supported by reason.

June 26, 1946

A river goes dry when cut off from its source. So does man when cut off from his original source, i.e., God.

June 27, 1946

Pure thought is so subtle and yet so powerful a thing that it becomes all-pervading.

June 28, 1946

A votary of truth must have a sense of discrimination and of time, as also a full understanding of the opposite side.

ON THE TRAIN TO POONA,

June 29, 1946

Man rests in the jaws of Death. He is said to be dead when the jaws close.

POONA,

June 30, 1946

Such being the case, where is the sense in making merry or becoming arrogant?

July 1, 1946

When Truth, that is God, is with us, what matters whether the world is with us or not, whether we live or die?

July 2, 1946

If you want to stand before God, you must go after shedding the robe of egoism.

July 3, 1946

If you are truly humble you will never, even in your dreams think disparagingly of those who do not practise such austerities as you do.

July 4, 1946

He who is not in the habit of keeping everything in its place is a fool. He wastes much time in searching for it when he wants it.

BOMBAY,

July 5, 1946

Divine Power is a thing that nothing can withstand.

July 6, 1946

We remember God when all is well with us. But a true devotee is he who remembers Him even when things go awry.

July 7, 1946

Man finds himself by losing his Self.

POONA,

July 8, 1946

He who explores the branch and forgets the root, strays.

July 9, 1946

The nectar of Ramanama brings joy to the soul and rids the body of its ailments.

July 10, 1946

Man dies when he cuts himself off from the source of his being, not when the soul leaves the body.

July 11, 1946

Meditation does not make one dull.

July 12, 1946

Meditation makes one strong and lucid.

PANCHGANI,

July 13, 1946

Just as drop by drop the lake fills up, so also every minute of sincere prayer nourishes the soul.

July 14, 1946

Man by himself is nothing. But when he has become one with God, he is everything.

July 15, 1946

When God is our Guide, we need worry about nothing.

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuke Ashirwad: A Thought for the Day*, pp. 466-601

346. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

CAMP: PANCHGANI,

July 16, 1946

BROTHER SARAT BABU,

I write this in English so as to cause you less strain and be better understood.

I had long chats with Bela and Arvind. They feel deeply aggrieved by your treatment of them. It is not, as I could see, so much a question of money as of ill-treatment. They feel too that Amiya is the evil genius. As often happens among cousins they fight for no reason whatsoever. I wonder if this is such a case. Anyway, both Bela and Arvind are certainly disconcerted. They seem to have discussed the matter with Jawaharlal and Sardar. They appear to have said they can do nothing. I have advised them to put themselves at your disposal without any expectation of favour which they do not want. They say they want justice, they want to be treated as members of the family who have done no wrong to any of the members. They say they have been discredited without cause. This they resent bitterly. The issue is purely moral. This you should be able to fix up without any difficulty. They ought not to be cut off from the family, if they have been. I have given you an idea of what, as I see it, they feel.

I am sending them a copy of this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

347. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

PANCHGANI,

July 16, 1946

CHI. PUNDALIK,

I went through your report and letter. The work seems to be going on well. If it goes on like this, success will come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5223

348. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA MAZUMDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

BHAI DHIREN,

I read *Krantikari Charkha* from cover to cover. I like it. None of the arguments irk me. You have correctly understood the place of the charkha. I want all lovers of the spinning-wheel to read your booklet and demonstrate its importance in the villages through their own work.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. Certainly I was a little annoyed. There was no reason for your coming to Delhi. If you found Gajraj in poor condition you alone were responsible for it. I had thought that you would be firm in your resolve but I find that you were not. I believed that you had given up your attachment to home but that too I did not find. Anyway, how does it matter? It is good that I now see you as you really are. It may be said, and rightly, that I have no reason to be unhappy about it. You may now realize the limit of your strength and do what you can. In that alone lies your well-being. Do not spoil Gajraj. Leave him alone but gradually, otherwise he will go completely out of hand.

I have your slivers.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. HOSHIARIBEHN
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Paper. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹Vide "*The Revolutionary Charkha*", 18-7-1946.

350. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I did get your letter. The riots are a shameful affair from beginning to end.¹ I do get reports from all sources. It is a matter for concern that your sickness does not leave you. Sushila will soon be arriving there. See if she can do anything. My preference is for nature cure. I would consider extraction of teeth as part of the nature cure treatment. Jesus advised long ago that a limb which has become rotten should be cut off.²

I know a great deal about V.³ now. We shall discuss the problem when I am there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
ACHARYA, KHADI VIDYALAYA
A[KHIL] BHA[RATIYA] CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9143

351. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have gone through the speech of the Maharaja of Kashmir.⁴ I do not like it. All the same I am quite certain that Jawaharlal should do nothing in haste. He should not go when it suits the Maharaja. It is for us to consider when he should. The Working Committee must meet and discuss it. He should go when the

¹ The reference is to the communal riots in Ahmedabad. *Vide* also "Bloodshed in Ahmedabad", 22-7-1946.

² *Matthew*, v, 29-30

³ Vanamala, addressee's daughter

⁴ The Maharaja in his announcement of July 15, 1946, had said that the Kashmir Government would resist any outside interference in their internal affairs fully realizing that such a course would lead to strife, disorder and bloodshed among the people of Kashmir.

Committee wants him to go. It may also be that the Kashmir affair will be used to sabotage the whole thing. I feel that we should not let such a possibility arise. I hope that whatever is done will be done after the Constituent Assembly meets. I would go so far as to say that the Maulana or you should go there first and find out what is feasible. It may also be necessary for the Maulana to issue a statement addressed to the people of Kashmir. If in spite of all that we do the whole thing collapses it cannot be helped. The situation requires very careful consideration. Munshi will tell you the rest.

Please also see the letter¹ I have written to Jawaharlal.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 308-9

352. LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

PANCHGANI,

July 17, 1946

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter giving me the details. It is most painful. It seems they haven't learnt any lesson from the death of Vasantrao and others.² Send me further details.

I hope both of you as well as the children are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

SABARMATI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-7-1946.

² Vasantrao Hegishte and Rajabali Lakhani, two local youths, were killed while trying to bring about peace during communal riots in Ahmedabad on July 7, 1946.

353. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. SATYADEVI,

Jayantilal brought me your letter giving me the news of Krishnamaiya's passing away. Later, on inquiring I came across Mahavir's telegram. It had been received by Pyarelal two days ago and was lying with him. He assumed that I must have been informed and so kept it for filing. Thus I could get the news only last evening. I believe that Krishnamaiya has found relief in death. I know from the death of Kashi, wife of Jaisukhlal, that cancer is painful disease. X-ray [*sic*], etc., is the right treatment for it. Your account also tells me that Mother passed away peacefully. We should all, therefore, be but happy about it. She has departed after seeing you all well settled. You should all now prove yourselves worthy of her name as well as your father's and also of the Ashram's where you were brought up. Mahavir is properly settled, so is Durga. You are study-ing. Once you recover your health, you are intelligent enough to be able to take care of yourself. Dharmakumar cannot be said to be doing too well. Maitri however has grown quite mature. She is the eldest among you. I am sure you will all regard her as your mother and conduct yourselves accordingly. Krishnamaiya's advice is right, i. e., you should all take care of her and she will look after you all. Thus the whole family will be protected.

I am not writing separately either to Mahavir or to Dharmakumar. All of you brothers and sisters should read this. I had only one letter from Dharmakumar regarding your operation. Under pressure of work I could not spare any time before this.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SATYADEVI GIRI
VILLE PARLE

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

354. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have gone through what Munshi showed me,¹ though I did not have the time to examine it closely. He came today after 4 o'clock and will be going back tomorrow morning. I had a long talk with him about grouping. He will explain things to you. I have advised him to consult other lawyers as well. What he has prepared after seven days' labours may not be placed before the Committee just yet. Once it goes before the Committee, it will become public. I do not see the need of making it public so soon.

Your statement as published in the papers does not sound good.² If it is correctly reported, some explanation is needed. It must be admitted that we have to work within the limits of the State Paper. It is clear in Maulana's letters. We have given it our own interpretation. But if the Federal Court gives a different interpretation, we shall have to be firm. I think it necessary to say this clearly. If we do not admit even this much, we will be doing nothing and Jinnah Saheb's accusation will prove true.

Fischer³ and Jayaprakash have come here today. They too will return tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

In regard to Kashmir, Sardar has sent me the Maharaja's speech. It deserves careful study. I think a meeting of the Working Committee should be called to consider it. Let us not be hasty. Let us not endanger the whole thing just for this reason. I am of the view that Maulana Saheb and, if necessary, Sardar too, should go to Kashmir. After all, has not the Working Committee assumed the entire responsibility?

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 7697

¹ The reference is to the Rules of Procedure in the Constituent Assembly.

² The reference is presumably to Jawaharlal Nehru's Press Statement of July 10, 1946, in which he had said that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise".

³ Louis Fischer

355. LETTER TO DR. T. J. KEDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

I have your letter of the 4th inst. No one dies or lives or is born without God's grace. Then why rejoice at birth or grieve over death? I have no interest in elections. If your name is proposed for the Constituent Assembly, how can you escape it?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KEDAR
NAGPUR, C. P.

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

356. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER¹

PANCHGANI,
[July 17, 1926]²

LOUIS FISCHER: I would go into the Constituent Assembly and use it for a different purpose—as a battle-field—and declare it to be a sovereign body. What do you say to this?

GANDHIJI: It is no use declaring somebody else's creation a sovereign body. After all, it is a British creation. A body does not become a sovereign body by merely asserting it. To become sovereign, you have to behave in a sovereign way. Three tailors of Tooley Street in Johannesburg declared that they were a sovereign body. It ended in nothing. It was just a farce.

I do not consider the proposed Constituent Assembly to be non-revolutionary. I have said, and I mean it cent per cent, that the proposed Constituent Assembly is an effective substitute for civil disobedience of the constructive type. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the self-denial and spirit of sacrifice of our Socialist friends,

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "After Four Years". Louis Fischer met Gandhiji twice on the 17th and then again on the 18th. The report here reproduced covers the two interviews on the 17th. For the interview of the 18th, *vide* "Interview to Louis Fischer", 18-7-1946. For extracts from Fischer's report of the interviews, *vide* Appendix "Extracts from Louis Fischer's Report of Interview with Gandhiji", 17-7-1946.

I have never concealed the sharp difference between their method and mine. They frankly believe in violence and all that is in its bosom. I believe in non-violence through and through.

L. F. You are a socialist and so are they.

G. I am, they are not. I was a socialist before many of them were born. I carried conviction to a rabid socialist in Johannesburg, but that is neither here nor there. My claim will live when their socialism is dead.

L. F. What do you mean by your socialism?

G. My socialism means 'even unto this last'. I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. In their socialism, probably these have no place. Their one aim is material progress. For instance, America aims at having a car for every citizen. I do not. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. I must be free to build a staircase to Sirius if I want to. That does not mean that I want to do any such thing. Under the other socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, not even your body.

L. F. Yes, but there are variations. My socialism in its modified form means that the State does not own everything. It does in Russia. There you certainly do not own your body even. You may be arrested at any time, though you may have committed no crime. They may send you wherever they like.

Does not, under your socialism, the State own your children and educate them in any way it likes?

G. All States do that. America does it.

L. F. Then America is not very different from Russia.

G. But socialism is dictatorship or else arm-chair philosophy. I call myself a communist also.

L. F. O, don't. It is terrible for you to call yourself a communist. I want what you want, what Jaiprakash and the socialists want: a free world. But the communists don't. They want a system which enslaves the body and the mind.

G. Would you say that of Marx?

L. F. The communists have corrupted the Marxist teaching to suit their purpose.

G. What about Lenin?

L. F. Lenin started it. Stalin has since completed it. When the communists come to you, they want to get into the Congress and control the Congress and use it for their own ends.

G. So do the socialists. My communism is not very different from socialism. It is a harmonious blending of the two. Communism, as I have understood it, is a natural corollary of socialism.

L. F. Yes, you are right. There was a time when the two could not be distinguished. But today socialists are very different from communists.

G. You mean to say, you do not want communism of Stalin's type.

L. F. But the Indian communists want communism of the Stalin type in India and want to use your name for that purpose.

G. They won't succeed.

L. F. So you will not yourself go into the Constituent Assembly, but will support it?

G. Yes, but it is wrong to say we are going into the Constituent Assembly to seize power. Though it is not a sovereign body, it is as near it as possible.

L. F. Pandit Jawaharlal said that if the British tried to impose a treaty in terms of the State Paper of May 16, he will tear it up.¹

G. Yes, an imposed treaty from outside.

L. F. And he said, Congress will not go into groupings.

G. Yes, I have said the same thing—unless the Federal Court or some other court gives a different decision.² As I see it, much can come out of the Constituent Assembly, if the British will play the game.

L. F. You say and I believe they will. But supposing they do not, won't you then offer your form of protest?

G. Not until the conditions are favourable. But it is wrong to speculate about the future, still more so to anticipate failure. If we take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.

They then passed on to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhiji startled his visitor by proffering the remark that the Hindu-Muslim question, in the final analysis, was an offshoot of the untouchability question.

When Hinduism is perfectly reformed and purged of the last

¹ At a Press Conference in Bombay on July 10 Jawaharlal Nehru had said : “. . . If the British Government presumes to tell us that they are going to hold anything in India . . . because they do not agree either in regard to the minorities or in regard to the treaty we shall not accept that position. It will become a *casus belli* . . . we shall tear up any treaty they try to impose.”

² Vide “Speech at Prayer Meeting”, 23-6-1946.

trace of untouchability, there will be no communal problem left.

L. F. I have heard that though the Congress Harijans have won at the elections against non-Congress Harijans, they were able to do so only with the Hindu votes!

G. What was the joint election for, if not to enable the caste Hindus to make a selection from successful candidates at the primary elections? No failed candidate at the primary elections can offer himself as a candidate at the joint elections. Moreover, it is not correct to say, as has been claimed, that in the majority of cases, the Congress Harijans won against the non-Congress candidates with the caste Hindus' votes. In Madras the non-Congress Harijans were defeated almost to a man in the primary elections, wherever they contested them. In the majority of cases the Congress Harijans were returned unopposed.

L. F. Some of them want separate electorates.

G. Yes. But we have resisted it. By separate electorates they put themselves outside the pale of Hinduism and perpetuate the bar sinister.

L. F. That is true. But, anyhow, they might say that Hindus have put them outside the pale.

G. But today the Hindus are penitent.

L. F. Are they adequately penitent?

G. I am sorry to say not yet. If they were, there would be no untouchability and no communal problem as I have already said.

L. F. Is there less social contact between the Hindus and Muslims?

G. No, rather the contrary. But politically there is a bar, thanks to Lord Minto.

L. F. Your young men are too Indo-centric.

G. That is only partly true. I won't say we have become international, but we have taken up forlorn causes, e. g., the cause of the exploited nations, because we are ourselves the chief exploited nation.

L. F. The growing anti-white feeling here is bad. In the Taj Mahal Hotel they have put up a notice "South Africans not admitted". I do not like it. Your non-violence should make you more generous.

G. That won't be non-violence. Today the white man rules in India. So, if the Taj Mahal has the gumption to put up that notice, it is a feather in its cap.

L. F. That is what any nationalist will say. You must say something better.

G. Then I will be a nationalist for once. They have no right to be here if they do not deal with Indians on terms of equality.

L. F. No right—yes. But you must give them more than their right. You must invite them.

G. Yes, when I am the Viceroy.

L. F. You mean the President of the Indian Republic.

G. No. I will be quite content to be the Viceroy, a constitutional Viceroy, for the time being. The first thing I will do will be to vacate the Viceregal Lodge and give it to the Harijans. I will then invite the South African white visitors to my hut and say to them: You have ground my people to powder. But we won't copy you. We will give you more than you deserve. We won't lynch you as you do in South Africa,' and thus shame them into doing the right.

L. F. There is so much anti-white feeling today.

G. Of course, I am opposed to that. It can do no good to anybody.

L. F. The world is so divided. And there might be another war and that may be between the coloured and the white races.

G. Europe seems to be heading for another war. It is not sufficiently exhausted.

L. F. Europe is terribly exhausted. But with the atom bomb human beings don't matter so much. A few scientists are enough. The next war will be carried on by pressing a few buttons. That is why colour war is so dangerous.

G. Anything is better than cowardice. It is violence double distilled.

And to illustrate his remark Gandhiji narrated the story of a Negro clergyman with a Herculean frame in South Africa saying 'pardon me brother', when insulted by a white man, and sneaking into a coloured man's compartment.

That is not non-violence. It is a travesty of Jesus' teaching. It would have been more manly to retaliate.

L. F. You are not afraid of what happens to you but what it may mean to others. It takes a great deal of irresponsibility to give vent to your feelings and slap the white man under the circumstances described by you. In India the situation is different. The white men are not so numerous here.

G. You are mistaken. Why, one Englishman is killed and a whole village is razed to the ground as a reprisal. What vindictiveness!

Harijan, 4-8-1946

357. QUESTION BOX

Q. I am a young businessman of 21 years and have 11 dependents. I believe in truth and non-violence but find I cannot strictly follow it in business. What should I do? Abandoning the business means suffering for my relations.

A. This begs the question. It is difficult but not impossible to conduct strictly honest business. The fact is that the honester a business the more successful it is. Hence the proverb coined by businessmen "Honesty is the best policy". What the correspondent lacks is application and an accurate knowledge of honest business methods. What is true is that honesty is incompatible with the amassing of a large fortune. "Verily, verily, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." Nor therefore should an honest businessman, however capable he may be, support idlers whether eleven or more or fewer. The eleven dependents cannot all be infants or incapables. Honesty makes no impossible demands upon the resources of a businessman. An honest man cannot have dishonest kinsmen. The questioner will find on introspection that there is nothing wrong with honest business but that there is something wrong with him. Let him find out what it is that is wrong with him.

Q. Are the time, place and manner of death predestined by the Almighty for each individual? If so, why worry even if we are ill?

A. I do not know whether time, place and the manner of death are predestined. All I do know is that 'not a blade of grass moves but by His will'. This too I know hazily. What is hazy today will be clear tomorrow or the day after by prayerful waiting. Let this however be quite clear. The Almighty is not a person like us. He or It is the greatest living Force or Law in the world. Accordingly He does not act by caprice, nor does that Law admit of any amendment or improvement. His will is fixed and changeless, everything else changes every second. Surely, it does not follow from the doctrine of predestination that we may not 'worry' in the care of ourselves even if we are ill. Indifference to illness is a crime greater than that of falling ill. There is no end to the effort to do better today than yesterday. We have to 'worry' and find out why we are or have become ill. Health, not 'illth', is the law of nature. Let us investigate the law of nature and obey it, if we will not be ill or, if having fallen ill, will be restored.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

358. A TRAGIC PHENOMENON

My post contains so many letters from persons who want to be in the Constituent Assembly that it frightens me into the suspicion that, if these letters are an indication of the general feeling, the intelligentsia is more anxious about personal aggrandizement than about India's independence. And if I, though I have no connection with the applications of candidates for elections, receive so many letters, how many must the members of the Working Committee be receiving? These correspondents should know that I take no interest in these elections, I do not attend meetings at which these applications are considered and that I often only know from newspapers who have been elected. It is on rare occasions that my advice is sought as to the choice to be made. But I write this more to draw attention to the disease of which these applications are a sign than to warn my correspondents against building any expectation of my intervention. It is wrong to think communally in such elections, it is wrong to think that anyone is good enough for the Constituent Assembly, it is altogether wrong to think that the election carries any honour with it, it is a post of service if one is fitted for the labours and, lastly, it is wrong to regard the post as one for making a few rupees while the Assembly lasts. The Constituent Assembly should have such members only who know something about constitutions all the world over, above, all, about the constitution that India's genius demands. It is debasing to think that true service consists in getting a seat in the Assembly. True service lies outside. The field of service outside is limitless. In the fight for independence, the Assembly, like the one in course of formation, has a place. Nevertheless it is a very small place and that too if we use it wisely and well; certainly not, if there is a scramble for a seat in it. The scramble warrants the fear that it may become a hunting ground for place-seekers. I am free to confess that a Constituent Assembly is the logical outcome of parliamentary activity. The labour of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru opened my eyes to the fact that the parliamentary programme had a place in the national activity for independence. I strove hard against it. It is certainly inconsistent with pure non-co-operation. But pure non-co-operation never held the field. What came into being also waned. Had there been universal non-co-operation of the non-violent type in the Congress ranks, there would have been no parliamentary programme. Non-violent non-co-operation with evil

means co-operation with all that is good. Therefore, non-violent non-co-operation with a foreign government necessarily means an indigenous government based on non-violence. Had there been such complete non-co-operation, there would be swaraj today based on non-violence. But this never happened. In the circumstances it would have been vain to struggle against what the nation had been familiar with and from which it could not be completely weaned. The parliamentary step having been taken, it would have been improper to boycott the present effort. But that does not, can never, mean that there should be indecent competition for filling the seats in it. Let us recognize the limitations.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

359. "THE REVOLUTIONARY CHARKHA"¹

Shri Dharendra Mazumdar has written a booklet under this title. Though it is only forty small pages it contains everything about the new scheme. It tells us how true swaraj and true revolution lie in the successful working of the scheme. But the true revolution will remain only on paper unless the scheme is proved in work. It is, therefore, necessary to show how it may be proved and to act accordingly. Today there is much restlessness in the towns because townsfolk are not able to get khadi at any price. This has happened before. At that time I was able to assure people that khadi would soon be available because then the question was only one of money. Now this is not so. Money alone cannot answer the purpose. True revolution is not brought about by money. It is a difficult task to change the habits of a lifetime, to overcome laziness, to create rather than destroy. It is easy to acquire ten thousand rupees by looting a train. It is difficult to earn that sum by the sweat of one's brow. It is a common enough occurrence for someone to earn a lac of rupees in a single day in the share market. But to accumulate a lac of rupees in one day through one's labour is an impossible task. A beggar has been known to become rich by winning a lottery but no beggar has amassed wealth in a single day through his labour. He can only get his wage in the market. This may be eight annas or even two annas. Producing khadi is one thing, producing mill-cloth another. Swaraj cannot come

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.

through the machine. But if two hundred million people with full understanding produce khadi with their own labour and wear it the face of India will be transformed. It will be another matter if out of the four hundred million people two hundred million cannot take the trouble to produce cloth for themselves. But I can never believe that.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-7-1946

360. TESTIMONIAL TO HERBERT FISCHER

PANCHGANI,

*July 18, 19[46]*¹

I have known Mr. Herbert Fischer² and his wife for a long time. Mr. Fischer was for some time in the Village Industries section of my constructive activities. The Fischers belong to the Quaker Settlement at Itarsi. They are a simple godfearing family and lovers of humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

PANCHGANI,

*July 18, 19[46]*³

CHI. RAMACHANDRAN,

I got your letter from Poona the day before yesterday. Murti had met me. What will he do in the Constituent Assembly? Have my talks with him been of no avail? I have written on this subject in *Harijan*.⁴ Read it. You will have to go to Ceylon soon and correctly appraise the situation. I have had a talk with Ashadevi. I hope Sourdaram's work is going on well.

¹ Although the source has 1940, this item has been placed among those of 1946. Moreover Gandhiji was in Panchgani on July 18, in 1946.

² He had come from the Fiji Islands. During the war he was declared an enemy and was arrested. Later he worked at Sevagram for Nayee Talim.

³ The source has 1947 but Gandhiji was in Panchgani on this date; besides, the source has this letter among those of the year 1946.

⁴ Vide "Tragic Phenomenon", 18-7-1946

You should now try to write in Hindustani.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

SHRIG. RAMACHANDRAN

MADRAS

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

362. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

PANCHGANI,

[*July 18, 1946*]¹

L. F. If the Working Committee had reacted to your ‘groping in the dark’ or as you have called it your instinct about the long-term proposals, they would have rejected them?

G. Yes, but I did not let them.

L. F. You mean you did not insist?

G. More than that. I prevented them from following my instinct unless they also felt likewise. It is no use conjecturing what would have happened. The fact however remains that Dr. Rajendra Prasad asked me: ‘Does your instinct go so far that you would prevent us from accepting the long-term proposals, whether we understand you or not?’ I said, ‘No. Follow your reason since my own reason does not support my instinct. My instinct rebels against my reason. I have placed my misgivings before you as I want to be faithful to you. I myself have not followed my instinct unless my reason backed it.’

L. F. But you have said that you follow your instinct when it speaks to you on occasions as, for instance, you did before certain fasts that you undertook.

G. Yes, but even in these cases, before the fast began, my reason was able to back my instinct. My reason failed my instinct on the long-term proposals.

L. F. Them, why did you inject your ‘instinct’ into the political situation?

G. Because I was loyal to my friends. I wanted to retain my faith in the *bona fides* of the Cabinet Mission. So I told the Cabinet Mission also about my misgivings. I said to myself, ‘Supposing they meant ill, they would feel ashamed.’

¹ *Vide* 1st footnote of “Interview to Louis Fischer”, 17-7-1946.

L. F. You are strongly constitutionalist now. Is it for fear of the alternative—violence?

G. No. If India is destined to go through a blood-bath, it will do so. The thing I would fear is my own cowardice or dishonesty. I have neither. So I say, we must go in and work it out. If they are dishonest, they will be found out. The loss will not be ours but theirs.

L. F. I think you are afraid of the spirit of violence. It is widespread. I wonder whether it has not captured the mood of the youth and you are aware of it and you fear that mood.

G. It has not captured the imagination of the country. I admit that it has captured the imagination of a section of the youth.

L. F. It is a mood that has got to be combated.

G. Yes. I am doing it in my own way. It is my implicit faith that it is a survival which will kill itself in time. It cannot live. It is so contrary to the spirit of India. But what is the use of talking? I believe in an inscrutable Providence which preside over our destinies—call it God or by any other name you like. All I contend is that it is not the fear of violence that makes me advise the country to go to the Constituent Assembly. It is repugnant in a non-violent attitude not to accept an honourable substitute for civil revolt.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

363. “SCHEDULED CASTES”

A copy of a printed leaflet was thrown into my car on 6th July as I was driving to the A. I. C. C. meeting in Bombay. It was again handed to me by Shri Rajbhoj on the 12th instant. It is addressed to the members of the A. I. C. C. I promised to deal with the questions in these pages. I do so now.

The questions are such as not to need an answer from the members. I should not wonder if no member has answered them. They betray gross ignorance of Congress history. It is hardly the province of men gathered together for a particular purpose to deal with extraneous matters. But it is the province of newspapers to dispel ignorance. It is doubly mine, being conductor of a weekly and a *Harijan* by choice.

Q. What is going to be the place of the untouchables in your swaraj? The Congress has talked a lot about protecting the minorities. Why has the Congress

failed to produce its blue-print of plan for protecting the minorities? Is this silence not calculated to create want of confidence in the *bona fides* of the Congress?

A. The place of untouchables in the swaraj of my conception will be the same in every respect as that of the so-called caste Hindus. Such is also the position of the Congress. It has talked less and done more for minorities than any other cosmopolitan body known to me. There is no blue-print necessary when work speaks.

Q. Does the Congress regard the untouchables as a minority? Mr. Gandhi in an article in the *Harijan* in 1939 admitted that the only real minority in India were the untouchables. Why did Maulana Azad in his last letter¹ to the Viceroy say that the Congress was not prepared to recognize the untouchables as a minority?

A. The Congress should not regard the untouchables as a minority for the simple reason that they are not a minority in the sense in which Parsis, Jews, Christians and others can call themselves minorities. Harijans are a minority, if Brahmins, Kashatriyas and Vaishyas are minorities and Shudras are a majority. These are not minorities and majorities in the sense we are used to. We have fortunately not come to that pass. When we do, it will be good-bye to any kind of swaraj. The English may go today, they will some day, but if we become savages cutting one another's throats we will have the freedom that savages have.

The President of the Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation should have given the quotation referred to by him from the article in the *Harijan* of 1939. He has not taken the trouble of giving even the number and page of the *Harijan* in question. I have no recollection of ever having made the statement attributed to me. What the Maulana Saheb is reported to have said was undoubtedly right, irrespective of what I wrote in 1939 or did not write.

Q. What is the significance of the statement that the Congress does not regard the untouchables as a minority? Does it mean that the Congress will take away even those political safeguards which have been secured by the untouchables under the present Government of India Act?

A. The significance is that untouchables are an integral part of Hindus. They are, therefore, better than minorities and worse if they claim to be and become a distinct community. A few educated untouchables may keep themselves as a class apart but the mass of them must sink or swim with the Hindus who, if they continue their

¹ Of June 25, 1946

misbehaviour towards Harijans—the so-called untouchables—must become extinct as a separate branch of the human family.

What ‘political safeguards’ the questioner has in view I do not know. If they refer to ‘separate’ electorates they must go even to the extent they exist today. They are a device of Satan named Imperialism. It was never meant for the protection of the untouchables. It was a prop of Imperialism. Every statutory separation has been in furtherance of the policy of ‘divide and rule’. It is inherent in the life of Imperialism even if it were to be called by a sweeter name.

Q. Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that the candidates of the Scheduled Castes who have been elected to the Provincial Legislatures came to the bottom in the primary elections and the candidates put up by the Scheduled Castes Federation came to the top? Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that if in the final election the failed candidates were elected, it was entirely due to the Hindu votes? Can the Congress deny that candidates elected by Hindu votes cannot be regarded as the real representatives of the Scheduled Castes?

A. I have not the statistics to verify the statement. My impression is to the contrary except in some cases.

Who were the ‘failed’ candidates? They could not offer themselves for the joint vote. The first four in the primary elections are the successful candidates, i. e., eligible for the joint vote. Surely it is a thing to be proud of, if the last successful candidate in the primary list won because of the caste Hindu vote at the joint election.

The Congress must deny that the top man of the primary election who failed to secure enough or any caste Hindu votes was the real representative of the Scheduled Castes. Can Sjt. Gaekwad and others like him, so long as they Hindus, be indifferent to the vote of their fellow Hindus, even though the latter are caste men? They must not cut the branch on which they are sitting. Separation must mean either change of religion or setting up a new religion—confusion added to confusion.

Q. At the time of the Poona Pact, Mr. Gandhi gave a pledge that the Hindus will not interfere in the election of the Scheduled Castes to the seats reserved for them. Why did the Congress violate the pledge and commit breach of faith?

A. I gave no such pledge as is imputed to me. The joint vote for the sake of which I fasted was interference, if it can be so called. If any other interference is meant, the questioner must explain and quote my writing in support of the contention.

Q. In the Simla Conference called by Lord Wavell in 1945, the Congress raised no objection to two representatives of the Scheduled Castes being included in

the Executive Council. Why did the Congress reduce the representation of the Scheduled Castes this time to one? Does it not prove that the Congress cannot be trusted to keep its word and that as soon as the Congress obtains the right to decide, it will break all its promises and withdraw all the political safeguards secured by the Scheduled Castes?

A. I do not understand this charge at all. The Congress, so far as I know, has committed no breach of faith.

Q. It has been admitted by all the workers of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and also by Mr. Gandhi that the removal of untouchability has made no headway at all. On the contrary, the tyranny and oppression of the untouchables by the caste Hindus which has been going on for ages, has increased in its rigour and has taken manifold forms. It is necessary to ventilate these grievances on the floor of the legislatures if any redress is to be obtained. No sensible man will deny that this work of ventilating the grievances cannot be done except by the representatives of the Scheduled Castes who are returned through separate electorates. Why does the Congress alone oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates?

A. I have made no statement, and I do not know that the Harijan Sevak Sangh has, to the effect that the removal of untouchability has made 'no headway at all'. What all of us have admitted is that removal, so far as the caste Hindus are concerned, has made no satisfactory headway. That is not a new complaint. It is of long standing. Woe to the reformer who is easily satisfied with the progress of the reform, on which his mind is set. The reform is two-sided. So far as work among the Harijans is concerned, the Sangh has made fair strides. That in itself is no small contribution to the cause of removal of untouchability. The work among the touchables has gone on at a snail's pace. It is an uphill task. Yet I assert that it is making sure progress, though undoubtedly slow.

The charge that the tyranny and oppression by caste Hindus have "increased and have become intensified in rigour" is wholly wrong and cannot be sustained. What is true, and it is a healthy sign, is that there is a growing consciousness of the wrong among the Harijans, thanks largely to the efforts and the increase in the number of reformers and their impatience of the wrong. But they dare not be satisfied with the results so far achieved. They have to go much farther than they have done. I am sure that will never be through the legislatures or legislation, necessary as both are, though to very limited extent. As I have said in a previous issue, it is the hoary custom and not law, that is responsible for the mischief. Custom is any day

tougher than law. It can be removed only by enlightened public opinion.

Progress will be totally blocked by separation. It is a night-mare which must be given up, unless the goal of separation is extinction of Hindus including the so-called Scheduled Classes. They can only be misrepresented by separate electorates. How can others who are not interested in Scheduled Classes oppose separation?

Q. There is no connection between the religion of a community and its demand for separate electorates. Even communities professing one religion have claimed separate electorates. Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians profess one common religion. Yet all of them have separate electorates. Nobody has raised any objection to their separate electorates, not even the Congress. Why does the Congress oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates on the ground of common religion which it does not rely upon in other cases?

A. This question can only arise in the minds of those who support separate electorates as good in themselves. Not so the Congress. The parallel of Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Indian Christians is inapplicable and fatal. That separation is a glaring example of the mischief that separate electorates are, as also of Imperialism gone mad. Arrogance cannot go farther. Europeans have been separated as the ruling race, Anglo-Indians being a cross breed have been kept distinct from Indian Christians.

Q. There is no social separation between the Hindus and the Sikhs. In one family one member is a Sikh and the other a Hindu. The Hindus and the Sikhs intermarry and interdine. Yet the Sikhs have separate electorates to which the Congress has never raised any objection. The untouchables in the matter of social intercourse are far more separated from the Hindus than all the Sikhs and Muslims. If the Sikhs and Muslims can have separate electorates, why not the untouchables?

A. The Congress would do away today with these separate electorates if it had the power—not the power that the sword gives but that of persuasion. It is perfectly true that more is common between Hindus and Sikhs than between caste Hindus and untouchables. That is a blot upon caste Hindus and Hinduism. But the remedy is not to add evil to evil but to reform Hinduism, so that the demand for separation on the part of untouchables dies a natural death. Meantime Hindus cannot be expected to commit suicide which separation of Harijans from caste Hindus must mean.

PANCHGANI, July 19, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

364. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 19, 1946

YOUR WIRE¹ SENT LETTER YESTERDAY. JUST RECEIVED LETTER FROM MINISTER ENCLOSING COPY MAHARAJA'S LETTER TO YOU. I CONSIDER THAT LETTER SATISFIES MINIMUM DEMAND. AFTER FINISHING WORK DELHI YOU SHOULD GO KASHMIR TAKING MAULANA IF HE WILL COME. INFORM MAHARAJA OF DATE DEPARTURE TELLING HIM YOU ARE AWARE OF BAN ON MEETING AND DEMONSTRATIONS ADDING YOU HAVE NO DESIRE TO DO MORE THAN MEETING SHEIKH ABDULLAH AND ATTENDING TO HIS DEFENCE. KEEP ME INFORMED OF YOUR MOVEMENTS.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

365. TELEGRAM TO JOACHIM DIAS²

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

YOUR WIRE DOING ALL I CAN. GOANS SHOULD BE PREPARED SUFFER UTMOST. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

366. LETTER TO JOACHIM DIAS

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

DEAR SHRI DIAS,

Your wire to Gandhiji came in yesterday and he has today sent you the following message³ in reply.

“Your wire. Doing all I can. Goans should be prepared suffer utmost. Writing.”

¹ Dated July 18, 1946, this read : “Have received no communication from Kashmir. In view Maharaja's recent speech as reported no change in policy indicated. Please advise about future action. Am going Delhi tomorrow.”

² President, Goa Youth League, Bombay

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

Gandhiji has written to the Roman Catholic Archbishop¹ in Bombay as well as to His Excellency the Viceory.² Your ultimate success, however, lies in your own strength. Goans, he says, must be prepared to stand every hardship up to torture and death without retaliation.

Please keep Gandhiji informed of happenings in Goa.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI JOACHIM DIAS
PRESIDENT
GOA YOUTH LEAGUE
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

367. LETTER TO ARCHBISHOP, BOMBAY

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

DEAR ARCHBISHOP,

You must be aware of happenings in Goa.³ I refer you to an account on page 6 of the *Bombay Chronicle* of 18.7.1946.

I recieved a wire⁴ yesterday, a copy of which is in the *Bombay Chronicle* above referred to. Goan friends tell me that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Goa is actually party to the lawlessness there. This appears to me to be a matter needing investigation by you. I have no doubt that you can influence the Goan authorities in the way of peace.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP OF BOMBAY
BOMBAY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

¹ *Vide* the following item.

² *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 19-7-1946.

³ The Portuguese authorities had been resorting to oppressive measures to deal with the Goans' demand for civil liberties. There were arrests and banishments, and meetings were forbidden.

⁴ The telegram reported the arrest and detention of the Secretary of the Goa Congress.

368. *LETTER TO MOTILAL SUNAR*

July 19, 1946

Your wire does not give full information. Send details. Hope you have informed Jawaharlalji.

M. K. GANDHI

MOTILAL SUNAR
RATLAM

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

369. *LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL*

CAMP: PANCHGANI,

July 19, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji desires me to refer you to happenings in Goa,¹ a vivid description of which is given on page 6 of the *Bombay Chronicle* of 18-7-1946.

I enclose a copy of a wire² Gandhiji received yesterday from Joachim Dias. Goan friends have been to see him too and related their woes. He wonders whether H. E. the Viceroy can do anything to stem the tide of what would appear to be lawlessness on the part of authority in Goa.

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

Encl: 1

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY

NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 99-100

¹ The Portuguese authorities had been resorting to oppressive measures to deal with the Goans' demand for civil liberties. There had been arrests and banishments and meetings had been forbidden.

² The telegram reported the arrest and detention of the Secretary of the Goa Congress.

370. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA KAK¹

PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

Your letter of the 12th was received today. Thanks. The Maharaja Saheb's reply seems appropriate. Its success depends on your wisdom, tolerance and patience. I have observed that even good work can be spoilt by haste or some other mistake.

The Maharaja Saheb's speech, if correctly reported in the newspapers, is irksome.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the Hindi original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar; also *Sardar Patel's Correspondence*, Vol. I, p. 20

371. LETTER TO R. K. RAMLINGA REDDY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

CHI. RAMLINGA REDDY,

I have your postcard redirected from Poona. After all everyone has to lose his father someday or other. We too have to go. Why grieve over it? The thing to do is to emulate the good qualities of our fathers and forget their faults. Only then do we gain something. Go on doing your work with zeal and you will have perfect peace. I shall be reaching Sevagram in August. You may come then, if you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 10416

¹ Prime Minister of Kashmir

372. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH¹

PANCHGANI,

[July 20, 1946]²

Q. The Communist Party has successfully organized sweepers' unions and helped them to secure their rights through *hartals*, etc. But the Harijan Sevak Sangh's activities are confined mostly to welfare work. It cannot therefore successfully compete with the Communists for popularity among the Harijans. Don't you think that in view of this, the Harijan Sevak Sangh ought to alter its policy and method of work?

A. We must be guided in our policy by our sense of right, not by the lure of winning cheap popularity. If the Harijan Sevak Sangh is convinced that it is working on the right lines, it will keep on to them, regardless of what others might or might not do. Thus we may organize unions or even induce *hartals*, not from political motives or for such purposes but for bettering the social or economic position of Harijans.

Q. The feeling is gaining ground among the Harijans that the Congress is showing more solicitude for Muslim demands than for the just rights of the Harijans. What have you to say to it?

A. The Congress being a political organization is likely to be more susceptible to political pressure, which the Muslims are in a far stronger position to exert than the Harijans. If it succumbs to that pressure, it will pay the price for it. The Harijan Sevak Sangh, however, being a non-political organization, should never put expediency before its primary duty towards the Harijans.

Q. In your recent correspondence with Shri Shyamlal you have said that caste ought to go root and branch if untouchability is to be completely eradicated. Then, why do you not make anti-untouchability work part of a wider crusade against the caste system itself? If you dig out the root, the branches will wither by themselves.

A. It is one thing for me to hold certain views and quite another to make my views acceptable in their entirety to society at large. My mind, I hope, is ever growing, ever moving forward. All may not keep pace with it. I have therefore to exercise utmost patience and be satisfied with hastening slowly. As you must have seen from my preface to a recent Navajivan publication of my writings on *Varnavyavastha*,³ I

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Harijan Sevak Sangh Under Fire"

² From *Gandhi—1915-1948*

³ Vide "Foreword to *Varnavyavastha*", 31-5-1945.

am wholly in agreement with you in principle. If I live up to 125 years, I do expect to convert the entire Hindu society to my view.

Q. Would you advise the so-called *savarna* Hindus to start, even under the pre-sent circumstances, an agitation in selected places for securing elementary civic and social rights for the Harijans? Would you for this purpose advise the Harijan Sevak Sangh to organize satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus if necessary?

A. I would not advise the Sangh as an organization to offer satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus, but I would certainly not only advise but expect members of the Sangh in their individual capacity to organize such satyagraha in their respective places. I shall certainly support any such move on their part if it is undertaken in the proper spirit. It is their duty.

Q. Would you, in the absence of popular government in the provinces, advise the Sangh to carry on a vigorous and energetic programme of temple-entry for Harijans?

A. I could. I understand it is being done even at present but at a rather slow pace. I would certainly like its tempo to be stepped up.

Q. Can the members of the Sangh refuse to inter-dine with the untouchables? Have your views on this question undergone any change?

A. At one time I did say that inter-dining was not an essential part of the campaign for the removal of untouchability. Personally, I was for it. Today I encourage it. In fact, today I even go further, as a perusal of my recent preface to which I have already referred would show.

Q. Should not the Harijan Sevak Sangh try to secure for the Harijans political power by demanding due representation for them on *gram panchayats*, municipalities and legislatures?

A. Certainly it ought to. No effort can be too great for it.

Q. Should not the Sangh give instructions in the essentials of Hindu religion in the Harijan hostels and in Harijan gatherings of adults?

A. It ought to be the primary duty of the Sangh to give to Harijan children and adults a grounding in the essentials of Hindu religion. If they were brought up in ignorance of these, they would not continue to remain in the Hindu fold, and the responsibility for it would rest on those who had failed to give them the necessary instruction.

Shri Sitaram Shastri of Vinaya Ashram, Guntur, asked whether the Sangh ought not to specially train a body of missionaries to carry on propaganda work

among the *savarna* Hindus. He was prepared to start a training centre for that purpose in his Ashram if he were given adequate help.

Gandhiji however had grave doubts as to the practicability of the suggestion. In fact, the question had actually been raised by Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla several years ago and dropped after full discussion. He would be quite satisfied, if at least the members of the Sangh would fully come up to the ideal.

Q. Ought not we to set up a precedent for having Harijan representatives in the Sangh or at least one Harijan member in the Executive Committee of the Sangh?

In reply he referred to the history of the birth of the Harijan Sevak Sangh at the conclusion of the Poona Pact, which resulted in the modification of the decision of the MacDonald Government on the question of the representation of the minorities. It was felt that if the rot was to be effectively stopped, Hinduism ought to be completely rid of the curse of untouchability. This called for a real change of heart and repentance for its past sins on the part of Hindu society. It was to that end that the Harijan Sevak Sangh was formed.

I am therefore opposed to both the propositions. I know that under the present arrangement some Harijans are included in the Board of the Sangh. But this was a concession to Thakkar Bapa's weakness. I have described the Harijan Sevak Sangh as an organization of penitent sinners. Its object is to call upon so-called *savarna* Hindus to do expiation for having harboured untouchability. The inclusion of a Harijan in the Sangh would be mere eye-wash and make-believe, as his would be a mere voice in the wilderness. Before long, he would himself heartily wish to be out of it. I say this from my personal experience of the way in which committees function. I know the Sangh cannot always keep up to the mark. It is of course open to the Sangh to alter its scope and give Harijans a majority in its Executive Committee or appoint a competent body of representative Harijans to act as a board of advisers and supervisors and keep the Sangh on the alert and on the right track.

Gandhiji was next asked to give his opinion on the recent work in the Gwalior State to enlist the services of the *Sadhu* community in the cause of Harijan uplift. Gandhiji replying said he had grave doubts as to the correctness or advisability of the step. It seemed to him to smack of politics. He would welcome the assistance of true *sadhus*, if it was available. But he confessed he looked in vain in the country for *sadhus* of his conception. Such *sadhus* as he saw disappointed him. There might be here and there honourable exceptions and their help would be welcome. But he was frankly sceptical of the possibility of utilizing *sadhus* as a body for their work. Even if they tried the experiment, he was afraid they would come to the parting of the ways

before long.

Another friend asked whether a portion of the Kasturba Memorial Trust Fund ought not to be earmarked for Harijan sisters. Gandhiji's reply was that they could have the whole of it if they could show the capacity to utilize it. No special earmarking of a part was therefore necessary.

I am responsible for the policy of conducting Harijan uplift work through the agency of the *savarna* Hindus. They had to do expiation. All of them, I argued to myself, could help with money even if they could not, owing to lack of necessary qualifications, render direct service. For instance, they might not be able themselves to do teaching work, but they could engage a competent teacher to give education to Harijan children. That would be one way of doing expiation. They would be able to penetrate Harijan society and help in its progress.

He knew there were sceptical critics, who questioned whether this kind of work could lead to the eradication of untouchability. He himself was at one time among the doubters. But he had since realized his mistake. He owed a debt of gratitude in this respect to the late Shri Devdhar, at whose activity he had at one time looked askance and which he had even criticized. A year's experience, however, had cured him of his conceit and taught him humility. He realized that if he confined himself exclusively to doing propaganda among the *savarna* Hindus with a view to their conversion, he might have to wait till the Greek Kalends and in the meantime the actual uplift work among the Harijans would remain hopelessly bogged. His own experience had since convinced him that if they could only have sufficient workers with the requisite purity and devotion and spirit of sacrifice to work among Harijans, untouchability would become a thing of the past, even if the *savarna* Hindus were left severely alone. But that would mean that they must first become Harijans at heart and live and labour among the Harijans as Harijans.

But can the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh truthfully claim to have eradicated the last trace of untouchability from their own hearts? Are their professions altogether on a par with their practice?

A member asked as to what his criterion was in that respect.

Are you married?

THE MEMBER: I happen to be.

G. The have you an unmarried daughter? If you have, get for her a Harijan bridegroom, not to satisfy her lust but in a purely religious spirit and I shall send you a wire of congratulations at my expense.

You will now realize why the Harijan *sevaks* are unable to move the hearts of the *savarna* Hindus. The reason is that they have not that fire of faith in their hearts, that impatient hunger for service which is the first essential for an effective appeal. Let but a handful of *savarna* Hindus go forth in that true missionary spirit and they will leaven the entire Hindu mass. But not even a whole army of missionaries so called will produce any effect upon them.

It needed a Malaviyaji to make such a missionary. He (Gandhiji) could not convert his own sister. And if he could not, how could he blame others. That would show how hard and thorny was that path. It was however open to them, if they felt that they had the necessary qualification, to try the experiment for themselves in their locality.

The reason for this partial failure, Gandhiji proceeded to explain, was also that the approach of most of the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh to their mission was not unmixed with political motives. If they really wanted to penetrate the hearts of *savarna* Hindus, they ought to be filled with a purely religious spirit. Mere dialectics was a poor weapon for this kind of work. As it was, they were too much weighed down by inertia, heedlessness and woodenness of mind.

The other method is more fierce and not altogether free from danger. It is the method of fasting.

He himself had before condemned fasting when it seemed to him to be wrong or morally unjustified. But to shirk a fast when there was a clear moral indication was a dereliction of duty. Such a fast had to be based on unadulterated truth and ahimsa.

In passing he hinted at the possibility of his having to go through one more fast in his life, possibly even more than one. He warned them however that he had no present thought of any. It was only a vague premonition.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

373. LETTER TO KALYANIDEVI¹

PANCHGANI,
[July]² 20, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I am grieved to learn of Doctor Saheb's death but grief is momentary. Doctor Saheb left us doing work of service till the end. Let us all imbibe his good qualities and by doing so bear testimony to his immortality. Do not grieve for him but carry on his work even as

¹ Widow of Dr. T. S. S. Rajan of Trichy

² The source has October; *vide*, however, the following item.

Ramabai Ranade did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYANIDEVI

C/O DR. T. V. S. SASTRI OF TRICHINOPOLY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

374. LETTER TO RAMA SHETTY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

SIR,

I got your wire. You did well in sending the wire. I have written to Kalyanidevi.¹ I remember the Doctor very well. I had stayed at his house when I went to Trichy the first time.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIRAMA SHETTY

PRESIDENT, TOWN CONGRESS

TRICHINOPOLY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

375. LETTER TO RAJAGOPAL

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

CHI. RAJAGOPAL,

I got your letter. It is good that 128 people have taken the pledge to do spinning as *yajna*. It is certainly good that all of them will make their own slivers. This is as it should be.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

376. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING¹

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

The verse from the *gatha* sung today says: 'Let me remember Thee by making my heart pure by righteous thought, by performing good and wise deeds and by right speech.' Unless all these conditions are fulfilled, one cannot expect to come near God.

Then the poet says: 'We bow to Thee and thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for us. We will always remain Thy debtors.' What is this debt towards God and how can one repay it? The answer is, by discharging one's duty completely. And since no mortal can completely discharge his duty in life, he must for ever remain a debtor to God.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

377. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES AT PRAYER MEETINGS²

PANCHGANI,
[Before July 21, 1946]³

In the song that has been sung today, the devotee says: 'Keep my heart pure—guide me on the path of truth. Give me true happiness which springs from holding on to truth. Destroy the misery which results from relinquishing truth.' Believe me when I tell you after 60 years of personal experience that the only real misfortune is to abandon the path of truth. If you but realize this, your one prayer to God will always be to enable you to put up without flinching with any number of trials and hardships that may fall to your lot in the pursuit of truth. . . .

The verse from the *Zend Avesta* describes five kinds of physicians, but the fifth is the true physician, who depends on nothing but the name of God for healing. That is just what I have been saying in connection with nature cure. Ramanama is the sovereign remedy. It is an agreeable surprise to me to find an authority for it in the *gatha*. . .

In the song that has been sung, the poet says that God is hidden

¹Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 21-7-1946

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

and yet present everywhere. . . . That is true. He knows our innermost thoughts better than we ourselves can do. One who depends on God will never be afraid of anybody, not even of the most despotic government on earth or its officers. For he will have as his protector the King of kings from whose eye nothing is hid. . . .

Just as a tree has many branches but one root, similarly the various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are the main branches but as for varieties of religion, they are as numerous as mankind. If you take the name of God in the prayer gathering and forget all about it on going out, it is not prayer but blasphemy. Religion has to be lived every moment of one's life.

The girls have sung, 'With folded hands, O Mazda! I beg of Thee to give me true knowledge and enable me to devote every moment of my life to the service of Thy creation.' It is a great prayer. The devotee begs of God to fill him or her with the thirst for service, so that service will become a pleasure and not a task. But what is the meaning of service? Is killing fellow human beings in war, for instance, also service? No. Therefore the devotee says, 'Whatever I do, whether in order to serve others or myself, let all my deeds be pure and noble. Let them fill me with Thy joy.' A man who lives up to this prayer would always be filled with His joy.

Referring to the riots in Ahmedabad he said that the Hindus and Muslims in Ahmedabad had not yet got over their insanity. Islam meant peace, Hindus claimed to follow the path of ahimsa. They both swore by God but in practice they followed Satan. The Muslim stabbed the innocent Hindu and the Hindu stabbed the innocent Muslim.

Of the three workers who were killed in Ahmedabad some days ago one was a Muslim¹. It was a Muslim's dagger that killed him. He was in the company of Hindus. No one even knew that he was a Muslim. One of his companions Vasantao was well known and commanded the respect of both Hindus and Muslims. While in jail one of his Muslim companions went on a fast. There was an overwhelming majority of Hindus amongst the satyagrahi prisoners. Vasantao felt that he ought to give his moral support to the Muslim brother and went on a sympathetic fast. His senior companions in jail, tried to dissuade him. 'Are you wiser than all of us? You know the Muslim friend's fast is not justified. If it was, we would all have fasted

¹ Rajabali Lakhani; *vide* "Letter to Ghulam Rasool Qureshi", 17-7-1946.

with him.’ His reply was: ‘I do not claim to be wise. I prefer to be a fool. I seek your blessings. If this Muslim friend dies in jail in the midst of all of us Hindus, with what face shall I return to my Muslim friends outside? Therefore, I would far rather die with him, whatever the issue of his fast.’ Neither died in the end, but Vasantrao proved by his action that he was a true Hindu and a true Muslim combined into one.

Gandhiji concluded by exhorting the audience to cultivate that mentality. He was sure that if they prayed to God to restore to sanity the Hindus and Muslims of Ahmedabad, their prayer would not go unheeded, but leap across space and melt the hearts of the deluded rioters in Ahmedabad.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

378. INDEPENDENCE

Q. You have said in your article in the *Harijan* of July 15, under the caption “The Real Danger”,¹ that Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. Would you kindly give them a broad but com-prehensive picture of the Independent India of your own conception?

A. I do not know that I have not, from time to time, given my idea of Indian independence. Since, however, this question is part of a series, it is better to answer it even at the risk of repetition.

Independence of India should mean independence of the whole of India, including what is called India of the States and the other foreign powers, French and Portuguese, who are there, I presume, by British sufferance. Independence must mean that of the people of India, not of those who are today ruling over them. The rulers should depend on the will of those who are under their heels. Thus, they have to be servants of the people, ready to do their will.

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or *panchayat* having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary

¹ *Vide* “The Real Danger”, 9-7-1946.

play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

This society must naturally be based on truth and non-violence which, in my opinion, are not possible without a living belief in God, meaning a self-existent, all-knowing living Force which inheres every other force known to the world and which depends on none and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or cease to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living Light.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it. If there ever is to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.

In this picture every religion has its full and equal place. We are all leaves of a majestic tree whose trunk cannot be shaken off its roots which are deep down in the bowels of the earth. The mightiest wind cannot move it.

In this there is no room for machines that would displace human labour and that would concentrate power in a few hands. Labour has its unique in a cultured human family. Every machine that helps every individual has a place. But I must confess that I have never sat down to think out what that machine can be. I have thought of Singer's sewing

machine. But even that is perfunctory. I do not need it to fill in my picture.

Q. Do you believe that the proposed Constituent Assembly could be used for the realization of your picture?

A. The Constituent Assembly has all the possibilities for the realization of my picture. Yet I cannot hope for much, not because the State Paper holds no such possibilities but because the document, being wholly of a voluntary nature, requires the common consent of the many parties to it. These have no common goal. Congressmen themselves are not of one mind even on the contents of Independence. I do not know how many swear by non-violence or the charkha or, believing in decentralization, regard the village as the nucleus. I know on the contrary that many would have India become a first-class military power and wish for India to have a strong centre and build the whole structure round it. In the medley of these conflicts I know that if India is to be leader in clean action based on clean thought, God will confound the wisdom of these big men and will provide the villages with the power to express themselves as they should.

Q. If the Constituent Assembly fizzles out because of the “danger from within”, as you have remarked in the above-mentioned article, would you advise the Congress to accept the alternative of general country-wide strike and capture of power, either non-violently or with the use of necessary force? What is your alternative in that eventuality if the above is not approved by you?

A. I must not contemplate darkness before it stares me in the face. And in no case can I be party, irrespective of non-violence, to a universal strike and capture of power. Though, therefore, I do not know what I should do in the case of a breakdown, I know that the actuality will find me ready with an alternative. My sole reliance being on the living Power which we call God, He will put the alternative in my hands when the time has come, not a minute sooner.

PANCHGANI, July 21, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

379. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 21, 1946

YOUR WIRE.¹ I UNDERSTAND REASON FOR GOING 24TH. ANY
DATE AFTER SEVENTH AUGUST WARDHA WILL
SUIT.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy:
Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

380. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

H. H. NAWAB SAHEB
BHOPAL

THANKS YOUR WIRE². MAHARAJAH'S LETTER TO PANDITJI
LIFTS BAN FOR VISIT FOR SHEIKH ABDULLAH. THINK
THIS SHOULD ENABLE HIM VISIT KASHMIR. YOUR
WIRE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN SENT IN IGNORANCE
OF MAHARAJAH'S ABOVE LETTER. HOPE YOUR GOOD
OFFICES WILL CONTINUE IN FURTHERANCE END
DEADLOCK.

GANDHI

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

¹ Of July 20, 1946, which read : "Received letter from Viceroy today about Kashmir. Thereupon decided go there twenty-fourth on brief visit as Abdullah's trial beginning twenty-second. Informed Viceroy Maharaja others my visit. Received your letter later. Consider change in programme not desirable now. Could early August suit you for Working Committee. Please wire suitable date place.

² In this, the addressee had informed Gandhiji of his advice to Nehru to defer his visit to Kashmir.

*381. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, NATAL INDIAN
CONGRESS*

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

YOUR WIRE.. HOPE RESISTERS WILL REMAIN FIRM TO THE END.

EVERYTHING POSSIBLE BEING DONE THIS END.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy:
Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

382. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is 4 a. m. and I am writing this by the light of lantern. All others are asleep and will rise when the electricity comes on at five. So I have only this piece of paper to write on.

I received all your letters. It was a good thing that you met Bhimarao Ambedkar. He will not agree. Why 20 per cent? I see a snag in this. Do think about it. The deposit ought to be paid. One can understand the condition that in all elections a certain minimum number of Harijans should be elected.

I think that the Maharaja's letter about Kashmir is fairly good. I already informed you of the advice I have given and I enclose copies herewith.

I have said that I will see Bhimarao if he comes to Poona or Sevagram. The newspaper report is false.

A great many things seem to be slipping out of the hands of the Congress. The postmen¹ do not listen to it, nor does Ahmedabad², nor do Harijans, nor Muslims. This is a strange situation indeed.

Yesterday, Deo³ the Raja of Aundh, Appa⁴ etc., came. We had a

¹The reference is to the Postal strike in Bombay and communal riots in Ahmedabad.

² *Ibid*

³ Shankarrao Deo

⁴ Appa Pant, son of the Raja of Aundh

long discussion. Bhai . . .¹ came with representatives of East Africa. He will meet you. I think something can be done in the matter.

Are you not well enough to go to Ahmedabad? You are ruining your own health. I wish you had come here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 309-11

383. LETTER TO RASIKLAL SHUKLA

PANCHGANI,

July 21, 1946

BHAI RASIKLAL,

I have your postcard. It is sarcastic. If you had ever stayed with me even for a few days, you would have realized that I am never . . .² Those who are with me are cooped up as in dovecots.

Your postcard reached Panchgani on the 20th and was handed to me the same day. You were impatient. The matter for *Harijan* is not written where *Harijan* is printed. The matter is sent from the places where I may happen to be touring. Thus things take time. The fact is that the day on which I got your wire I spoke on the subject at the prayer meeting and sent an account for *Harijan*. It must have now been published. Write whatever else you wish.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. RASIKLAL SHUKLA

SARASWATI HIGH SCHOOL

SARANGPUR, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Omission as in the source

² Omission as in the source

384. *LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT¹*

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

CHI. NANABHAI,

I got your wire. Come along whenever you like. I hope you are well.

SJT. NANABHAI BHATT

C/O SARDAR PATEL

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

385. *LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI*

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

CHI. ARUNA,

I was not pained so much by your speech that day as by your visit later and the inquiry. You appeared to be putting up an act. You are not a goddess, nor do you want to become one. You should become an instrument of service, pure and simple. You are not an actress either. Beware !

This letter is a sigh of sorrow. Brajkisan will tell you more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 11338. Courtesy: Aruna Asaf Ali

386. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING²*

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

Gandhiji said that when he came to Panchgani under medical advice in 1944, after his release from detention, he found that there was no place where the poor and the destitute could put up, in order to take advantage of the beautiful climate. And what about the Harijans? He had received a long letter from one of them describing their woes.

¹ The letter bears the remark : "To be sent with Brijkrishna."

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 30-7-1946

“It is all right so long as his identity is unknown. But the moment it is discovered that he is a Harijan, he suddenly becomes a *pariah*. He is unwelcome everywhere. All doors are shut against him. The shopkeeper receives his money but sells him the rottenest stuff and cheats him into the bargain by giving him less than the full measure. Should the poor unfortunate object, he is insulted and told to be gone. The landlord won’t have him and asks him to quit. Where is the poor man to go?” It was heart-rending. He felt he could not come and stay in Panchgani unless there was a place where the Harijans would be welcome like all others. It had therefore given him great pleasure that Panchgani was at last going to have such a place. Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad had purchased the ‘Satish Kunj’ property for Rs. 45,000 and had agreed to get it reconditioned and bear the running expenses of the institution for ten years. In the dharma shala which was going to be built, the poor of all communities including the Harijans would be able to come and stay without any distinction of caste or religion. They would be provided free accommodation but would have to make their own arrangements as regards food, etc. A Trust had been formed to look after the dharmashala, consisting of Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad, Sheth Mohanlal, Shri Bachharaj, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Gandhiji. He would have liked the dharmashala, said Gandhiji, to be built out of funds provided by the inhabitants of Panchgani itself. But finance was not everything. Although they had not contributed the money, they should give their blessings and co-operation. The institution would fail unless the people took active and genuine interest in it. He suggested that sisters from well-to-do families should visit the sick or the convalescent who might come to the dharmashala for a change of climate, soothe them by singing beautiful hymns and render them whatever service they could or was necessary.

The sanitary conditions in Panchgani were awful. In a climate like theirs there should never be any epidemics. Yet they had the plague only the year before and had to vacate the bazaar which was indescribably dirty. There was water shortage in spite of a plentiful rainfall. Why could not the rain water be captured and utilized for water supply? In South Africa, where rainfall was scarce and there was a dearth of underground water supply, they had a reservoir in every house for storing rain water. It was the duty of all of them, most of all the Municipality and the Public Health Department to remedy these defects. The Prime Minister Shri Balasaheb Kher¹ was there and was prepared to render them whatever help was necessary. If he were the Health Officer or the Chairman of the Panchgani Municipality, said Gandhiji, he would make the place so clean and neat that anybody might be able to lie down and sleep on the hill side in the open without any compunction. Today that was not

¹ Kher, Bal Gangadhar (1888-1957); Premier of the Bombay State from 1937 to 1939 and again from 1946 to 1952. He along with Patil and Tapase had come from Poona for the ceremony of dedication of ‘Satish Kunj’

possible, because of the Municipal insanitation. People spat and made nuisance here, there and everywhere indiscriminately. He spoke from knowledge, he said. Before he came under the Mahatmaic handicap and was free to go into dharmashalas and other places of public utility without attracting crowds, he had occasion to study the conditions prevailing in those places. The insanitation, the filth and the stench of the public latrines and urinals of the railway stations and in the dharmashalas were simply awful. They could make Panchgani into a jewel among hill stations, if only they did their duty.

He then proceeded to make some concrete suggestions. The first and foremost of course was sanitation and night-soil disposal. Having become a Bhangi himself, he thought of it first. He had done a Bhangi's job right from South Africa. He knew how to do it without becoming filthy himself. The sight of a Bhangi carrying the night-soil basket on his head made him sick. Scavenging was a fine art. Not only must the cleaning be perfect, but the manner of doing it and the instruments used, must be clean and not revolting to one's sanitary sense.

You have only to see the privy I use. It is spotlessly clean without a trace of smell. That is so because I clean it myself. The municipal Bhangi pours out the contents of the night-soil waggons over a cliff converting a beauty spot into a plague spot. If you become your own Bhangis, not only will you ensure perfect sanitation for yourself, but you will make your surroundings clean and relieve the Bhangis of the weight of oppression which today crushes them. Do not imagine that thereby you would deprive them of their living. Today we have reduced them to the level of the beast. They earn a few coppers but only at the expense of their human dignity. The same Bhangi serves in the municipality as well as in your bungalow, with the result that he can do justice to neither. Look at him as he eats his food, cowering under the shadow of the latrine wall, surrounded by filth. It is enough to break one's heart. It should not be difficult for you to find a more decent avocation for him to follow.

The Nawab Saheb of Wai who had seen him earlier in the day had told him that they knew what to do, but that the municipality was too poor and the necessary finances were lacking. He had asked the Nawab Saheb, said Gandhiji, to send him a small note setting forth their handicap. He hoped to be able to show him that what they wanted to do and what needed to be done, need not be held up for lack of funds. After all the various improvements which he had suggested would not require more than ten lakhs of rupees. He wanted to tell the rich folk who frequented Panchgani that it was up to them to provide that amount. In free and progressive countries, the gentry considered it their special privilege and duty to shoulder the burden of providing municipal amenities and improvements. It was only in India that people looked for every little thing to the Government. They must learn to shed that mendicant habit if

they aspired to become a free and self-respecting nation.

Then they should do something to improve the drainage. For that, a suitable scheme would have to be prepared by an engineer. He hoped that the work would be taken up without delay.

Lastly, he hoped that something would be done immediately about the disposal of the night-soil. The present practice was a sin against man and God and its continuation even for a single day should be a matter of utter shame to them. He was sorry to tell them that Dr. Dinshaw had reported that even after nearly a fortnight, things were as bad as they were on their arrival in Panchgani.

He hoped that when he came to Panchgani next year, God willing, he would find things different. The gulf that separated the rich and the poor today was appalling. It had to be bridged. The rich must share all their amenities with the poor in the fullest measure. Their joining in the prayer gathering would have gone in vain if it did not help them to realize and do their duty. Such prayer would be vain repetition which could do no good to them, to him or to anybody.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

387. *BLOODSHED IN AHMEDABAD*¹

Bloodshed had been going on in Ahmedabad for several days now. It is difficult to say who is at fault. The policy of the Government has been not to let anyone know who has stabbed whom. The Congress Government has adhered to this policy, so we should assume that there is some reason behind it. It could be in the manner of a thief's mother feigning grief over her son's doings, because in Ahmedabad everyone must know who is the aggressor or who is more to blame. My job is not to deliberate upon it; it is comparatively easier.

The best way is for one of the parties to desist. Then alone can true peace be established and the madness come to an end. In my childhood a cousin of mine and I took *bhang* and laughed and laughed at each other like two mad men. When morning came and we were sober, we were both ashamed of ourselves and could not face each other. That intoxication was comparatively harmless but this is frightful.

Is it not enough that three young men² have died in the attempt to stop the holocaust? I spoke about it at the prayer meeting at Poona.³ Several friends have written to me about the martyrdom. If we

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.

² Two of them were Rajabali Lakhani and Vasantrao Hegishte.

³ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 2-7-1946.

had sense that sacrifice would have quenched the fire. That has not happened. However, that does not mean that the sacrifice was in vain. It only means that many more such sacrifices must be offered before the fire can be quelled. Or both sides must tire themselves out. Some must face police bullets, some go to jail and some hang before the flames are extinguished. This is the wrong way; because the fire thus put out has every possibility of erupting again. It will not reduce the poison, only suppress it, which will then spread in the body politic and cause immense mischief.

Moreover, if the riots are suppressed with the help of the police and its elder brother the military, it will strengthen the grip of the foreigner and emasculate us still further. Poet Iqbal has said: "Religion does not teach us to bear enmity towards each other." Can there be greater cowardice than to fight amongst ourselves.

There are ways even of fighting. If we must fight, why should we seek the help of the police and the military? The Government too should clearly say that the military, whilst it is in India, will only be used for the work of sanitation, for cultivating unused land and the like. And the police similarly will be used for catching thieves and dacoits, but never to put down communal riots. Let the people of Ahmedabad be brave enough to say that they will not seek the help of the police and the military, and they will not flee in panic. Rioters are mostly *goondas*. Even the white-collared *goondas* murder by stealth. I am told that nearly all the stabbings have been in the back, none or very few in the chest or the face. Why should one be frightened of such people? One should either die at their hands in the hope that they will in the end give up their madness and *goondaism*, or if one does not have that much courage one should fight to defend oneself. The question may rightly be asked how can one fight against a person who strikes from behind. It may not be possible to prevent such a person from stabbing people in the back but if the onlookers are not in collusion with him and are brave enough, they can catch hold of the culprit and hand him over to the police or to the community to which he belongs, or bring him before the *panch*. Only, they may not become judges.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946
[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1946

388. *A DHARMASHALA FOR PANCHGANI*

When I first visited Panchgani after my release from jail, at a prayer meeting I mentioned the absence, in a beautiful place like Panchgani, of facilities for the poor, especially Harijans. In the event, for a person like me it becomes difficult even to stay at Panchgani. As far as I was concerned there were many who would put me up but where could the Harijans go? My host would accommodate the Harijans accompanying me but what about the rest? How could we put up with such a pitiable state of affairs? I told this to the audience assembled at the prayer meeting.

This created some stir. However, the result came only after two years. Sheth Shantilal bought a house and handed it on to me for lodging the poor. Such poor include myself and others I recommend. Of course they include poor Harijans and poor persons belonging to other religions who have nowhere to stay. There won't be any arrangement for their meals. Even poor people do eat at home, so they will have to do their own cooking or make whatever other arrangement is possible. Besides, the poor will have to keep the place given to them clean, deposit their trash in the municipal cans and observe all the rules of sanitation. Free supply to them of water and electricity will be arranged. No one will be allowed to stay for ever. Those who are not suffering from infectious diseases, are not invalid, and do not require looking after will be given free accommodation for a certain specified period. They will not be provided with bedding, etc. This is not to be a home for the crippled. Idlers will have no place here. There are many places in Panchgani and the neighbouring hills for the middle-class people who observe caste distinctions. However, there is none for those who have broken away from the circle of castes or are outside that circle. Here accommodation will be provided to the poor and industrious.

This activity can be pursued only if some local public worker is available. Shri Bachharaj Tribhovandas Doshi is such a worker. It was through his encouragement, as also of Gadhada's Sheth Mohanlal Motichand and of his won grandfather Jeshangbhai, that Sheth Shantilal bought the above-mentioned house.

Bhai Bachharaj stays in Panchgani most of the time. He has a flair and also love for this kind of work, so he will keep an eye on it. Sheth Shantilal has undertaken to bear the cost of repairs for ten

years. Five trustees have already been appointed. I am considering the names of the remaining two. Among the five trustees are the above-mentioned three gentlemen, Dr. Dinshaw and myself. At the moment the building is not fit for residence. It is in need of repairs and the water supply is incomplete. It may be ready for use only in October.

Thus a beginning has been made. Prime Minister Shri Kher along with two other Ministers Shri Tapase and Shri Patil, were present when this was announced after the prayer meeting in the hall of the Parsi Girls School on Sunday.¹ We should pray and wish that the work which has begun so well may really prove beneficial to the poor.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1946

389. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

CAMP: PANCHGANI,

July 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Rajkumari of 13-7-'46 was received on the 18th instant. Having slept over it for four nights, I feel it to be my duty to say that it seems His Excellency is wrong to delay the release of Shri Haridas Mitra. It is inconsistent with the declared policy of the Government.²

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MAJOR C. W. B. RANKIN

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 55

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 21-7-1946.

² Haridas Mitra was released soon after.

390. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1946

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have your letter. A short preface is enclosed herewith. You may send it if you like it.

I hope you are fully recovered by now.

I shall be in Poona on the 28th and expect to reach Sevagram by the 6th or the 7th August.

What happened to the Urdu book?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

391. A TELEGRAM

July 23, 1946

MY BLESSINGS. NO GRIEF OVER INEVITABLE.

GANDHI

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

392. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. A. SALAAM,

Your letter to Rajkumari was received after she had left. She will be passing through Wardha. Most probably she has written to you. If your health permits, you may observe the Ramzan. I suppose you know that the Ramzan is truly observed by him who kills his anger and behaves rationally. Mere fasting serves no purpose at all. I shall be arriving there on the 7th or even earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 523

393. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. . . .¹ also came and saw me. It will be better if you issue a statement on Goa. You may mention in it that people belonging to various parties have been coming to you for advice and that it is risky for them² to have so many parties. They must all speak with one voice; and they should not build their hopes on people from outside Goa. Too many statements are likely to make for confusion. It will therefore be better if everything is sent to the Bombay Congress Committee and then an official statement is issued by it. As I see it, the present struggle in Goa is only for civil liberty and it must succeed. Although the whole of India sympathizes with it the hard-ships will have to be borne by the Indians in Goa. Goa's freedom is bound to follow India's freedom. There is little perhaps the people of Goa need do for that today.

I understand about Bhimarao. Do see him. His speeches are in bad taste. It would be good if you answered the two points he has made. I do not have figures about the elections and caste Hindus; I am getting them.

I do not agree with you at all about your health. You must do something about it. It is a pity you have no confidence at all in Dinshaw, but there are many others. In any case you must not allow your health to get worse.

I understand about Ahmedabad. There is no question of your going there when people themselves do not want it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine p. 312

¹ Omission as in the source

² Goans. The reference seems to be to A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee; *vide* "Statement to the Press", 24-7-1946.

394. *LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH*

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. Just now give Ramprasad what Jajuji has suggested. I hope to arrive there by the 7th. If necessary, I will think further about the matter. It is bad that Gordhandas¹ is having low fever. He should take rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10650

395. *LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI*

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

Herewith please find Dr. Hiralal Sharma's letter. I have an impression that I sent you some papers earlier. I do not have the whole file with me here. The statements are such that you should not take long to come to a decision. You may, if you want, send for Sharma, in which case you would have to invite Lakshminarayan Gadodia, too.

I hope you succeeded in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosed one letter.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Gordhandas Chokhawala, addressee's son-in-law

396. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am writing to Munshiji. We shall see what happens. I do not have much hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 360

397. *LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR*

CHI. INDU,

Why do you want to go to America? For a person like you, the field of service [here] is vast. Spending a year or more in America would be a waste of time for you. You haven't yet moved through the length and breadth of India. I shall understand it if you go abroad after settling down in a particular job. Then you can go to Afghanistan or Central Asia to gain experience. Asia is always there. I am positive that America or Europe is not for you. You will learn about these countries from Tendulkar.

I had absolutely no idea where you were, nor where Tendulkar was. I was therefore glad when he visited me today. I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

398. *LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI*

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

The papers report that you have undertaken a fast in protest against some mill and that too in the Congress House premises in

defiance of the manager.¹ If this is true it does not seem right to me. A sacred means like fasting should be used in a sacred way. I can give my judgment on your fast only after I get your letter. The same applies to the use of the Congress House. I shall be here till the 28th. Then to Poona. Maybe by the time you get this letter everything will have been settled. If the fast is still continuing I hope you are not feeling too weak. Have you allowed yourself to take . . .² during the fast?

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,

July 24, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I received your letter. Immediately I sat down to write to Abidali.³ Nobody can forcibly lodge in the Congress House. And how can they resort to fasting?

I understand about Jawaharlal. For the moment everything is going to come off without a hitch. About the future we shall see.

Pyarelal tells me that there is a newspaper report about the meeting of the Working Committee in Wardha on the 8th.

You must have heard about Munshi's visit to Delhi. The situation is becoming more and more delicate.

There are other strikes on top of the postal strike. All this looks pretty significant. It is necessary that you and others should think about it very seriously. The Congress position may seem strong on the surface but it appears to have lost its hold on the people. Or it may be that the Congress itself is involved in these troubles if only from a

¹ The addressee, a trade union leader of Bombay, had undertaken the fast from July 22 in protest against the dismissal of S. A. Bhimji, an assistant engineer of the India United Mills and a member of the Union. On Gandhiji's advice he gave up the fast on July 30.

² Omission as in the source

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

distance. This must be clarified; otherwise the battle which we are on the point of winning will be lost.

I hope you are well. These days it has been raining here all the twenty-four hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhai, pp. 313-5

400. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1946

I have gone through everything carefully. You seem to forget that I had offered to give you work only after you had decided what you wished to do regarding Kanchan. This time you have come to some decision, but it is incomplete. I had also told you what you should do in the meanwhile and I had explained, too, that if you finally decided to stay with me you would be welcome. But you can live and work with me only if you abide by my advice. Personally, I would welcome your staying with me; but if you experience any difficulty in doing so, is it not for you yourself to overcome it? You may ask for my help in that. Your work for each hour should be defined. Don't you observe complete silence? Never enter into an argument with anybody. If other people speak untruth or behave indecorously, how are you concerned with that? We may feel ashamed if we ourselves do so. It is true I have collected a mixed crowd round me. But is that a new story? This answers all your questions. However, if any point is left out you may ask me. Do not reduce your exercise. Physical labour is necessary. Improve your proficiency in the languages. As soon as you have come to some decision I shall immediately be able to make arrangements for your work. In short you should know that I have given my word to Kanchan that as long as she is firm in her desire to live separately with you I will support her in her desire.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10238. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

401. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

Doctor A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee is the last one from Goa who has come to me with the latest news from the place.¹ He tells me that there are several parties there, working not necessarily for its inhabitants but for power. Yet at bottom the fight is good. He has produced voluminous papers in support of the statement that confusion reigns supreme in the minds of Goans, correctly described as Gomantakas. This confusion is bad in that the inhabitants of these Portuguese possessions are novices in the art of real politics. Its separate existence, it is clear, can only depend on the goodwill of the mighty British Government and the impotence of its Indian residents. It is therefore most essential for the success of the movement that it should be conducted by the Gomantakas on the clearest possible issue, i. e., civil liberty. The larger question of swaraj should await its attainment by the whole of India unless of course the Portuguese Government wisely come to terms with the inhabitants of the settlement through friendly negotiations. It cannot be attained by any direct action of the citizens, whether violent or non-violent. In non-violent action success is assured where every inhabitant is a hero ready to lay down his or her life. It is less to be thought of in Goa than in the more numerous and better seasoned and awakened British India. Therefore the clearest possible issue of civil liberty must be kept steadily in view.

The second condition of success is that the fight must be through non-violent and therefore also entirely open means.

Thirdly, there should be no parties struggling for power and position. Where the goal and the means are common, different parties have no meaning.

On reading the literature I find two persons called loyalists who have already made lavish declarations saying that nothing is wrong in

¹ Tendulkar saw Gandhiji in the afternoon of July 23; *vide* "Letter to Indumati Tendulkar", 23-7-1946.

Goa and that a false agitation is being carried on by some mischievous persons. Let not the circle of these loyalists grow larger. The best way to avoid this growth is for all parties to become one.

PANCHGANI, July 24, 1946

Harijan, 28-7-1946

402. QUESTION BOX¹

Q. I have been repeating Ramanama according to your advice and I am getting better. I must add that the medical treatment for tuberculosis is also being followed. You have said that eating little and eating the right food enables a man to be healthy and promotes longevity. I have observed the rule about eating sparingly for the last twenty-five years. Why should I have fallen a prey to tuberculosis? Would you say I should attribute this ill-luck to some evil deed in this life or in the previous one?

You say a man can live up to 125 years. Then why should God have carried away Mahadevbhai, who was so useful to you? He observed the rule of eating moderately and having a balanced diet and he served you as his God. Why did he fall a prey to high blood-pressure? Why did Ramakrishna Paramahansa, who is looked upon as an incarnation of God, fall a prey to cancer, as deadly a disease as tuberculosis? Why was he not able to fight it successfully?

A. I have been expounding the rules of maintaining health as I know them. Spare and balanced diet may not be the same for everybody. It can be best worked out by the individual for himself through proper reading and careful thought. But that does not mean that the individual cannot make mistakes or that his or her knowledge is complete. That is why life has been called a laboratory. One should learn from the experience of others and go forward and if he is not successful, he should not blame others or even himself. One should not be too ready to find fault with the rule, but if after careful thought, one comes to the conclusion that a certain rule is wrong, he should be able to tell the right one and declare it.

So far as your own case is concerned, there may be several causes leading to your illness. Who can say whether you have made the right use of the five 'powers' in your own case? So long as I believe in the laws of nature as I know them, I have to say that you must have erred somewhere. As for Mahadev and Ramakrishna Paramahansa, to feel that even they must have erred somehow is fitter

¹ The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946

than to say that the laws are wrong. These rules are not my creation. They are the laws of nature according to experienced men. I believe them and try to live up to my belief. Man is after all an imperfect creature. How can he know the whole truth? That the doctors do not believe in them or, if they do, they do so in a different sense, does not impress me. What I have said does not and should not in any way detract from the greatness of the individuals mentioned.

Q. In *Harijanbandhu* of 14-4-'46, you have said, "God is the Law and the Law-giver." I do not understand it. Laws are made by man and they keep on changing with time. For instance, Draupadi had five husbands and yet she was considered a *sati*. A woman who does that today will be considered immoral.

A. Law here means the law of God. Man interprets that law according to his understanding. We can therefore say that with the gaining of more knowledge he finds the previous assumption wrong.¹ For instance, the rotation of the earth is a law of nature. We are convinced of its correctness today. Yet before Galileo, astronomers believed differently. As for Draupadi, the *Mahabharata* in my opinion is an allegory and not history. Draupadi means the soul wedded to the five senses.

Q. God cannot be realized through reason. He has to be understood through faith. Do you believe in rebirth or is it that the Hindu seers² propounded it in order to enable people to appreciate the significance of good and evil deeds and derive some satisfaction from the belief?

A. God cannot be realized through the intellect. Intellect can lead one to a certain extent and no further. It is a matter of faith and experience derived from that faith. One might rely on the experience of one's betters³ or else be satisfied with nothing less than personal experience. Full faith does not feel the want of experience. The distinction between good and evil is not meant to act as a consolation. Nor is faith in God meant for that purpose. The seers have held that there is good and evil and there is rebirth. I think this theory of reincarnation is capable of being understood by the intellect.

Q. The Congress has been fighting the British Government non-violently. When Congressmen come into power, they shoot their own brothers who have gone astray and are causing trouble. Is it right? If the Congressmen in power have not the courage to lay down their lives while attempting to put down the riots non-violently,

¹ This is taken from the Gujarati version.

² The Gujarati original has "Hindu dharma".

³ The Gujarati original has "predecessors".

does it not show with the exception of a few individuals like Ravishankar Maharaj and Sane Guruji, the non-violence of Congressmen in general is the non-violence of the weak?

A. The question of violence and non-violence raised by you is an old question. I have said a lot in this connection. If like many others, non-violence does not appeal to your heart, you should discard it. I shall not find fault with you for that, and, if others do, you should not care. The principle is this: "That which has been propounded by the *rishis*, practised by the sages and appeals to one's heart should be followed and put into practice." The question might arise as to what one is to do when the thing that appeals to one's heart is contrary to what has been propounded by the *rishis* and practised by the sages. The answer is, that in such a case the individual can follow his bent at his own risk. Many reforms and new discoveries have been made in this way. Our Shankaracharyas have supported the institution of untouchability but both our head and heart consider it a blot on Hinduism. We do not care if others consider our belief to be wrong.

Q. From 1920 you have described the British Government's officials as the arms of Ravana. Congress Governments use these arms. Again, the laws made by the British Government say that it is an offence to beat a prisoner arrested on suspicion or for an alleged offence, in order to extort a confession or to frighten him. During the 1942 revolution, many like me were severely beaten after arrest. Should not the Congress Governments hold an inquiry into the police excesses thus committed?

A. I have severely criticized the British Government and do so still. But that does not mean that all police officials under the British Government must necessarily be devil's disciples even when they come under Congress Governments. No one has questioned Congress Government's right to inquire into the police excesses in 1942 or even before. But such rights are not always exercised. We all know that there are times when wisdom lies in not exercising certain rights. The Congress has in general followed the policy of not inquiring into the kind of excesses mentioned by you. You should know that often such offences are difficult to prove. I believe the right of inquiry has been exercised in cases where the offence was beyond doubt. But my advice is let us not sit in judgment on the Congress ministries. The belief that Congress has acted wisely in accepting power should suffice.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946

Harijan, 4-8-1946

403. HEAL THYSELF¹

A correspondent has written to me about the butchery that is going on in Ahmedabad. I give below the relevant portions from his letter.

I wish to write to you about the means to be employed for putting down riots. About two months ago you wrote an article on Ahimsa Seva Dal—non-violent volunteer corps.² But looking to the situation in the country, the suggestion will not do. Just as you have taught us how to fight against the British Government non-violently, you should go to some place of riot and show us the way of quelling riots in a non-violent manner by personal example. Supposing you were in Ahmedabad today and went out to quell the riots, any number of volunteers will join you. Two of our Congress workers, Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali, went out in such a quest and fell a prey to the *goonda's* knife. They laid down their lives in the pursuit of an ideal and they deserve all praise. But no one else had the courage to follow in their footsteps. They have not the same self-confidence. If they had it, there would be no riots and, even if riots broke out, they would never assume the proportions and the form that the present day riots do. But the fact remains that such a state is merely an imaginary thing today.

Your guidance and example can inspire many like me with courage and self-confidence. Once you have shown the way, the local workers will be able to follow it whenever occasion demands it. I feel that unless you set an example in action, your writings and utterances will not be of any use to the ordinary people, and even Congressmen, in organizing non-violent protection of society.

I like the suggestion mentioned above. People followed my advice and took to non-violent resistance against the British Government because they wanted to offer some sort of resistance. But their non-violence, I must confess, was born of their helplessness. Therefore, it was the weapon of the weak. That is why today we worship Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj. We forget that Netaji himself had told his soldiers that on going to India, they must follow the way of non-violence. This I have from the leaders of the I. N. A. But we have lost all sense of discrimination. To restore it, the I. N. A. men will have to live up to the ideal placed before them by Netaji. The work of those who believe in non-violence is very difficult

¹ The Hindi original of this was also published in *Harijan Sevak*, 4-8-1946.

² *Vide* "Non-Violent Volunteer Corps", 26-4-1946.

in this atmosphere which is full of violence. But the path of true non-violence requires much more courage than violence. We have not been able to give proof of such non-violence. We might look upon the action of Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Shri Vasant Rao and Shri Rajabali as examples of the non-violence of the brave. But when communal feelings run high, we are unable to demonstrate any effect of the sacrifices mentioned above. For that, many like Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi will have to lay down their lives. The fact that no one else in Ahmedabad has followed the example set by Shri Vasant Rao and Shri Rajabali shows that we have not yet developed the spirit of sacrifice to the extent of laying down our lives in non-violent action. The correspondent has rightly said that under these circumstances, I should act myself whether others join me or not. It will be disgraceful on my part to sit at home and tell others to go and lay down their lives. Such a thing cannot be an indication of non-violence. I have never had the chance to test my non-violence in the face of communal riots. It might be argued that it was my cowardice which prevented me from seeking such a chance. Be that as it may, God willing, the chance will still come to me, and by throwing me in the fire, He will purify me and make the path of non-violence clear. No one should take it to mean that sacrifice of my life will arrest all violence. Several lives like mine will have to be given if the terrible violence that has spread all over, is to stop and non-violence is to reign supreme in its place. The poet¹ has sung:

“हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो नहीं काथरनुं काम जोने।”

“The path of Truth is for the brave, never for the coward.” The path of Truth is the path of non-violence.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946

Harijan, 4-8-1946

¹ The Hindi original has ‘Pritam’.

404. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. MIRA,¹

I got on 22nd yours of 10th. Such are the vagaries of the post while the strike lasts.

Your letter to Dr. Katju² is exhaustive. The scheme is ambitious. I only hope that you will not have to give in. Let it be as unpretentious as you like but it should be failure proof.

Your illness worries me. You should find out the cause of these frequent breakdowns and deal with it.

Your quotation from *Talisman*³ is very apt.

It has been pouring night and day. Yet the weather in Panchgani is harmless if you take care.

I hope to go back to Poona on 28th. Shall stay till 31st there, then go to Uruli for three days and then to Sevagram, reaching on 6th or 7th August at the latest. R. Kumari has gone to Calcutta for three days.

BAPU

MIRABEHN
DEHRA DUN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I found this blank space on your letter and so I am using it to reply to you.

It was as well you went to Delhi. If you wish, you may come here. Most probably I shall leave for Poona on the 28th. The last date is 29th.

¹ The superscription is in Devanagari script.

² Dr. Kailash Nath Katju

³ This was published in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946, under the heading "True Non-violence".

There are, of course, many difficulties in the way. We shall come into our own only when we have overcome them all.

I trust you are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7698. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

406. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

PANCHGANI,

July 25, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have the letters of you both. About your falling down and breaking the toe, what shall I call it, the grace of God or your carelessness! If you had come here we would surely have found some time to talk. What will happen in Poona I do not know. I shall reach there on the 28th or 29th.

Why should you cry when you have Gangi? Why should you not take it that in Gangi Vidya has returned to you? Now it is not a question of forgetting Vidya. Gangi is Vidya's image. She does as much work of service as Vidya did. She has married you at the instance of Vidya. What more do you want?

Surrender all your worries to God and become carefree.

Blessings to you both from

Bapu

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

407. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

PANCHGANI,

July 25, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I shall write something about it in *Harijan Sevak*. Here I shall only say that your information is absolutely correct.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 8774

408. LETTER TO DEVICHAND SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI DEVICHAND,

I got your letter. You are right in saying that what I have written about the monkeys could prove dangerous. It is as well that people should know me as I am. True, a way should be found to deal with the nuisance of monkeys without killing them, but it would hinder all progress if we did nothing while we went on thinking.

SHRI DEVICHAND SHAH

KUSHAL ASHRAM

SARDARPURA

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

409. ENTRY IN DIARY OF MUNNALAL SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

4-5	Five minutes for toilet . . . ¹	<i>Comments</i>
	Prayer 50 minutes. Lack complete concentration.	Liked the Bhajan
5-6	The light did not come on. Enjoy-ed reading with the kerosene lamp. Read Urdu. ²
6-7	Walk and exercise. During the walk, reflected over life.	Nanabhai was with me for part of the time.
7-8	Wrote a letter to Kanchan. Explained my folly and admitted that she was blameless.	If only such noble thoughts continue to occur to my mind.
8-9	Heated water. Did not strain it even though there was some dirt in it.	Was not this a sign of lethargy?
9-10	Shaved. It took seven minutes. After that read newspapers.	There were only Gujarati papers.

¹ A word is illegible here.

² A sentence here is illegible.

10-11 Did spinning. The yarn broke
many times. The slivers were not
good.

Concentration also was poor.

11-12 . . .

This is only a specimen. Rule the pages in the note-book in this
manner and try to write a diary thus.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10243. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

410. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Newspapers have published a telegram saying that you have arrived there. That is good. I received Sita's letter only yesterday. Sita and Sumi have both settled down in Benares. According to the present schedule, Sushila will be leaving in a few days. But when she came to Poona she told me that she would await your letter. These days again there is no letter from her. I shall go to Poona from here on the 28th. I shall stay there for two days and then in Uruli for three days. From there I shall go to Sevagram—that is my programme at present.

Things are going on as usual here. You get the news from here through cables so I do not write anything about it. Also I do not have the time. I shall be happy if you keep on writing to me regularly. You will know more from Medh's¹ letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5009

411. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I had occasion to see your handwriting after many days. I was glad all the same for the opportunity. There is a slight deterioration in

¹ Surendra Medh

the handwriting. You should improve it gradually. Your language also is not grammatically correct. You have eaten up the vowel marks. Don't do it hereafter. If you do not revise what you have written it cannot be considered to have been written. People who formed such a habit have been saved from a great many difficulties. If your pen cannot express what you think, will not the reader misconstrue the meaning? There are so many instances of this having happened.

The news that Manilal had reached Durban appeared in the newspapers. It was two or three days ago. You need not worry about anyone. Be engrossed in your study. Master your mother tongue by studying it at home. You will certainly master Hindustani. Learn thoroughly carding, sliver-making, spinning and doubling the yarn. And spin with the same thoroughness. Do not cultivate the mind at the expense of the body. One man make real progress only if all the three things develop simultaneously.

Both sisters should read both my letters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4985

412. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PANCHGANI,

July 26, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I understand your unhappiness. I am no less unhappy that I shall not be able to come to Saswad during this visit.¹ But you and I should understand Dr. Gilder's point of view. He is a straightforward man. He says what he feels to be the truth and acts accordingly. I have no fear of the plague. But as a public man I cannot act as I like in regard to public affairs. Both of us are under the same discipline. If I disregard his order or wishes, his authority over others also would be weakened. How can I make myself responsible for that? Deo has understood this point. You also should understand it. If I get leave to go to Saswad even later, before I leave Poona, I will come. I am reaching Poona on the 28th. I shall have a

¹ Gandhiji was to go to Saswad on July 13, but as there had been cases of plague in a neighbouring village, Dr. Gilder advised him not to go.

talk with Dr. Gilder and if it is in any way possible I will come. Otherwise you can show this letter to the other people. That also will be a good lesson.

Sucheta did not leave¹ on my suggestion. You may think that she has acted wisely, but I do not believe so. But does it matter in any way what you and I believe? She must do what she herself thinks right. I shall have to look for another woman worker now. I have had a talk with Sushila, but she will discuss the matter with you. She might consult her other friends, too, as also some sympathizers, and decide after that. I hope you also will help.

Come along to Wardha with me. I shall be glad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10448. Also C. W. 6887. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

413. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,

July 26, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got Vanu's postcard yesterday. I gather from it that you are held up there because of your dental trouble and because you want to have your rheumatism treated. I have written a letter to you at the Sevagram address. It will reach you after a bit of wandering. I shall reach Poona on the 28th. I take it that Vanu will meet me there on the 30th. I have forwarded to Sevagram a letter in original, so that she may not see it. It will be very good if you can improve your health fully after having all your teeth extracted.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRINARAHARI PARIKH

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 9144

¹ Sucheta Kripalani had resigned from the Kasturba Memorial Trust to contest election to the U. P. Assembly.

414. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI HORMUSJI MODY,

I got your prompt reply. I thank you for the same and for offering higher interest.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

HORMUSJI MODY
BOMBAY HOUSE,
FORT, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

415. LETTER TO MRIDE

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MRIDE,

I got your long letter of 3-7-1946 on the 25th. The wire has not come. You have given a lot of news in your letter. In the context of a movement of such magnitude it is futile if not difficult to guess who are noble and who are not. Water from many sources flows into the Ganga and yet the Ganga is pure as ever. A major movement is like the stream of the Ganga and is always pure. Under the circumstances our dharma is to stay as pure as the Gangotri. Then all will be well. If she did not remain pure for all time the Ganga would cease to be what she is and turn into a filthy river. We see such things happening in our midst.

Manilal will tell you the rest. The papers here carry a Reuter's cable saying that he has reached there. I am certainly very glad that he went there. Without doubt that was his dharma.

I had told Sorab that no help whatever should be sent from here. That is my advice now. I am arranging for a lot of other help and you will continue to receive it. It should be a rule with all struggles to depend solely on local support. You will remember that for my part I

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Shyamlal", 27-7-1946.

had tried to avoid help coming from India. But it did come. Some came from England, too, which I put to good use. One might say that in those times it was even necessary to some extent. My experience, however, is that whenever aid arrived from outside we grew lax. Now I see no need to send even a cowrie from here.

AIR-MAIL

SOUTH AFRICA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

416. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BAPA,

Thinking that you would be in Delhi I sent you an airmail letter there yesterday. I got your letter of 14-7-1946 last night. (A copy of the letter is enclosed.)¹

If you want to save your eyes you must keep them closed for the major part of the day. You should dictate. You do have someone to take you around. You can preserve your eyesight to some extent if you deliberately go about like a blind person. Resting the eyes may be the greatest exercise for them. I say this from personal experience. I have not yet achieved complete success in that, I still do some writing. My hands can do the work of writing and since my eyes can read I do a little reading too. Still, for most of the time, I work with my eyes closed. I expect you have now started travelling second class, and I think we can afford second class fare for whoever accompanies you. You may do your touring among the Adivasis as you please subject to this condition. I have no worry on account of the [Kas-turba] Trust and the Harijan [Sevak Sangh] since you will continue to look after them.

I am certainly glad that Janakibehn has joined the [Servants of India] Society. It will please me if you dictate your letters to me rather than write them yourself. Make it an excuse to try the experiment of working with eyes closed. If you find any difficulty in keeping your eyes closed, since you are not used to this, you should bandage your

¹ Not available

eyes after the manner of Gandhari so that they will remain closed without any effort on your part.¹

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

417. LETTER TO V. K. KRISHNASARMA

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI KRISHNASARMA,

I got your letter. Though in your view it contains deep knowledge, I can find none in it. I have read the book by Thomas a Kempis². It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. K. KRISHNASARMA
7009 KALASEGUDA
SECUNDERABAD

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

418. CLOTH SHORTAGE

Shri Manu Subedar who takes interest in khadi and other village industries, sent me the following note some time ago. But I delayed publication in order that I might make some more effective use of it than giving it in *Harijan*. I could not think of any. Hence this publication for the use, not only of all provincial governments but also of private individuals or organizations, in however limited a field it may be.

Here is Shri Subedar's scheme:

One bale of cotton should be given to every village collectively. The people of the village could spin this yarn. The yarn will be used either for doubling or as weft and cloth could be made.

One bale would yield approximately 2,400 yards of cloth (or 1,800 according to count).

If charkhas and *taklis* are wanted, they should be supplied by the State. (Manufacture should be organized in jails.)

¹ The rest of the letter has been omitted in the source.

² German ecclesiastic and writer. The book referred to was presumably *Imitation of Christ*.

The cloth, when ready, should be made available to the people of the villages on a per head ration basis.

If and when it is important to collect grain in those villages where there is supposed to be a grain surplus in the hands of the farmers, the cloth should be substituted only for grain. In other cases, the people of the village should collect enough to pay for the value of the bale of cotton. In other words, for the price of cotton (which is in the first instance advanced by Government) they would get cloth.

While cloth shortage would be eased, cotton surplus would also be taken away and it will help the grower of cotton.

As the village *Panch* would have to take over the cotton bale and deal with the whole thing, the beginning would be made of:

- (i) village industry,
- (ii) joint and collective effort,
- (iii) participation and labour contribution by the small and the big ones, and
- (iv) elimination of the middleman.

If the experiment were made in the first instance with twenty thousand villages of the Bombay Presidency or even two thousand of them, the results would be seen in the course of the next six weeks.

Government will have to lock up funds for the cotton at the rate of Rs. 225 per bale. Much of this money will return either in the form of grain or in the form of cash. But it will have incidentally marked the beginning of something which the villages can do for themselves.

Assistance may have to be given where looms are not available, or where the yarn produced is not capable of being used both as warp and as weft. But these are details in organization which could be attended to by someone at the headquarters of every district.

On return of price of bale by a village, a fresh bale should be sent to them by Government as an advance.

I may add that this is a variation upon the one suggested by me. In my opinion, the original is probably better, but I attach greater value to Shri Subedar's note because he has worked out the figures, suggested a beginning with a bale of cotton and more specially because he as an economist has thought out his scheme independently of me. It will be easy enough to find flaws in every human scheme. Our business is to remove flaws if we know how or to make a beginning in spite of the flaws which we know but cannot mend. No reform is possible if we wait for perfection.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

419. NINTH AUGUST

Ninth August, like 6th April, 13th April and 26th January, is a red letter day in the battle of India's freedom. They are days for universal hartal in terms of satyagraha, i.e., truth and non-violence. But today, considered in terms of satyagraha, hartals are generally taboo and more specially so on the coming 9th of August. They would be fitting if hartals are designed to signalize violence.

Two powerful voices have spoken: one of the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the other of the President of the Socialist Group, Shri Jaiprakash Narayan. It is delicate for me to give my opinion when these two ardent lovers of their country speak in opposition. But as a satyagrahi I must overcome the delicacy.

Jaiprakash Narayan is a Congressman. It is an open secret that he was offered a seat on the Working Committee by Panditji, naturally under the belief that, whatever views he entertained, he was too honest to be disloyal to the Congress in action. If, now, in spite of knowing the Congress President's views to the contrary, he adheres to his own opinion given to the contrary, it would appear to be an act of disloyalty to the Congress. If, therefore, he has not withdrawn from the false position, I hope, recognizing the aptness of my remarks, he will see the wisdom of retracing his steps.

The Working Committee, rightly or wrongly, has taken a step. It has been endorsed by the A. I. C. C.¹ It is up to every Congressman to support the Congress going to the Constituent Assembly, by creating the atmosphere suitable for work in that Assembly. This I say even to those who distrust good faith in everything the British do. They may warn the Congress of the dangers they sense. This they were allowed by the President to have the fullest latitude to do at the recent A. I. C. C. meeting. Anything in excess of that opposition is surely harmful for the country. I would consider as such the hartal on the 9th August.

The Congress cannot have the cake and eat it too. It must be left free, it must be helped, to develop freedom through the Constituent Assembly. It will not be a waste of effort to honestly work the Assembly for the purpose. The Congress must not kill the hen before

¹ The resolution signifying acceptance by the Congress of the proposal regarding the Constituent Assembly contained in the Cabinet Mission's announcement of May 16, was passed by the Working Committee on June 26 and ratified by the A. I. C. C. on July 6.

it has laid.

Then mark the atmosphere in the country. There is senseless disorder as in Ahmedabad and elsewhere. There is a parody of satyagraha in the show staged by Dr. Ambedkar. In satyagraha the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means. The cause is certainly vague, even if the means are non-violent. I doubt the wisdom of the sympathetic paralysis of all business in Bombay and elsewhere, assuming the postal strike to be good on merits. Many would seem to have left off all thinking. They seem to take up any nostrum without caring to examine its merits. To call for hartal in this atmosphere is to invite disorder. No disorder is conducive to the growth of independence. Considered from every point of view, I hope that 9th August next will see no hartal in India, but a peaceful and dignified, orderly celebration of the day as advised by the President of the Congress.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946

[PS.] Before the despatch of this to *Harijan* I saw to my joy the withdrawal by Shri Jaiprakash of his proposal for hartal on 9th August. I am glad that the spirit of discipline has dictated this withdrawal. I might have cancelled the foregoing but for the important incidental observations in it.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

420. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

DEAR UMA,

I have the History of the Poles and your two letters. R. Kumari is in Calcutta. She will be back at the end of the month. I did write.¹ There is an acknowledgment and a promise of inquiry and of writing again. As soon as I have a definite answer I shall let you know. Keep cool and patient.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1211. Also C. W. 5102. Courtesy: Wanda Dynowska

¹ Vide "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.

421. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Sudhir¹ cannot refuse to go now. If Jinnah Saheb's man is also going, let him go. I think in the letter I wrote him I must have said that the Cabinet would welcome it if he also sent someone. Be it as it may, if there is time it would be as well if Sudhir meets you and me before he leaves. It is certainly necessary to think carefully over all that is happening, but it is no use worrying about it. I have not yet received Sudhir's letter; if I had, I would have sent it on to you at once.

I have already written a letter to Abidali which he must have received the night before last or yesterday morning.² I feel that if Abidali does not leave the Congress House, Congress officials should start satyagraha against him. That is, they can give him notice and then vacate and lock up all the rooms in the Congress House until he leaves. If such satyagraha is not possible, they should give him notice of trespass and ask him to leave.

I will leave Poona on the 5th or the 6th. I wish to go to Wardha. I have purposely decided to entrain at Kalyan. In that case there is no need to go to Bombay. I do not like living under police guard and putting my host and all others to inconvenience. I had told the overseer³ all this. I had told Lilavati, too, and most probably Patil also. Nor would I like staying anywhere else. You agree with all this, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANI,

You have stopped writing to me.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

BAPU NA PATRO—2: SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PP. 316-7

¹ Sudhir Ghosh, Gandhiji's emissary for carrying on negotiations with the British Labour Government for transfer of power during 1945-47

² *Vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 24-7-1946.

³ Gandhiji has used the English word here.

422. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 27, 1946

I believe that Kanchan will not be happy till you set up a house with her. It will be different if she herself gives it up later. Where you should stay is for you to decide. If you two willingly observe physical *brahmacharya*, i. e., do not touch each other for the satisfaction of physical craving and sleep in separate beds, I will have no objection to your staying in the Ashram. Do not Shakaribehn, Kashi and Gomati live thus? If Kanchan wants only that, the matter is quite simple. I unhesitatingly agree to your working in the office, irrespective of whether or not Kanu is there. I have some work also for you. Both of you will have to be ceaselessly vigilant and strive to banish thoughts of passion from your minds; otherwise you will both burn up. You will be listless all the time, be unhappy and make others unhappy. If you are going to burn with passion inside, you may as well live in a separate house away from the Ashram, gratify the desire for sex pleasure and, after you have tired of it, see what you can do. Show this letter to Kanchan. You may show it to others also. Even if you live away from the Ashram and pursue sexual enjoyment, I will still give you work.

I must not be pressed to decide about it just now. I must watch and you also will have to consider how you can find time for work, and how much, from your pleasure-seeking. You will feel as if you had been but recently married. I know the plight of newly-married couples.

I have never thought even in my dreams that you would knowingly tell a lie. But when you get excited while speaking, you behave like a man out of his senses and your face and words seem like those of a mad man. In a sense all of us are mad. But at such moments you seem to be the maddest of us all. You will not be cured of this madness unless you decide to speak as little as possible. I think the cause of this madness in you is self-suppression. For all I know it may be something else.

I understand about Uruli. I will know more if Kanchan explains it to me.

Show me the exercise book in which you write Urdu. You should not get up at night at two o'clock and write. It would be better to write a little whenever you get the time during the day.

It will save space if for writing the time you use the space to the left of the red line. The exercise-book should be kept as tidy as possible.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10244. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

423. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I am of the view that the Governor's invitation should be accepted. At present we are not offering non-cooperation. I expect to reach Poona by tomorrow evening.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI BALASAHEB KHER

POONA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

424. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Durgabai¹ cannot remain an agent of the Kasturba Committee if she gets into the Constituent Assembly. Can you suggest the names of a few deserving women out of whom we can choose someone in her place? Ashabehn² suggests the name of Bharatibehn Ranga³. What do you say to it?

Blessings from

BAPU

DR. PATTABHI

ANDHRA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Wife of C. D. Deshmukh

² Ashadevi Aryanayakum

³ Wife of Prof. N. G. Ranga

425. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. In no case can we have [as agent] anyone who gets into the Constituent Assembly. Any kind of compromise here would, in my view, be harmful to the Kasturba work. We truly abide by a rule we have ourselves made only when we stick to it even in times of difficulty. Personally, I like the name of Smt. Bharati Ranga but I have written to Dr. Pattabhi and asked him to send me other names also if he has any in mind.

A letter has arrived on behalf of Sir Homi Modi to the effect that interest will be paid at the rate of three per cent.¹ I shall give the letter to you when I reach there. I do not consider it safe these days to send things by post. A report of the work of the Kasturba Trust has also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRISHYAMLAL
WARDHA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

426. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PANCHGANI,
*[July 27, 1946]*²

In his farewell message at the prayer meeting yesterday Mahatma Gandhi told the people that God willing he would again visit Panchgani next year. But the uncleanliness of Panchgani had hurt him. The people should not sit tight on the plea that there was dearth of sweepers in Panchgani, added Gandhiji.

The paucity of water here was another factor which Gandhiji brought to their notice. He hoped to see proper arrangements made about water when he came next year.

Gandhiji said that he was pained to see the wide gap that prevailed in Panchgani between the rich and the poor. The poor could not afford expensive stay in

¹ *Vide* "Letter to H. P. Mody", 26-7-1946.

² The news item carries the date July 28.

the sanatorium and, therefore, he had opened a free sanatorium for poor patients. He wanted the public to co-operate and make his scheme of serving the poor a success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

427. ANSWER TO QUESTION¹

PANCHGANI,

[On or before *July 28, 1946*]²

Q. The English people have for years oppressed the coloured people in India, Ceylon and South Africa. Would their conduct not make an impression on their civilization? Can any one nation attain progress or preserve its existence through oppression?

A. An oppressor must perish in the end. But I wonder if that term can be strictly applied to the English people. Surely, they are not the worst. I have simply stated the divine law with regard to the oppressor. It is attested to by all religions. Irrespective of whether the conquest and exploitation by the English of other nations can be called oppression in the technical sense, their power cannot last for ever. Oppression is sin but submission to oppression is no less sin. History teaches us that neither the power of the oppressor nor the suffering of the oppressed can last for ever. Both must come to an end.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

428. QUESTION BOX

Q. Whilst the food policy was in the hands of the Advisors to the Provincial Governors, there was no effective method of checking them. Things under the responsible Provincial Governments are different. Should it not be a matter of conscience with Congress ministers to get their rations from common rationing depots and take not a grain more from any other source? This will immediately have a far-reaching effect. Today all controlling centres for food grains or cloth have public dens for thieving and corruption. Equipped with the moral force that the ministers will gain by acting as suggested, they will be able to fight out the evil with success.

A. This question is a consolidation of many letters of com-

¹ The question was asked by the U. P. I. representative attached to Gandhiji's camp.

² The report carrying the item is dated July 28.

plaints. I wholly agree with the suggestion made in the question. I fancy that the suggested practice is already being observed, not only by the ministers but all other Government servants. I do not know of any other source save the black market for getting supplies of foodstuffs. Of course, no exhortation can take the place of persons in authority setting a good example. If they took their rations from the same stock as is given to the public, the keepers of stores will soon find that it would not pay to dole out rotten stuff to the public. The practice of the ministers and other high-placed men in England taking their things in common with the public is, I am told, the usual thing, as it should be.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

429. KHADI WORKERS¹

I have two questions about Khadi workers before me. One of these is in connection with village workers. It is their duty to spend their time mainly in spinning and making others spin. The new conception of khadi work includes all the processes from the cultivation of cotton to the preparation of cloth. A worker who does all these intelligently and can mend the spinning-wheel or the spindle, will never have any difficulty in earning his livelihood and teaching others to do so. Along with it, and without letting khadi work suffer, the worker might treat simple ailments and attend to the sanitation of the village. Education has to be imparted through a craft. Therefore I do not consider it apart from khadi work. Those who come for education must wear khadi and get education through khadi.

The second question is how long should a khadi worker work as a paid worker. In my view he should be self-supporting from the beginning. If that is not possible, he should fix a time limit for himself. Five years is the utmost limit in my opinion. A worker who is to become self-supporting at the end of five years, should reduce his allowance progressively from year to year. He cannot expect to become self-supporting all of a sudden at the end of five years. It is an art which requires careful thought and management. He who really teaches others should certainly become self-supporting himself.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

¹The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946.

430. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 28, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter from Kumi. See if you can give her some work in Rashtriya Shala. She is certainly hard-working and intelligent. Give her the enclosed letter¹. Have a frank talk with her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8634. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

431. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

PANCHGANI,

July 28, 1946

CHI. VIJAYA,

Nanabhai gave me your letter. I was very pleased to read it. Nanabhai gave me all the news from there. Your good lies in resisting the temptation of running to me. Only when we realize that physical meeting has no value can we be absorbed in our work.

I am surprised that you are not able to understand a very simple thing. I could not have thought this of you. If poison is freely available to a person, if someone stops him from taking it and if by and by that person comes to love nectar, how does it mean coercion? The village people gave up khadi because they were tempted by mill-cloth. If there is an opportunity to end that temptation but one does not utilize it, then that person would be a fool. How does it mean forcing khadi on the village people? If mill-cloth is not available and if people do not make their own cloth, then they have the right to shiver in the cold and remain naked—nobody can deprive them of that. One can say that a thing is forced on others when they are punished for not accepting a particular thing or are compelled to wear anything against their will.

Blessings to all of you from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7151. Also C. W. 4643. Courtesy: Vijaya M. Pancholi

¹ This is not available.

432. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1946

BHAI MOTIBABU,

Your letter of 7th June came to hand only yesterday. I cannot blame anyone for this. I have been very busy and constantly on the move; hence those attending to my correspondence were unable to inform me. Thanks for clearing your debt to the Charkha Sangh. It gives me much pleasure to see that you have such khadi-lovers in the Pravartak Sangh. I hope to write another letter after reaching Wardha. I hope your eye is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILALBABU
PRAVARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DECCAN PRINCES¹

POONA,
July 28, 1946

Gandhiji said that it was a great pleasure to him to be able to meet the Deccan Princes. He had read the papers and the note prepared for his edification by the Raja Saheb of Phaltan. He did not wish to speak on the papers. It was a good thing that the Princes were seriously thinking in terms of the whole of India, rather than of themselves and of the protection they had all these years thought they were getting from the Paramountcy of the British Power. Only a few years ago the Princes felt that they could not be safe except under the Paramountcy of the British Crown. It seemed to have dawned on most of them that that was not the correct attitude. This was but natural, for they were after all sons of the soil. He had said openly on another

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Deccan Chiefs in Conference". The meeting was held in the Servants of India Society's Library Hall. Among those present were the Rajas of Aundh, Phaltan, Bhore, Miraj (Senior), Jamkhandi and Kurundwad (Senior), Appasaheb Pant and Satawalekar from Aundh, Kore, Sathe and Thomre from Sangli, the Dewan of Bhore and representatives from Budhgaon and Ramdrug. N. C. Kelkar and Shankarrao Deo were also present on the occasion by special invitation.

occasion that the people of the States were slaves of slaves which the Princes were. They exercised their authority within their own principalities, so long as they were in the good books of the British Government. They were made or unmade at the pleasure of the British Crown. The Princes who had eyes opened to that vital fact were desirous of India's independence equally with the people of India. If then they felt that need, they did not want a union of the States but each State had first to form a union with its own people. Their people were the real power on whom they were to depend for their status. It became trusteeship if they became servants of their own people. If they took that attitude, they needed no terms with the Congress or with any other organization. The immediate need was an understanding with their own people.

He made bold to take up that attitude, though his might be a lonely voice. In his opinion, the Princes, as servants and trustees of their people, were worthy of their hire. It would then (but not before) be time to consider whether they and their people wanted a union among themselves. Such a union would be of a wholly different type from what they had conceived.

The speaker had a serious suspicion that the present proposal¹ was a creation of the British Rulers, meaning the Political Agents. No blame need be imputed to them if they advised such a union. They were brought up in no better tradition. They thought that when the British power was not in India, the Princes would fight amongst themselves. That fear was wholly unjustifiable. They honestly believed that before they retired, as they must within perhaps a few months, owing to force of circumstances, they should enable the Princes to consolidate their power by organizing them into a union.

It was his belief that if India was not merely to be independent of British control, but was to enjoy real freedom, which their country, by virtue of its ancient culture and tradition was entitled to, it should grow from the bottom upwards, not be imposed from above. Otherwise, it would be a question of change of masters only. Instead of the English, there might be the Allied Powers or whosoever could impose himself on them. He did not look forward to that time. He looked forward to a time when India would come into her own because of her intrinsic merit. To that consummation the Princes could make a most handsome contribution.

If the Deccan Princes played their part and set a solid example, they would follow. For that purpose, the speaker repeated, they did not need the suggested union. If, on the other hand, at the back of their minds they had the idea that they would give the so-called responsible Government to the people to the ear and break it to the heart, then the proposed union would be a kind of military combination after the manner of the European Powers. It would be used against the people despite their protestations. That Power would be useless against a first-class military Power. They

¹ For a Deccan States' Union

would be the first to lay down their arms before a venturesome aggressor. The British had taken good care not to give them training that might enable them to resist a Power like themselves by force of arms.

What applied to the States applied to the whole of India. She would have to serve a long period of tutelage at the feet of the Western nations before she could become a first-class military power. A quarter of a century's effort that the Congress had spent in teaching the country non-violence would in that event have been utterly wasted. That was not a prospect to which he could look forward with equanimity.

He had suggested to the Raja Saheb of Aundh that the Princes should, with necessary changes, copy the constitution of Aundh, if they wanted to take their due share in building up of a free India. That constitution was designed for the people. He, the speaker, would have liked it to go much further in such matters as the amount and control of the privy purse, etc. But all that had to come naturally. It could not be imposed. The working of that constitution, he added, had made considerable progress—though not all the progress—which the Raja Saheb of Aundh, his Prime Minister or he, would have liked.

After Gandhiji had finished, a discussion followed and questions were asked. "Unless we unite, not a single State would have a survival value," remarked one of them and asked for Gandhiji's opinion on that point.

GANDHIJI: I am prepared to join issue on it though mine is perhaps a solitary voice. Every village has a survival value. Why should not your villages and hence you, the Princes, if you will be part of the people? Aundh, one of the smallest among you, has a greater survival value than many of you. It depends upon you. So far as the people are concerned, they are one with the rest of India already.

In an article¹ that I have written for the *Harijan*, you will see my picture of Independence. In that picture, the unit is the village community. The superstructure of Independence is not to be built on the village unit so that the top weighs down on and crushes the forty crores of people who constitute the base.² The power will vest in the unit itself, which will be economically and politically as autonomous as possible. Today power is perched on Mt. Everest. From there orders are issued and the people have to obey. The almighty British Government comes to the people once or twice in the year when the patel and the talati come to collect revenue.

I have conceived round the village as the centre a series of ever-

¹ *Vide* "Independence", 21-7-1946.

² The rest of this paragraph as also the following one has been taken from *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946.

widening circles, not one on top of the other, but all on the same plane, so that there is none higher or lower than the other. Maine¹ has said that India was a congerie of village republics. The towns were then subservient to the villages. They were emporia for the surplus village products and beautiful manufactures. That is the skeleton of my picture to serve as a pattern for Independent India. There are many faults in the ancient village system. Unless they are eradicated, there will not only be no hope for the untouchables in a free India but for India in the comity of nations.

“But we shall ask our people to draw up their own constitution. The plan of union that we have drawn up is only intended as a blue-print for their consideration,” explained another.

G. With the best intention in the world you will not be able to do that. You are brought up in a different tradition. Therefore, I suggest you should see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about it, if you will really let the people judge. He is the proper person to deal with this question as the President of the States’ People’s Conference. You should not be afraid to go to the States’ People’s Conference with your suggestions. Let the Conference decide finally. Their present policy is sound and not hostile to you, considered as servants and trustees of your people.

Q. We are anxious to serve our mother country. But we are so small that we cannot serve unless we merge into a union.

G. Not in my picture of Independent India. A village unit as conceived by me is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-sufficiency. Do not, therefore, think that unless you have a big union you will not be able to give a good account of yourself. If Princes are all of one mind and the interest of the people is first and themselves last, theirs will be more solid union than the one now proposed.

Q. What would you say if the States organized themselves on the basis of village republics first and then formed them into a union?

A. That would be excellent, but then you will speak a different language and proceed to work in an altogether different way.

Q. But that may take a long time and, unless it is done by people outside

¹ Sir Henry James Sumner Maine (1822-88), author of *Village Communities in the East and West*

first, our people will not take to it.

A. I have said that the States can make the finest contribution to the building of India's future Independence, if they set the right example in their own territories. They as individual States being compact, homogenous units can well afford to make experiments in government. As it is, the Princes have taken the lead only in copying the bad points of the British system. They allow themselves to be led by the nose by their Ministers, whose administrative talent consists only in extorting money from their dumb, helpless subjects. By their tradition and training they are unfitted to do the job you have let them do. Therefore, my advice to you is: 'Make Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru your Chief Minister, if you are in earnest. Let him present you with an outline. He will naturally consult the people.'

Q. We want to organize ourselves into a union so that our people may have *swaraj* first without waiting for the labours of the Constituent Assembly to be finished, which may take time.

A. That is the wrong way of going about the thing. If you are solicitous of the welfare of the people and want them to come into their own, give them the fullest liberty straight away. By the time you have done that, the Constituent Assembly will have finished its work. The constitution which it will frame will not be for British India merely, but for the whole of India. That constitution will necessarily provide for a States' union or unions, if it is desirable. You should assist them instead of anticipating them by forming your own union. Begin with the individual and you will not then go wrong.

N. C. KELKAR: Are you opposed to the union, because it is suspect in your eyes?

G. I began with that. But I do not oppose it on the ground for my suspicion. I suspect not you—A, B or C, but the circumstances. You do not know the danger and mischief you are running into. Hence my advice to you to hasten slowly.

Q. If you stretch your argument, would it not apply equally to the district and taluq organizations in the provinces? Why do not you ask for their dissolution?

G. I am not asking you to dissolve anything that already exists—not that I am enamoured of the machinery of administration set up in British India. History tells us, it was devised mainly to facilitate revenue collection. You will follow it only at your cost. My point just now is: Do not do anything in the shape of unions. Leave

that work to be done by the Constituent Assembly. As a Sanskrit poet says, अनारम्भो हि कर्माणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् (not to rush into new enterprises is the first mark of wisdom).

Harijan, 4-8-1946, and *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946

434. FOREWORD¹

I have gone through this summary. The beauty of it is that though it is a summary, I did not find anything missing in it.

POONA, July 29, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Prempanth, Book 1,

435. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

POONA,
July 29, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

So you have completed 40 years. You must hope to live up to 125. Keep your body fit in any case.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. AMRITLAL NANAVATI

KAKAWADI

OPP. MAHILASHRAM

WARDHA C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10811

436. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 29, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Deo also had a talk with me and will do so again. I met the Princes.² A full summary of the talks is being

¹ To *Prempanth*, a series of booklets containing extracts from Gandhiji's writings

² Of the Indian states of Maharashtra; *vide* "Speech at Meeting of Deccan Princes", 28-7-1946.

prepared. I shall send you a copy when it is ready.

There is a long letter from Abidali. I am replying to it today, suggesting that he should give up the fast, leave the Congress House and, if he so desires, refer the dispute to arbitrators.¹ Let us see what happens. The postal strike seems to have become worse. You must issue a statement saying that they do not listen to the Congress.

Do at least something for your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

68 MARINE DRIVE

BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

BAPU NA PATRO—2: SARDAR VALLABHBHAI, P. 318

437. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

POONA,

July 29, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I got your letter last night and went through the whole of it, including your notice. In my opinion the notice is wrong, so also is the fast. And you certainly cannot undertake a fast in the Congress House premises. How can a Union be concerned with a senior official? If any injustice has been done to him, he should go to court. He can ask for arbitration.

Fasts and strikes will not help things. The whole matter can be referred to an arbitrator. Anything beyond this would, I am afraid, amount to coercion.

No one, however important, may occupy a portion of the Congress House without permission. My advice is that, if at all, you should take the matter to an arbitrator. But, first of all, give up the fast and leave the Congress House. See me whenever you like. I hope you are all right. Send me a wire saying that you have given up the fast and moved out of the Congress House.

Blessings from

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ *Vide* the following item.

438. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH¹

July 29, 1946

None of these three remedies will do you any good. I would advise to remain in bed even if you cannot go to sleep and go on repeating Ramanama. You will then be able to do every job at the time appointed for it. See the nightly practice that I have started.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 10245. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

439. LETTER TO GHARPURE

POONA,

July 29, 1946

I arrived here only yesterday. Today early in the morning after the prayer, I devoted one hour to reading the book you have sent. Although I did not have much time, I could not put down the book after starting it. It is a very fascinating and instructive work. I thank you. I am returning the book. Your effort is commendable, no doubt about it. What help can I give you? Your work alone will take you to your goal.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRIGHARPURE, CURATOR

INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

440. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

POONA,

[July 29, 1946]²

I shall go to Uruli on the 1st. I shall return from there for the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. Again Uruli on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. Wardha on the 5th. These two days I am busy with the ministers. Such being the situation, how can I find time for a talk? I can meet you alone but the question is of finding the time. How much time do you want? I must have some idea. Come tomorrow at one o'clock; I shall try.

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

¹ Gandhiji scribbled this in the addressee's diary.

² As noted by the addressee

441. SPEECH AT EDUCATION MINISTERS' CONFERENCE¹

POONA,
July 29, 1946

He knew clearly enough, said Gandhiji, what was to be done but he did not quite know how it could be done. So far they had their course mapped out for them, but now they had to sail on uncharted waters. He knew their difficulties. It was not easy for those who had been brought up in the old tradition to break away from it at a stroke. If he were in the Ministerial chair, he would issue broad instructions that hereafter all educational activity of the Government should be on basic education lines. Adult education drives had been launched in several provinces. If he had his way, he would conduct them also through a basic craft. In his opinion, cotton spinning and the allied processes were crafts *par excellence* for this purpose. But he would leave the choice of the craft to the people concerned in each case in the certain belief that in the end that craft alone which had the necessary intrinsic merit would survive. It should be the job of the inspectors and other officers of the Education Department to go among the people and teachers of schools and by persuasion and argument, educate them in the value and utility of the Government's new educational policy. That was their primary job, not to lord it over them. If they had no faith in it or if they were unwilling loyally to work out the new policy, he would give them the choice to resign. But he did not think that it would be necessary, if the Ministers knew their job and put their shoulder to the wheel. Merely issuing orders would not do the trick.

What he had said about adult education applied equally to university education. It must be organically related to the Indian scene. It must therefore be an extension and continuation of the basic education course. That was the central point. If they did not see eye to eye with him on that point, he was afraid they would have little use for his advice. If, on the other hand, they agreed with him that the present university education did not fit them for independence but only enslaved them, they would be as impatient as he was to completely overhaul and scrap that system and remodel it on new lines consonant with the national requirement.

Today the youth educated in our universities either ran after Government jobs or fell into devious ways and sought outlet for their frustration by fomenting unrest. They were not even ashamed to beg or sponge upon others. Such was their sad plight. The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the people who would live and die for the country's freedom. He was therefore of the opinion that university education should be co-ordinated and brought into line with basic education, by taking in teachers from the Talimi Sangh.

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Congress Ministries and Basic Education". The Conference had been convened by B. G. Kher to discuss the programme of basic education. Ministers from all the Congress-governed provinces except two attended.

The Ministers had accepted office as people's representatives. Their writ would not run beyond the four walls of the Council Hall unless they could carry the people with them. What was taking place in Bombay and Ahmedabad today, was an ominous symptom, if it portended that the Congress had lost its hold over the people. Nayee Talim was as yet a tender sapling but it held out big promise. Its growth could not be forced by ministerial ukases, if popular support was lacking. If, therefore, they could not command popular support, his advice to them would be to tender their resignations. They should not be afraid of anarchy. Theirs was only to do their duty according to their lights and leave the rest to God. People would learn the lesson of true independence even out of that experience.

Q. Can basic education be conducted minus the self-support basis?

A. You can certainly try. But if you ask my advice, I will tell you that in that event, you had better forget basic education altogether. Self-sufficiency is not an *a priori* condition but to me it is the acid test. This does not mean that basic education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, covered by the basic education plan, income and expenditure must balance. Otherwise, it would mean that even at the end of their training, the basic education students will not be fitted for life. That is the negation of basic education. Nayee Talim without the self-support basis would, therefore, be like a lifeless body.

Q. We have accepted the principle of giving education through a basic craft. But the Mussalmans are somehow opposed to the spinning-wheel. Your emphasis on spinning is perhaps all right in cotton tracts. But do you not agree that it is unsuited to areas where the cotton crop is not grown? May not some other craft be substituted for it in such places—agriculture for instance?

A. This is a very old question. Any basic craft to serve as a medium for education must answer the test of universality. As early as 1908 I came to the conclusion that to make India free and to enable her to stand on her own legs, the spinning-wheel had to hum in every home. If England can become an exporter of textiles to India and to the whole world, although she does not grow a pod of cotton, I cannot understand why we cannot introduce cotton spinning in our homes, merely because cotton would have to be obtained from a neighbouring province or district. As a matter of fact, there is no part of India where cotton was not at one time grown. Localization of cotton cultivation in 'cotton tracts' is only a recent and anomalous development, forced upon India by cotton manufacturing interests at the expense of the poor tax-payer and cotton spinner of India. Even today tree

cotton grows everywhere in India. Such arguments as yours speak ill of our capacity for taking initiative, for our enterprise and resourcefulness. It would kill all manufactures if transportation of raw materials from another place were to be regarded as an insuperable handicap.

Moreover, to enable a person to clothe himself through his own effort, when the alternative is to go naked, is in itself an education. An intelligent pursuit of the various processes related to cotton spinning has, besides, a very high instructional value. In fact, it covers the whole education of man as perhaps no other craft does. We may not today be able to dispel the doubts of the Mussalmans, as they are rooted in a delusion and delusion is a very real thing to its victim, while he is under its spell. But if our own faith is clear and firm, and we can demonstrate the success of our method, the Mussalmans will themselves come to us and ask to be taught the secret of our success. They do not seem to have realized that the charkha has done more for the poorest Mussalman masses than even the Muslim League or any other Muslim organization. The bulk of the weavers in Bengal are Muslims. Nor should it be forgotten that Dacca owed its world-wide fame for its *shabnams*¹ to the deftness and skill of Muslim women spinners and Muslim weavers.

The same applied to Maharashtra. The best cure for the delusion is to concentrate on the performance of one's own duty. Truth alone will endure, all the rest will be swept away before the tide of time. I must, therefore, continue to bear testimony to Truth even if I am forsaken by all. Mine may today be a voice in the wilderness, but it will be heard when all other voices are silenced if it is the voice of Truth.

AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: To produce efficient teachers for Nayee Talim would take time. What should be done to improve education in the schools in the meantime?

G. If you realize that the present system of education cannot bring India Independence but only serves to deepen her slavery, you will refuse to encourage it, irrespective of whether any other takes its place or not. You will do whatever you can, within the four corners of the principles of Nayee Talim and be satisfied with that.

If people did not want the ministers on those terms, it would be

¹ A variety of muslin; literally, 'dew'

better for the ministers to resign. They could not possibly be party to serving poison because they could not provide or because the people did not relish life-giving food.

Q. You say that for Nayee Talim we do not need money but men. But to train men we again need institutions and therefore money. How can we get out of this vicious circle?

A. The remedy lies in your own hands. Begin with yourself. There is a good English proverb: 'Charity begins at home.' But if you yourself will sit in an easy chair like a sahib and expect others of the lesser breed to get ready for the job, you will get nowhere. That is not my way. It has been my practice ever since my childhood, to begin with myself and my immediate environment in howsoever humble a way. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the British people. A mere handful of them came to and settled in India in the first instance and carved out an empire for themselves which is even more formidable in its cultural than in its political aspect, so much so that, today we are so infatuated with English that we hug it, just as a slave hugs its fetters, even at the cost of the mother tongue. Think of the faith single-minded devotion, sacrifice and perseverance, which must have been at the back of it. It only shows that where there is a will, there is a way. Let us be up and doing with the firm resolve not to give up, come what may, and all the difficulties will melt away.

Q. What is the place of English in this programme? Should it be made compulsory or taught only as an optional, second language?

A. I must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast, in spite of its shortcomings. It alone can give me the life-giving milk. I love the English tongue in its own place, but I am its inveterate opponent if it usurps a place which does not belong to it. English is today admittedly the world language. I would therefore accord it a place as a second, optional language, not in the school but in the university course. That can only be for the select few—not for the millions. Today when we have not the means to introduce even free compulsory primary education, how can we make provision for teaching English? Russia has achieved all her scientific progress without English. It is our mental slavery that makes us feel that we cannot do without English. I can never subscribe to that defeatist creed.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

*442. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, PHALTAN STATE PRAJA
PARISHAD*

[After July 29, 1946]¹

UNABLE ADVISE. NO TIME FULL STUDY.

GANDHI

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

443. NOTES

DECENTRALIZATION

Appasaheb Pant of Aundh State writes:²

The British have forged an adequate instrument in the “Services” to help them maintain themselves in this country. . . .

We shall have to discard all this old machinery and through our own experience, create a new one that will aid us in the formation of an equitable and democratic way of life.

For this purpose, one feels that the decentralization of administrative power is the first step. . . . The test of the Congress, in office with this centralized power in hand, lies in devising ways and means to create decentralization which will enable ordinary human beings to manage their affairs themselves and in that process become more human, creative and therefore happy.

Appasaheb writes from experience, having had much to do with the administration of Aundh.

POONA, July 30, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

444. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1946

You have not lost me. Gangi is a good girl. I am only hoping that you will not look upon her with lustful eyes and all will be well.

¹ This was in reply to the addressee’s telegram seeking Gandhiji’s advice regarding participation of the States’ people in the proposed union of Eight Deccan States which was resolved by the rulers in their meeting held at Poona on July 29, 1946.

² Only extracts are reproduced here.

The real peace has to come from within. Do not think of Vidya, the figure of flesh and blood, but of her permanent self. Steady your nerves and Gangi will be a tower of strength to you.

BAPU

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

445. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

POONA,
July 30, 1946

DEAR SINGER (SAROJINI NAIDU),

I have seen your note to Sushila. You have the opportunity of getting thoroughly well if you will be well. Rest and be thankful.

You know all I am trying to do here; expecting to reach Sevagram on or before 7th August.

Love to you and the family.

SPINNER

PS.

R. K.¹ has shown me your letter. Be careful for nothing.

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

446. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

POONA,
July 30, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

The sun may change its course but Bhansali's word will not change. You have but to live your life as the sentinel of Sevagram. Never mind if the body drops there. You are the pole-star and you have to remain that. You are not rotting in Sevagram. The very thought is dangerous. It indicates a tendency to swerve. A drop which has merged in the sea does not rot but lends the sea its greatness. In

¹ Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

the same way you endow with importance the sea that is Sevagram. If you forget this fact all will be lost. How if all the drops regarded themselves as rotting? Yes, there is one point. Only he who becomes a cipher can lend greatness. You can see clearly through a glass window. If you coat the pane with mercury you will see none but yourself. May you never take on such a coating.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHANSALIBHAI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

447. LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY

POONA,

July 30, 1946

CHI. GOVIND REDDY,

I have your letter. I have not known you enough. Consult Krishnachandraji and others and do whatever is considered proper. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th or 7th.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 10666

448. *LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI*

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your letter. It makes me very happy. Now, get well at Jassawala's and come to me whenever you like. I can take a lot of work from you.

I am not writing about the other matters just now.

It is 9.15 p. m.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

449. *LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA*

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Your Hindi letter is very good. If you go on like this, you will write Hindi better than English. Your pleading is un-necessary for your sincerity is beyond doubt. Now forget all about it. Immerse yourself in khadi work and become of steadfast mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

450. SOUTH AFRICA

The following news from South Africa will be interest to the readers.

Rev. Michael Scott who has thrown in his lot with Indians in their struggle there, has written a note under the caption "Not by Might". It is already published in the dailies. It should make a special appeal to all Europeans. He adds in a personal note:

The spirit which enshrined you and your movement here will not be extin-guished by the powerful and cunning forces which are now arrayed against it.

An English sister writes from Durban:

I went along to the camp almost the first day just to give the campers a word of encouragement and was quite impressed by their cheerfulness and general attitude—it was the "real thing" like some of the Indian movements I have seen. Then I went to the court one day too and it seemed as though those on trial (apparently) were really the judges and the officials and the Government were in the dock. If you have seen the statements by some of the leaders, you will see they give the same impression.

Rev. Michael Scott is a very good man. He is only about 40 years old and wears "shirts" as do many high Anglicans and is addressed as "Father Scott". He reminds me somewhat of C. F. Andrews.

I am glad to know that Manilal is coming back. He will be a help to the leaders here, though, as a matter of fact, the struggle on the Indian side has been on a very high level up to the present. It is that that has drawn a group of Europeans to support the struggle but the number is not very large yet.

As I have said before, the battle will certainly go to our country-men if they remain truly non-violent. Non-violence knows no defeat.

Another friend writes:

You have heard of Mrs. Naidoo's¹ passing. She met with an accident about three months her death. During all that time the family could not get my number due to some error on the part of the exchange. Mrs. Naidoo wanted to see me but they could not contact me till the day after her death. I loved her. She was a sweet soul, a real friend and had a genius for home-making. There was always a beautiful atmosphere in the Naidoo home and one could drop in at any time, no matter how busy she was and always feel a welcome guest. And what a heroine she was! Think of the anxiety she must have gone through all

¹ Wife of Thambi Naidoo

the time the children were in India. I do hope that there will be a joint memorial to her and Thambi.

Incidentally I must mention that Mrs. Naidoo's husband was one of the first satyagrahis during the days of our struggle there in my time.

POONA, July 31, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

451. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You are not looking after your health—it is not good. Abidali writes to say that he has broken his fast and has left the Congress House. He has written a sweet letter.

I have to go and see the Governor today. I understand it is to be purely a courtesy call.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 318-9

452. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

When you met me yesterday, I completely forgot about Sharma's case.¹ I have already sent you something regarding the case. Those people have not given me anything more than that. Can you do anything on the basis of what I have sent you? I am asking you this because I have had a telegram from Sharma.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 7699. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

¹ Hiralal Sharma's dispute with Gadodia. *Vide* "Letter to K. M. Munshi", 23-7-1946.

453. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI PRAKASAM,

I have found your letter (of July) among my papers. I am sorry that we could not meet. It is good that the Harijans were let off.

I am aware of the constructive work you are doing in the Madras Presidency. I shall be very happy if it shows some results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIT. PRAKASAM

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. SPEECH AT INDUSTRIES MINISTERS' CONFERENCE ¹

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Gandhiji explained his approach to Village Industries in the course of a thirty minute address. The conception underlying both the Nayee Talim and the Village Industries programme, including khaddar, was rooted in the same thing, viz., concern for the dignity and status of the village unit as against the big cities and of the individual against the machine. The concern was further augmented by the fact that India lives not in a handful of her big cities but in her 700,000 villages. The problem was of re-establishment of justice between the town and the village. As it was, the balance was heavily tipped in favour of the former to the disadvantage of the latter.

Ours has been described as the machine age, because the machine dominates our economy. Now, what is a machine?—one may ask. In a sense, man is the most wonderful machine in creation. It can neither be duplicated nor copied.

He had, however, used the word not in its wider sense but in the sense of an appliance that tended to displace human or animal labour instead of supplementing it or merely increasing its efficiency. That was the first differentiating characteristic of the machine. The second characteristic was that there was no limit to its growth or

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Congress Ministries and Rural Uplift". The Conference was convened by Vaikunthlal Mehta, Finance and Village Industries Minister of Bombay, and was attended by Bhimsen Sachar from the Punjab, Nityanand Kanungo from Orissa, R. K. Barlinga from C. P. and Ansari from Bihar.

evolution. That could not be said of human labour. There was a limit beyond which its capacity or mechanical efficiency could not go. Out of this circumstance arose the third characteristic of the machine. It seems to be possessed of a will or genius of its own. It was antagonistic to man's labour. Thus it tended more to displace man, one machine doing the work of a hundred, if not a thousand, who went to swell the army of the unemployed and the underemployed, not because it was desirable but because that was its law. In America it had perhaps reached the extreme limit. He had been opposed to it, said Gandhiji, not from today, but even before 1908 when he was in South Africa surrounded by machines. Their onward march had not only not impressed him but repelled him.

It then dawned on me that to suppress and exploit the millions, the machine was the device *par excellence*; it had no place in man's economy if, as social units, all men were to be equal.

It is my belief that the machine has not added to man's stature and it won't serve the world but disrupt it, unless it is put in its proper place. Then, I read Ruskin's *Unto This Last* during a train journey to Durban¹ and it gripped me immediately. I saw clearly that if mankind was to progress and to realize the ideal of equality and brotherhood, it must adopt and act on the principle of *Unto This Last*; it must take along with it even the dumb, the halt and the lame. Did not Yudhishthira—the Prince of Righteousness, refuse to enter heaven without his faithful dog?

In the machine age these had no place. Under it the fittest alone survived to the exclusion and at the cost of the weak.

That is not my picture of Independence in which there is room even for the weakest. That requires that we must utilize all available human labour before we entertain the idea of employing mechanical power.

It was with that background that he was instrumental in founding the Talimi Sangh and the A. I. V. I. A. The object was to strengthen the Congress which claimed to be essentially the people's organization. The Congress had created these autonomous institutions. The Congress Ministries could requisition the services of these organizations always and without any compunction. They existed and laboured for the villagers who were the back-bone of the Congress. But the Ministries were under no obligation. If they had no faith in what these organizations stood for, they should plainly say so through the Working Committee. To play with a thing when they had no heart in it would be worse than useless. They should take it up only if

¹ In June, 1904

they believed with him that it alone held the key to the economic and political salvation of the country. They should not deceive themselves or others.

The base and foundation of village industries is agriculture. Years ago I read a poem in which the peasant is described as the father of the world. If God is the Provider, the cultivator is His hand. What are we going to do to discharge the debt we owe to him? So long we have only lived on the sweat of his brow. We should have begun with the soil but we could not do so. The fault is partly mine.

There were people, remarked Gandhiji, who said that no basic reform in agriculture was possible without political power. They dreamt in terms of industrialization of agriculture by large-scale application of steam and electricity. He warned them that trading in soil fertility for the sake of quick returns would prove to be a disastrous, short-sighted policy. It would result in virtual depletion of the soil. Good earth called for the sweat of one's brow to yield the bread of life.

People might criticize that approach as being slow and unprogressive. It did not hold out promise of dramatic results. Nevertheless, it held the key to the prosperity of both the soil and inhabitants living on it. Healthy, nourishing food was the alpha and omega of rural economy.

The bulk of a peasant's family budget goes to feed him and his family. All other things come afterwards. Let the tiller of the soil be well fed. Let him have a sufficiency of fresh, pure milk and ghee and oil, fish eggs, and meat if he is a non-vegetarian. What would fine clothes, for instance, avail him if he is ill-nourished and underfed?

The question of drinking-water supply and other things would come next. A consideration of these questions would naturally involve such issues as the place of plough cattle in the economy of agriculture as against the tractor plough and power irrigation, etc., and thus, bit by bit, the whole picture of rural economy would emerge before them. In this picture cities would take their natural place and not appear as unnatural, congested spots or boils on the body politic as they were today.

We stand today in danger of forgetting the use of our hands. To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves. To think that your occupation of the Ministerial chair will be vindicated if you serve the cities only, would be to forget that India really resides in her 700,000 village units. What would it profit a man if he gained the world but lost his soul in the bargain?

Q. You have called cities boils or abscesses on the body politic. What should be done with these boils?

A. If you ask a doctor he will tell you what to do with a boil. It has to be cured either by lancing or by the application of plasters and

poultices. Edward Carpenter called civilization a malady which needed a cure. The growth of big cities is only a symptom of that malady. Being a nature-curist I am naturally in favour of nature's way of cure by general purification of the system. If the hearts of the city-dweller remain rooted in the villages, if they become truly village-minded, all other things will automatically follow and the boil will quickly heal.

Q. What practical steps can be taken to protect our village crafts from the invasion of foreign and Indian manufactured goods under the present circumstances?

A. I can only speak in broad terms. If you have felt in your heart that you have taken office as custodians and representatives of the interests of the masses, everything that you do, your legislation, your executive orders, the instructions that you issue, will breathe concern for the villager. To protect his interests, you do not need the Viceroy's sanction. Supposing you want to protect the hand-spinner and hand-weaver against the competition of mills and solve the problem of cloth shortage for the masses, you will put aside red tape and send for the mill-owners and tell them that, unless they want you to go out of office, they must make their production policy conform to the requirement of the masses, whose custodian and representative you are. You will tell them not to send mill cloth to certain areas, which are put under hand production or produce a certain range of yarns and textiles which comes within the handloom weaver's domain. If you are in earnest, your word will go home and they will willingly give their co-operation as they did recently, when they provided the required textiles for export to Indonesia, in return for Indonesian surplus rice for the relief of the Indian famine. But there must be that inner conviction first, everything else will then be all right.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

455. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi told the audience in brief how the last three days since his return to Poona from Panchgani had been occupied. First, there was a meeting with the Chiefs of the Deccan States. The Rajas wanted his advice as a friend as to what their duty was. He had told them that they must now shed their autocracy and be guided by the people's will. Up till now the princes had been ruled by the British and they, in turn, had ruled their people. Now that power was coming into the hands of the

Indian people, it should come into the hands of States' people too, for they were not different. The Rulers had recognized that they could not exist if they were at perpetual variance with their subjects. A true union with their people was the only way for them to live serve.

Ministers from various provinces had come here to discuss with the workers of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the All-India Village Industries Association as to how best they could forward these two great schemes, which had been brought into being and had so far been sponsored by the Congress. Gandhiji feared the audience were probably ignorant about Nayee Talim. This was not as it should be. After all the Congress Ministers were the elected representatives of the people and, therefore, their servants. They could not force anything down the throats of the people. It was up to the people to study and understand what Nayee Talim was. It was up to them to be orderly and disciplined and eager to learn. Only then could the Ministers take them along with them. Nayee Talim was a grand thing. It would help them and their children to become good citizens. The same applied to khadi and all the other village industries.

Both these schemes were for village India which was the real India. Really speaking, it was the farmers who fed them and ought, therefore, to be their masters, but things had been the other way round, and townspeople had been sucking the villagers' blood. It was now time that they became the servants of the villagers. If they realized this, the work of the Congress Ministers would progress and India would become prosperous.

Gandhiji hoped, as this was his last meeting with them this year, that their daily association with him in prayer had been of benefit to them and they would continue the practice in their homes

The Hindu, 2-8-1946

456. THE LIMIT OF INSANITATION ¹

Panchgani is a fine hill resort. The air itself is like medicine. Rajas and Maharajas do not frequent it like they do Mussoorie and yet there has been no place where the poor could stay.² Now at last if there is going to be a small haven for them, it would only be a tardy reparation. But if the present insanitary conditions continue, Panchgani will cease to exist as a health resort. I believe the same is true of Mahabaleshwar too. I am of opinion that such conditions are due to our own fault, rather than to that of Government. I have heard doct-

¹ The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.

² *Vide* also "A Dharmashala for Panchgani", 22-7-1946.

ors say that everyone knows how to observe personal cleanliness up to a point, but our people do not seem to know the A B C of hygiene sanitation. The truth of this has to be admitted with sorrow. The following is a vivid account¹ of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's observations regarding the lack of proper sanitary arrangements in Panchgani. I give it in the fervent hope that this disgraceful state of affairs will be remedied without undue delay.

POONA, August 1, 1946

Harijan 18-8-1946

457. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing on behalf of Gandhiji to thank you much for yours of the 22nd July.²

I am sending a copy of it to the Polish friend at whose instance Gandhiji wrote to you.³

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

¹ Not reproduced here

² The addressee had said: "The present repatriation scheme refers only to those who came to India as refugees under arrangements made by His Majesty's Government and are maintained here at H. M. G.'s expense; it does not cover Poles who came to India on their own initiative and have found employment here."

³ *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 9-7-1946.

458. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR UMADEVI,

The enclosed¹ is a reply to Gandhiji's letter to the Private Secretary to H.E. the Viceroy.

In Gandhiji's opinion the reply is good and should set your mind at rest. No exception can be taken to what they are doing.

I hope you are well. I was away for six days and returned day before yesterday.

Yours with love,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat: G. N. 1208

459. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. GORDHANDAS

I have only today received your postcard of the 29th. I have come alone from Poona to Uruli for four days. I hope to leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th.

I was happy to learn that you were better now. You have yet much service to render. Do not tax your body. I will not at all be displeased if you do only as much as you can. I see that Sharda and Anand are well. I was glad to read even a few lines by Sharda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C. W. 10086. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

460. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have not been able to answer your letter fully. The main problem is about Ambedkar. I see a risk in coming to any sort of

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

understanding with him, for he has told me in so many words that for him there is no distinction between truth and untruth or between violence and non-violence. He follows one single principle, viz., to adopt any means which will serve his purpose. One has to be very careful indeed when dealing with a man who would become a Christian, Muslim or Sikh and then be reconverted according to his convenience. There is much more I could write in the same strain. To my mind it is all a snare. It is a “catch”¹. Besides, it is not necessary for him at present to insist on 20 p. c. If India becomes independent in the real sense—the provinces to some extent are— and if the caste Hindus are true to themselves, all will be well. But if the number of fair-minded persons is small and if power passes into the hands of fanatics, there is bound to be injustice, no matter what agreements you make today. You may come to any understanding you like today—but who are the people who beat up Harijans, murder them, prevent them from using public wells, drive them out of schools and refuse them entry into their homes? They are Congressmen. Aren’t they? It is very necessary to have a clear picture of this. I therefore feel that at present we should not insist on an agreement such as you suggest. However, we should stress the capacity of the Congress to do justice. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness. Even so I prefer it that way. Therefore, if we negotiate with Ambedkar out of fear of the League we are likely to lose on both the fronts.

I will definitely leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th. I have already written to you and informed you that I have deliberately decided not to go to Bombay and I adhere to that decision. But if you want it to be modified, do tell me be all means—that means I shall have to remain in a railway compartment for a few hours more. You may see me there if necessary but in any case not at the cost of your health. There is nothing we cannot deal with through correspondence. In any case do come to Wardha on the 8th. You may come even a day earlier if you like.

If postmen are using high-handed methods, I think it will be perfectly proper to raise our voice against it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 319-20

¹ Gandhiji has used the English word here.

461. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[August 1, 1946]¹

CHI. MANI,

There is not enough time to write to you. You did well in reminding me about Chamanbhai. Send the accompanying letter to him.²

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Putro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 321

462. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL G. PAREKH

POONA,

August 1, 1946

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Only yesterday Manibehn gave me the news that you were laid up. We can only live as God wills. It is well if He keeps us and equally well if he takes us away. Only the good we do will go with us.

Blessings from

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI CHIMANLAL SHETH

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

463. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,

August 1, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Herewith a letter from Ramanlal. I pass it on to you so that you can send him a reply; and maybe also give him peace. In this way I save my time. If you think it right show Ramanlal's letter to Krishna-chandra also. I like some of the arguments Ramanlal has advanced. But are the facts what he assumes them to be? You are in the best position to know this.

¹ This letter was written at the bottom of the preceding letter.

² *Vide* the following item.

I have come to Uruli only today. I shall stay here for four days, leave on the 5th and expect to reach Wardha on the 6th. But let us see how it comes about. What God wills will be. This last statement is especially apposite, seeing the anarchy that is beginning to show itself.

I am not personally replying to Ramanlal, for a reply from you is as good as one from me. Let him take it that way.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

464. LETTER TO SURENDRA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 1, 1946

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your postcard of the 26th on the 31st at Poona. To-day I have come to Uruli, which is 18 miles from Poona. I came by car. The journey took half an hour. I don't remember your having written to me two months ago telling me about your faith in me. I have come here alone, leaving my companions at Poona, as this place cannot offer the necessary accommodation. Besides, I did not want to make a crowd. I can therefore . . .¹ only when we meet. I hope to leave here on the 5th so as to reach Wardha on the 6th. Let us see what God wills.

It is all to the good if you have spent 11 years in Boriavi. Even if you had to spend a lifetime there, what would it matter? I would not mind as long as you could give an honest account of every single moment of it.

I stayed in Panchgani for 14 days. I enjoyed it. There was almost incessant rain. That there can be misfortune but no darkness for a devotee even if he seeks it, is fully true for a perfect devotee, not for an aspirant. I cannot count myself among the perfect devotees, I regard myself as no more than an aspirant. All I can say is that darkness cannot engulf me. I have no time to further analyse this.

BORIAVI

DIST. KAIRA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The source is not clear here.

465. LETTER TO D. D. JOSHI ¹

URULI KANCHAN, VIA POONA,

August 1, 1946

BHAI JOSHI,

I have gone through your letter. This is the answer to your question². This thing is meant for villagers, for the villages. Therefore there is no place here for a microscope or an x-ray plant. Nor is there any place in nature cure for quinine, emetin, penicillin and such other drugs. Village sanitation, domestic cleanliness, personal hygiene and health care have the first place and also full scope, the underlying idea being that this done there can be no disease. And in case disease has occurred, Ramanama is the basic remedy besides observance of the laws of nature. As long as the practitioner has not personally experienced the efficacy of Ramanama, the latter treatment cannot be applied universally. Hence, the treatment in the form of Ramanama cannot all of a sudden become universal. However, the endeavour is to cure disease with the help of whatever energy we can churn out of the five elements, viz., earth, water, ether, fire and air. And this is where, I think, nature cure ends. Hence the experiment that is being now conducted at Uruli Kanchan is one of instructing the villagers in the art of health care and curing those who are sick with the help of the five elements. This includes the use of herbs locally available in Uruli, whenever the need is felt. It also covers restrictions as to diet.

M. K. GANDHI

D. D. JOSHI

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ The text of the Gujarati letter was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946, and a translation of it appeared the heading "Question Box", in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946.

² The question was whether in nature cure x-ray and other devices could be used for diagnosis and certain medicines, with known efficacy could be used in treatment.

466. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

URULI KANCHAN,
DISTT. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

Your letter of the 29th addressed to Rajkumari reached today. I have come to Uruli for four days leaving Rajkumari and others at Poona. If anyone of them has any business with me, they will come and return in the afternoon in good time. I did not want to have a crowd here.

Your blood-pressure is very high. I cannot say I am wholly out of danger, but I think my blood-pressure is under control. Every-one does not have [high] blood-pressure for the same reason. [High] blood-pressure is not a disease in itself; it is a symptom of some other disease. It may, for instance, be caused by kidney trouble. A diseased kidney means the whole body becoming poisoned. Kidney trouble is caused by worrying too much or working under tension. In my view whatever the cause, fruit diet is an effective remedy. This should not include starchy fruits such as bananas. Oranges, pomegra-nates, pineapples and grapes are best. One must sleep well. To sleep is to rest. The fruits mentioned above may be taken as they are or their juice. They can be taken in either form. You may take gentle walks. There are also some exercises that one can do lying in bed. You should do such exercises. Along with this, if you enshrine Rama in your heart, I am sure your blood-pressure will be cured. *Ramanama* means having God in the heart in the form in which we worship Him. This is not superstition. This is scientific deduction. I shall not take you into the rationale thereof. I am writing this because I have known you as a saintly woman for many years which you are. I give no thought to the fact that you are the daughter of a rich father married to a rich man.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11150. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

467. LETTER TO PYARELAL

URULI,
August 1, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

I feel happy that here we have the *Gitai* and discourses in Marathi. It is absolutely peaceful here. No one distrubs me. Faces of Rajkumari, Sushila and Abha were around me. What does that mean? We shall have to give thought to this place also. Anybody who wishes can come tomorrow after 3 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

468. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

URULI KANCHAN, via POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter of the 16th reached me yesterday the 31st. I understood from it that the rooms on chimanlal's side are not to be given for Nayee Talim. Please remember that I have given the word and I think you all have agreed to it. So they should be given whatever they want. In doing so we may have to vacate some Ashram space. But even if we have to do that I see no objection to it. What has happened has happened. I am not finding fault with you people. I am explaining my position. Ashadevi met me in the morning today. But your letter was not before me then, or I would have talked to her. Aryana-yakumji also met me yesterday. I shall try to reach there on the 6th. Then we shall talk it over.

I understand about *Gitai*¹. I like it.

Here we recite *Gitai* morning and evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4561

¹ Vinoba Bhavé's rendering of the *Gita* in Marathi verse.

469. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI DIWAKAR,

I could read your letter of 17th July from beginning to end only today. I have serious doubts about the resolution concerning yarn. I don't think is right to pass on the yarn to the weavers and oblige them to weave it before it has been doubled. The weavers will ungrudgingly accept all the yarn you have if you give it to them after doubling and twisting it. Only then can you tell the weavers not to take mill-yarn as long as such hand-spun yarn is available. I have written about it in *Harijan*.¹

Do you have an estimate how many people act on the resolutions that have been passed and how they do it? If not, you should try to find out.

Your Resolution No. 22 calls upon the Government to examine the implements and the raw material of . . .² which I find rather impracticable. This job is for those who know the work. It is the constructive workers who can do this job. The Government can be asked to provide funds. I feel the same way about Resolutions 17, 18 and 21.

I have an impression that I have written to you regarding [Resolution] No. 27. I am of the opinion that Manohar Diwan cannot take up anti-leprosy work outside Wardha. He does not have enough workers. What you must do is to produce in Karnataka workers like Manohar Diwan. You can send them to Wardha to be trained, on the condition that all their expenses are met by you.

One more word of advice in general. Resolution No. 29 could have been put in nine or ten lines. It could have been more fully explained in a speech. I assume all these Resolutions were in Kannada and, when we think in our mother tongue or in the national language we do not do so in an orderly way. And then we do not attempt to bring precision and brevity to them. When we speak or write in English out of very shame we are more careful. This shows that our love of our mother tongue is no real, or say, not deep enough. It is the

¹ Vide "Cloth Shortage", 27-7-1946.

² Omission as in the source

duty of every Indian to overcome this failing. I have observed that true love of the mother tongue embraces the national language too.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. RANGANATH DIWAKAR

HUBLI

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

470. DEDICATION OF HOSPITAL

POONA,

August 1, 1946

This hospital¹ is for Indian patients of all castes, all provinces and all faiths. And since there is no hospital for Harijans and the proprietor of this hospital is a Harijan, all those patients who happen to be Harijan will be given first preference. And the first bed in the hospital will be occupied by a Harijan and that will mark its inauguration. Furthermore, in this hospital the poor patients will have precedence over the rich patients.

Sd. MANIBEHN NANAVATI

May God help us keep the pledge.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

471. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING ²

URULI,

August 1, 1946

The 25th anniversary of the late Lokamanya's demise³ which fell on the day Gandhiji reached Uruli, evoked poignant memories. Speaking after the evening prayer, he recalled how he had gone to attend the Lokamanya's funeral on receiving the sad news over the telephone. The mammoth funeral procession was composed of Mussalmans and Parsis no less than Hindus. He himself had got caught in the crush and narrowly escaped injury. Those were the days when the atmosphere was not poisoned by communal bitterness.

¹ Uruli Kanchan nature-cure clinic

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" 5-8-1946

³ Tilak died on August 1, 1920. *Vide* "Tribute to Tilak", 2-8-1920 and "Passing Away of the Lokamanya", 8-8-1920.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since then, but the memory of Lokamanya remains enshrined in the hearts and affection of his countryman as ever before. The lapse of time has only added to his popularity. He is still with us, though he is physically no more. He has given us the *mantra* that Swaraj is our birthright. That birth right belongs equally to all. Like the Infinite it is inexhaustible. To divide it is not to take it away.

May be that some questionable things are today being done in the late Lokamanya's name. That is the way of the world. Even divinity is not proof against abuse. The evil, however, remains with the evil-doer. It does not detract from the lustre of divinity.

India was today on the eve of attaining her birthright, Gandhiji went on to say. In his opinion, nature cure was an essential ingredient in the building of swaraj of his conception. The attaining of true swaraj presupposed the triple purification of body, mind and soul.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

472. LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF PORTUGUESE INDIA

August 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was kind of you to write to me in reply to what I had written in *Harijan*¹ about Goa affairs.² I suppose you know that I have visited Mozambique, Delagoa and Inhambane. I did not notice there any Government for philanthropic purposes. Indeed, I was astonished to see the distinction that the Government made between Indians and the Portuguese and between the Africans and themselves. Nor does the history of the Portuguese Settlement in India prove the claim set forth by you. Indeed, what I see and know of the condition of things in Goa is hardly edifying. That the Indians in Goa have been speechless is proof not of the innocence or the philanthropic nature of the

¹ Vide "White Man's Burden", 26-6-1946.

² In his letter of July 18 the addressee had *inter alia* observed: "If to authority is committed the preservation of the people's physical health against pestilence and the use of narcotics and toxics, with the same reason it must look after the mental health not leaving it a prey to unsettling ideas. I don't believe that there is lesser liberty in the existence of a benevolent censorship trying to educate without party spirit than in other forms of State intervention."

Portuguese Government but of the rule of terror. You will forgive me for not subscribing to your statement that there is full liberty in Goa and that the agitation is confined only to a few malcontents.

Every account, received by me personally and seen in the papers here in this part of India, confirms the contrary view. I suppose the report of the sentence by your Court Martial of eight years on Dr. Braganza¹ and his contemplated exile to a far off Portuguese Settlement is by itself a striking corroboration of the fact that civil liberty is a rare article in Goa. Why should a law-abiding citizen like Dr. Braganza be considered so dangerous as to be singled out for exile?

Though the politics of Dr. Lohia probably differ from mine, he has commanded my admiration for his having gone to Goa and put his finger on its black spot. Inhabitants of Goa can afford to wait for Independence, until much greater India has regained it. But no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect. He has lighted a torch which the inhabitants of Goa cannot, except at their peril, allow to be extinguished. Both you and the inhabitants of Goa should feel thankful to the Doctor for lighting that torch. Therefore, your description of him as “stranger” would excite laughter if it was not so tragic. Surely the truth is that the Portuguese coming from Portugal are strangers, whether they come as philanthropists or as Governors exploiting the so-called weaker races of the earth.

You have talked of the abolition of caste distinctions. What I see has happened is that not only no caste distinction has been abolished but at least one more caste, far more terrible than the system “caste”, has been added by the Portuguese rulers.

I, therefore, hope that you will revise your views on philanthropy, civil liberty and caste distinctions, withdraw all the African police, declare yourself whole-heartedly for civil liberty and if possible even let the inhabitants of Goa frame their own government, and invite from Greater India more experienced Indians to assist the inhabitants and even you in framing such Government.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Since your letter was sent to the Press, I am publishing this in *Harijan*.

M. K. G.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

¹ Dr. Tristo Braganza Cunha, who had started a Congress Committee in Goa

473. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 2, 1946

GENERAL MANAGER

G. I. P. RLY.

DEAR SIR,

A friend¹ in Cochin has sent me a cheque for Rs. 100/8/- to be presented to driver Mr. Pereira who was driving the third class special that brought me on 9th ultimo² to Poona from New Delhi, and by his skill avoided what might have proved a serious accident. I enclose the cheque herewith and request you to send it to Mr. Pereira if your rules permit the presentation of such gifts to your employees.

I am here till 4th instant after which date, letter may be addressed to me Sevagram, *via* Wardha, C. P.

Yours faithfully,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10529

474. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 2, 1946

BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I have your letter and cheque for Rs. 100-8-0. I have passed on the cheque to the driver through the General Manager.³

Indeed, who can touch him whom God protects?

BAPU

COCHIN (MALABAR)

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Ranchhoddas; *vide* the following item.

² This should be June 30.

³ *Vide* the preceding item.

475. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 2, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Radhakrishna¹ has written a letter about the strike. He has made the charge that the strikers stabbed a worker and beat up several others. I have written to Abidali. I enclose a copy of the letter.² If the violence continues, then the mill-owner should close down his mill and take steps to prevent incendiarism and damage to property by miscreants.

I have been thinking of writing about the League. Sometimes I feel that I should wait for the meeting of the Working Committee on the 8th and sometimes that I should write. Let me see what I finally do.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 322

476. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

URULI KANCHAN,

August 2, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I hope you are well. Khaitan saw me on the 31st. I advised him that if he had anything to say it should be placed before an arbitrator and if Bhimji or the strikers or Abidali had any complaints to make, they should also be referred to the arbitrator. This is the only civilized procedure.

A strike or any other kind of satyagraha can be undertaken only when all normal avenues for securing justice are closed and autocratic ways have taken the place of justice.

Today I got a letter from Khaitan in which he says that the night before last, that is, on 31-7-1946, the strikers beat up a head clerk and

¹ Radhakrishna Khaitan, owner of the Mill in which Abidali had organized a strike

² *Vide* the following item.

yesterday in the morning again inflicted injuries on a number of persons. They have not resumed work yet.

If it is true it is not good. The strikers being under your direction it is your duty to see that they do not indulge in any such excesses. If there is anything you want to say I would suggest your saying it to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhai, pp. 322-3

477. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA KHAITAN

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 2, 1946

BHAI RADHAKRISHNAJI,

I have your letter. I have written to Abidali¹ and your own messenger is taking the letter. I have written that no excesses should be committed on either side and if both parties are willing to refer the matter to arbitration, the strike should be called off. Let us see what happens. If there is something you wish to say you may write to me again. Sardar is still there. Consult him and do as he says.

BAPU

BOMBAY

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

478. TALK TO VILLAGERS ²

URULI,

[August 2, 1946]³

There were three ways, Gandhiji told the villagers of Uruli, of dealing with the case.⁴ The first was the stereotyped orthodox way of reporting to the police. Very often it only provided the police a further opportunity for corruption and brought no relief to the victim. The second way, which was followed by the general run of the

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 5-8-1946

³ Pyarelal places this on the day following the 25th death anniversary of Tilak, which was on August 1.

⁴ A villager had been brought to Gandhiji with injuries inflicted upon him by thieves.

village people, was to passively acquiesce in it. This was reprehensible as it was rooted in cowardice. Crime would flourish, while cowardice remained. What was more, by such acquiescence we ourselves became party to the crime. The third way, which Gandhiji commended, was that of pure satyagraha. It required that we should regard even thieves and criminals as our brothers and sisters and crime as a disease of which the latter were the victims and needed to be cured. Instead of bearing ill-will towards a thief or a criminal and trying to get him punished they should try to get under his skin, understand the cause that had led him into crime and try to remedy it. They should, for instance, teach him a vocation and provide him with the means to make an honest living and thereby transform his life. They should realize that a thief or a criminal was not a different being from themselves. Indeed, if they turned the search-light inward and closely looked into their own souls, they would find that the difference between them was only one of degree. The rich, moneyed man, who made his riches by exploitation or other questionable means, was no less guilty of robbery than the thief who picked a pocket or broke into a house and committed theft. Only the former took refuge behind the facade of respectability and escaped the penalty of law. Strictly speaking, remarked Gandhiji, all amassing or hoarding of wealth above and beyond one's legitimate requirements was theft. There would be no occasion for thefts and therefore, no thieves if there was a wise regulation of riches and absolute social justice prevailed. In the swaraj of his conception, there would be no thieves and no criminals, or else it would be swaraj only in name. The criminal was only an indication of the social malady and since nature cure, as he envisaged it, included the triple cure of body, mind and soul, they must not be satisfied with merely banishing physical illness from Uruli; their work must include the healing of the mind and soul too, so that there would be perfect social peace in their midst.

If they followed the nature cure way of dealing with the criminals, which, as he had already explained, was the way of satyagraha, they could not sit still in the face of crime. Only a perfect being could afford to lose himself within himself and withdraw completely from the cares and responsibilities of the world. But who could claim that perfection?

On the high seas a sudden calm is always regarded by experienced pilots and mariners with concern. Absolute calm is not the law of the ocean. It is the same with the ocean of life. More often than not, it portends rough weather. A satyagrahi would therefore neither retaliate nor submit to the criminal, but seek to cure him by curing himself. He will not try to ride two horses at a time, viz., to pretend to follow the law of satyagraha while, at the same time, seeking police aid. He must forswear the latter in order to follow the former. If the criminal himself chooses to hand himself over to the police, it would be a different matter. You cannot expect to touch his

heart and win his confidence if at the same time you are prepared to go to the police and inform against him. That would be gross betrayal of trust. A reformer cannot afford to be an informer.

And by way of illustration he mentioned several instances of how he had refused to give information to the police about persons who had been guilty of violence and had come and confessed to him. No police officer could compel a satyagrahi to give evidence against a person who had confessed to him. A satyagrahi would never be guilty of a betrayal of trust. He wanted the people of Uruli to adopt the method of satyagraha for dealing with crime and criminals. They should contact the criminals in their homes, win their confidence and trust by loving and selfless service, wean them from evil and unclean habits and help to rehabilitate them by teaching them honest ways of living.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

479. STRIKES

The statement in the daily press that I had approved of the postal strike¹ is not true. One day a postman asked to be allowed to just say 'Vande Mataram' to me. Kanu Gandhi brought him to me. The visitor, however, asked for my blessings for the postmen's strike which had just then commenced. I said to him that if the strike was justified and if they conducted themselves absolutely peacefully, they must succeed.² This was no approval of the particular strike. Apart, however, from what I said and apart from the merits of the postmen's strike, I feel that as an expert in successful strikes of an absolutely peaceful nature, I owe it to the conductor of this strike as to those of all others and to the public to state the conditions of successful strikes.

Obviously there should be no strike which is not justifiable on merits. No unjust strike should succeed. All public sympathy must be withheld from such strikes.

The public has no means of judging the merits of a strike, unless it is backed by impartial persons enjoying public confidence. Interested men cannot judge the merits of their own case. Hence, there must be an arbitration accepted by the parties or a judicial adjudication. As a rule, the matter does not come before the public when there is accepted arbitration or adjudication. Cases have, however,

¹ This commenced in Bombay on 11th July and ended on 2nd August, 1946.

² The Press had reported Gandhiji as having said: "If you conduct your strike in a peaceful manner success will surely be yours."

happened when haughty employers have ignored awards or misguided employees, conscious of their power to assert themselves, have done likewise and have decided upon forcible extortion.

Strikes for economic betterment should never have a political end as an ulterior motive. Such a mixture never advances the political end and generally brings trouble upon strikers, even when they do not dislocate public life, as in the case of public utility services such as the postal strike. The Government may suffer some inconvenience but will not come to a stand-still. Rich persons will put up expensive postal services but the vast mass of the poor people will be deprived during such a strike of a convenience of primary importance to which they have become used for generations. Such strikes can only take place when every other legitimate means has been adopted and failed.

In the present case we have National Provincial Governments. Postmen should consult these Governments before resorting to the extreme step. So far as I am aware Shri Balasaheb Kher, Shri Mangaldas Pakvasa¹ and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have intervened. If their advice has been rejected by the men, they have taken a serious and dangerous step. If all these powerful unions disregard their own Governments and the Working Committee members, they disown the Congress. They have a right to do so if the Congress sells their interest.

Sympathetic strikes must be taboo until it is conclusively proved that the affected men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal and until the Congress has been proved to have betrayed or neglected their interest or until the Congress has called for sympathetic strikes in order to secure justice from obdurate and unsympathetic authorities.

One hears of strikes all over the country to paralyse the Government. This paralysis is an extreme political step, open only to a body like the Congress, not even to unions, however powerful they may be. If the Congress is the people's arm *par excellence* for the purpose of winning Independence, paralysing action should be retained solely in the hands of the Congress.

At the present moment, the Congress is engaged in making a success of the proposed Constituent Assembly. There are interminable difficulties in the way. Paralysing strikes must seriously hamper Congress action.

It follows from the foregoing that political strikes must be

¹ President of Bombay legislative council

treated on their own merits and must never be mixed with or related to economic strikes. Political strikes have a definite place in non-violent action. They are never taken up haphazard. They must be open, never led by goondaism. They are calculated never to lead to violence.

Therefore, my humble suggestion to all strikers is to make a frank declaration of submission to arbitration or adjudication, to seek the guidance of the Congress and abide by its advice and for all sympathetic strikes to stop whilst the Congress is engaged in making the contemplated Constituent Assembly a success and while Provincial National Government are functioning.

URULI KANCHAN, August 3, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

480. *THE MEANING OF NATURE CURE*¹

Many people wish to come to Uruli Kanchan to learn nature cure. I dissuade them. The institution that is working at Uruli Kanchan on behalf of the Trust is for the villagers. Its three trustees are Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, Shri Jehangir Patel and myself. Though Dr. Dinshaw Mehta has a lot of experience of nature cure, he has gained this experience in towns. When he was conducting his nature cure home in Poona, though he took in poor patients, he gave them the same treatment as he gave his rich patients. As I conceived nature cure for the villagers, it should confine itself to such remedies as are available in the villages and should do without the aid of electricity and ice. This would be the limit of this treatment.

Such work can only be for a person like me who has become a villager and whose heart is in the villages even though he be living in a city. So the trustees have entrusted this work to me. I have begun the work but I have no trained personnel. It is another thing that I take help from Dr. Mehta when ever I need it. I have found a good helper in Dr. Bhagawat whose heart is wholly in the villages and who himself lives very simply. Even though he is an allopath, he believes only in nature cure, does not despise manual work and never tires of working. The others are all new to the work though filled with the spirit of service. I too am new to the work. Shri Datar has given his house for our use. He charges no rent, and so the work can go on. But the house

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan* 11-8-1946.

has not room enough for new students to be admitted. I myself cannot permanently stay in Uruli Kanchan. If God wills it I hope in future to spend six months in the neighbourhood of Poona and six months in Sevagram. Those who wish to learn nature cure should therefore understand that in the present circumstances it is quite impossible for anyone to be put up here.

Now a few words as to my conception of nature cure. I have written a little bit about it from time to time in previous issues. But since the idea is growing, I may as well explain the limits of nature cure as carried on in Uruli Kanchan. Diseases, whether in village or in town, are of three kinds: physical, mental and spiritual. And what is true of the individual is true of society.

The majority of the inhabitants of Uruli Kanchan are business folk. One part is inhabited by Mangs, another by Mahars, and yet another by Kanchans. The name of the village is derived from this last group. There are some Garudis living here too, who are classified as criminal tribes under the law. The Mangs earn their living by making ropes, etc. They were doing well during the war but are now having a lean time and living in penury. The problem that faces the nature cure physicians is how to deal with this malady of the Mangs, which is by no means slight. It is the duty of the businessmen to cure them of this disease. No medicines from any dispensary are going to avail in this case and yet it is as fell a disease as cholera. Some of the tenements of the Mangs are fit only to be burnt. But burning will not provide new dwellings for them. How would they protect themselves from rain and cold? Where would they put their belongings? All these are questions to which the nature cure physician cannot shut his eyes. What is to be done about the Garudis? They do not commit crimes for the love of it. It is a habit ingrained in them for generations and so they are described as criminal.

It is for the residents of Uruli Kanchan to wean them from this habit. The nature-cure physician cannot neglect this work. Several such questions face the nature cure worker. Nature cure work thus becomes purely work for swaraj and its field also becomes very wide. God willing, it can succeed, provided we, the workers and residents of Uruli Kanchan, follow truth and persevere.

URULI KANCHANS, August 3, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 11-8-1946

481. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI,
August 3, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. If you see no risk in it, what is there for me to say? Do by all means settle with Bhimarao. I have nothing further to say in the matter.

I note what you say about your coming here. I shall await you on the 7th. Forward Rameshwardas's letter to him.

So Chimanlal has passed away. I hear there is again trouble from the postmen.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 323

482. LETTER TO NANUBHAI

August 3, 1946

BHAI NANUBHAI,

I have your letter. Also the books. Thanks. I had the article sent by you read out to me. I also had a gist prepared and went through it. I don't find in it anything that can be published in *Harijan*.

It contains criticism of the Council or the Ministers. Then there is something concerning what happened during the Ahmedabad riots. It says the people are not getting enough foodgrains and clothing and that there can be no true happiness in the absence of noble qualities.

I see no advantage in printing anything from this. Criticism will always be there and it hardly needs proclaiming that there can be no happiness without noble qualities. It needs to be acted upon—by you and me and everybody.

BAPU

ADVOCATE

BOMBAY HIGH COURT

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

483. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA

August 3, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter just now. I am sending to you Manilal's letter which I got yesterday. Please pass it on to Sita. I am glad that Manilal wired asking you to stay on. At this time of struggle, what else could you do but go to jail? I should like your going to jail, but I would not send you to South Africa just for that. But then this is my personal view. What really matters is what you think and what Manilal thinks.

I intend to entrain for Wardha on Monday and expect to reach there on Tuesday morning by the Mail. Whether this comes about is in God's hands.

I shall not dictate any more. You can travel in my compartment; I am sure there will be room for you. You did well in putting Arun and Ila to school. I have no time to write to them today.

Blessings from

BAPU

AKOLA

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

484. LETTER TO QURESHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,

August 3, 1946

BHAI QURESHI,

Bapuji is here these days. He will leave Poona for Sevagram on 5-8-46 by the morning train at 10.40. At Kalyan Station, his bogey will be attached to the Nagpur Mail.

I have to request you to send, if possible, a tin of cow's ghee with someone to the Nagpur Mail leaving Bombay at about 4.30 p. m. on 5-8-46. The gentleman can return after delivering the tin at Kalyan Station to one of us in Bapu's compartment.

Please excuse us for the trouble. I am writing this at Bapu's instance.

Pranams from yours respectfully,

MUNNALAL

From a copy of the Hindi: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

485. DOCTORS CRITICIZED

1. Whether it is not a matter of common experience that the diagnosis by doctors is a very uncertain quantity and varies from time to time in the same case and often from doctor to doctor, and many cases remain undiagnosed until they recover or die?

2. Assuming that the diagnosis is correct what useful purpose does it serve if it cannot be followed by remedial measures which lead to a cure, even on paper. Medical books do not speak with a certain voice on this point. If nature cure alone is to be followed, why is a diagnosis needed at all, considering that it recognizes the unity of disease and not hundreds of diseases which the doctors believe in?

3. Do the doctors make any use of their knowledge of the body in prescribing medical treatment as distinguished from surgical treatment? If not why should the doctors get credit for having once upon a time read physiology and anatomy which are soon forgotten for want of use in actual practice? Are not the *vaid*s entitled to equal credit or discredit for studying the physiology and pathology of *tridosha*¹ and not making but a nominal use of it in actual practice?

4. Are not the defects attributed to the *vaid*s really due to the omission of its duty by the State to provide institutions for research, etc.? How can the system be blamed for the fault of the individual or the Government? Even the doctors in private practice carry out no research and very few of them even read about researches carried on abroad.

5. Does not the constant examination of Mahatmaji's body by the doctors give them an undue and undeserved prominence in the public eye and so tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine which also have an equal if not greater claim on Mahatmaji's attention?

These are Shri Brijlal Nehru's questions to which I reply as follows:

1. What the question implies is very true. Nevertheless doctors flourish. This phenomenon should make us all think.

2. My experience is that a correct diagnosis is followed by a re-medial measure answering the diagnosis. It will be wrong to blame medical books because they mention several alternative measures. The complicated human system does not lend itself to one certain remedy. It would be untrue to say that nature cure does not demand

¹ This attributes the case of disease to the imbalance of the three humours namely, *Vata* or wind, *Pitta* or bile and *Kaf* or phlegm.

any diagnosis. As it believes in unity of disease and unity of cure, diagnosis adopted in nature cure is much simpler. Unity of disease and unity of cure is a good generalization. No nature cure man blindly applies earth poultices in all cases.

3. It is highly unfair to say that in their practice doctors make no use of their knowledge of physiology and anatomy. No comparison can be set up between doctors and *vaid*s for they employ wholly dissimilar methods of diagnosis. I am utterly ignorant of the value of the *tridosha* theory.

4. I am unable to subscribe to the condemnation of the State for not providing institutions for research. I have always blamed the *vaid*s' apathy in the matter of real research. The top ones are busy making money. The others are too ignorant to do so or are easily satisfied with what they find in the orthodox Ayurvedic books. I am sorry for this view. I come to it, in spite of my great regard for the Ayurvedic system and the Yunani which are suited to the soil.

5. I do not think that constant examination by medical friends of my body gives them undue or any prominence. They do not stand in need of any. They were all flourishing before I appeared on the scene. Nor does it tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine. I have friends among *vaid*s and *hakims*. But they do not need elaborate or frequent diagnosis. I submit my body to the diagnosis which is unfortunately advertised but I do not submit it to the treatment by drugs. The treatment is principally confined to the use of the five agencies of nature, diet changes and massage.

My love of nature cure and of indigenous systems does not blind me to the advance that Western medicine has made in spite of the fact that I have stigmatized it as black magic. I have used the harsh term and I do not withdraw it, because of the fact that it has countenanced vivisection and all the awfulness it means and because it will stop at no practice, however bad it may be, if it prolongs the life of the body and because it ignores the immortal soul which resides in the body. I cling to nature cure in spite of its great limitations and in spite of the lazy pretensions of nature-curists. Above all, in nature cure, everybody can be his or her own doctor, not so in the various systems of medicine.

URULI KANCHAN, August 4, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

486. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

POONA,
August 4, 1946

DEAR MARY,

Bapu got your letter duly and was glad to have it. He hopes you will continue to give him such news as is worth giving from time to time. We follow it all in the papers with very deep interest. You can imagine how Bapu's heart is with them all there. He is wonderfully well considering the heavy burden he carries. We are off to Sevagram tomorrow. I do not think we have been more than a month in any one place since last October! Dr. Sushila is engaged to be married to Kaka Kalelkar's younger son. Kanu and his wife are setting up house as soon as we return to Sevagram. It will be nice to get there again after so long. My love to you and Bapu sends his too.

Yours,
AMRIT

[PS.]

Mira is in her Ashram in the U. P.

From a photostat: G.N. 8086. Also C.W. 3416. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

487. LETTER TO DINSHAW MEHTA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 4, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

My idea of developing nature cure in Uruli Kanchan and the villages of India is fast expanding. It means teaching the hygiene of the body, mind and soul of the individual and society. Thus the workers in Uruli Kanchan have, besides cleaning the streets of the village, and attending to their bodily ailments through the judicious use of earth, sun, ether, light and water, to attend to the pauperism of the criminal tribes called the Garudis—described in law as one of the criminal tribes of India¹—and the rapacity of Pathans in exacting interest, [which] are all social diseases demanding treatment by a real nature cure man. That, ordinarily these things are not regarded as diseases in the nature cure books does not worry me. I, and if you like, we, as trustees for nature cure in the villages and cities of India cannot be satisfied with less. And, therefore we cannot be content if we

¹ *Vide* also “The Meaning of Nature Cure”, 3-8-1946.

periodically reduce obesity and deal with other ailments, knowing that the same patients will suffer from the same diseases and return annually for treatment. The workers in Uruli Kanchan have been doing some such work as I have described above but not methodically. Now they must not be satisfied unless they become efficient workers and train similar workers who will be able to replace them. For this work, we do not need a long course. Our aim should not be to replace surgeons or physicians of modern type or *hakims*. Our work is conceived in a different key. It requires original training. We have to produce original books. It needs concentration of work in Uruli Kanchan. Before a visible picture, considered in this light emerges, and you are able to assimilate it, we may not be able to do much in Sinhagad.

Mahatma, Vol. VII, p. 192

488. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

August 4, 1946

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have given me a second purse for which I thank you. Still there is some deficit. I have been told that it will be made up in two or three months.

I consider the money you have given the very minimum. The great work which is to be done here calls for your full co-operation. That work is the developing of the body, mind and soul of Uruli. For this, the co-operation of every caste, of the old and young, of children and women is needed. Only when we forget caste differences will our threefold afflictions subside. If Uruli Kanchan accomplished this work, we have some hope for the seven lakh villages of India.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C. W. 2742. Courtesy: Manibhai Patel

489. *LETTER TO PYARELAL*

August 5, 1946

CHI. PYA.,

God knows if some trouble has developed in the kidney. I feel in good health. My appetite is good, the bowel movements are good;

¹ The written speech was read out at the meeting.

the urine is also satisfactory. However, it is true that I overwork. The burden of *Harijan* is not a small one. The conditions in the country are also worsening day by day. Both these things should not affect me. I am very much alert. My position is that of किं कर्म किमकर्मेति¹. I utter Ramanama but do not leave all to Rama. You may call it a disease. But now let us see what Sevagram does.

Do not worry. Take upon yourself the burden that you can carry. Let us abide by the wish of God.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

490. LETTER TO RAJA OF PHALTAN

POONA,

August 5, 1946

RAJASAHAB,

I have your letter. I thank you for it. I have not read the papers enclosed with it. I understand your point. Personally I am not involved in the Princes' problem. That is why I advised you not to go by what I say. The right thing for you is to act as Panditji suggests. Today he is the voice of the people of the States and of the whole of India.

Had Tatya Saheb not suggested my publishing what I wrote to you I would never have considered publishing it. There is nothing special in what I have told you. Should my words be misunderstood, I shall try to remove the misunderstanding. Excuse me for not dealing with the matter further.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Marathi in *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 17

¹ That is, inability to decide between action and non-action; *Bhagavad Gita*, IV, 16

491. A KHADI LOVER'S COMPLAINT¹

A Gujarati khadi lover living in South India writes as follows:

In the Khadi Bhandar here, it is hard to get cotton, spindles, charkhas and their accessories. I have up till now been carrying on with my own cotton. The slivers from cotton bought here were not at all good. I discovered it was of poor quality after I had bought it. I found hand-carding (*tunai*) of it difficult and could not get anyone here to teach me either.

I have just given my full quota of self-spun and self-carded yarn for 1946 to be woven into cloth. At first one could procure coupons for self-spun yarn and buy a certain amount of khadi with it. The yarn given in is to be woven into saris and dhotis. How are we to buy cloth for our other requirements of underwear, sheets, towels, etc.? I went to the Bhandar recently and they demanded the same number of hanks as the amount of rupees the cloth was worth. In addition I was told I had to be a member of the Bhandar. I spend 2 to 2½ hours daily in carding and spinning. If I can spare any more time, I devote it also to this work. But, in spite of all my labour, I shall never be able to produce enough yarn for my requirements. What am I to do? The fact that I am unacquainted with the language is another difficulty. It would be easier if all the rules regarding khadi were written up in Hindustani. Moreover, it seems impossible to get anything done without outside influence. Is one to call it one's misfortune or part our nature? One needs some backing even to buy a spindle, to say nothing about a charkha. If the Charkha Sangh people themselves do not realize what difficulties one has to face in the matter of buying even small requirements to whom can one turn for help?

I spoke about this to a well-known Gujarati friend here. He got enraged. 'Gandhiji has constituted himself Viceroy. Why then should he listen to anyone? He does whatever comes into his head. Let him do so. We shall get khadi from wherever we can and what is more, we shall encourage uncertified khadi. As for Pyarelalji he only puts up to Gandhiji what he chooses and throws the rest into the waste-paper basket.'

The above angry criticism about my post does not need any comment, beyond saying that every worth-while letter is put up before me and that if I were to be acquainted with or read every letter that comes, the whole of my time would be spent on the post and I would be rendered useless for my real work. But what has been said about khadi demands consideration. That Sales Bhandars may disappear under the new scheme only means that they should be converted into

¹ The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946

schools for teaching all the processes of khadi. Therefore, cotton, charkhas, spindles and all other accessories of spinning, carding and ginning should certainly be available there. Above all, the khadi worker should be polite and obliging at all times. If he is not, it will mean the end of khadi and it will be a tragedy if khadi workers themselves were to be the cause of its death.

The criticism in the letter under reference can only be applicable to one or two Bhandars. This note is, therefore, only meant for those to whom it does apply. All such should early set their house in order.

Khadi-wearers who spin regularly and give in their self-spun yarn for being woven into cloth should be, as they are, entitled to purchase against cash the amount of khadi which, according to the A.I.S.A. rules, their above-mentioned yarn permits them to buy.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

492. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING*¹

SEVAGRAM,
[August 6, 1946]²

If I ask you how many of you spin, I am afraid very few hands will go up.³ You have just heard the Ashram inmates giving an account of the day's spinning at the end of the prayer. The reason is that spinning has become a part and parcel of the Ashram prayer. The conception of spinning as sacrifice has been linked with the idea of God, the reason being that we believe that in the charkha and what it stands for, lies the only hope of salvation of the poor.

He had come to realize that it was difficult to earn one's livelihood through the charkha, but the villagers could easily spin for their own clothes. Because they had not realized the self-help principle in the matter of clothing, they showed a deplorable lack of it in other things too. It stultified even agriculture, so that they

¹ Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 11-8-1946

² Pyarelal says Gandhiji made the speech on the day he arrived in Wardha. This was on August 6.

³ Gandhiji was addressing visitors who had come to Sevagram for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee to be held at Wardha.

suffered destitution in the midst of plenty.

We have plenty of fertile land where we can grow fruits, vegetables and other food-stuffs. But we do not make full use of our opportunity. Instead of eating fresh, whole foods, we eat them denatured. We grow cereals and eat them after converting them practically into dust. God has given us everything we need and He has endowed us with intellect and the use of two hands. We could raise our food, grow cotton and prepare our own clothes, rear cattle and supply milk to our children. Yet we go hungry and naked. Our children are ill-fed and undernourished. Could there be anything more tragic?

He compared the cities with the villages. The villages could subsist by themselves in regard to all the necessities of life. Not so the cities. They could neither grow their own food, nor produce cotton for cloth, nor keep cattle without the help and co-operation of the villages. And yet he knew of no village in India which was today self-sufficient. Sevagram should have been such a village. But it was still far from it. Our villagers were lazy and lethargic and killed time by gambling, etc. If they tried to leave the wheel and concentrate on land exclusively, he warned them, they would soon find that it was not practicable. On the contrary, resuscitation of the wheel would help to revitalize agriculture by making them shed their inertia and apathy.

Referring to the unthinking admiration of the visitors who had literally laid siege to his hut the whole day, he describe how it had driven him to desperation almost. He was sick of it. It could do not good either to him or to them. True admiration consisted in carrying out the wishes of the person one admired, not merely staring at him and thus wasting his time and one's own.¹

Unless there is an atmospheric calamity or some drasticaction by Government, my programme is to stay for six months here from August to January and later six months in Uruli Kanchan, Panchgani, Poona and near about.

Referring to the discontinuance in regular spinning by the Ashramites in the Mahadevbhai Desai Cottage, Mahatma Gandhi said:

When once begun it should have continued even in the absence of Durgabehn Desai. I have decided to spend 30 to 45 minutes daily in spinning in Mahadev's cottage.

He made a feeling reference to Mr. Mahadev Desai's association with him in the Aga Khan Palace in 1942.

¹ What follows is *Bombay Chronicle* version of the speech reported under August 6.

Mahatma Gandhi made a passing reference to the Constituent Assembly which he said might take some time.

Harijan, 18-8-1946, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-8-1946

493. HORSE RACING ¹

I have written before regarding the ruination of men and money through horse racing but a very strongly-worded letter from a friend who says that gambling on the race course is not a lesser evil than the drink habit, constrains me to write again on this subject. The writer further says:

Special trains are run for the races and are full of people who wear Gandhi caps, call themselves Congressmen and go there only to waste their money. Where does this money come from? We now have popular Ministries, but they too are silent and put up with the evil.

Although, in my opinion gambling at races is not as great an evil as drinking of alcohol, one ought not really to draw comparisons. Less bad does not make gambling a good thing. I do not know all the intricacies of horse racing. All I can say is that if it is within the competence of the present Government to put an end to the evil; it should certainly do so.

SEVAGRAM, August 7, 1946

Harijan., 18-8-1946

494. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SEVAGRAM, via WARDHA (C. P.),

August 7, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I have before me your two kind letters. Of course both will be treated as private and confidential, though you have marked one as personal and the other, received only two days ago, as private and confidential.

I see from Reuter's telegrams that your health has again given way and you have been obliged to take long rest. I am sorry and hope you are listening to your medical advisers and not wearing yourself out. I have come to know you and of you more through your good

¹ The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.

wife than through anyone else.

I understand all you say about your and your colleagues' attitude.¹ I have always justified it from your own standpoint. Therefore so long as that trust continues, you will find me defending you. The testing time is coming. I shall watch what you will do in view of the latest Muslim League decision.²

With regards to you both and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

LONDON

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 216

495. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,

August 7 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I arrived here yesterday. Sushila, Ila and Su's two friends joined me at Akola. I read your letter. We had a long talk. I approved of your idea and therefore I stated categorically that it was Sushila's duty to stay here and look after the children till you sent for her. Her own desire is to help you and join in the struggle, but her duty is to do as you wish. I assume that whenever you feel that Sushila should return there, you will unhesitatingly write or cable. Sushila is returning to Akola today. She will stay for a day at Mahila Ashram. The rest Sushila will write, or Kishorelal at any rate. He keeps indifferent health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 4987

¹ The addressee in his letter of July 20 had said that he and his colleagues of the Cabinet Mission were aware that Gandhiji had a "feeling" that the practical steps they had put forward did not embody the "spirit of their desires" and proceeded to explain that their "procedure was not based upon an ideal but on a practical solution of the problem". He was convinced that the best practical solution for the Interim Government was a coalition.

² On July 29 the Council of the All-India Muslim League had passed two resolutions, one rejecting the Cabinet Mission proposals and the other deciding to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan.

496. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE ¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1946

Gurudev's life was a continuous poem of service. He served Hindustan to the last breath of his life.

The Hitavada, 9-8-1946

497. QUESTION BOX

THE CENTRAL POINT MISSED

The following questions have been given by a British military officer who read with great interest the article in the *Harijan* of July 28, 1946 on 'Independence'². The officer is a military engineer, widely travelled in America and Europe, and has seen with his own eyes the horrors of the war in Germany.

Q. 1. In this ideal State (there is no doubt that it is ideal) how can one be sure that outside aggression can be avoided? If the State has no modern army with modern weapons which are the product of the machine age, an invading army with modern weapons could over-run the country and subject and inhabitants to slavery.

A. The questioner, who claims to have read and reread my article carefully and says he has liked it and is a military man, has evidently missed the central point of my article, viz., that however small a nation or even a group may be, it is able, even as the individual, provided that it has one mind as also the will and the grit, to defend its honour and self-respect against a whole world in arms. Therein consists the matchless strength and beauty of the unarmed. That is non-violent defence which neither knows nor accepts defeat at any stage. Therefore, a nation or a group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb.

WHY IN WANT OF FOOD?

Q. 2. India at the present time cannot grow enough food for its population. To buy food from abroad, India must sell other goods to pay for it, and in order to sell such goods, India must produce at competitive prices which, in my opinion, cannot be done without modern machines. How can

¹ The occasion was the death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

² Vide "Independence", 21-7-1946.

this be done, unless the machine replaces manual labour?

A. The statement in the first sentence of the question is wholly wrong. I hold, in spite of opinions expressed to the contrary, that India is able at the present moment to grow enough food. I have previously stated the condition for growing enough food, viz., that the Government at the head should be National and a Government that knows its business and is capable of dealing sternly with all profiteering, black-marketing and, worst of all, laziness of mind and body.

The second part of the question really falls to the ground if my answer to the first is correct. But for the sake of dismissing the plea on behalf of modern machines as against human labour of which there is plenty in a land like India, I would say that if all the able-bodied millions work with one mind and with zeal, they could compete on their own terms with any nation, however well-equipped it may be with modern machines. The questioner should not forget that modern machines have up till now gone side by side with the exploitation of the machineless nations, dubbed weak. I use the participle 'dubbed' because they will refuse to be weak immediately they realize the fact that they are even at the present moment stronger than the nations equipped with the most modern weapons and machinery.

SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING

A Congressman writes:

Q. You will perhaps agree that in spite of considerable publicity, spinning and weaving have not yet found favour with the public to the extent to which they should have done. I think if every Congress Committee—at least those of the big cities—starts a sort of coaching-class for the public for this purpose, it can do immense good. Many people—particularly the poor—do not take to spinning because they do not know spinning and weaving, what type of wheels are more convenient to use and give greater output, how these are properly operated, how best they should dispose of or utilize the yarn thus produced, etc. If once or twice a week, some such classes are undertaken after proper publicity and people are instructed in this technique by practical demonstrations, things should improve much. At least the experiment is worth a trial by the Congress. Even if regular classes are not held but a group or groups of experts of this technique undertake a tour and give demonstrations and instruction to the public for some days in each city, it can serve the purpose to a considerable extent.

Questions like the above often come to me from Congressmen. Since this is exhaustive, I reproduce it as it is. The signature is

undecipherable. Therefore, I am unable to say to which province the questioner belongs. Surely it would have been appropriate if the writer had been good enough to frame his letter in Hindustani. The vast mass of Congressmen who are not on the Congress register but who are more Congressmen than the registered ones, do not know English and those who do, careless for spinning than for being on the Congress register for reasons they know and which I need not specify. There is, however, a great deal in what the writer says. If all Congress offices became institutions for teaching the art of spinning from the anterior and posterior processes right up to the manufacture of khadi, I am quite clear that the face of the villages would be changed and swaraj would be ushered in through the effort of the masses. I have shown in these columns how it will be ushered in. These lines are written to emphasize the point made by the correspondent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

498. RAMANAMA AGAIN

A friend sends me a letter received by him for an answer. The letter is long. I have only copied here the relevant part:

India is in his blood but why should he cause resentment among his countrymen who are not of his religious faith by holding daily prayer meetings and chanting Ramanama (meaning the name of Rama, the Hindu God)? He should realize that India is full of manifold faiths and most of the conservatives are apt to mistake him (and this is one of the pleas of the Muslim League) if he openly goes on talking in the name of the Hindu gods. One of his pet terms is the establishment of *Rama-Rajya* (the rule of Rama). What would a devout Muslim feel about this?

I must repeat for the thousandth time that Ramanama is one of the many names for God. The same prayer meetings have recitations from the Koran and the Zend Avesta. Devout Muslims, for the very reason that they are devout, have never objected to the chant of Ramanama. Ramanama is not an idle chant. It is conceived as a mode of addressing the all-pervasive God known to me, as to millions of Hindus, by the familiar name of Ramanama. 'Nama' at the end of Rama is the most significant part. It means the 'nama' without the Rama of history. Be that as it may, why should an open profession by me of my faith offend anybody, much less the Muslim League? No

one is obliged to join these meetings and having joined is not obliged to take part in the chant. All that the visitors are expected to do is not to mar the harmony of the meeting and to tolerate the proceedings even when they are not in sympathy with any part.

As to the use of the phrase '*Rama-Rajya*', why should it offend after my having defined its meaning many times? It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier Province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai Raj, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the Kingdom of God on earth. Any other mode would, for me, be self-suppression and hypocrisy.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

499. IS GOD A PERSON OR A PRINCIPLE? ¹

A friend from Baroda, who writes in English, says:

You ask us to pray to God to give light to the whites in South Africa and strength and courage to the Indians there to remain steadfast to the end. A prayer of this nature can only be addressed to a person. If God is an all-pervading and all-powerful force, what is the point of praying to Him? He goes on with His work whatever happens.

I have written on this topic before. However, if one keeps on saying the same thing again and again in different words some new words or phrases used are likely to help someone or other to understand the matter better. In my view, whether called Rama, Rahman, Ormuzd God or Krishna, He is that Supreme Power that man is ever trying to find a name for. Man, though imperfect, strives after perfection and in so doing is caught up in the tides of thought. Then like a baby learning to toddle, he now stumbles, now stands up. Thus if we say that a reasoning man is only a few months' old child, we shall not in the least be exaggerating, judging by the immensity of cosmic time; we shall be stating a simple truth. Man can express himself only by means of language. But there can be no such medium as language for the Power that is God. Man however can describe this

¹ A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "Is God a Person or Force?"

Infinite Power only with his imperfect means. If one has grasped this there is nothing left further to ask. Then it would be right to pray to Him in the language of man, for one can comprehend Him somewhat by yfitting Him into one's own mould. One ought always to remember, while dwelling on Him, that one is but a drop, the tiniest of creatures of the ocean that is God. One may experience Him by being in Him, but one can never describe Him. As Madame Blavatsky puts it, man, in praying, worships the Great Power residing within. Only he who knows this may pray. He who does not, need not pray. God will not be offended by it, but I can say from experience that that man will be the loser by not praying. So it is immaterial if some worship God as a Person and some others as Great Power. Both are right, each in his own way. Nobody knows what is intrinsically right and nobody is likely ever to know. The ideal, to be an ideal, must forever remain out of reach. All the other forces are static, while God is the Life Force, immanent and at the same time transcendent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

500. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,

August 8, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. This is my order and my advice: You will stir from that place only after finishing your work there. Take it as completed only after Prafulla Babu and Bhagirathji say to. Thereafter you should go to Badshahkhan. In whatever situation you are it is better to stay there till I come. I will not take you to Bengal if you come here in the meantime.

I shall see about the money. Pyarelal is in Bombay at present. He may come in a day or two.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 524

501. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL ¹

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have read your letter and copies of the correspondence with . . .² I shall know more when I have further information. If you can take care of your health I shall consider it as part of the service rendered by you. But you being the Sardar, who may tell you to do anything?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

502. LETTER TO HIRALAL DESAI

[August 8, 1946]³

BHAI HIRALAL,

I have your letter and I have gone through it. I am doing all that I can. It is a difficult task, but many painful problems can be solved through courteous dealing. I have with me the report from Aryanayakum and Ram. It is full of information.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

HIRALAL DESAI
CEYLON

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ This may be read as the first letter under August 16, 1946, i.e., after the item “Move on”, p. 166.

² Omission as in the source

³ The source has this letter among those dated August 8, 1946.

503. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

You could not catch hold of Munnalal but I had also spoken to you about another man called Ramprasad¹. He is not physically as sturdy as Munnalal, but is just as hard-working. He is conversant with book-keeping. He has been trained under Bapa whom he has served well. He is married and has a child. If you decide to have him, he will for the time being come alone. He certainly needs Rs. 150 but I think he should be paid Rs. 200 if possible. There will be no question of raising this amount. If he does not need the whole amount he is honest enough to return the surplus. His child however is delicate. He himself is of course delicate, and so is his wife. Hence I suggest Rs. 200, so that in the event of a contingency arising he should not be without resources. I want to see to it that he is not obliged to economize on his food. I think your association ought to provide him residential accommodation. If he were to fend for himself and pay the current market rent he would hardly be free to move around. And as your work progresses he might have to run around a bit. Ramprasad's knowledge of English is rudimentary. Of course he understands it. He may also write it but will make mistakes. Gujarati, however, he knows well. He understands Marathi. He has an elementary knowledge of indigenous medicine. His wife is a nice lady full of the spirit of service. And she has become one with Ramprasad. In her own life she does not harbour any prejudice. She is simple. I rarely have English-knowing women around me. This one knows absolutely no English. She can read and write Gujarati. Please let me have an early reply to this if possible.

Remember that Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for eradicating malaria. Having become a trustee of a nature-cure institution you have got to appreciate this thing. And Ramanama is the same as Ahurmazda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

¹ Ramprasad Vyas

504. *LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE*

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA C.P.,

August 8, 1946

BROTHER MUNJE,

I have both your letters. My views on bigamy are opposite to yours. What can I do?

About Ahmedabad I have said what I wanted to.

Your

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C. W. 9764. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX I

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ¹

May 24, 1946

The Working Committee have given careful consideration to the Statement dated May 16, 1946, issued by the Delegation of the British Cabinet and the Viceroy on behalf of the British Government, as well as the correspondence relating to it that has passed between the Congress President and the members of the Delegation. They have examined it with every desire to find a way for a peaceful and co-operative transfer of power and the establishment of a free and independent India. Such an India must necessarily have a strong central authority capable of representing the nation with power and dignity in the counsels of the world. In considering the Statement, the Working Committee have kept in view the picture of the future, in so far as this was available to them from the proposals made for the formation of a Provisional Government and the clarification given by members of the Delegation. This picture is still incomplete and vague. It is only on the basis of the full picture that they can judge and come to a decision as to how far this is in conformity with the objectives they aim at. These objectives are : independence for India, a strong, though limited, central authority, full autonomy for the provinces, the establishment of a democratic structure in the centre and in the units, the guarantee of the fundamental rights of each individual so that he may have full and equal opportunities of growth, and further that each community should have opportunity to live the life of its choice within the larger framework.

The Committee regret to find a divergence between these objectives and the various proposals that have been made on behalf of the British Government, and, in particular, there is no vital change envisaged during the interim period when the Provisional Government will function, in spite of the assurance given in Paragraph 23 of the Statement. If the independence of India is aimed at, then the functioning of the Provisional Government must approximate closely in fact, even though not in law, to that independence and all obstructions and hindrances to it should be removed. The continued presence of a foreign army of occupation is a negation of independence.

The Statement issued by the Cabinet Delegation and the Viceroy contains certain recommendations and suggests a procedure for the building up of a Constituent Assembly, which is sovereign in so far as the framing of the Constitution is concerned. The Committee do not agree with some of these recommendations.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 24-5-1946.

In their view it will be open to the Constituent Assembly itself at any stage to make changes and variations, with the proviso that in regard to certain major communal matters a majority decision of both the major communities will be necessary.

The procedure for the election of the Constituent Assembly is based on representation in the ratio of one to a million, but the application of this principle appears to have been overlooked in the case of European members of Assemblies, particularly in Assam and Bengal. Therefore, the Committee expect that this oversight will be corrected.

The Constituent Assembly is meant to be a fully elected body, chosen by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. In Baluchistan there is no elected assembly or any other kind of chamber which might elect a representative for the Constituent Assembly. It would be improper for any kind of nominated individual to speak for the whole province of Baluchistan, which he really does not represent in any way.

In Coorg the Legislative Council contains some nominated members as well as Europeans elected from a special constituency of less than a hundred electors. Only the elected members from the general constituencies should participate in the election.

The Statement of the Cabinet Delegation affirms the basic principle of provincial autonomy and residuary powers vesting in the Provinces. It is further said that Provinces should be free to form groups. Subsequently, however, it is recommended that provincial representatives will divide up into sections which "shall proceed to settle the Provincial Constitutions for the Provinces in each section and shall also decide whether any Group Constitution shall be set up for those Provinces". There is a marked discrepancy in these two separate provisions, and it would appear that a measure of compulsion is introduced which clearly infringes the basic principle of provincial autonomy. In order to retain the recommendatory character of the Statement, and in order to make the clauses consistent with each other, the Committee read paragraph 15 to mean that, in the first instance, the respective provinces will make their choice whether or not to belong to the section in which they are placed. Thus the Constituent Assembly must be considered as a sovereign body with final authority for the purpose of drawing up a constitution and giving effect to it.

The provisions in the Statement in regard to the Indian States are vague and much has been left for future decision. The Working Committee would, however, like to make it clear that the Constituent Assembly cannot be formed of entirely disparate elements, and the manner of appointing State representatives for the Constituent Assembly must approximate, in so far as is possible, to the method adopted in the Provinces. The Committee are gravely concerned to learn that even at present moment some State governments are attempting to crush the spirit of their people with the help of armed forces. These recent developments in the States are of great significance in the present and for the future of India as they indicate that their is no

real change of policy on the part of some of the State governments and of those who exercise Paramountcy.

A Provisional National Government must have a new basis and must be a precursor of the full independence that will emerge from the Constituent Assembly. It must function in recognition of the fact, though changes in law need not be made at this stage. The Governor-General may continue as the head of the Government during the interim period, but the Government should function as a cabinet responsible to the Central Legislature. The status, powers and composition of the Provisional Government should be fully defined in order to enable the Committee to come to a decision. Major communal issues shall be decided in the manner referred to above in order to remove any possible fear or suspicion from the minds of a minority.

The Working Committee consider that the connected problems involved in the establishment of a Provisional Government and a Constituent Assembly should be viewed together so that they may appear as parts of the same picture, and there may be co-ordination between the two, as well as an acceptance of the independence that is now recognized as India's right and due. It is only with the conviction that they are engaged in building up a free, great and independent India, that the Working Committee can approach this task and invite the co-operation of all the people of India. In the absence of a full picture, the Committee are unable to give a final opinion at this stage.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 679-82. Also A.I.C.C. File No. 1499K, 1946-47. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE ¹

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,
NEW DELHI,
May 25, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

I thank you for your letter of yesterday. It seems to me quite natural that the Congress Working Committee should disperse while we are waiting for the Muslim League whose decisive meeting is, I understand, timed for June 5. But I hope very much they will be back on that day or as soon as possible after it, or else we shall have a further delay.

With regard to yourself I do not see why you should trouble to remain in Delhi

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 24-5-1946.

during the interval. But when the parties are here again after that I hope very much you will be able to come and give a helping hand.

I have come out here for the express purpose of launching India on its passage to sovereignty and independence and I greatly need your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,

PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 687-8. Also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 197-8

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE¹

Personal

OFFICE OF THE CABINET DELEGATION,

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE,

NEW DELHI,

June 10, 1946

MY DEAR GANDHIJI,

Thank you for sharing with me and Stafford your prayerful thoughts. I too have a strong feeling, where I am dependent on forces outside myself, that I must be content to accept the will of the Divinity that you call X; and that sometimes in Bjornsen's words may be "uber unserer kraft" (beyond our power). But where a decision of my own enters in I have a grave responsibility to all those who will be affected by it, to make it aright.

Did I ever tell you the following story illustrating the profound human belief in the rightness of things lying behind injustice? A parson said to a farmer who was worried about something, "Put your trust in Providence, my man." "No," said the farmer, "I have no trust in Providence. He lost me my pig 2 years ago. He let my home be burnt last year. He took away my wife last summer. No, I refuse to trust in Providence. But I will tell you what. There is a power above Him who will pull him up if he goes too far"

Sincerely yours,

PETHICK-LAWRENCE

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, p. 862. Also Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 203

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 10-6-1946.

APPENDIX IV
*INTERVIEW WITH LORD WAVELL*¹

June 11, 1946

1. I told Mr. Gandhi that I had asked him to come to see me because there appeared to be a deadlock over the last stage of the Cabinet Mission's work, the formation of an Interim Government. It would be very great pity if after all the hard and successful work of the Mission there was a breakdown at this point; and we must avoid it in the interests of India.

The deadlock seemed likely to occur over the issue of parity between the Congress and the Muslim League in the Interim Government. It was quite clear that this Government must be a coalition of the two main parties; and the trouble threatened to arise because Mr. Jinnah would not commit the Muslim League to participation in the Interim Government unless he had parity with Congress, and it seemed that Congress would not come in on these terms. I said parity between the Congress and the Muslim League, in view of the respective number of voters whom they represented, was obviously illogical; but what we were concerned with was an expedient, which would not form a precedent, to get over the difficult interim period. I said that if both parties were determined to work for the common good of India in the interim period, parity had no real meaning; and that if one party was out to dominate the Government and order everything to its own advantage then obviously the Government would do no good. I said that I was personally convinced that Mr. Jinnah, if he came into the Government, would work for good administration and not merely politically; and that I was sure that the same would be true of the Congress.

2. I stressed the need for good administration in the forthcoming period, both to tide India over her present difficulties, the threatened famine and the railway strike, and also to lay the foundations of India's future prosperity and independence. I said that I thought it was the opportunity for the Congress to make a generous gesture and to agree to Mr. Jinnah's condition, even if they thought it illogical and unreasonable, and that I hoped they would be able to do so. The alternative to obtaining a stable Government in this interim period was likely to be chaos and disorder, and might ruin the last opportunity for a really united India.

3. I suggested that perhaps the best way out of this difficulty would be for me to see Jinnah and Nehru together and to endeavour to arrive at an agreed composition for the Interim Government with them.

4. Mr. Gandhi said that he was thoroughly anxious for a settlement, and that he agreed that a coalition was necessary. What was required was a homogeneous team

¹ As recorded in a note by Lord Wavell.

which would work together. It should not lean too much upon the Viceroy, who was, he said, only a bird of passage, but to work together as a team by themselves. I said that this was undoubtedly the ideal but that it was the first step which was necessary and that a mediator between the two parties would undoubtedly be essential.

Mr. Gandhi then went off into a rather long digression about the poverty of India and the necessity for more food and cloth; but at the end of it came back to my suggestion and agreed that the best thing would be for me to see the leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League together; and that since he realized the difficulty of Azad meeting Jinnah, the meeting should be between Jinnah and Nehru; he would advise me to pin them down to make a Government and not to allow them to leave the room until they had done so; that parity was of no account, nor whether the members belonged to the Congress or the league or anyone, provided they were the best men available. He said I should be prepared to go out of the room and leave them to themselves if necessary.

5. He then turned on to the matter of the Europeans' vote and said that it was a most important issue, and that the Europeans should make a declaration if they did not intend to vote. I said that it was a matter which must be left to the commonsense of the Europeans.

6. The conversation lasted for about forty minutes and Mr. Gandhi was quite friendly throughout. It is always difficult to fathom how his mind is working, but he gave the impression that he would advise the Congress to come to terms and not to allow a breakdown on the parity issue.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 864-5

APPENDIX V

RESOLUTION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE COUNCIL¹

June 6, 1946

This meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League, after having carefully considered the Statement issued by the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy on May 16 and other relevant statements and documents officially issued in connection therewith, and after having examined the proposals set forth in the said Statement in all their bearings and implications, places on record the following views for the guidance of the National and direction to the Working Committee :

2. That the references made, and the conclusions recorded, in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Statement, concerning the Muslim demand for the establishment of a full sovereign Pakistan as the only solution of the Indian

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 12-6-1946 and "Letter to Lord Pethick-Lawrence" 13-6-1946.

constitutional problem, are unwarranted, unjustified, and unconvincing, and should not therefore have found place in a State document, issued on behalf and with the authority of the British Government. These paragraphs are couched in such language and contain such mutilations of the established facts, that the Cabinet Mission have clearly been prompted to include them in their Statement solely with the object of appeasing the Hindus, in utter disregard of Muslim sentiments. Furthermore, the contents of the aforesaid paragraphs are in conflict and inconsistent with the admissions made by the Mission themselves in paragraphs 5 and 12 of their Statement, which are to the following effect: First, the Mission “were greatly impressed by the very genuine and acute anxiety of the Muslims lest they should find themselves subjected to a perpetual Hindu majority rule.” Second, “this feeling has become so strong and widespread amongst the Muslims that it cannot be allayed by mere paper safeguards.” Third, “if there is to be internal peace in India, it must be secured by measures which will assure to the Muslims a control in all matters vital to their culture, religion, economic or other interests.” Fourth, “very real Muslim apprehensions exist that their culture and political and social life might become submerged in a purely unitary India, in which the Hindus, with their greatly superior numbers, must be the dominating element.” In order that there may be no manner of doubt in any quarter, the Council of the All-India Muslim League reiterates that the attainment of the goal of a complete sovereign Pakistan still remains the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India, for the achievement of which they will, if necessary, employ every means in their power and consider no sacrifice or suffering too great.

3. That notwithstanding the affront offered to Muslim by the choice of injudicious words in the preamble to the Statement of the Cabinet Mission, the Muslim League, having regard to the grave issues involved, and prompted by its earnest desire for a peaceful solution, if possible, of the Indian constitutional problem, and inasmuch as the basis and the foundation of Pakistan are inherent in the Mission’s plan by virtue of the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim provinces, in Sections B and C, is willing to co-operate with the constitution-making machinery proposed in the scheme outlined by the Mission, in the hope that it would ultimately result in the establishment of complete sovereign Pakistan, and in the consummation of the goal of independence for the major nations, Muslims and Hindus, and all the other people inhabiting the vast sub-continent.

It is for these reasons that the Muslim League is accepting the scheme, and will secession of Provinces or Groups from the Union which have been provided in the Mission’s plan by implication.

The ultimate attitude of the Muslim League will depend on the final outcome of the labours of the constitution-making body, and on the final shape of the constitutions which may emerge from the deliberations of that body jointly and

separately in its three sections. The Mulim League also reserves the right to modify and revise the policy and attitude set forth in this resolution at any time during the progress of deliberations of the constitution-making body, or the Constituent Assembly, or thereafter if the course of events so require, bearing in mind the fundamental principles and ideals herebefore adumbrated to which the Muslim League is irrevocably committed.

4. That with regard to the arrangement for the proposed Interim Government at the Centre, this Council authorizes its President to negotiate with the Viceroy and to take such decisions and actions as he deems fit and proper.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 836-8

APPENDIX VI

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE¹

7.30 p.m., June 12, 1946

Gandhi came in and I said it was a pleasure to see him again after so long an interval and the Viceroy had asked me to thank him for his helpful talk the other day² and I wanted to thank him for the help he had been giving in the last few days. I knew he would agree with me as to the importance of not having a break now.

He said that was of course true but there were certain things that were wrong that must be straightened out. He then went in some detail into the question of the European vote in Bengal and elsewhere. I said we had promised when he was here before to discuss this with the Europeans and had scrupulously carried out this promise. But we could not amend the Statement and he himself had advised us not to do so. He said that though it was not expressly stated in the Statement it was implied by the references to adult suffrage, population, weightage, etc., that the tiny handful of Europeans should not have the voting power that they claimed and that, further, Europeans by virtue of the fact that they were aliens should not interfere with such a purely Indian question as the future constitution of India. (He did *not* if I remember right refer specifically to the sentence in paragraph 3). I said that I understood the Europeans were issuing some public statement. He interrupted me and I gathered he knew all about the statement. He said it did not alter the facts and that the Europeans ought to have the good sense not to intervene. I said that they were in a very difficult

¹ As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* "Letter to Lord Wavell", 13-6-1946.

² On June 11

position. I understood him to say that he appreciated this but it did not alter his strong feelings in the matter.

Turning to the Interim Government, I said that I was sorry it had not been possible to have the three-party interview which had been envisaged but that I understood the Viceroy had had a very full and interesting talk with Nehru. He said he was sure the plan he had supported provided a golden bridge with which to span the chasm. He then developed an attack on Jinnah alleging that Jinnah had said that he would use his position in the Interim Government to “water the seeds of Pakistan”. When I suggested that if Jinnah came into the Interim Government he would work for the good of India, and that I found it difficult to credit him with the statement attributed to him, Gandhi said he would have the quotation looked up and send it to me.

I then stressed the fearful consequences of not reaching [an] agreement with which he seemed fully to concur. After some small talk in which I made reference to my desire to finish my work for Indian independence and to get back home, he took his departure. He had stayed about 40 minutes.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 888-9

APPENDIX VII

INTERVIEW WITH LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE¹

1.30 p.m., June 16, 1946

Gandhi came to see me today at Willingdon Crescent. I described the document² to him stressing that the Viceroy had selected men that he thought would make a good team and would do good administrative work. I told him what the allocation between parties was, what would happen if one individual fell out, what would happen if the proposal were not accepted, and the need for the scheme of May 16th to go forward.

I said I understood that Congress had passed a resolution which in terms would prevent them from accepting this scheme but that, if it seemed good to him, I hoped he would not allow this decision to prevent them from accepting. I believed he knew that I had only one desire—to promote the independence, prosperity and friendship of India and as he had the same idea I asked him to help to get the scheme through.

He then took the document and read it. The first thing that caught his eye was the alphabetical order of the names which caused him to smile and I think approve. He wanted to be quite clear as to what would happen if an individual fell out and I said that if he were a Congressman Congress would be consulted. In response to enquiry I said

¹ As recorded in a note by Lord Pethick-Lawrence. *Vide* Interview to the Press”, 16-6-1946.

² *Vdie* Appendix “Lord Wavell’s Statement”, 16-6-1946.

I could not commit the Viceroy to accepting the advice of Congress in selecting an alternative name but I thought it likely that if after discussion with Congress they strongly urged a certain name he would probably accept it. He noted that there was no woman on the list, and I said that personally I regretted that it had not been found possible to secure a suitable name.

He said that he realised it was not now possible to alter a comma in the Statement.

He said that he would examine it carefully, but of course there was not time to do so now as it was nearly 2 o'clock. He then left.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 953-4

APPENDIX VIII

LORD WAVELL'S STATEMENT¹

NEW DELHI,

June 16, 1946

1. His Excellency the Viceroy, in consultation with the members of the Cabinet Mission, has for some time been exploring the possibilities of forming a coalition Government drawn from the two major parties and certain of the minorities. The discussions have revealed the difficulties which exist for the two major parties in arriving at any agreed basis for the formation of such a Government.

2. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission appreciate these difficulties and the efforts which the two parties have made to meet them. They consider, however, that no useful purpose can be served by further prolonging these discussions. It is indeed urgently necessary that a strong and representative interim Government should be set up to conduct the very heavy and important business that has to be carried through.

3. The Viceroy is therefore issuing invitations to the following to serve as members of the Interim Government on the basis that the constitution-making will proceed in accordance with the Statement of May 16 :

Sardar Baldev Singh
Sir N. P. Engineer
Mr. Jagjivan Ram
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Mr. M. A. Jinnah
Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan
Mr. H. K. Mahtab
Dr. John Matthai

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Prayer Meeting", 16-6-1946.

Nawab Mohammed Ismail Khan
Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin
Sardar Abdur Rab Nishtar
Mr. C. Rajagopalachari
Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

It any of those invited is unable for personal reasons to accept, the Viceroy will, after consultation, invite some other person in his place.

4. The Viceroy will arrange the distribution of portfolios in consultation with the leaders of the two major parties.

5. The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government.

6. The Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission believe that Indians of all communities desire to arrive at a speedy settlement of this matter so that the process of constitution-making can go forward and that the Government of India may be carried on as efficiently as possible in the meantime.

7. They therefore hope that all parties, especially the two major parties, will accept this proposal so as to overcome the present obstacles, and will co-operate for the successful carrying on of the interim Government. Should this proposal be accepted the Viceroy will aim at inaugurating the new Government about 26th June.

8. In the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16.

9. The Viceroy is also directing the Governors of the Provinces to summon the Provincial Legislative Assemblies forthwith to proceed with the elections necessary for the setting up of the constitution-making machinery as put forward in the Statement of May 16.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 954-5

APPENDIX IX

INTERVIEW WITH SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS¹

[June 20, 1946]²

I saw Gandhi at 1.10 p. m. and stayed with him till 2.40 p. m. He started by saying that I should address my arguments to the Maulana. I told him I had done so and the Maulana had suggested I should see him (Gandhi). To this he replied “he has done a disservice to both of us”.

I made as strong an appeal to him as was possible on both the points, repeating all the arguments I had put to the Maulana.

On Engineer, which I dealt with first, he said he had no personal objection against him, indeed he had heard favourable accounts of the honourable way in which he had conducted the I. N. A. prosecutions. His objection was first that Congress had not been consulted on his name and second that as he was in an official post he would merely be another vote for the Viceroy.

I explained to him why Congress could not be consulted under the procedure we had adopted and I strongly stressed that his other fear was quite groundless as that was not the spirit in which the Viceroy was entering upon this task. He admitted that he had no reason to suspect it but maintained his objection “in principle” arising from his long experience of former Government and in South Africa. I pointed out the conditions of this Government would be quite different and one amongst 14 was not a basis for objection to “officials”. I also pointed out that Engineer was not an official though he happened to hold an official post and that any way as he had accepted we were not able to make any alteration as it would be a wrong and impossible way of dealing with an individual. With this he agreed.

We then went on to the other point and he reiterated that he had always said this was the wrong way for forming a Government, that it should be left to one party or the other and not be a coalition forced on the two parties by the British. He did not regard a breakdown on this as final since it might lead to a better arrangement.

It was quite clear that he could not be influenced from his point of view and therefore, after a final appeal to him to at least let this method be tried, I left him.

The Transfer of Power 1942-47, Vol. VII, pp. 985-6

¹ As recorded in a note by Sir Stafford Cripps. *Vide* “Interview with Sir Stafford Cripps”, 20-6-1946.

² Though placed under June 19, a footnote in the source says that it seemed probable that this meeting took place on June 20.

APPENDIX X

*INTERVIEW WITH CABINET DELEGATION*¹

8 p. m. *June 24, 1946*

1. Mr. Gandhi raised the matter of the instructions issued by Governors for the elections to the Constituent Assembly. He produced to the Delegation a telegram which he had received from Assam and said that this, read with the instructions as he had first understood them, made him think that members of the Constituent Assembly were being required to accept the Delegation's interpretation of their Statement of the 16th May because of the words in it which said that a candidate agreed to serve as a member of the Constituent Assembly for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the Statement of 16th May. Mr. Gandhi explained that he had taken legal opinion which did not support his anxieties and said that he had seen the Press Communique put out by the Government of India. If he had seen this Communique originally he would not have been troubled to the same extent that he had been. In addition to the legal difficulty, however, he felt a moral difficulty about this matter.

The Secretary of State and Sir S. Cripps pointed out that the telegram from Assam was based on a complete misunderstanding of what members of the Constituent Assembly were required to undertake. Mr. Gandhi was shown the form of undertaking required by the Bengal regulations and agreed that it contained no obligation of the kind he feared. The Secretary of State emphasised that by signing the undertaking a member of the Constituent Assembly was not accepting anything in addition to what was in the Statement of 16th May already.

The Viceroy said that it was clear that grouping was an essential part of the Delegation's proposals. Sir S. Cripps pointed out that what was essential was the forming of the constituent Assembly in sections for the purpose of framing the constitution. Mr. Gandhi said that he felt that the regulations should have referred to the Statement of May 16th as a whole and not specifically to paragraph 19 was the only one which referred to the setting up of the Constituent Assembly. There were other parts of the Statement as a whole to which members of the Constituent Assembly could not be expected to give concurrence, for example, the paragraphs rejecting a sovereign Pakistan. Mr. Gandhi said that at the Press Conference Lord Pethick-Lawrence had interpreted the Statement to mean that the Constituent Assembly must meet in sections. He (Mr. Gandhi) had dissented from this view and his interpretation of the document was upheld by eminent lawyers. It

¹ *Vide* "Interview with Cabinet Delegation", 24-6-1946.

was clear that the Delegation were the law-givers and could not interpret their own law. It must be the Federal Court which would interpret the meaning of the Statement. His trouble was that by signing the declaration required by the electoral rules a member of the Constituent Assembly might be bound morally to accept the Delegation's interpretation. Sir S. Cripps said that any doubt on the point might be solved by the fact that the person who sent the telegram from Assam was under a misapprehension as to what members of the Constituent Assembly were in fact asked to sign. Mr. Gandhi had agreed that the form of declaration was innocuous morally and his lawyers had agreed with the interpretation of it which Sir Stafford himself had expressed to Mr. Gandhi earlier. The First Lord said that what mattered was what a person signed. Mr. Gandhi agreed that whatever views a man might have about sections or groups he could sign the form of declaration in the Bengal regulations.

2. Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position about the Constituent Assembly clear. His view was that the Europeans had no vote and could not stand as candidates. He would like to ask the Delegation whether they had made any further progress or did they ask Congress to rely on whatever local assistance they could get if the Europeans say that they want to assert their right. Sir S. Cripps and the Viceroy said there was nothing more to be said about the Europeans since the statements issued by the European representatives.

3. Mr. Gandhi said there was one very delicate matter which he would like to raise. Mr. Sudhir Ghosh had reported to him his conversation with Sir S. Cripps on this subject and he felt that he would like to clear his mind. What he wanted to know was whether, if the whole thing was scrapped, would the undertakings to Mr. Jinnah also be scrapped, would the undertakings to Mr. Jinnah also be scrapped, or would the whole Statement be scrapped, or what would happen. It would not be a satisfactory thing from his point of view if this were the case. If the Government of India is appointed personally by the Viceroy he will be responsible only to the British Government. It would not be satisfactory to Mr. Gandhi nor did he think it would satisfy the Congress or, for that matter, the Muslim League. He thought the Delegation owed it to the Congress, the Muslim League and the public to tell them what they proposed to do. If the Delegation said that they could tell him nothing he would take that answer, but if they had anything to say to him so that he could advise the Working Committee with full knowledge, he would be obliged.

The Indian people would have to work this Constituent Assembly which had no statutory existence. It would be a difficult thing to do as the Delegation had created the Statement which had no legal existence. There were bound to be differences of opinion as to what it meant. The Congress, the Muslim League and the British Government used the same terms to mean different things. For example, the Congress independence meant independence now. To the Delegation it meant

independence when “this Charter is passed”, but it would only become a Charter if the people went for it and the British Government afterwards legalized the Charter. Suppose that there were a change of Secretary of State or a change of Government and that the intention of the British Government changed. . . . The Secretary of State here interrupted Mr. Gandhi to say that he would like to answer that point at once. It was not the practice of British Government to repudiate definite pledges given by their predecessors to third parties. They were not capable of doing that but if it were assumed that they were then the answer was that no statute would be any protection because a new statute could be passed altering the old one. He thought that this suggestion of a statutory basis for the Constituent Assembly would add nothing to the dignity or security of the Indian people. It would make the Constituent Body a creature of a British statute and if legislation were introduced attempts might be made to alter or amend the Statement. He thought that Mr. Gandhi would have been the first person to object if the Delegation had said that the Constituent Assembly could only be set up by an Act of the British Parliament. Sir S. Cripps said that apart from these considerations the lack of rigidity in basing a Constituent Assembly on the Statement and not on an enactment was very desirable. The origin of a Constituent Assembly should be the popular will and not the act of another State’s Legislature. This gave the Assembly the right constitutional status. It did not give it legal status. Mr. Gandhi said that the Delegation did contemplate a statute after the Constituent Assembly had met. Sir S. Cripps said this was not for the purpose of enacting the new Constitution but of removing the existing legislation. The First Lord said that there was no question as he understood it of any legislation except to cancel the existing constitution and the British Government had said that they would enact this legislation at the proper time provided two factors were satisfied. First, adequate provision for the protection of minorities as to the necessity of which there was no controversy at all and both major parties had said that they intended to make such provision, and secondly, reasonably formal engagements to be entered into between the united Kingdom and India covering matters arising out of the transfer of power. This would deal with formal matters such as the arrangements in regard to the Services.

4. Sardar Patel said he understood that the Europeans would not put up candidates but he would like to know whether it was contemplated that they should vote. The First Lord said that the Secretary of State had fulfilled his undertaking to do what he could to arrange this matter. No European would now vote for a European to sit in the Constitution-making Body. That was the major point. Sardar Patel said that voting was very important. Sir S. Cripps said that the position on the Statement of 16th May was that members of the Legislatures were entitled to vote and therefore Europeans were entitled to vote. The document clearly did not intend that no one other than Indians should be members of the Constituent Assembly so that that

question was on a different footing. Whether the Europeans exercised their vote was legally a matter for them. The First Lord said that the Europeans had gone a very long way from the position which obtained when the Congress complained about this matter. He thought that the original complaint had had justification but 75 per cent of it had been met.

The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, pp. 1026-9

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM LORD WAVELL TO ABUL KALAM AZAD¹

June 22, 1946

I understand from Press reports that there is strong feeling in Congress circles that the party should insist on their right to include a Muslim of their choice among the representatives of the Congress in the Interim Government.

For reasons of which you are already aware it is not possible for the Cabinet Mission or myself to accept this request, but I would draw your attention to paragraph 5 of the Statement of the 16th June which reads as follows :

“The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available coalition Government.”

In the light of this assurance that no precedent is established we appeal to the Congress not to press their demand, but to take part in the strong Interim Government which the country so urgently needs.

The Transfer of Power 1942-7, Vol. VII, p. 1005

APPENDIX XII

GROUPING CLAUSE CONTROVERSY²

It has been reported in the Press that the text of a Bengal Government communique requires every delegate to the Constituent Assembly to sign a declaration accepting Clause 19 of the Cabinet Delegation's Statement of May 16. This allegation is without any foundation. The A. P. I. has been authorized to state that according to the instructions actually issued a candidate for election to the Constituent Assembly from any province is required to declare that he has not been proposed for candidature to represent any other province and that he is willing to serve as a representative of the province for the purpose of paragraph 19 of the

¹*Vide* “Interview with Cabinet Delegation”, 24-6-1946.

²*ibid*

Cabinet Delegation's Statement.

The plain purpose of paragraph 19 is the framing of a new Constitution for India and this has been made further clear in the actual form of a declaration prescribed for the purpose by the Governor of Bengal which is as follows :

"I hereby agree to this nomination and declare that I am willing to serve in the Constituent Assembly as a representative of the General or Muslim part of the Bengal Legislative Assembly for the purpose of framing a new Constitution for India. I further declare that I have not been proposed as a representative of any part of the Legislative Assembly of any other province in India in the said Constituent Assembly."

The other reference to paragraph 19 of the Statement in the instructions issued by the Bengal Governor is with regard to reporting the result of the election.

This reads as follows : "The returning officer shall report the result of the election to the Governor who shall cause the names of the candidates declared elected, to be published in the Calcutta *Gazette* on July 15, 1946 or as soon as may be thereafter; and the persons whose names are so published shall be representative of Bengal for the purposes of paragraph 19 of the above-mentioned Statement."

The Hindustan Times, 25-6-1946

APPENDIX XIII

*EXTRACTS FROM CABLES FROM SOUTH AFRICA*¹

I

Acts of savage violence committed against peaceful passive resisters by mobs (of) unruly Europeans during last few nights when resisters have been beaten unconscious, two of whom still lying in serious condition and some going about with swollen faces, has only made Indian people more determined (to) carry their struggle for emancipation. Despite ban meeting held Nicols Square today (at) 5.30 p. m. attended by ten thousand Indian men and women resolved (to) carry on non-violent struggle. Permission holding meeting had been refused by city council. A gallant band (of) volunteers who have been camping on and off resistance camp whenever not in detention cell [*sic*]. Present amongst them Doctors Naicker and Gonnarn and M. D. Naidoo who addressed meeting. . . . Immediately after meeting huge crowd (of) Indians accompanied 47 Indian passive resister volunteers (who) left for resistance camp. Large police force and misguided European crowd awaiting 8.20 p. m. Ajosskeevy District Commandant . . . "in name (of) magistrate issued warning declaring any gathering within five hundred yards of intersection Sumbbilo and Gale streets

¹ *Vide* "Letter to G. E. B. Abell", 27-6-1946.

unlawful assembly in terms of Riotous Assemblies [Act]. Order remains in force seven days.” Crowds dispersed except forty-seven resisters who remained on camp ground. Arrested, taken in police van include Drs. Naicker, Gonnamm and M. D. Naidoo, President, Vice-President (and) Secretary respectively (of) Natal Indian Congress, European resister Reverend Michael Scott and eight women. Doctor Dadoo on behalf of Joint Passive Resistance Council issued statement : “Consider police action and arrest first victory. Spirit of resisters excellent. Their non-violent behaviour under extreme provocation and assaults magnificent. Struggle continues more and more volunteers will go into action according to plan. We shall resist.”

A. I. MEET

PASSIVE RESISTANCE COUNCIL
NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

II

Following statement made in court today by Dr. G. M. Naicker, President Natal Indian Congress and Chairman Passive Resistance Council when charged under Riotous Assemblies Act together with 46 other passive resisters : “I am South African born Indian peaceful citizen of this land. Recently Government has passed Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act 1946 which deprives my fellow countrymen and myself of certain basic elementary human rights. In protest to this unjust and inhuman law I have occupied land which Act debar me from. I am not challenging Durban City Council’s ownership of land nor am I engendering hostility to any section of community. . . .”

In accordance with passive resistance code resisters pleaded guilty though no evidence brought before court to show resisters guilty of any act of violence. . . . Marked feature about round-up that groups of Indians found there after expiry of 5 minutes’ warning irrespective of whether they waiting for transport arrested. But groups of Europeans seen standing in vicinity even an hour after expiry of warning were not touched by notice nor arrested.

DR. NAICKER

PRESIDENT, NATAL INDIAN CONGRESS

Gandhiji’s Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 303