THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LII

(1932-1933)

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VOLUME FIFTY-TWO



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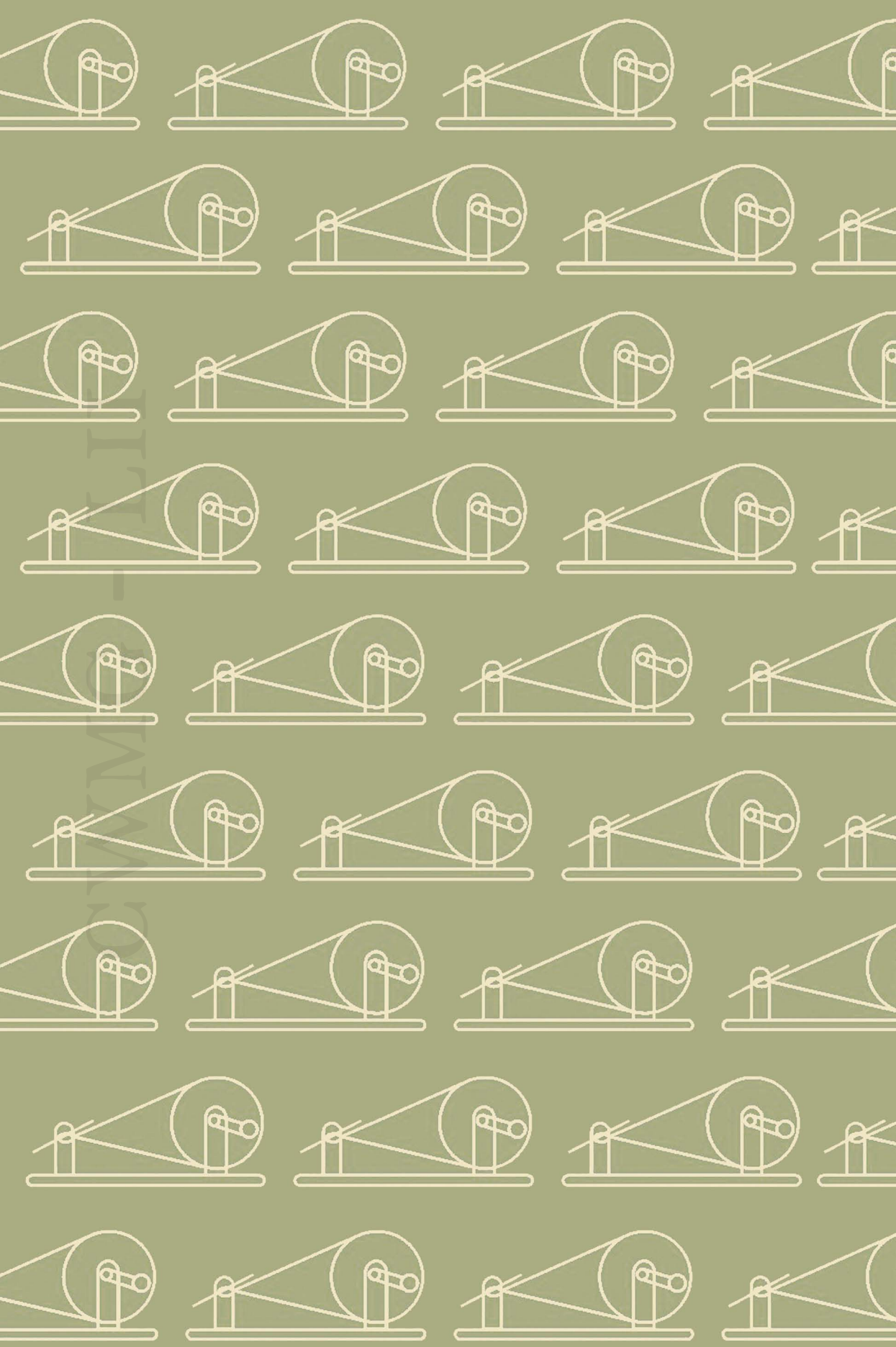
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PREFACE

The contents of this volume (covering the period November 16, 1932 to January 10, 1933) consist for the most part of Gandhiji's letters and statements which were strictly confined to the campaign against untouchability. While explaining to friends the inwardness of his fasts, he carried on with his orthodox opponents a patient dialogue on the true intent of the Shastras and the essence of Hinduism. The plan for the great reform, which was to be brought about without violence and in conformity with Hindu dharma, was set out succinctly in a letter to a fellow-worker: "... we must endeavour to bring round orthodoxy to our point of view, if it is at all possible. In any case we may do nothing to hurt anybody's susceptibilities" (p. 312).

The avoidance of politics, however scrupulous, was, he warned all concerned, both voluntary and temporary. In a public statement he declared: " . . . I draw no hard and fast line of demarcation between political, social, religious and other questions. I have always held that they are interdependent and that the solution of one brings nearer the solution of the rest" (p. 4). In an interview to the Press contradicting the story that he was "going spiritual", as Sri Aurobindo had done, and refusing to accept release on certain "terms", he stated, "I don't regard my life as divisible into so many water-tight compartments. It is one organic whole . . ." (p. 37). Not only would he obliterate the distinction between political dharma and social dharma, but he would break down the barriers between the ashramas. When a correspondent argued that the *Gita* doctrine of "oneness and therefore equality of all life" applied only to ascetics who had renounced action, Gandhiji replied: "The main theme of the *Gita* to me is oneness of life. Realization thereof comes through work without attachment. Untouchability as it is practised today seems to me to be utterly contrary to this divine fact of oneness" (pp. 51-2). Meeting the same critic's fear that the campaign against untouchability might "indefinitely postpone the prospect of swaraj which is the common aim of all", Gandhiji refused to "indefinitely postpone realization of oneness", which could only come by incessant striving to obliterate differences, especially man-made and unjustifiable ones. Indeed, he felt that opposition to this urgent and absolutely vital reform was "a painful sign of the decadence of Hinduism" (pp. 220-1).

In a typical letter to Anand Swarup, giving detailed instructions on cleaning lavatories and exposing them to sunlight and converting excreta into manure, Gandhiji dwelt equally lovingly on the identity of Ramanama and *Omkar* and on the concept of truth as "unity of thought, word and deed", the known *satya* in the total *sat*, the sole reality which is Parameshwara (p. 76). For him "God is the sum-total of all life just as the sun is the aggregate of rays" (p. 237).

Gandhiji was averse to disrupting society or using one part of it against another. He was clear "that there should be no forcible opening of any single temple". He was all for educating public opinion and preparing it for the opening of temples to Harijans. As from the orthodox, so from the Harijans, he demanded voluntary co-operation. He was clear that "every reform voluntarily made by Harijans" would hasten the removal of the black mark (p. 148).

To the repeated suggestions, therefore, that it was inexpedient to antagonize the orthodox section and weaken the freedom struggle, he repeatedly answered that his political, religious and social ideas were different branches of the same tree and that he would not, through foolishness or cowardice, "barter away the diamond of dharma for the pebble of political advantage . . . " (p. 63). In the same spirit he answered friends who argued (pp. 62 and 217) that his body belonged to the nation and should not be endangered by fasting for a mere social reform, and asserted that both the body and the nation belonged to God who had imposed these irresistible tasks upon it.

Explaining in a letter to C. F. Andrews his inability to give any undertaking regarding his future course of action, he wrote: " . . . civil disobedience under given circumstances is as much an article of faith with me as removal of untouchability" (p. 158). Not only did he thus refuse to fragment his life or distinguish between politics and religion, he recognized "no difference of degree in matters of moment" and was as ready to give up his life for the sake of "an incorruptible man and a dear comrade" (p. 112) as for a public cause. His intervention on behalf of Appasaheb Patwardhan, who was offering satyagraha for the privilege of being assigned scavenging work in Ratnagiri Jail, was a mode of organic thinking and action far beyond the comprehension of Superintendent E. E. Doyle, who could only interpret the many movements of the Mahatma's integral mind as "*mahseer* wriggles" seeking some excuse to get out of "his so-called 'contemplated fast' " (pp. 428-9).

So far, however, from funking a fast, Gandhiji was eager to use it as his chosen and well-tested instrument for sensing and sharing the *satya*, the simple concrete reality, in any complex situation. He regarded it as the highest form of prayer and an expression of faith which "shakes and awakes the slumbering soul and impels a loving heart to action" (p. 114). His fast was not aimed at the sanatanists, but at the millions who were bound to him by the tie of love (p. 7). It was intended to stir the public conscience and to move to right action the great mass of Hindu humanity (p. 365). As if apologizing for his helplessness, he wrote to his cousin and nephew that his fasts were not undertaken by him of his own free will but seemed to him to come from God (p. 81). Repudiating Khurshed Naoroji's suggestion that his fast was due to disappointment, he declared that for him fasting was a part of prayer, as indispensable as eating, a source of inward joy, a process of penance and purification firmly founded on "faith in mankind, God and oneself" (p. 269).

To meet the objection that the fast due to commence on January 2, 1933 in sympathy with Kelappan's amounted to coercion, Gandhiji claimed that it was based on the assumption that the vast majority of temple-going *savarnas* were in favour of admitting Harijans. To establish this claim he suggested a methodical referendum of *bona-fide* temple-goers within a ten-mile radius. With 55% voting in favour, 9% against, 8% remaining neutral and 27% abstaining (p. 304), the result vindicated Gandhiji's contention. The fast, however, had to be postponed in the face of a legal difficulty which barred the trustees departing from established usage. Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, introduced in the Madras Legislative Council to remove this obstacle, required the Viceroy's sanction for inclusion in the agenda and this could not be announced before January 15, 1933.

The orthodox opposition to the anti-untouchability movement was based on the claim that the Shastras enjoined untouchability as part of varnashrama dharma, but Gandhiji could not find one such authority supporting untouchability "as it is practised today" (p. 351). Gandhiji's stand was supported by numerous scholars and pundits, some of whom, including Dr. Bhagwandas and Acharya A. B. Dhruva, issued a public statement that untouchability as practised in modern times had no warrant in the Shastras and that in any case any community hitherto considered untouchable could acquire all the privileges of caste Hindus "by clean living and initiation into the Shaiva or Vaishnava worship . . ." (pp. 348-9).

Gandhiji, however, would not confine the debate to this issue. He went further and attacked all fundamentalism, all blind faith in the inerrancy and literal authority of the Shastras. He held the view that Hinduism was sanatana because it was dynamic and that the Shastras were designed not to supersede but to sustain "the universally accepted first principles of morality . . . " (p. 9). They contained ample evidence of their "continuous progress and adaptability to circumstances that arose from time to time". But when Hinduism lost its old vitality and its healthy growth was arrested, Hindu society became "irresponsive to the central call of Hinduism, that is, progressive realization of the unity of all life, not as a philosophical doctrine but as a solid fact of life . . ." (pp. 305-6). Gandhiji felt that by long and continuous effort to live his religion he had gained the fitness and heard the inner call to do penance for reforming Hindu society. He appealed to the sanatanists to share his agony and co-operate with him in removing this evil. He assured them, "I have no other end to serve than to see sanatan dharma revivified and lived in its reality" (p. 361). He repeated this assurance in a private apologia: "Devotion to Krishna is the key-note of my life; and sanatan dharma is my very life-breath" (p. 411). To a critic who suspected communalism in this "fast on behalf of Hinduism", Gandhiji replied: "I am not ashamed of Hinduism or of the Hindu. . . . To me, Hinduism is but one branch from the same parent trunk . . . and if I take care of the Hindu branch on which I am sitting and which sustains me surely I am taking care also of the sister branches. . . . if God gives me the privilege of dying for this Hinduism of my conception, I shall have sufficiently died for the unity of all and even for swaraj" (pp. 71-2).

Some critics considered that the right of admission to temples was not worth fighting for. In Gandhiji's view, however, temple-entry occupied a crucial place in the anti-untouchability movement as the temples were the commonest means of participating in Shaiva or Vaishnava worship. Gandhiji recognized that "village temples were . . . a place of refuge . . . It is difficult to conceive the life of a Hindu villager being regulated without his temple" (p. 154). Replying to the usual non-Hindu objection to idol-worship itself, Gandhiji retorted that mosque-going and church-going were also forms of idol-worship and that it would be both "arrogant and ignorant to look down upon such worship as superstition" (p. 96).

On the proposal that Harijans should undergo a purification ceremony before they could be admitted to temples, his comment was that it was for the caste Hindus "to undergo purification for

having done a violent wrong to the untouchables'' (p. 126).

Gandhiji was well aware both of the limits of reason and the power of faith. There was no need, he told a friend, and it would be a sign of mental lethargy, ''to resort to faith regarding anything that can be grasped by the intellect'' (p. 237). But he advised another friend, who could not understand the ethics of fasting, that in situations out of the ordinary ''too much thinking is to be avoided'' (p. 228). *Mauna*—mental fast—includes abstention from thinking; for thinking helps verbalization and ego-building and crowds out the tacit components of human growth, such as subceptual, creaturely fellow-feeling and creative action, inexplicable and irresistible, transcending conventional dharma and performed in the name and presence of the Lord.

Gandhiji advised Dr. B. C. Roy to step down from the presidentship of the Anti-untouchability Board of Bengal so as to make room for a person to be chosen by representatives of all the groups willing to co-operate in the reform. Dr. Roy followed the advice but felt hurt. On receiving his reply, Gandhiji sent a telegram withdrawing his advice and offering his apology (pp. 201-2). Gandhiji also apologized to G. D. Birla who had suggested the appointment of Dr. Roy as president of the Bengal Board and who too felt unhappy over the incident. When Mr. Birla explained his earlier silence and failure to prevent Gandhiji from writing to Dr. Roy, saying, '' . . . dazzled with your superhuman personality . . . we have almost lost self-confidence in ourselves'' (p. 437), Gandhiji replied that this dazzling presence was a greater embarrassment to him than to his friends and he hated to have any special credit attached to his word (p. 295). The misunderstanding soon cleared up and Gandhiji could write to Dr. Roy: ''I love and accept your correction, and say with you that we are near to each other . . .'' (p. 311).

In letters to the Ashram boys and girls, Gandhiji explained how training in craft was as important as education in letters. Khadi work, carpentry, farm work, tanning, dairy work ''develop your intellect and also some of the bodily senses'' and should, therefore, form ''part of your education'' (p. 226). Encouraging the pupils to keep up their enthusiasm, he assured them: ''Once you learn farming you will find it more interesting than any other work. And when one gets familiar with plants, one feels they are part of one's family'' (p. 335). Significant too are his references to animals, birds and plants as friends (p. 85), to our four-footed kinsfolk (p. 96) and to the companionship and fall from grace of ''our cat family'' (pp. 193, 200 and 258).

In a series of letters to ailing friends (pp. 75, 78, 87, 105, 107 and 226-7), Gandhiji, with charming variations, urged them to accept even sickness as a gift from God and an opportunity for cultivating patience, cheerfulness, gratitude to helpers and the practice of prayer. The detailed letter (p. 253) about the disposal of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's property is a good example of Gandhiji's personal interest in the welfare of those around him.

Reprimanding Premabehn Kantak who did not want her letters to be shown to the Ashram manager, Gandhiji wrote: "We have no right to think any thoughts which others may not know." "Every human being", he added, "is God's representative on the earth" and is, therefore, entitled to know our thoughts (p. 230). Again he pleaded with her, "If I don't show your shortcomings to you, who else will? So long as the poison of hatred is there in your heart, you must let me drink it" (p. 385). Perhaps the most touching and most prophetic of the letters is what Gandhiji wrote to Vinoba Bhave on New Year's Day: "Your love and faith bring me tears of joy. I may or may not deserve them, but they will bring their reward to you. You will be the instrument of some great service to the people" (p. 332).

CWMG - VII

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the January 1969 edition.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to documents, M.M.U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit and S.G. to the photostats of the Sevagram collection available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

CWMG - LII

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CWMG - LII

CONTENTS

	PREFACE	v
	NOTE TO THE READER	xi
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiii
1	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—VII (16-11-1932)	1
2	FOREWORD TO "HAMARA KALANK" (16-11-1932)	5
3	TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (16-11-1932)	5
4	LETTER TO S. M. MICHAEL (16-11-1932)	5
5	LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN (16-11-1932)	6
6	LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI (16-11-1932)	7
7	LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA (16-11-1932)	8
8	A LETTER (16-11-1932)	8
9	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—VIII (17-11-1932)	9
10	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (17-11-1932)	12
11	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (17-11-1932)	14
12	LETTER TO BHAU PANSE (17-11-1932)	15
13	LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR (17-11-1932)	16
14	LETTER TO DR. RAGHUVIR SINGH AGRAWAL (17-11-1932)	16
15	TELEGRAM TO JAGANNATH (18-11-1932)	17
16	TELEGRAM TO GOVIND MALAVIYA (18-11-1932)	17
17	TELEGRAM TO MADHUSUDAN DAS (18-11-1932)	17
18	STATEMENT ON MADHUSUDAN DAS (18-11-1932)	18
19	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (18-11-1932)	18
20	LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU (18-11-1932)	19
21	TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL (19-11-1932)	19
22	LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI (19-11-1932)	20
23	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (19-11-1932)	21
24	LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA (19-11-1932)	22
25	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (19-11-1932)	23
26	DISCUSSION WITH G. K. DEVDHAR (19-11-1932)	23
27	LETTER TO THORNBERG (20-11-1932)	24
28	LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI (20-11-1932)	25
29	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (20-11-1932)	25
30	LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH (20-11-1932)	26
31	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (20-11-1932)	26
32	LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI (20-11-1932)	27
33	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (20-11-1932)	27
34	LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA (20-11-1932)	28
35	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (20-11-1932)	28

CWMG - LIII

36	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ (20-11-1932)	29
37	LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVDE (20-11-1932)	30
38	LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL (20-11-1932)	30
39	LETTER TO PRABHAVATI (20-11-1932)	31
40	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (20-11-1932)	31
41	LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR (21-11-1932)	31
42	LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI (21-11-1932)	32
43	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (21-11-1932)	32
44	LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI (21-11-1932)	33
45	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (21-11-1932)	34
46	LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA (21-11-1932)	36
47	INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS (21-11-1932)	37
48	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO LORD SANKEY (On or before 22-11-1932)	37
49	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (22-11-1932)	38
50	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (22-11-1932)	39
51	LETTER TO BHAU PANSE (22-11-1932)	39
52	LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ (22-11-1932)	40
53	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (22-11-1932)	40
54	LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ (22-11-1932)	41
55	LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR (22-11-1932)	42
56	LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN (23-11-1932)	42
57	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (23-11-1932)	45
58	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI (23-11-1932)	47
59	LETTER TO HIRALAL A. SHAH (23-11-1932)	47
60	INTERVIEW TO WOMEN (23-11-1932)	48
61	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (24-11-1932)	49
62	LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (24-11-1932)	50
63	LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI (24-11-1932)	51
64	LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU (24-11-1932)	51
65	LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI (24-11-1932)	52
66	LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (24-11-1932)	53
67	LETTER TO ADA WEST (24-11-1932)	53
68	LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND (24-11-1932)	54
69	LETTER TO OLIVE ALEXANDER (24-11-1932)	54
70	LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK (24-11-1932)	55
71	LETTER TO AN AMERICAN WOMAN (24-11-1932)	56
72	A LETTER (24-11-1932)	56
73	LETTER TO "LARKS OF ST. FRANCIS" (24-11-1932)	57
74	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (24-11-1932)	57
75	LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD (25-11-1932)	58

CWMG - LII

76	LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON (25-11-1932)	58
77	LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR (25-11-1932)	59
78	LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI (25-11-1932)	59
79	LETTER TO ESTHER MENON (25-11-1932)	60
80	LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH (25-11-1932)	60
81	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SAMUEL E. STOKES (25-11-1932)	61
82	LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON (25-11-1932)	61
83	LETTER TO SECRETARY TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (25-11-1932)	61
84	A LETTER (25-11-1932)	62
85	REPLIES TO RATLAM CORRESPONDENTS (25-11-1932)	62
86	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (25-11-1932)	64
87	A LETTER (25-11-1932)	65
88	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (25-11-1932)	65
89	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (25-11-1932)	66
90	LETTER TO GOVINDLAL SAHA (25-11-1932)	67
91	INTERVIEW TO KHIMJI AND J. K. MEHTA (25-11-1932)	67
92	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–IX (26-11-1932)	68
93	LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR (26-11-1932)	72
94	LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM (26-11-1932)	73
95	LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (26-11-1932)	74
96	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (26-11-1932)	74
97	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ (26-11-1932)	75
98	LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI (26-11-1932)	75
99	LETTER TO ANAND SWARUP (26-11-1932)	76
100	INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA" (26-11-1932)	77
101	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (27-11-1932)	78
102	LETTER TO BHAU PANSE (27-11-1932)	79
103	LETTER TO BHIKHIBEHN (27-11-1932)	79
104	LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI (27-11-1932)	80
105	LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH (27-11-1932)	80
106	LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ (27-11-1932)	80
107	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (27-11-1932)	81
108	LETTER TO JAMNADAS AND KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI (27-11-1932)	81
109	LETTER TO LAKSHMI D. DAFDA (27-11-1932)	82
110	LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI (27-11-1932)	82
111	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (27-11-1932)	83
112	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (27-11-1932)	84
113	LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH (27-11-1932)	86
114	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (27-11-1932)	86
115	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (27-11-1932)	87

CWMG - III

116 FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANMATHA ROY (Before 28-11-1932) 87
117 LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (28-11-1932) 87
118 LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (28-11-1932) 88
119 LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI (28-11-1932) 89
120 APPEAL TO PUBLIC (29-11-1932) 90
121 LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (29-11-1932) 90
122 LETTER TO A BENGALI YOUTH (29-11-1932) 91
123 A LETTER (29-11-1932) 91
124 LETTER TO A SINDHI DOCTOR (29-11-1932) 92
125 LETTER TO VASANTRAM SHASTRI (29-11-1932) 92
126 LETTER TO PRABHAVATI (29-11-1932) 93
127 LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA (29-11-1932) 93
128 LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (30-11-1932) 94
129 LETTER TO F. MARY BARR (30-11-1932) 95
130 LETTER TO CHITTOOR RAJAGOPALACHARI (30-11-1932) 97
131 LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH (30-11-1932) 98
132 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (30-11-1932) 98
133 LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE (November 1932) 99
134 TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON (1-12-1932) 99
135 LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (30-11/1-12-1932) 99
136 LETTER TO MIRABEHN (1-12-1932) 102
137 LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI (1-12-1932) 103
138 LETTER TO BECHARDAS J. DOSHI (1-12-1932) 104
139 LETTER TO SHAMJI MARWADI (1-12-1932) 104
140 LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (2-12-1932) 105
141 LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ (2-12-1932) 105
142 LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA (2-12-1932) 106
143 LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI (2-12-1932) 107
144 INTERVIEW TO DEPRESSED CLASSES LEADERS (2-12-1932) 107
145 TELEGRAM TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR (3-12-1932) 108
146 LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (3-12-1932) 108
147 LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR (3-12-1932) 110
148 LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (3-12-1932) 110
149 INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS (3-12-1932) 111
150 STATEMENT ON FAST TO ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY COMMITTEE (4-12-1932) 112
151 TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (4-12-1932) 114
152 LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (4-12-1932) 115
153 LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (4-12-1932) 115
154 LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (4-12-1932) 116
155 TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN (5-12-1932) 116

CWMG - LII

156	TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI (5-12-1932)	117
157	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (4/5-12-1932)	117
158	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (5-12-1932)	118
159	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (5-12-1932)	119
160	LETTER TO BHAU PANSE (5-12-1932)	119
161	LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA (5-12-1932)	120
162	LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH (5-12-1932)	120
163	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (5-12-1932)	120
164	LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR (5-12-1932)	121
165	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (5-12-1932)	121
166	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (5-12-1932)	122
167	LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI (5-12-1932)	123
168	LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH (5-12-1932)	123
169	LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA (5-12-1932)	123
170	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (5-12-1932)	124
171	LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI (5-12-1932)	124
172	INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS (5-12-1932)	125
173	ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY PROGRAMME (6-12-1932)	128
174	TELEGRAM TO S. P. PATWARDHAN (6-12-1932)	128
175	TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN (6-12-1932)	129
176	LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI (6-12-1932)	129
177	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (6-12-1932)	131
178	LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU (6-12-1932)	131
179	LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR (6-12-1932)	132
180	LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S. (6-12-1932)	132
181	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (6-12-1932)	133
182	LETTER TO U. SUBBARAO (6-12-1932)	134
183	LETTER TO A GUJARATI STUDENT (6-12-1932)	134
184	A LETTER (6-12-1932)	135
185	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (6-12-1932)	136
186	LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON (Before 7-12-1932)	136
187	INTERVIEW TO SRIPAD SHANKER (Before 7-12-1932)	137
188	TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI (7-12-1932)	138
189	TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI (7-12-1932)	138
190	LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY (7-12-1932)	138
191	LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (7-12-1932)	140
192	INTERVIEW TO STUDENTS (7-12-1932)	141
193	INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (7-12-1932)	142
194	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (7/8-12-1932)	143
195	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (7/8-12-1932)	144
196	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (8-12-1932)	145
197	LETTER TO S. A. K. SUBRAMANIAM (8-12-1932)	146
198	LETTER TO P. R. LELE (8-12-1932)	146

199	LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ (8-12-1932)	147
200	LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS (8-12-1932)	149
201	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (8-12-1932)	149
202	A LETTER (8-12-1932)	150
203	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—X (9-12-1932)	151
204	TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON (9-12-1932)	155
205	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (9-12-1932)	156
206	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER (9-12-1932)	156
207	LETTER TO A. S. ALTEKAR (9-12-1932)	157
208	LETTER TO R. L. BISWAS (9-12-1932)	157
209	LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (9-12-1932)	158
210	LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI (9-12-1932)	159
211	LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR (9-12-1932)	160
212	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (9-12-1932)	160
213	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (9-12-1932)	161
214	LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (9-12-1932)	161
215	TELEGRAM TO K. L. DAFTARI (10-12-1932)	162
216	LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON (10-12-1932)	162
217	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (10-12-1932)	163
218	LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD (10-12-1932)	163
219	LETTER TO CHAS. PEACOCK (10-12-1932)	164
220	LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN (10-12-1932)	165
221	LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (Before 11-12-1932)	166
222	LETTER TO DEONAYAKACHARYA AND HIRALAL D. NANAVATI (11-12-1932)	168
223	LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI (11-12-1932)	168
224	LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA (11-12-1932)	169
225	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (11-12-1932)	170
226	LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI (11-12-1932)	171
227	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (11-12-1932)	171
228	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (11-12-1932)	172
229	LETTER TO PADMA (11-12-1932)	172
230	LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE (11-12-1932)	173
231	LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL (11-12-1932)	173
232	LETTER TO TULSI MAHER (11-12-1932)	173
233	LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL (11-12-1932)	174
234	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (11-12-1932)	174
235	LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH (12-12-1932)	174
236	LETTER TO URMILA DEVI (12-12-1932)	175
237	A LETTER (12-12-1932)	176
238	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (12-12-1932)	176
239	LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ (12-12-1932)	177

CWMG - LII

240	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (12-12-1932)	178
241	LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM (12-12-1932)	178
242	LETTER TO C. V. VAIDYA (13-12-1932)	179
243	LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO (13-12-1932)	181
244	LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD (13-12-1932)	182
245	LETTER TO RAMTARAN MUKHERJI (13-12-1932)	182
246	LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN (13-12-1932)	183
247	LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA J. SOMAN (13-12-1932)	184
248	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–XI (14-12-1932)	185
249	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (14-12-1932)	186
250	LETTER TO SUNDAR DASS (14-12-1932)	187
251	LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY (14-12-1932)	187
252	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (14-12-1932)	188
253	LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS (14-12-1932)	189
254	LETTER TO KAMAL KUMAR BANERJI (14-12-1932)	191
255	LETTER TO A BENGALI BOY (14-12-1932)	192
256	LETTER TO MANIBEHN (14-12-1932)	192
257	LETTER TO SHIVPRASAD GUPTA (14-12-1932)	193
258	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (14-12-1932)	194
259	LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE (14-12-1932)	196
260	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DHARMADEV (14-12-1932)	196
261	INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY (14-12-1932)	197
262	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–XII (15-12-1932)	198
263	CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS (15-12-1932)	199
264	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (15-12-1932)	200
265	LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY (15-12-1932)	201
266	LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR (15-12-1932)	202
267	LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (15-12-1932)	203
268	LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR (15-12-1932)	204
269	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ (15-12-1932)	205
270	MESSAGE FOR ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY (16-12-1932)	205
271	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (15/16-12-1932)	207
272	LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (16-12-1932)	209
273	LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK (16-12-1932)	210
274	LETTER TO S. NEELAKANTHA AYYAR (16-12-1932)	211
275	LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S. (16-12-1932)	212
276	LETTER TO MANGALDAS M. PAKVASA (16-12-1932)	213
277	LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI (16-12-1932)	213
278	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (16-12-1932)	214
279	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (16-12-1932)	214
280	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (17-12-1932)	215

281	LETTER TO S. K. DATTA (17-12-1932)	216
282	LETTER TO DUNI CHAND (17-12-1932)	217
283	LETTER TO N. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR (17-12-1932)	218
284	LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU (17-12-1932)	219
285	LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI (17-12-1932)	222
286	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (17-12-1932)	222
287	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (17-12-1932)	223
288	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (17-12-1932)	223
289	LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI (17-12-1932)	224
290	LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI (17-12-1932)	225
291	LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR (17-12-1932)	225
292	LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA (17-12-1932)	225
293	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (17-12-1932)	226
294	LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI (17-12-1932)	226
295	LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA (18-12-1932)	227
296	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (18-12-1932)	227
297	LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI TRIVEDI (18-12-1932)	227
298	LETTER TO KOTWAL (18-12-1932)	228
299	LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA (18-12-1932)	229
300	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (18-12-1932)	229
301	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (18-12-1932)	230
302	LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH (18-12-1932)	231
303	LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH (18-12-1932)	231
304	LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL TRUST (Before 19-12-1932)	232
305	LETTER TO NIROD RANJAN GUHA (19-12-1932)	232
306	LETTER TO R. B. TALEGAONKAR (19-12-1932)	233
307	LETTER TO SECRETARY, ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY (19-12-1932)	235
308	A LETTER (19-12-1932)	235
309	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (19-12-1932)	236
310	LETTER TO GOPIKRISHNA VIJAYAVARGIYA (19-12-1932)	237
311	LETTER TO KRISHNAN NAIR (19-12-1932)	237
312	LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA (19-12-1932)	238
313	LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA (19-12-1932)	238
314	LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER (Before 20-12-1932)	238
315	TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S. (20-12-1932)	239
316	LETTER TO RAMAGOPALA SHASTRI (20-12-1932)	239
317	LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI (20-12-1932)	240
318	LETTER TO VAKKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR (20-12-1932)	240
319	LETTER TO K. RAMABHADRA ROW (20-12-1932)	241
320	LETTER TO G. H. PATWARDHAN (20-12-1932)	241
321	LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN (20-12-1932)	242

CWMG - VOL

322	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (20-12-1932)	243
323	LETTER TO M. I. DAVID (20-12-1932)	243
324	LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (20-12-1932)	244
325	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (20-12-1932)	246
326	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (20-12-1932)	246
327	LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (21-12-1932)	247
328	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (21-12-1932)	247
329	LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (21-12-1932)	248
330	LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (21-12-1932)	249
331	LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD (21-12-1932)	249
332	LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON (21-12-1932)	250
333	LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA (21-12-1932)	251
334	LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI (21-12-1932)	251
335	LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI (21-12-1932)	252
336	LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI (21-12-1932)	253
337	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (21-12-1932)	255
338	LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH (21-12-1932)	256
339	LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH (21-12-1932)	256
340	LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS (21-12-1932)	257
341	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (22-12-1932)	257
342	LETTER TO KOWTHA SURYANARAYANA ROW (22-12-1932)	259
343	LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM (22-12-1932)	260
344	LETTER TO P. K. MATHEW (22-12-1932)	260
345	LETTER TO J. R. GHARPURE (22-12-1932)	261
346	LETTER TO N. V. THADANI (22-12-1932)	262
347	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (22-12-1932)	262
348	LETTER TO DIWANCHAND (22-12-1932)	263
349	LETTER TO H. D. NANAVATI (22-12-1932)	263
350	LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL (22-12-1932)	264
351	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ (22-12-1932)	264
352	QUESTIONS FOR SHASTRI PARISHAD (On or before 23-12-1932)	265
353	TELEGRAM TO ZAMORIN OF CALICUT (23-12-1932)	265
354	LETTER TO S. SEN (23-12-1932)	266
355	LETTER TO MANINDRA NATH MITTER (23-12-1932)	266
356	LETTER TO MOHAN LAL (23-12-1932)	267
357	LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER (23-12-1932)	267
358	LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI (23-12-1932)	268
359	FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KHORSHED NAOROJI (23-12-1932)	269
360	LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI (23-12-1932)	269
361	LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR (23-12-1932)	270
362	LETTER TO G. V. NARASIMHACHAR (24-12-1932)	270

363	LETTER TO T. B. KESHAVA RAO (24-12-1932)	271
364	LETTER TO R. VENKATARAMAN (24-12-1932)	271
365	LETTER TO S. RAJAGOPALACHARI (24-12-1932)	272
366	LETTER TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN (24-12-1932)	272
367	LETTER TO SECRETARY, VAIDIK DHARMAVARDHINI SABHA (24-12-1932)	273
368	LETTER TO W. E. S. HOLLAND (24-12-1932)	273
369	LETTER TO N. VENKATAKRISTNAYYA (24-12-1932)	274
370	LETTER TO MUKANDI LAL (24-12-1932)	274
371	LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA (24-12-1932)	275
372	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (24-12-1932)	275
373	LETTER TO B. VARADARAJULU (24-12-1932)	276
374	LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER (24-12-1932)	276
375	LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER (24-12-1932)	278
376	LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON (24-12-1932)	278
377	LETTER TO NARAYANRAO KULKARNI (24-12-1932)	279
378	LETTER TO PURNA CHANDRA DEY (24-12-1932)	279
379	LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI (24-12-1932)	280
380	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (24-12-1932)	281
381	LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA (25-12-1932)	282
382	LETTER TO P. P. SHENAI (25-12-1932)	283
383	LETTER TO K. L. SAHU (25-12-1932)	283
384	LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER (25-12-1932)	284
385	A LETTER (25-12-1932)	285
386	A LETTER (25-12-1932)	286
387	A LETTER (25-12-1932)	286
388	LETTER TO BHAU PANSE (25-12-1932)	287
389	LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI (25-12-1932)	287
390	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (25-12-1932)	288
391	LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE (25-12-1932)	288
392	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (25-12-1932)	289
393	LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL (25-12-1932)	290
394	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (25-12-1932)	290
395	LETTER TO NARADEV SHASTRI (25-12-1932)	291
396	LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL (25-12-1932)	291
397	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (25-12-1932)	292
398	LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI (25-12-1932)	292
399	LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR (26-12-1932)	293
400	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (26-12-1932)	293
401	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSI BAZAJ (26-12-1932)	294
402	MESSAGE TO HARI KIRTAN MAHA SAMMELAN, MEERUT (Before 27-12-1932)	294
403	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (27-12-1932)	295

404	LETTER TO L. N. BHARGAVA (27-12-1932)	296
405	LETTER TO SHYAMLAL (27-12-1932)	296
406	LETTER TO M. R. RAMASWAMI (27-12-1932)	297
407	LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVADE (27-12-1932)	297
408	LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (27-12-1932)	298
409	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (28-12-1932)	298
410	LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER (28-12-1932)	298
411	LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN (28-12-1932)	299
412	LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (28-12-1932)	299
413	LETTER TO AN ENGLISH WOMAN (28-12-1932)	300
414	LETTER TO M. SWAMINATHAN (28-12-1932)	300
415	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (29-12-1932)	300
416	LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA (29-12-1932)	301
417	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (29-12-1932)	302
418	LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL (29-12-1932)	303
419	INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (29-12-1932)	303
420	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY—XIII (30-12-1932)	304
421	STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (30-12-1932)	308
422	TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY (30-12-1932)	309
423	LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY (30-12-1932)	311
424	LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (31-12-1932)	311
425	LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY (31-12-1932)	312
426	LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA (31-12-1932)	312
427	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (31-12-1932)	313
428	LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI (31-12-1932)	313
429	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (December 1932)	314
430	LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI (1932)	314
431	DIARY, 1932	315
432	LETTER TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT (1-1-1933)	328
433	LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI (1-1-1933)	329
434	LETTER TO P. SUBBAROYAN (1-1-1933)	330
435	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (1-1-1933)	331
436	LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ (1-1-1933)	331
437	LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE (1-1-1933)	332
438	LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE (1-1-1933)	332
439	LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL (1-1-1933)	333
440	LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI (1-1-1933)	333
441	LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA (1-1-1933)	333
442	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ (1-1-1933)	334
443	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (1-1-1933)	334
444	LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA (1-1-1933)	335
445	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (1-1-1933)	335

446	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (1-1-1933)	335
447	LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI (1-1-1933)	336
448	LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA (1-1-1933)	337
449	LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA (1-1-1933)	337
450	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (1-1-1933)	338
451	LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH (1-1-1933)	338
452	TELEGRAM TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM (2-1-1933)	339
453	LETTER TO MADHUSUDANAN THANGAL (2-1-1933)	339
454	LETTER TO A. KALESWAR RAO (2-1-1933)	340
455	LETTER TO G. S. B. SARASWATI (2-1-1933)	340
456	LETTER TO GOVIND RAGHAV (2-1-1933)	341
457	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (2-1-1933)	341
458	LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA (2-1-1933)	342
459	INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (2-1-1933)	343
460	INTERVIEW ON SUBBAROYAN'S BILL (2-1-1933)	345
461	TELEGRAM TO DAMARAJU LAKSHMAMMA (On or before 3-1-1933)	347
462	STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS (3-1-1933)	347
463	LETTER TO F. MARY BARR (3-1-1933)	350
464	LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO (3-1-1933)	350
465	LETTER TO NAGARDAS K. BHAMBANIA (3-1-1933)	351
466	LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN (3-1-1933)	352
467	LETTER TO M. BALAKRISHNA TIVARI (3-1-1933)	352
468	LETTER TO RAMANANDA SANNYASI (3-1-1933)	353
469	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (3-1-1933)	353
470	LETTER TO DHARMA VIR VEDALANKAR (3-1-1933)	354
471	LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (3-1-1933)	354
472	LETTER TO D. NARAYANA RAJU (3-1-1933)	354
473	LETTER TO M. MANICKAM (3-1-1933)	355
474	LETTER TO G. VENKATARATNAM (3-1-1933)	355
475	LETTER TO S. K. DATTA (3-1-1933)	356
476	LETTER TO M. S. PARKHE (3-1-1933)	356
477	LETTER TO C. R. KRISHNASWAMI (3-1-1933)	357
478	LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (3-1-1933)	357
479	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (3-1-1933)	357
480	APPEAL TO SANATANISTS (4-1-1933)	358
481	LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI (4-1-1933)	361
482	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (4-1-1933)	362
483	TELEGRAM TO SHAMJI MARWADI (5-1-1933)	363
484	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (5-1-1933)	363
485	LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU (5-1-1933)	364

CWMG - LII

486	LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER (5-1-1933)	365
487	LETTER TO PETER J. MASCREEN (5-1-1933)	366
488	LETTER TO BIRESWAR SEN (5-1-1933)	366
489	LETTER TO GANGA RAM (5-1-1933)	367
490	LETTER TO KURUR NILAKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD (5-1-1933)	367
491	LETTER TO BALDEODAS BAJORIA (5-1-1933)	367
492	LETTER TO AN ENGLISH GIRL (5-1-1933)	368
493	LETTER TO ESTHER MENON (5-1-1933)	369
494	LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI (5-1-1933)	370
495	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (5-1-1933)	370
496	LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE (5-1-1933)	371
497	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (5-1-1933)	371
498	LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI (5-1-1933)	372
499	LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA (5-1-1933)	374
500	INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA (5-1-1933)	374
501	TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI (On or before 6-1-1933)	375
502	LETTER TO JOHN MORRIS (6-1-1933)	375
503	LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND (6-1-1933)	376
504	LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS (6-1-1933)	378
505	LETTER TO MRS. HUNTER (6-1-1933)	379
506	STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (7-1-1933)	379
507	LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY (7-1-1933)	381
508	LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS (7-1-1933)	381
509	LETTER TO S. SALIVATI (7-1-1933)	382
510	LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO (7-1-1933)	383
511	LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN (7-1-1933)	384
512	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (7-1-1933)	384
513	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (7-1-1933)	385
514	A LETTER (7-1-1933)	386
515	LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI (7-1-1933)	387
516	LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH (7-1-1933)	388
517	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (7-1-1933)	389
518	LETTER TO DHARMADEV (7-1-1933)	389
519	LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA (7-1-1933)	390
520	LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA (8-1-1933)	390
521	LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA (8-1-1933)	392
522	LETTER TO SHAMLAL (8-1-1933)	393
523	LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA (8-1-1933)	394
524	LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU (8-1-1933)	394
525	LETTER TO N. NARAYAN MURTHI (8-1-1933)	395
526	LETTER TO S. MAHALINGA IYER (8-1-1933)	395

CWMG - III

527	LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR (8-1-1933)	396
528	LETTER TO P. V. SESHU AIYAR (8-1-1933)	396
529	LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (8-1-1933)	397
530	LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR (8-1-1933)	397
531	LETTER TO PROMODE BIHARI MATHUR (8-1-1933)	397
532	LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR (8-1-1933)	398
533	LETTER TO DUDABHAI M. DAFDA (8-1-1933)	398
534	LETTER TO PARMANANDA K. KAPADIA (8-1-1933)	399
535	LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ (8-1-1933)	400
536	LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK (8-1-1933)	401
537	LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA (8-1-1933)	401
538	LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI (8-1-1933)	402
539	LETTER TO TULSI MAHER (8-1-1933)	402
540	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (8-1-1933)	403
541	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (8-1-1933)	405
542	LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI (8-1-1933)	405
543	LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS (8-1-1933)	406
544	LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA (8-1-1933)	406
545	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (8-1-1933)	406
546	LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI (8-1-1933)	407
547	LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM (9-1-1933)	407
548	LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA (9-1-1933)	408
549	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (9-1-1933)	408
550	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (9-1-1933)	409
551	LETTER TO A SANATANI (9-1-1933)	410
552	LETTER TO GIRDHAR SHASTRI (9-1-1933)	410
553	LETTER TO NANASAHEB KHASGIWALE (9-1-1933)	410
554	LETTER TO PRABHAVATI (9-1-1933)	411
555	LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM (9-1-1933)	412
556	LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE (10-1-1933)	412
557	LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN (10-1-1933)	413
558	LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA GUHA (10-1-1933)	414
559	LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE (10-1-1933)	414
560	LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON (10-1-1933)	415
561	LETTER TO S. PONNAMMAL (10-1-1933)	416
562	LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR (10-1-1933)	416
563	LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL (10-1-1933)	417
564	LETTER TO D. N. SHIKHARE (10-1-1933)	418
565	LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY (10-1-1933)	418
566	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (10-1-1933)	418
567	LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA (10-1-1933)	419
568	DIARY, 1933	419

CWMG - VIII

ADDENDA

1 LETTER TO THE SANATANISTS (11-12-1932) 420

2 LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI (19-12-1932) 420

3 LETTER TO FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN (2-1-1933) 420

APPENDICES

I DISCUSSION WITH "THE TIMES OF INDIA" REPRESENTATIVE 422

II DISCUSSION WITH "FREE PRESS" REPRESENTATIVE 423

III LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE 424

IV DISCUSSION WITH POONA SANATANISTS 425

V LETTER FROM DR. B. C. ROY 427

VI LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE TO R. M. MAXWELL 428

VII DISCUSSION WITH MACRAE 429

VIII LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH 430

IX EXTRACT FROM T. CHINNIAH'S LETTER 431

X LETTER FROM RAMTARAN MUKHERJI 432

XI LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI 434

XII DISCUSSION WITH UNTOUCHABLES' DEPUTATION 435

XIII LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA 436

XIV DISCUSSION WITH NATARAJAN AND DEVDHAR 438

XV LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH 440

XVI LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA 441

XVII EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM C. F. ANDREWS 442

XVIII DISCUSSION WITH K. KELAPPAN 443

XIX DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI 444

SOURCES 445

CHRONOLOGY 447

INDEX OF TITLES 451

INDEX 455

CORRIGENDUM 483

ERRATA 483

CWMG - III

CWMG - LII

1. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY[1]–VII

POONA,
November 16, 1932

Though the questions that I shall endeavour to answer in this statement have been more or less covered by the previous statements, as they continue to recur, I thought it would be well to collect as many as possible and to deal with them in one single statement. "Are you not forcing people to do things against their will?" is one such question. At least, such is not my intention.

The contemplated fast[2] is intended to strengthen the weak, to energize the sluggards and to give faith to the sceptics.

It should be clear to anyone who will give a little thought to it that those who are hostile to the reform will not only be unaffected by the fast, but will probably and perhaps rightly, from their own standpoint, welcome it, if only it ends fatally. An angry correspondent does not hesitate to say it in so many words, but says another correspondent, "it is all very well for you to say, you do not intend to do such and such a thing. There are many orthodox people who will follow the multitude for fear of personal injury from your over-zealous followers."

An argument like this can be advanced under almost any conceivable circumstance. I have led many movements in my lifetime where there has been no fast necessary, but the charge I am now answering has been brought against me often enough, in order to turn me away from my purpose.

Whatever the intended consequences of the contemplated fast may be, apart from its being a question of honour, it must be taken up, if the occasion arises, for the additional reason that it is certain to stir to worthy effort tens of thousands of people who have faith in me. Such must be the case in every movement of a religious character.

The second question is:

[1] Issued by Gandhiji, from the Yeravda Central Prison, Poona. The earlier six statements were issued on the 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 14th and 15th November, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI.

[2] In sympathy with Kelappan's fast for the opening of the Guruvayur Temple to Harijans; *vide* "Statement on Untouchability–IX", 26-11-1932. The fast was to commence on January 2, 1933, but was postponed.

Are you not setting one section of the Hindus against another?

Most emphatically not. Some opposition is inevitable in every reform. But up to a point. Opposition and agitation in a society are a sign of healthy growth. I have no fear whatsoever of a permanent cleavage between the sanatanists and the reformers. Far be it from me either to underrate the sanatanist opposition or to disregard their sentiment. I have no doubt whatsoever that some of them feel strongly that sanatan dharma is in danger. Nevertheless it is astonishing how narrow at least in theory is the difference between the sanatanist and the reformer.

Almost every letter that I have received from the sanatanists makes these startling admissions:

> 1. We admit that there is much to be done for the amelioration of the condition of the Harijans; 2. we admit that many caste Hindus are ill-treating the Harijans; 3. we admit that their children should receive education and that they should have better quarters to live in; 4. we admit that they should have proper arrangement for bathing and drawing water for themselves; 5. we admit that they should have full political rights; 6. we admit that they should have ample facilities for worship and 7. we admit that they should have all the civic rights that the others have.

But, say these sanatanists, "we must not be compelled to touch them or associate with them, especially whilst they are in their present condition."

Then I say to them, since you admit the necessity for putting them on the same level with you, why are you agitated that other caste Hindus will go a step further and believe on strength of the same Shastras that you believe in, that is, their duty is not to regard the Harijans as untouchables, but to have them share with themselves all those rights and privileges which you concede to them, but which you would have them to enjoy and exercise in isolation from you? Surely you who want to guard your own liberty of action and rightly resent the very idea of coercion, will not desire that the reformers should be coerced into carrying out schemes of amelioration which you hold to be necessary in exactly the same manner as you would like.

I venture to suggest a better way. Since you are at one with the reformers in conceding the desirability of ameliorating the condition of the Harijans and since you have not hitherto done anything tangible in that direction, subscribe liberally to the funds that the reformers are collecting, and use them as your agents for

CWMG - LII

carrying out the common scheme and respect their interpretation of Hindu religion, as you would have them to respect yours. Hitherto, in practice, you have not resented the reformer's action in associating with the Harijans. You have suffered him to go his own way. You have not boycotted him. There is, then, no meaning in your opposition now simply because the movement has become more active and more universal than before.

One difficulty is still standing in the way. Who is to have the use of public temples and other public institutions that are in existence, and from which Harijans are at present debarred, in some cases legally and in other far more numerous cases, illegally? There is a very simple way out of the difficulty. If only each party will shed anger and mutual disrespect, a referendum can easily be taken for each village or a group of villages and each city or each division of a city, and whichever party has the majority in favour of its view should make use of the public institutions, including the temples. And if the sanatanists carry the majority with them, they should defray their share with the reformers of the cost of providing equal services for the reformers and the untouchables.

I bracket the reformers with the Harijans, for if they are worth their salt and will work up to their convictions, as time progresses, the duty must dawn upon them of denying to themselves the use of a single service which the Harijans cannot enjoy with the caste Hindus on absolutely equal terms.

Following out this train of reasoning the sanatanists will see that in justice they should bear the whole cost of bringing into being parallel services, because as I have understood the correspondence and as I have explained above, the sanatanists agree that the Harijans are entitled to the same services that they have hitherto enjoyed, and of which the Harijans have hitherto been deprived. Let not the sanatanists run away with themselves by picturing a condition of things as existing but which in reality does not exist.

Let them clearly understand that the removal of untouchability in accordance with the Yeravda Pact[1], and with the declaration of the recently formed All-India Anti-Untouchability League includes no more than I have narrated. It does not include interdining and intermarriage. That many Hindus including myself would go much further ought not to disturb the

[1] Between the leaders acting on behalf of the depressed classes and of the rest of the Hindu community, regarding the representation of the depressed classes in legislatures and certain other matters affecting their welfare. For the text of the agreement, *vide* Vol. LI, Appendix–II.

sanatanists. They will not want to stifle private judgment or private action, and if they have deep faith in what they believe, they should not take fright, in anticipation of what is to come. If a particular reform has an inherent vitality and has come in response to the needs of the time no power on earth can stem its irresistible march.

The third question is:

> Are you not retarding political emancipation by forcing on public attention your views on social and religious questions, and springing upon the public a hurricane agitation for their acceptance?

I cannot answer this question at length without trespassing upon the limits which, as a prisoner, I have accepted for conducting the anti-untouchability campaign. But this much I can say that those who know me at all should understand that I draw no hard and fast line of demarcation between political, social, religious and other questions. I have always held that they are inter-dependent and that the solution of one brings nearer the solution of the rest. This does not exhaust the questions which I have collected from the correspondence which is already proving more than I can handle with the very limited assistance which only naturally I can have. I must deal with the rest to the best of my ability in the statement[1] to follow.

I would here like to urge the correspondents to be merciful. Hitherto, I have punctiliously acknowledged almost all the letters that have reached me. But the correspondents will henceforth please be satisfied with whatever answers I can give through the series of statements I am issuing, and they will help themselves and me, if they will be brief and write only when they have something original to say or when they have questions to which they must have answers from me, before they can form their judgment on any issue arising in connection with the movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-11-1932

[1] *Vide* pp. 9-12.

CWMG - III

2. FOREWORD TO "HAMARA KALANK"

November 16, 1932

This venture of Sasta Sahitya Mandal is laudable. As there is such a rigorous movement afoot for the eradication of untouchability, everyone must, as a matter of course, know what is being done in this direction and how. We want, through enlightenment, to do away with this sin. It is, therefore, essential for the Hindu public to realize the implications of untouchability and our duty in this matter.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Hamara Kalank

3. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
November 16, 1932

SHETH JAMNALAL BAJAJ
PRISONER
DISTRICT JAIL
DHULIA

WIRE RECEIVED. KEEP ME INFORMED[1] IF NECESSARY DAILY BY WIRE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 98

4. LETTER TO S. M. MICHAEL[2]

November 16, 1932

I do not claim ability to give satisfaction to anybody. I can only try. Sjt. Kelappan's fast was without notice and therefore began with an initial flaw. That will not apply to the contemplat-

[1] About health; *vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", pp. 18-9.

[2] The addressee had written : "If you could assure me that your fast did not imply undue pressure, I will not undertake one."

CWMG LII

ed fast. If the temple is opened to the Harijans it will not be due in fact to any coercion used against the trustees, but it will be opened because of the irresistible demand of the temple-goers who are the real owners. Take the converse case. If the temple-goers are not converted, can any pressure brought to bear on the trustees ever result in the admission of Harijans to the temple?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 251

5. *LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN*[1]

November 16, 1932

I have both your letters. I am delighted that the doctor has got a suitable job in Delhi. Your second letter is an appeal to reason, and rightly so. But there are two difficulties about appeals to reason in a case like mine. In the first place, though the reasoning may be perfectly sound, it may not be based on the same premises, and therefore may fail to carry conviction. Secondly, as you yourself have justly remarked, a case like mine transcends reason. Nevertheless I have always desired in such cases to compare notes with kindred spirits. For I do believe that with fallible human beings there is no such thing as absolute surety, even about promptings of the inner voice. God requires the purest instruments to speak through, but poor mortals can only make an approach to perfection. And whilst they are confined in their bodies, they can never attain perfection. What I therefore want is with the utmost freedom to discuss with you whatever has been actuating me in the hope that either you will see my viewpoint and find perfect justification for my action, or some argument or a word coming from you may discover to me a flaw that might have escaped me. I confess however I have no doubt in my mind about the ethics of the proposed fast. I am therefore suffering from no mental disturbance and therefore I do not want you to hasten back to Bombay. Do carry out all your private and public programmes in the North and when in due course you come back to Bombay I would like you when you can spare a few hours to run up to Poona to have a brief interchange of views.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 248-9

[1] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

CWMG-II

6. *LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI*

November 16, 1932

If, on the one hand, hundreds of self-seeking men have misused mosques, temples and churches, on the other millions have made good use of them. If you wish to test the truth of this statement, use your wonderful gift of imagination and suppose that a reformer razes to the ground in a single day all the churches, temples and mosques. Then picture to yourself the condition of those millions of simple good souls when they discover that the temples and mosques from which they daily derived consolation and support were no more. I see the truth of this every day. Devotees who visit even the most unholy temples with pure heart certainly feel the presence of God in those temples, so wonderful is the mystery of His Nature, or say His *maya*. But some great *bhakta* was inspired and sang: "*Maya* casts a spell on all, but she is helpless before a God-lover". If, therefore, you realize through your imagination that so long as temples exist they should be open for Harijans too, your own reason will convince you of the necessity of the fast. My fast is not aimed against the sanatanists; it is aimed against the thousands or rather the millions who are bound to me [by the tie of love]. If the fast shocks them out of their slumber, the temples are bound to be thrown open to Harijans.

I have infinite patience as regards the spinning-wheel. Your experience of villages is limited to Kutch. But conditions in the thousands of other villages are far different from those in the villages of Kutch. And even in Kutch no cloth can be cheaper than what is produced by the cultivator with his own labour from cotton growing in his own fields. If there is any such cloth, you may say that it is a shroud rather than cloth which protects the weaver against cold and heat or covers his shame. Suppose somebody offers me, instead of water, a poisonous liquid which looks like water, gives it free and even offers to me the glass which contains it as a gift, and another person offers real water but pours it from his jug into my folded palms and asks four pice for the service, whose offer should I accept? You are impatient, your mind is very much unsteady and your faith is short-lived. That is why you get irritated every now and then. But this is not your true nature. It is a disease in you. Get rid of it. Your true

nature is capable of patience and iron firmness of mind. One need not put faith in anything too readily, but once we have put faith in a thing after the most careful thought, we must cling to it as tenaciously as does a black ant to a jar of jaggery. "Better lose one's life rather than break one's plighted word." I think I have written enough now.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 250-1

7. *LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA*[1]

November 16, 1932

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I hope I did not worry you by writing to you. If a beggar hides his begging bowl, his cause would be lost. Though you are advanced in age, I can put no limit to your capacity. Will you kindly send me the names of other persons whom you think I can approach for help?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Narasinhraoni Rojnishi, p. 548

8. *A LETTER*

November 16, 1932

I got your letter. I felt unhappy to see you unhappy. I can understand your anger. I know that you have suffered beyond limit. Still, I do not repent the advice which I gave to you and to others. Suffering undergone voluntarily for a good cause is not known to have harmed anybody in the world. Having to bear suffering is not an evil. But in your present condition of mind I shall not be able to explain anything to you. May God give you peace of mind and bless you. I will welcome your letters written even in anger. What do you do in Bulsar?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 247

[1] (1859-1937); Gujarati poet and man of letters

CWMG - LII

9. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–VIII

POONA,
November 17, 1932

Here is another question that many correspondents have asked:

> You say you believe in the Shastras. We do not understand what you mean by them, for you seem arbitrarily to reject many things which are supported by the Shastras. Even the *Gita* that you swear by requires one to follow the Shastras.

I must repeat what I have said in a previous statement[1] that for me, nothing that is inconsistent with the main theme of the *Gita* is Shastra, no matter where it is found printed. If I do not shock my orthodox friends, I would like to make my meaning clearer still. Nothing that is inconsistent with the universally accepted first principles of morality has for me the authority of the Shastras. They are designed not to supersede, but to sustain the first principles, and the *Gita* is all-sufficing for me, because it not only conforms to the first principles, but gives you reasons for adherence to them at any cost. But for this Golden Rule that I have suggested, laymen like me would flounder in the midst of a forest of conflicting texts and a pile of nicely printed and equally nicely bound Sanskrit volumes, for which rival pundits claim divine authority.

Thus, there are many *Smritis*, some of which are unknown outside the little areas in which, by a few hundred men they are held in veneration. No one can give their origin or the dates of their composition. I saw one such volume in the South. When I inquired of the learned scholar friends about this volume, they told me that they had no knowledge of it.

There are numerous *Agamas*[2] which when examined, contradict one another and which have no binding effect outside the little areas where they find acceptance.

If all these books were to be held as binding on the Hindus, there is hardly an immoral practice for which it would be difficult to find Shastric sanction, and even in the hoary *Manusmriti* from which if the verses of doubtful authenticity are not expurgated, one would discover several texts contradicting the loftiest morals and

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 341-5.
[2] Scriptures

teachings to be found spread throughout that great book. Therefore the meaning I have given to the word 'Shastras' in the *Bhagavad Gita*, wherein it occurs only in one context, is not any book or set of laws outside the *Gita* itself, but it means right conduct embodied in a living authority.

I know that this is not likely to satisfy the critic, and as a layman I can give no lead to anybody, but I can satisfy the curiosity of my critics by telling them what I mean exactly by the Shastras.

Another question put with equal persistence is this:

> What do you mean by divine guidance or the inner voice, and how would you and for that matter the world, fare, if every one claimed such guidance for himself and each acted in a manner wholly different from his neighbours?

This is a fair question, and we would come to a pretty pass if divinity had made no provision by way of self-protection. Whilst, therefore, all may lay the claim, some alone will be able to justify it. A person falsely claiming to act under divine inspiration or the promptings of the inner voice without having any such, will fare worse than the one falsely claiming to act under the authority of an earthly sovereign. Whereas the latter on being exposed will escape with injury to his body the former may perish body and soul together.

Charitable critics impute no fraud to me, but suggest that I am highly likely to be acting under some hallucination. The result for me, even then, will not be far different from what it would be, if I was laying a false claim. A humble seeker that I claim to be has need to be most cautious and to preserve the balance of mind. He has to reduce himself to zero before God will guide him. Let me not labour this point.

The claim I have made is neither extraordinary, nor exclusive. God will rule the lives of all those who will surrender themselves without reservation to Him. In the language of the *Gita*, God acts through those who have acquired complete detachment, i.e., self-effacement here.

There is no question of hallucination. I have stated a simple scientific truth, thus to be tested by all who have the will and the patience to acquire the necessary qualifications which are again incredibly simple to understand and easy enough to acquire where there is determination.

Lastly, no one need worry about my claim. What I am asking the people to do is capable of being verified by reason. Even when I disappear from the scene, untouchability will have

CWMG-LIII

to be removed. Whether the fast is divinely inspired or not, need not be a matter of concern even to my closest associates. They may, out of affection for me, work with double zeal in the cause. That would [not] be a calamity, even if it was found that the fast was the foolish act of a self-willed friend. Those who have neither affection for, nor faith in, me will remain unmoved by it. Constant harping, therefore, on the contemplated fast or my claim in regard thereto, is calculated to befog the public mind and the attention from the great work before the nation.

I would therefore conclude this statement by drawing the readers' attention to a few pictures that I have picked up from the voluminous correspondence in my possession.

Here is one from Vile Parle, suburb of Bombay, inhabited by well-to-do Hindus among others. The suburb has in round figures, 1,700 villas or houses; the Municipality has an income of Rs. 70,000 of which Rs. 31,000 are spent for conservancy. The scavengers are accommodated in quarters where there are no roads, no arrangement for water-supply and no sanitary convenience. The land itself is low-lying, the huts are hovels constructed from dilapidated tins which were once used for conservancy work. There is no lighting, and nearby is the dumping ground for all the suburban rubbish which gives an eternal stench. Next to it is a structure for housing conservancy; attached to this is a water-pipe for washing dirty tins, and if the overseer is well disposed he would allow the scavengers to help themselves to water from the pipe; on the other side, is a row of carts that receive the buckets collected from the privies of households. It is in these surroundings that the scavengers have to pass their life. These quarters are surrounded by fields which are often under water, breeding mosquitoes, harbouring scorpions, snakes, field-rats. Thirty-one families live in this condition, they are composed of 35 men, 25 women, 34 boys and 15 girls.

Of this population of 109, only 9 boys can at all read and write with difficulty. The rest are utterly illiterate. This is a suburb where if the inhabitants, if they had any thought for these fellow-beings of theirs, could well afford to provide for them decent accommodation in decent quarters with lighting and water and other conveniences which are part of city life. There is work here for both the sanatanists and the reformers. It would be no answer to my complaint that the Vile Parle Municipality has an income of only Rs. 70,000 out of which it spends the princely sum of Rs. 31,000 on conservancy. I know that the inhabitants of Vile Parle are well-to-do enough to tax themselves specially on

behalf of these useful servants of society. But I would regard that as a slow process. It is the primary duty of the Hindu habitants to make decent collections overnight and provide suitable quarters and other conveniences for the scavengers. If they did so, even then it would be a tardy performance of a simple duty done to fellowmen. When they have done this, there would be a point in their moving the Municipality to take up the burden of additional annual expenditure that would undoubtedly have to be incurred in order to enable the scavengers to live in comparative comfort.

An almost identical picture has been drawn by Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, the tireless Secretary of the All-India [Anti-] Untouchability League, of scavengers' quarters he has inspected during his travels undertaken on behalf of the League. He gives a harrowing tale about the condition of such quarters in Danapur and other places about Patna in Bihar. Now I wish that instead of engaging in fruitless controversy about what is not contained in the Shastras about untouchability, everyone of us would apply ourselves to ameliorating the conditions of the so-called untouchables. There is work enough and to spare for all my learned correspondents who almost without exception have assured me that they yield to no one in their desire to better their material and moral conditions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1932

10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 17, 1932

CHI. MIRA,[1]

Not that I cannot use the right hand but it is better to use the left. I have begun this before the morning prayer just making use of the odd minutes before the little family gathers together. You should not be surprised if you find my letters shorter than usual. The Harijan work has become too heavy to allow of anything else being done. The mere reading of the voluminous correspondence takes over two hours. The (here comes Mahadev) (I resume after the prayer) interviews take from two to three hours. Therefore I must reduce the other work. Since the doctors here are firmly of opinion that the elbows have nothing wrong about them except that they require rest from the spinning motion, I have cut off the wheel altogether and just do the *takli* for about

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

half an hour. The *takli* requires the use of other muscles. This compulsory saving of time has come when it was just wanted. (There was another interruption here for the drink and fruit, dressing and eating).

I do not mind your omission of salt. Take it again when the benefit of abstention has been exhausted. I do not know if *juwari* or *bajri* chapati will suit you. Is there no prison-ground whole-wheat meal? Anyway one *juwari* or *bajri* chapati ought not to do you any harm at all. But you will fare all right by taking dried and fresh fruit liberally.

Kisan[1] must attend to her eyes and become strong and well.

For me I have still progress to report. Another increase of 1½ lb. total 103½ lb.! This is due to a dietetic discovery as I imagine. It synchronizes with the untouchability work. But the latter has little to do with the increase. I am taking nearly an ounce of fresh, dried milk. This is called *mavo*[2] in Marathi and Gujarati. You evaporate the water. It should prove heavy. But for me it seems to have come as a godsend. It is too late to pronounce upon its efficacy. That the present increase is due to it there is no doubt.

What you say about Amir Ali's introduction is too true. He is safe when he talks of Islam itself.

Ba is still at the Ashram. There has been the usual crop of sicknesses there. Kusum Gandhi is rather bad, fever won't leave her.

We are all well and send you both a cartload of love.

BAPU

[PS.]

It is now after 5.30 a.m. I must now go to the 'library' and then to the walk till the goats come, i.e., about 6.30.

From the original : C.W. 6250. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9717

[1] Kisan Ghumatkar, Premabehn Kantak's friend

[2] The source has this in Devanagari.

11. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,[1]
November 17, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant in answer to my letter[2] regarding Shrimati Manibehn Patel. As the request made in that letter had reference to a very urgent matter, I had expected an immediate reply to be of value. Fortunately her brother's illness has not yet reached the danger point, but it is serious enough to cause anxiety to those who are deeply interested in the patient[3]. A request on behalf of a near relative as Manibehn Patel that she should be informed of the progress of her brother's illness from day to day, I do not regard as one for a concession. I venture to submit that it is a human right belonging to every person although he or she may be a prisoner. I would therefore like the Government to consider my request from that human standpoint. I have no desire whatsoever to ask for a concession which being such may not be expected to be granted to every other prisoner in similar circumstances. And lest Government may not know, as you do, why I have made the request rather than her father, I may state that it is simply because Manibehn has been an inmate of the Ashram and has been placed by her father under my guidance since 1924. To complete the relevant information that should be put at the disposal of Government I may add that I wrote my letter to you with the consent and approval of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Will you kindly place this letter before the Government if their orders have not been already received ere this reaches you?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 61

[1] Also called Yeravda Mandir. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent letters. Gandhiji was in Yeravda Prison from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 437-8.

[3] Dahyabhai Patel

12. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE[1]

November 17, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I liked your question about cow-protection. Giving up milk altogether is no doubt our ideal; but I do not think that we can act upon it now. Hence, at present, our ideal should be to maintain in the Ashram as many cows as possible, and to provide as much milk as we can. We do not have the necessary stability in the Ashram for that, but when conditions become stable, I am eager to do a good deal of work in that field. God willing, I shall be able to do it. I certainly think it morally wrong to get milk from weak cows. At present we cannot escape that. In India, we get milk from really healthy cows at very few places. The fact is that Hinduism is in a state of utter confusion. Though cow-protection is one of the pillars on which Hinduism stands, nowhere in the world is the condition of cows more wretched than in India. But you need not think too much about this and worry. If you do your present duty, you will have done everything that is possible for you.

That your constipation is not yet cured indicates that your intestines have become very weak. The disease has struck deep roots. Whenever you do not pass stool and get headache, eat only vegetables if fruits are not available. You will not get fever or headache then, will get some nourishment at least and will probably be able to pass stool. I am sure that you can get many varieties of leafy vegetables in the Ashram just now. If, however, you find that the place does not suit you, you may even go and stay in Rajkot for a while after consulting Chhaganlal. The experience will be useful to you and the water of Rajkot may even suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6743. Also C.W. 4486. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] A follower of Vinoba Bhave

13. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

November 17, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

You have sent me a most encouraging reply.[1] But I hope you did not think that I was unaware of your past activities in regard to the removal of untouchability. Earlier I had read your article too. I only wanted to ascertain what your contribution is to be now in this powerful movement. I am immensely reassured now on this count. Please convey my deepest thanks to Shrimant Maharaj and Rani Saheba. I shall at the right time make good use of your beautiful account of the work going on there.[2]

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRI S. D. SATAVLEKAR
SVADHYAYA MANDAL
AUNDH
(DIST. SATARA)

From Hindi : C.W. 4769. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

14. LETTER TO DR. RAGHUVIR SINGH AGRAWAL

November 17, 1932

BHAI RAGHUVIRJI,

I have your letter and the book[3]. I have no time at present being totally immersed in the service of Harijans. But I shall try to follow the treatment you prescribe. Moreover, all three of us here are condemned to spectacles. It is hoped that we all will

[1] In an earlier letter dated November 12, 1932, Gandhiji had asked the addressee about his participation in the eradication of untouchability; *vide* Vol. LI, p. 407.

[2] The account was reproduced with Gandhiji's remarks in *Harijan*, 25-3-1933, under the title, "Aundh State and Untouchability".

[3] *Mind and Vision*

make an experiment. I would not bother you to come over here and there is no difficulty in following your instructions.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

DR. R. S. AGRAWAL
EYE AND EAR SPECIALIST
BULANDSHAHR, U.P.

From Hindi : C.W. 9664. Courtesy: M. S. Agrawal

15. TELEGRAM TO JAGANNATH[1]

[*November 18, 1932*][2]

OUR CONDOLENCES TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THOUGH WE MUST NOT SUPPRESS OUR PERSONAL HAPPINESS OVER THE FORTUNE THAT FAVOURED THE NOBLE WIDOW.

The Hindustan Times, 20-11-1932

16. TELEGRAM TO GOVIND MALAVIYA

November 18, 1932

[GOVIND MALAVIYA][3]
ALLAHABAD

THANK GOD. HOPE FATHER[4] NONE THE WORSE FOR STRAIN.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 373

17. TELEGRAM TO MADHUSUDAN DAS

[*November 18, 1932*][5]

LONG LIVE MADHUSUDANDAS. I HAD GATHERED THE IMPRESSION THAT YOU WERE NO MORE. THIS IS PROOF POSITIVE

[1] Secretary, Servants of the People Society

[2] The telegram was published under the date-line, "Lahore, November 18, 1932", as having been sent by Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai on the death of Mrs. Lajpat Rai. *Vide* also "Diary, 1932", entry under this date.

[3] From "Diary, 1932", entry under November 18, 1932

[4] Madan Mohan Malaviya

[5] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date. *Vide* also the following item.

CWMG III

OF MY STUPIDITY BUT LET IT ALSO BE PROOF THAT GOD STILL HAS SERVICE TO TAKE FROM YOU FOR MANY A LONG YEAR TO COME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1932

18. STATEMENT ON MADHUSUDAN DAS

November 18, 1932

An Ashram inmate living in Orissa has telegraphed to me saying that Babu Madhusudandas to whose good work for the tanners I referred in my fifth statement[1] is not dead. I cannot account for my stupidity in having imagined Madhusudan Babu was no more. On receipt of the telegram I sent the following telegram[2] to Madhusudan Babu:

I tender my humble apology to Madhusudan Babu and his family for my stupid blunder.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-11-1932

19. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 18, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Knowing that Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj was suffering from cough for some time and knowing also that he had ear trouble which was suspected to be tubercular, I had telegraphed to him suggesting that he should send for his special adviser Dr. Modi, the ear and throat specialist of Bombay.[3] He telegraphs as follows:

> Received. General condition same. Cough and pus discharge persistent. Have today wired Inspector General of Prisons requesting to arrange X-ray examination by specialist in Bombay or Poona wherever convenient to Government.

This was received on the 15th instant. Since then I have received his usual letter also in which he gives me more information about his illness and his diet. I know what a serious view Dr. Modi takes of the ear trouble. He wants Jamnalalji to take a liberal diet. Jamnalalji is himself used to fruit. He has lost

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 429.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] The telegram is not available; *vide*, however, Vol. LI, p. 329.

CWMG - LII

nearly 40 lb. in weight since his admission. I venture to think therefore that he should be transferred where he can have better climate and prompt expert medical assistance, that he should have frequent access to his special medical advisers, and that meanwhile there should be no restriction as to the choice of food, all extras being paid for by Jamnalalji if the Government so desire. May I request urgent attention to this matter?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (2), Pt. I, p. 383

20. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

November 18, 1932

It certainly pays to be a Mahatma. I get fruit and flowers from slaves like you when it is their birthday[1] and also when it is mine.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 253

21. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 19, 1932

MANIBEHN
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

DAHYABHAI SUFFERING FEVER LAST SEVEN DAYS. NOW DECLARED TYPHOID. NO COMPLICATIONS. SPECIAL NURSES ATTENDING. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. WILL TRY SEND DAILY REPORT.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 90

[1] Padmaja Naidu's birthday fell on November 18.

CWMG-III

22. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 19, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You have kindly showed me a memorandum from Government in connection with my interview[1] with the correspondent of *The Hindu* which refers to Lord Sankey's letter. In the light of that memorandum I have read and reread the Government of India's decision on my letters requesting facilities in regard to visitors and correspondence on removal of untouchability. I can see absolutely no inconsistency between the undertaking given by me and the reference to Lord Sankey's letter in the interview. It would be found on a perusal of the interview that rather than in any shape or form depart from my undertaking I have expressed my inability, because of the undertaking, to deal with the letter except through the Government.

I am however grateful to Government for having drawn my attention to what they consider is inconsistency between my undertaking and the reference to Lord Sankey's letter in the interview in question. I would add that I am carrying out the undertaking in most difficult circumstances. Questions crop up in the course of interviews which have a vital bearing upon untouchability work, but which strictly speaking would be outside untouchability. I rigorously refrain from answering them even at the risk of being misunderstood and the cause [of] suffering. As it is, generally either you or the Jailor has been present at the interviews. You or he will perhaps bear me out when I state that I have scrupulously refused to give my opinion on any matter outside untouchability and have even refused to receive visitors, whether Indian or European, when I have known that they could not have anything important to say on untouchability or when they have desired a discussion on the political aspect of untouchability. I feel that in doing the last thing I have gone beyond the letter of the Government of India's decision and my undertaking, but I know that the spirit of them would exclude discussion even on the political aspect of untouchability. I have

[1] On November 12, 1932; *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 408-11.

here in mind the correspondence I am carrying on with Mr. Jenkins.

Nevertheless if this reply does not satisfy the Government I suggest their sending an official to discuss with me exactly what the Government would have me to do in matters such as the one which is the subject-matter of this correspondence. And if consistently with my work I can carry out their wishes I would do so with great pleasure. My one desire in the midst of the extraordinary facilities given to me in extraordinary circumstances is, if it is at all possible, to earn at the end of the chapter a certificate from Government that the undertaking given by me had been carried out in an honourable manner.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. II, p. 35

23. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 19, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

We get daily reports about your health. Such illness comes to us as a test. Bhai Karamchand says that you are bearing it patiently. That is just what one expects of you. Don't worry about Manibehn.

God will surely protect you.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
RAM NIVAS, PAREKH STREET
BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 149

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to Manibehn Patel", p. 19.

CWMG-LIII

24. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

November 19, 1932

You have always been diffident about yourself. You were no less diffident when you got an offer to go to Banaras. But see, how many years have you spent there? And who knows for how many more years still you may remain there? Your diffidence is not likely to have any effect on me. Rajaji has advanced a very sound argument against Malaviyaji's going to the South. So long as he has not opened the Kashi Vishwanath Temple (for Harijans) the pundits of the South will not listen to him. They will ask him to open that temple before going to the South. We should not put him in that awkward position. Moreover, Rajaji has also argued that, in view of Malaviyaji's indifferent health, we should not ask him to undertake such a long journey. If, therefore, Malaviyaji agrees, you should immediately start as his representative. Don't mind if the people do not listen to you. But I don't think that is likely to happen. So much about your tour of the South.

Now, about the correct interpretation of the Shastras. I send with this some of the literature on the subject given to me. Go through it carefully and draft a well-reasoned reply as soon as you can and obtain on it signatures of all the pundits whom you can persuade to join with you. The reply should be in Sanskrit, Hindi and English. It should be addressed to four types of readers: to the honest sanatanists, to impartial students who wish to know the truth, to persons who are working for the removal of untouchability and to whom your statement can be a great help in meeting the arguments of the sanatanists and, last, to non-Hindus who should know that the true sanatana dharma does not consider anybody as untouchable from birth and that, if in certain circumstances, a person is considered untouchable, he or she soon becomes touchable again. You should also point out that the oppression to which the untouchables are subjected today has no sanction in the Shastras at all. I quote here a sentence from a man whom you, I and many other thousands respect:

> In this part of the country these classes have come to be excluded from temples from the very time the people started worshipping in temples. Scholars will find it difficult to ascertain the time when the untouchables

were permitted to enter temples. I am afraid, though I don't take pride in the fact that our religion as it is practised today enjoins exclusion of the untouchables. The people who cling to the practice as a religious principle have the law, the Shastras and tradition on their side. They are the sanatanists.

You have to reply to this argument. Law, i.e., the law of the Government, may be on their side, custom, i.e., the custom of the degenerate present, may also be on their side. But the Shastras at any rate are not. If you can honestly show that the law of the Hindu period was not on the side of the sanatanists and also that true custom, i.e., the practice of the enlightened, was never on their side during the great prosperous days of Hinduism, you should do that convincingly. Your statement should not be like a pronouncement of the Delphic oracle. Send me as early as you can a statement enunciating such a *Dhruva*[1]-principle.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 255-6

25. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 19, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I am enclosing a letter from Ramsinhasan Mahto. Read it or get it read out and do what is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 7905. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

26. DISCUSSION WITH G. K. DEVDHAR

November 19, 1932

Mr. Devdhar[2] explained to Mahatmaji the scheme devised by the Board for starting work throughout Maharashtra, in connection with the uplift of the untouchables in general and the removal of untouchability in particular.

[1] Literally, that which is fixed or immutable; here the true essence of Hinduism.

[2] President, Servants of India Society and the Maharashtra Divisional Board of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League

CWMG-LIII

There was then a long discussion between him and Mahatmaji, as regards the latter's proposed fast in connection with the Guruvayur temple-entry. Mr. Devdhar pointed out that difficulties they had to face in removing untouchability and throwing temples open to the untouchables in the province of Malabar were much greater than those in other provinces. The Hindus of Malabar were, in the opinion of Mr. Devdhar, very stern in their religious beliefs and prejudices and they strongly resented temple-entry by the untouchables.

Mahatma Gandhi expressed his desire that Mr. Devdhar, in view of the experiences he had in Malabar, should undertake propaganda work in that province to educate public opinion in regard to the removal of untouchability.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-11-1932

27. *LETTER TO THORNBERG*[1]

November 20, 1932

I thank you for your letter. I was sorry not to be able to see you. The way America can help in this internal movement of reform is first by understanding and studying the movement and pronouncing intelligent opinion upon it. Even orthodoxy is today sensitive to reasoned opinion, even though it may come from outside; secondly, by placing at the disposal of the reformers the free aid of experts with reference to the economic question. For instance, there is the tremendous problem of carrion-eaters. They will not give up carrion-eating so long as they continue to take charge of dead cattle, which they skin and whose flesh they eat. I have myself tried to find clean and expeditious method of skinning carcasses and making the best use of all the contents of these carcasses. Not wanting to, and not being able to pay for expert assistance, I have been obliged to grope in the dark. America could easily send us free expert assistance in matters such as I have mentioned, without any ulterior proselytizing motives, if only religious-minded men of America could be persuaded to believe that Hinduism, Islam and other great religions are just as true as Christianity and that they do not therefore need destruction but reformation where necessary. The conviction can only come if sober-minded Americans will study the present very big movement.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 259-60

[1] The addressee, an American, had sought Gandhiji's interview twice in vain. He then sent autograph books for his signature and also asked for a message for America.

28. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI[1]

November 20, 1932

FARZAND[2] AMINA,

I liked your letter. I am glad that you wrote frankly. The only way to improve your health is the one suggested by me. If you have not received education, the fault is partly yours. Think about it. The rest of the fault is mine. It is that I did not pay sufficient attention to education of the children in the Ashram. If, however, you really want to study, I am ready to get you admitted to a school. If you are ready to go to Bhavnagar, I will get you admitted to the girls' school there. There is a good school at Amreli also. At both places, they will pay special attention to you. If you are unhappy only because of want of education, I can help you to remove the cause. Let me know your wish. Talk frankly to Narandas too. May God give you peace of mind.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6663. Also C.W. 4308. Courtesy: Hamid Qureshi

29. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 20, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should not expect any letter from me these days. You will then be satisfied with a few lines. You, however, should continue to write to me.

Do not get tired of the food which is similar to that in jail.

BAPU

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

[1] Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir Bawazeer's daughter, married to Gulam Rasool Qureshi

[2] Child

30. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

November 20, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Four marks for your handwriting.

The *atman* is that which survives when the body has perished.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1730

31. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 20, 1932

CHI. JAMNA[1],

Did I not sign somewhere in a corner the letter[2] in which I wrote about the primus stove? If I forgot to sign it and if you want my signature on it, return the last page.

If you need a stove very much, you may use in place of the primus stove the kerosene stove which is available [in the market]. Mahadev tells me that these stoves are very good, and are also cheap at present. Why not try this stove? It is also very easy to light.

I hope Purushottam[3] and Kanu[4] are well.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 863. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] Wife of Narandas Gandhi

[2] This is not available; *vide*, however, Vol. LI, "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", p. 418 and also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", pp. 217-8.

[3] & [4] Addressee's sons

CWMG - LII

32. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 20, 1932

CHI. KESHU[1],

Other people also get unwanted thoughts as you do. You should go on repeating Ramanama. The thoughts will cease then. A teacher should be a man of pure character and should know his subject well. A student should be humble and hard-working.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3284

33. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 20, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I hope you received my wire[2] regarding Dahyabhai's illness. I have obtained permission[3] to send you a report every day as also for you to write anything you like [to or about Dahyabhai]. You can, therefore, write to me daily from there. I will forward your letters to Dahyabhai. I also will write to you every day. I have secured Dr. Madan's letter which I enclose herewith. There is also a letter today from Bhai Karamchand. So the reports up to yesterday are reassuring. Today is the fourteenth day of the fever. The temperature remains between 100° and 103°. Once it fell even to 99.5°. The lungs are clear. He can take fruit juices, barley-water and sometimes thin butter-milk diet. Special nurses have been engaged. He is thus being looked after with the utmost care and so there is no cause for anxiety.

We are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 90-1

[1] Son of Maganlal Gandhi
[2] *Vide* p. 19.
[3] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", p. 14.

34. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 20, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I am returning your letter[1] after correcting the mistakes in it. Go through them carefully. You should not feel unhappy because you make mistakes. One can learn most of the things by oneself. If you practise writing carefully every day, your handwriting will improve. You can learn the tables by heart, if you go on repeating them every day. For spellings, you should consult the *Jodani-kosh*. You can improve arithmetic by doing sums daily.

Thus in most of the things you do not need anybody's help. Hard work also is a kind of education.

BAPU

[PS.]

See the corrections which I have made in your handwriting and also the model[2] at the bottom.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 2768. Courtesy : Ramnarayan N. Pathak

35. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 20, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

My letters will remain short for some time yet. I don't mind yours being long. I do want you to describe all the things as you do. I don't have to give you any information. I may at the most joke with you or show my love for you. Sometimes I may admonish you and, if I know how to, may give you wise advice. But you, on your part, should continue to tell me how things go with you and tell me whether you are happy or otherwise.

I don't wish to worry you about Ramabehn[3]. But the very manner of your explaining the position makes it difficult for me

[1] Dated November 14, 1932

[2] This read: "I have your kind letter. I am exceedingly happy to read it."

[3] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

to judge that you have love in your heart. My only consolation is that the bitterness in your words does not affect your actions. If I had sufficient time, I would give you a long lecture on this. But the Harijan friends have saved you, since they take up all my time.

Amina seems to be very much troubled in her mind. Try to discover her malady if you can, and, if possible, comfort her.[1]

What you say about Mangala is correct.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10311. Also C.W. 6750. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

36. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ

November [*20*][2], *1932*

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. How nice it is that the boy[3] is in the Ashram. The chief thing which you should do to improve your health is to take walks, and that in a place where there is no dust in the air.

CHI. BENARSI,

I got Father's[4] letter this time. He has written in it about his business. There was one word in it which I could not read. It seems to be something like 'tea' or 'coffee'. Does he carry on business in either? If not, in what else?

I hope your business is prospering.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR
BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9145

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Amina G. Qureshi", p. 25.
[2] From the postmark
[3] Addressee's son
[4] Rameshwarlal Bazaj

CWMG - III

37. LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVDE

November 20, 1932

BHAI SITARAMJI,

I got your letter. If you and the other friends who wish to see me come on Thursday, the 24th instant, at 3 p.m., I shall be glad to see you.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 799

38. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

November 20, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Prakriti and *purusha* are one and the same thing because nothing exists but God. The apparent plurality is only due to the qualities attributed. Vegetation certainly contains life but that is vegetable life. The difference is clear. Our prayer is addressed to the form as well as to the formless. Image-worship is necessary for those who desire it. Others cannot lay down a rule. One who is hungry for bread needs that alone. There can be no universal common prayer for all, the very fact that none exists, clearly proves the point.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 771

CWMG - LII

39. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 20, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I reply to your letters immediately I get them. I simply fail to understand why my letters do not reach you. My health is fairly good. I take milk, vegetable, fruit and *roti*. My weight has risen to 103½ lb. Blessings to you all. There is no question of disbanding the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 3425

40. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 20, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must not expect long letters from me these days. Give up worrying for Kudsia[1]. Whatever is destined for her will happen. Don't talk of your own death. Why do you get so disheartened? God will exact abundant service from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 264

41. LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR

November 21, 1932

MY DEAR KASHINATH,

I must acknowledge your letter, if only because you are the son of a dear friend. If by '*garbhagriha*' is meant the '*sanctum sanctorum*', I have clearly stated that it should be reserved for the ritualists. I have always sympathized with the Zamorin's position. Where the law is against the reformer, he has to wait till the law

[1] Addressee's niece

is altered. I hope to develop these things as time progresses. Meanwhile, I expect you to help forward the reform in every way you can.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KASHINATH N. KELKAR
ADVOCATE, YADUGOPAL PETH, SATARA CITY

C. W. 977. Courtesy : G. N. Kanitkar

42. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I feel like both smiling and crying. Look upon Santok as younger mother and Ba as elder mother. When you made a request for the spinning-wheel, I thought it was for the younger mother, and so, when the elder mother requested to have it I felt unhappy because I thought then that she wanted to snatch it from the younger mother. Now I can see from your letter that I have done great injustice to the former. God knows how often I have sinned in this manner in my behaviour towards her. She will be unhappy even if I beg her forgiveness. Hence I have to atone for my sin silently. You may talk about this to the elder mother jokingly if you can. But it may be beyond your capacity. I will certainly tell her about it when I meet her.

BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9468. Courtesy : Radhabehn Choudhri

43. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got the postcard which you wrote on the train. I had also got your letter about Pragji[1]. You have not mentioned that Pragji had kept £ 450 for himself from the money which he himself had collected. Read his letter again. In another letter to me he says that you must return to Phœnix by the end of

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa

CWMG-LII

December. Whatever may happen to me on 2nd January, you ought to keep your promise. You should not break your promise on my account. It should not be a matter of sorrow if my body perishes in the cause of dharma. And you cannot delay my death even by a minute by remaining here. Your remaining may make both you and me personally happy, but don't we have often to forgo such happiness? My blessings to all there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4801

44. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

November 21, 1932

This time your letter was delayed a good deal. Why should my letters also not be censored? After all, a prisoner is a prisoner.

It was certainly good that you finished the commentary on the *Gitarahasya*[1] which you were writing. . . . As for my going through it, I don't know when that will be possible. I am so busy with Harijan work these days that I don't think it probable that I shall be able to attend to any other work. I cannot satisfy at present the desire of friends like you for long letters.

If you have read all my articles[2] about Guruvayur, you should have no doubt in the matter. In short, the position is this: Kelappan was nearing death. He gave up the fast on my advice. It was but right that he should do so. But I who persuaded him to give it up have now a moral duty towards him. If, therefore, Kelappan is obliged to undertake a fast for a moral aim, I would have to join him. It is not yet certain whether Kelappan would have to fast.[3]

Since you have said nothing in your letter about your health, I assume that it is good.

I have now got back the weight as it was before I commenced the fast. All three of us are in good health. I did not get the envelope made by you. Generally the envelopes are opened and the letters taken out before they are given to the prisoners.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 117-8

[1] By B. G. Tilak

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability", pp. 1-4 and 9-12; also Vol. LI.

[3] *Vide* also Appendix I.

45. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

The pressure of work on me is increasing day by day. The condition of the two elbows also requires rest. You should, therefore, tell everybody that at present they should not expect long letters from me. Probably I may have to content myself with only a letter to you and one to Kusum[1] who is ill. We should regard this as the smallest sacrifice that we can make for our Harijan friends. We shall have to make much bigger sacrifices in future. Even if the whole Ashram gave up its other activities and plunged in this movement of self-purification, I would not regard that sacrifice as too big. But there can be no renunciation without complete freedom from desire. And there can be no freedom from desire without self-purification. Anybody, therefore, who wishes to plunge into this *yajna* of self-purification should purify himself. The line "Hari's way is for the brave" is perfectly applicable in the present situation.

But some of the inmates seem to tremble even at the suggestion for simplicity in food which I have made. Those who tremble and cannot overcome their misgivings are at any rate truthful, and deserve compliments for that. How long can self-restraint practised through false shame endure? Those who remember the story of the pilgrim[2] should reflect over how the other characters who, blindly following his example, got tired in two or three days and returned.

I do not get much time at present. When I get some, I wish to suggest a good many more changes. If we eat more than we need or eat things which we do not need for nourishment, we are guilty of theft according to our principle, besides harming our health. The experiment which I suggest in this letter is not quackery, it is based on true science. Really speaking, we should eat what the poor and the prisoners do not get only when those things become absolutely necessary in our case. Hence I feel that we must from time to time advance towards greater and greater

[1] Kusum Gandhi, daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

[2] In John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*

simplicity. We should learn the secret of eating only a few things at one meal. Doctors have conducted experiments and proved that this is necessary for health. We may eat several things in the course of the day, but we should not mix them all at the same meal. We cannot eat at the same meal *rotli*, dal, vegetables, milk, rice, etc. But we can eat at one meal *rotli* and milk, a vegetable and milk, rice and dal, rice and milk and *rotli* and dal. We should never take dal and milk together. Similarly, we should not eat wheat and *bajri* at the same meal. And also it is better not to eat rice and vegetables together. I make this suggestion because I have read about it and put it into practice. If we follow this practice the burden on the stomach will be lightened and the body also will feel light. Those who do not adopt such experiments with full knowledge [of their likely benefits] will certainly be upset by them. If the mind does not co-operate, such an experiment may possibly fail. We shall succeed in it if we strengthen our mind by thinking that through such a practice we shall increase our capacity for renunciation, show proper regard for the poor, save money and benefit our health.

I am realizing in actual experience that milk, bread, vegetables and fruit make a completely balanced diet. My weight has gone up to 103½ pounds. I eat fresh fruits with nothing else. With milk, I eat dates or a vegetable. I mix half the quantity of milk with dates and drink the remaining half. In this manner, I drink from two and a half to two and three-quarter pounds of milk. In the morning, I eat *mosambis* or oranges without fail. At seven, I have milk and dates; at twelve, two oranges or *mosambis*,[1] and at four a vegetable, milk and one loaf of bread. This is my daily food. I have been thinking of omitting milk or bread. I take twice a day sour lemon juice with water and soda bicarb. Perhaps this may not be necessary. I have yet to find that out. Mirabehn is at present living on almost the same diet as I am doing, and she informs me that it has benefited her. It is too early yet to attach importance to her experience. Since her heart is behind her experiment, naturally she feels that it is benefiting her. If there is no benefit in reality, we shall know by and by. It is also necessary not to eat *jowar* porridge in excessive quantity. It would be advisable to observe moderation in regard to the quantity of every item. In case of stomach-ache, or headache or, for those who suffer from constipation, indigestion, one may drop one or two meals, or even fast for the whole day. Nobody should lose courage all too

[1] What follows is also available in M.M.U./I.

soon. The best way of running the joint kitchen without much trouble is that anybody who does not like a particular item should not eat it, but without asking for something else in its place. Every meal provides sufficient nourishment. Generally, milk and vegetables will suit everybody. They should be enough. It is a superstitious belief that one will become weak if one does not eat solid food for the whole day. Of course all this does not apply to persons who are ill. They should always get food which the state of their health demands. But I am convinced that if we plan our diet on a scientific basis and eat moderately, nobody would fall ill. This should be enough for today on the subject of food. Show this letter to all. Everybody may reject what does not appeal to him or her.

Prabhashankar[1] must have returned there. I hope he is quite happy. Tell him that I had got his letter. This time I content myself with this letter in reply to him. I think all the suggestions will be acceptable to him. Is Ratilal[2] calm? Do you know that Ramji has many complaints to make? Amina is unhappy. Ask her what the cause is.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 497-9. Also C.W. 8265. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

46. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

November 21, 1932

CHI. PARASHURAM,

I am unable now to write a long letter. Don't mind if some of the classes[3] have had to be closed. Carry on those which are running. You will be able to keep up the atmosphere even by talking with everybody in Hindi.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7512. Also C.W. 4989. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

[1] Father-in-law of Ratilal Mehta
[2] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son
[3] Hindi classes

47. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

November 21, 1932

In an interview Gandhiji thoroughly exposed the baselessness of certain assertions made by an Anglo-Indian paper, which had come out with the story that Mahatmaji was 'going spiritual' as Aurobindo Ghosh had done, and that his interest in active politics was waning.

Gandhiji says that social reform is very important for Hinduism just now. This, however, did not and could not divert him from his political objective.

To a straight question whether he intended devoting all his time to anti-untouchability work, Mahatmaji said:

> I cannot say that such is my present intention, nor is it ever likely to be. It will be perfectly true to say that my life is dedicated to this absolutely necessary reform in Hinduism, but my life is also dedicated to many other things. I don't regard my life as divisible into so many water-tight compartments. It is one organic whole, and it will be found that all my activities spring from the same source, namely, my passion for vindication of truth and non-violence in every walk of life, be it ever so great or so small.[1]

This in a nutshell supplies all the 'terms' on which the Mahatma is prepared to accept release. Prospects of his release solely depend on the interpretation which officialdom will put on the above statement.

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1932, and *The Hindu*, 23-11-1932

48. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO LORD SANKEY

[On or before *November 22, 1932*][2]

Replying to Lord Sankey's invitation, it is understood Mahatma Gandhi has assured Lord Sankey that he was by instinct a co-operator and actually dying for co-operation. But the Ottawa[3] and the Ordinance Bills showed no

[1] This paragraph appeared in *The Hindu* as an interview to the Poona correspondent of *The Evening News of India*. For Mahadev Desai's account of the Interview, *vide* Appendix I.

[2] The report was published under the date-line: "Bombay, November 22".

[3] Ottawa Tariff Bill designed to implement the Ottawa Conference agreement to impose a general tariff of ten per cent on all Empire products

such desire for securing co-operation. Finally, the Mahatma is reported to have assured Lord Sankey that he would find "Gandhi in his pocket" if a genuine gesture of co-operation is forthcoming from the Government side.

The Hindustan Times, 23-11-1932

49. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 22, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

In continuation of my letter[1] regarding Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, I have further information from his wife and children which makes me extremely anxious. They have seen Dr. Modi of Sir J. J. Hospital, the specialist, who advised Jamnalalji before his incarceration. Dr. Modi is not satisfied with his weight and general condition. Seeing that he has not recently seen the patient, naturally his remarks are based upon the reports received by him from laymen. Nevertheless when I add Dr. Modi's remarks to the patient's own state of mind as revealed in his telegram I become nervous.

Perhaps it would not be considered impertinent in this connection if I mention the fact that Jamnalalji looks up to me as to a parent. His children are under my care and discipline. He has himself lived in the Ashram off and on for several months at a time. Naturally therefore even as a prisoner I try to give the members of his family what comfort and guidance I can, within the limitations put upon me, and it will be a great relief to me and his family if Jamnalalji could be transferred to this prison and is allowed facilities for such food and special medical advice as his health may require. I would lay stress upon the almost universal medical opinion that Jamnalalji suffers from a disease which may any day assume an acute and even fatal form and that such symptoms arise without sufficient previous warning. I therefore request an early decision by the Government.

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (2), Pt. I, p. 385

[1] *Vide* pp. 18-9.

50. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 22, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Devdas tells me that you are quite cheerful and says that you would be happy if you heard from us every day. We have deliberately refrained from writing every day although we daily send our blessings [mentally] and think of you. But now you will also get a letter every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4 : Manibehn Patelne, p. 150

51. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 22, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

That you are still suffering from constipation indicates that your intestines have become very weak and that your stomach also is not secreting the necessary juices. I would certainly like it if you went to Vijapur. If, however, your constipation is not cured even after going there, then you should eat only vegetables and fruit, and not even *rotlis* or *rotlas*. You may start taking milk after you begin to pass regular stools and, if that continues, you can start eating wheat, *bajri* and *jowar*. If you do this, your constipation is bound to be cured. You should, therefore, go to Vijapur and also carry out the foregoing suggestions. If there is no improvement even after this, we will think whether you should fast again. But I am confident that the complaint will disappear. Stop writing about the *takli* for the present. If possible, I will ask you to come and see me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6744. Also C.W. 4487. Courtesy : Bhau Panse

52. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

November 22, 1932

CHI. JANAKIBEHN[1],

I had wanted to reply to your letter and tease you a good bit, but I get no time at all these days. I forgot to tell you about Kamalnayan[2], and I write about it here now. He is very eager to learn English. He wants to be kept in an atmosphere of study. I am, therefore, of the opinion that you should send him to Colombo. He will get there all opportunity to satisfy to the full, his desire to learn English. He will be away from you, and yet not too far away. We need not believe that children remain good or acquire a good character only if they are kept at home. It may be assumed that whatever beneficial influence the Ashram was likely to have on him, it has already had. If he lives in Nuwara Eliya in Ceylon, he will have the benefits of excellent climate and water. I believe the place also has good facilities for education. You will have no cause for worry. If you wish to write to me about the subject and discuss it further, you may do so.

Do not worry about Jamnalal at all. Report to me whatever news you get. I am in correspondence with him about the matter. I am not writing separately to Madanmohan[3].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2904

53. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*November 22, 1932*][4]

CHI. MANI,

I sent a wire[5] to you and also wrote a letter[6]. I hope you got both. Write to me every day, I will forward the letter to

[1] Wife of Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] Addressee's son

[3] Madanmohan Chaturvedi, Jamnalalji's secretary

[4] The source is doubtful about the date. Its correctness is corroborated by "Diary, 1932".

[5] & [6] *Vide* pp. 19 and 27.

Dahyabhai. Today also the report about his condition is satisfactory. Devdas has been to see him. He says no one who looks at Dahyabhai will believe that he is having typhoid, such is his courage and physical stamina.

Give my blessings to all the women prisoners.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, CENTRAL PRISON, BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 91

54. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

November 22, 1932

CHI. MADALASA[1],

I must say that your handwriting is improving very much. Your plan of studies is also very good. See that you do not work beyond your strength. If you neglect your health for the sake of study, both will suffer. Since you know that anger is bad, you are bound to become free from it in the course of time. And the same about pride. It is a sign of weakness that you start crying at every little thing. If you start playing games, your crying will stop. Begin reciting the *Gita* loudly whenever you feel that you are about to begin crying; you will then immediately forget about crying. Try this method.

Why do you say that no one lives in a temple the whole day and night? The priest certainly does so.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 471

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

55. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

[*November 22, 1932*][1]

CHI. MATHURADAS[2],

You can only see Mahadev's handwriting, but he may not write for himself. That would be against the law.

I understood all that you had said.

Formerly, Mahadev used to card daily. He stopped only after Chhakkaddas[3] started sending slivers regularly. Just now we have a large stock of them.

Chhakkaddas's slivers have deteriorated in quality recently. They contain dust particles and also other impurities. I am not complaining, however. After considering everything I have come to one conclusion. Instead of wasting time in testing the strength of the yarn, I should give away the yarn for weaving as soon as I have spun enough. It would be best if all the yarn is woven by the same weaver. I should watch the quality of the yarn as may be necessary in the light of the results of its testing by him. Another practical course is to wind the yarn very tightly round the spindle, no matter even if it snaps occasionally, and to watch the yarn as it is being spun to know whether it is even. Don't worry about your health, but go on employing simple remedies. I am sure you hear in due course about my latest discoveries regarding food.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3758

56. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

November 23, 1932

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have your letter. I wish you would write daily and give me a full report of progress from day to day. Of course you will

[1] Illegible in the source but corroborated by "Diary, 1932"
[2] A khadi worker of the Ashram
[3] An expert sliver-maker

cheerfully resume your fast if it becomes necessary. But we must strain every nerve to prevent its resumption.

Do not for one moment imagine that I promised to fast with you because of anything you had said in your telegrams. I know that you would be better pleased if I did not join you. But with me it was a point of honour that I should join you if the fast which was suspended upon my advice had to be resumed. After all you should have no difficulty in believing me when I tell you that at least during the days of the fast all my acts were prompted by the inner voice. All the movements of a life of perfect surrender to God are so directed, and it is my perpetual endeavour to make my life one of perfect surrender. Therefore I would like you not to expend your energy in dissuading me from the fast if it becomes necessary, but devote every ounce of your energy to organizing public opinion so that the temple is opened to the Harijans before the due date. I have read your letter to the Zamorin. I think that it is quite all right. It would have been better if you had omitted all reference to the *Vaidiks* and *Tantriks*. Your position with regard to them was already known.

I had long conversations with Sadashiv Rao. He told me all about you. I have given him my views fully but in order to make assurance doubly sure I reduce them to writing.

Our claim is that the proposed fast can never savour of coercion because it is based on the assumption that the vast majority of the temple-going *savarnas* are in favour of temple-entry. If this cannot be proved up to the hilt there is no case for fasting by us. Fasting with the knowledge that *savarnas* are opposed to temple-entry by Harijans would undoubtedly amount to coercion. If we make that painful discovery, it would not mean that we cease to agitate for temple-entry by *avarnas*, but the movement will then have to take a different turn. I can even conceive the possibility of a fast in such an event, but that could only be in an unmistakably different setting. In order to demonstrate to all concerned the fact that we have the majority of temple-goers on our side, there should be a methodical taking of a referendum of temple-goers, say within a ten-mile radius. And in order to have the thing absolutely above the board, signatures should be taken at public meetings in the presence of witnesses known to the signatories with their full names, addresses and occupations, together with age and sex. It is being suggested that whilst many people have been in favour of Harijans entering temples, they may be afraid owing to pressure from their landlords or otherwise to say so openly. I should say that even in that case we must be declared to have lost. What-

ever the cause of abstention may be, if we do not get the majority of votes we must be declared to have lost the battle so far as the proposed fast is concerned.

Needless to say that there should be no coercion of any kind on our part during the taking of the referendum. On the contrary every endeavour should be made to carry on the referendum with the co-operation and goodwill of the opponents. The points of difference between the so-called orthodox party and the reformers should be reduced to a minimum. The orthodox party can have nothing to say against the reformers so long as they do not resort to any coercion. If they are assured that there will be no attempt whatsoever made either on the part of the reformers or Harijans to force entry, there would be no opposition by the orthodox, and even if there is, it is bound to fall flat. Real non-violence can never beget violence. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the point that the removal of untouchability, apart from the political side of it, which is settled, is a wholly religious matter.

Question was put to me whether sympathizers of temple-entry may start fasting a few days before the second of January, in order, I suppose, to force the issue. This must not be done on any account whatsoever. Nor, if the fast begins, can anyone join us in the fasting out of sympathy.

Fasting by you, if it comes, must not take place on the public road. It must be in a house or a hut. There can be no public exhibition of you, whilst you are under fast.

Urmila Devi, the widowed sister of the late Deshabandhu Das, will be leaving here on the 27th by the Madras Express. She will be accompanied by her son. She is being sent there in response to Gopala Menon's suggestion that a sister from the North may be sent. She has a weak heart, she must not therefore be rushed too much. She leads an austere life of a Hindu widow. She is an accomplished English scholar and has been doing public work for years in Bengal. I could not think of a fitter woman for work to be sent from the North. Urmila Devi can address men as well as women. She must be taken to the homes of the orthodox and she must be taken to Harijan quarters. I do not know where it is proposed to house [her]. [If] no other arrangement has already been made, I suggest the Gujarati house where I was taken during the last tour. She should be provided with a mosquito curtain if [there] are mosquitoes at all. She should be provided with a commode wherever possible. She is a pure vegetarian.

You must keep yourself in perfect order. There should be no loss of confidence and no work under a nervous strain. We can but work with zeal and honesty. The result lies in God's hands. Purest instruments alone should lead the movement. Give me a list of all the active workers. I suggest that Malaviyaji be not worried to go to Kerala. He is too weak and he has his hands otherwise absolutely full. You should even telegraph to him saying that if he sends his blessings and messengers it would be deeply appreciated, but Kerala would spare him the trouble of undertaking the long journey whilst he is occupied in national work of the highest importance.

From a microfilm : S.N. 20004

57. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 23, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letters to Kusum and Bhau[1] and then pass them on to them. Kusum's illness requires care. There is no cause at all for fear. She holds in her own hands the key to recovery. If she lives all the time in open air and eats only what, and as much as, she can digest, she will certainly get all right. The only cure for loose motions is a fast. During the fast she should drink as much water as she can. A little soda bicarb should be mixed in every glass of water she drinks. It helps very much in stopping loose motions. The proportion of one grain of soda for every ounce of water will be all right. If she can digest fruit juices, a fast is not necessary.

I have discussed about eggs before. Compared with fish-liver oil, pure eggs are innocent. Pure eggs are those from which no chickens come out, however long they are kept, and which are laid by the hen without a cock having been brought to her. Such eggs are not boiled but opened as they are and the liquid consumed. They help in stopping loose motions and are more nourishing than milk. If Kusum is willing, she may drink the liquid of such eggs. They are available even in Ahmedabad. But I realize that no value should be attached to my advice. Instead of doing what I advise from this distance, the proper course would be to follow the doctor's advice and you should do that. Show my suggestions to the doctor and then do as he advises.

[1] Bhau Panse; *vide* p. 39.

About Bhau, I do not wish to make any suggestion other than what I have done in my letter to him. If Kanti has not got all right, I would certainly say that his case requires careful watching. That is, we should treat his disease to be a case of black fever. That means that he should take complete rest, stop all food except fruit-juices and, if he really feels hungry, milk in small quantities at a time. If he does not pass stool, he should take an enema.

I would be happy if you or somebody else drop me a post-card daily.

Ramji came and saw me yesterday. He had many complaints against Mathuradas. The latter should remove his suspicions and should even tolerate occasional troubles caused by him. He is very eager to weave khadi of even texture from the yarn spun by Mahadev. If he is really eager and if there is no definite complaint against him, he should be permitted to weave that yarn notwithstanding any loss that this may involve. About the other matters, call him to you and ask him in confidence. We should not feel hurt by anything he says. We should even put up with insults from him. All this is part of our atonement (for our treatment of the *Antyajas*). Show this to Mathuradas.

How is Hariyomal[1] behaving?

In Poona, Ramji stayed in a room provided by the Christian Seva Sangh. Ordinarily, there should be no objection to any-one of us staying there. I would even welcome that. But I think the fact that Ramji had to stay there only means that he was not welcomed at any other place. You should have asked him and made some arrangements for him. Perhaps you would have found it difficult to do so. That is why probably you kept quiet. I will fix up with some families who will put up friends like Ramji, and then let you know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8269. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

[1] A Sindhi inmate of the Ashram

58. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

November 23, 1932

You should stop coming till this affair[1] is over. We shall rest satisfied by writing to each other. You must not apologize hoping that thereby you might be able to come and see me. On the other hand, when it is your duty to apologize you need not feel the slightest hesitation or shame in doing so. Even such small incidents should teach us the way of love.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 271

59. LETTER TO HIRALAL A. SHAH

November 23, 1932

I was fully aware that the analogy of a dyer did not apply in all respects, but it was good enough for my purpose. You think that the problem of untouchability has been solved in prisons. But that is so only on paper. Nothing of the kind that you suppose is being done. I am speaking from personal observation. Whether in jails or outside, the fact is that in most parts of India and for most of the year the Bhangi's dress is no more than loin-cloth. I myself did a Bhangi's duty continually for nearly one-and-a-half years. I used to do it dressed like an ordinary labourer. In the Ashram it is done with the dhoti tucked in. A person doing Bhangi's work does not become as much soiled as a dyer. If he does his work scientifically, he need not do anything more than clean himself with earth. You probably know that according to *Smritis* and Islam, such cleaning is as good as a full bath. But there are occupations in which this is not sufficient, nor is even washing with water. Soap and antiseptic medicines are required for cleaning oneself properly. Such occupations are those of the Chamar, the doctor, the dyer and the worker in a coal mine. There are many others besides these. Thus the cleanliness of Bhangis has

[1] The addressee had not been allowed to see Gandhiji the previous day, because the Jail Superintendent felt that he had been "insulted before his juniors by Devdas" during Gandhiji's fast in September.

very little part in the removal of untouchability. Think over all this very carefully. You should not lose your sense of perspective. If you wish to discuss the matter further, come and see me.[1]

I did not see anything objectionable in the note in the *Chronicle*. It is true that at present Bhangis work for all classes of people. If, however, Hindus had given them a place in their fold, their condition would never have become as bad as it is. The status of Bhangis in Europe or in any other part of the world is not inferior in any respect to that of other workers. There are no special localities for their residence nor is there a special dress for them. Nowhere outside India is there a special section of the community like our Bhangis.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 271-2

60. INTERVIEW TO WOMEN[2]

November 23, 1932

The Zamorin is a good man, not even obstinate, but he must take his co-trustees with him. Only the certainty of the sincerity of public opinion will accomplish that. Women have good powers of persuasion. Let them convince the *bonafide* temple-goers that true religion will open the hearts of the people and the gates of the temple to every human being and will brand no one as an outcaste.

Go to Malabar and enlist Nambudri and Nair women there to procure signed statements from the *bonafide* attenders at the temple within a radius of 10 miles that they would be willing to admit the depressed classes into the temple. This work is specially suited to the women and the Women's Indian Association branch at Malabar should take a leading part.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-11-1932

[1] The source does not mention if any portion was omitted between this and the following paragraph.

[2] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-11-1932, Mrs. Cousins, Mrs. Urmila Devi, Mrs. Ambalal Sarabhai and others of Women's Indian Association met Gandhiji in the afternoon.

61. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 24, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

It is again before morning prayer time while waiting for Mahadev.

So you are without Kisan. You are having varied experiences.

I am sending you a book on Buddhism which has been recently received. It is likely to be interesting. I have not read it as yet. You will return it to me and tell me whether you think it is well written. I have promised the author that I would glance through it. But there is no hurry about returning it. I shall be unable to touch anything for two weeks or longer.

I note what you say about unsifted wheat. I shall pass on your experience to the Ashram.

Make any change you like so as to get thoroughly well.

My weight was registered at 103 lb. yesterday. I am likely just now to stop at that. I may not increase the quantity of dried milk now. And the growing strain of work is not likely to add to the weight. But 103 is a good weight for me. The elbows are not quite in order. The doctor wants me to drop spinning altogether for a week and I have agreed. He is so sure that the pain is due to the wear and tear of spinning that he thinks the rest is bound to do good. I am to try till Wednesday next.

Proper cold weather seems to have set in here now.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 625. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9716

62. *LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY*

November 24, 1932

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I have waited almost to the breaking point before writing this letter. Untouchability work is proving beyond my ability to cope with and this in spite of assistance I am getting from Sardar Vallabhbhai and Sjt. Mahadev Desai. The correspondence is daily growing in volume. The number of visitors is increasing daily and more and more time has to be given to these visits as the movement progresses. I am already in arrears with my correspondence and the statements I must make for the public. My difficulty is enhanced by the fact that my elbows are giving more trouble than before and I am not able to use my hands for writing as much as I should, nor have I regained my pre-fast vitality so as to enable me to put in more work than I am doing now. As it is, we all begin work at 4 o'clock in the morning and it continues with necessary intervals up to 9 p.m. The only way therefore out of the difficulty is for the Government to send one of my prisoner-associates to stay with me. The following are the names that just now occur to me:

1.	Sjt. Mohanlal Bhatt	—Camp Jail, Yeravda
2.	„ Shanker Kalelkar	—Central Jail, Yeravda
3.	„ Ramdas Gandhi	—do—
4.	„ Swami Anand	—Camp Jail, Nasik Road
5.	„ Chhaganlal Joshi	—(Jail not known)
6.	„ Jugatram Dave	—Byculla, House of Correction

These prisoners have been intimately connected with me and have worked under me, and they know English, Gujarati and Hindi, which is what I need. If I had my choice, I would choose Swami Anand as being the most competent for the work. He has been Secretary of the Anti-Untouchability Committee established by the Congress in 1929 and since then has been devoting most of his time to untouchability work.

I need hardly say that I have confined my request to the least assistance I need immediately. If this is a matter which can only be decided by the Government of India, may I ask that my request may be telegraphed to them?

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. II, p. 77

63. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 24, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to my letter[1] to you of the 14th instant submitting certain names for approval by Government as visitors in connection with the late Dr. P. J. Mehta's estate, as the widow and the heirs of the estate are anxious for an early settlement of affairs of the deceased, may I request that the matter may be treated by the Government as urgent?

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p. 347

64. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU[2]

November 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I see quite clearly that we look at the *Gita* from different standpoints. The main theme of the *Gita* to me is oneness of life. Realization thereof comes through work without attachment.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 432.

[2] Manager, Sanatana Dharma Karyalaya, Madras, who in his letter dated November 18, 1932 (C.W. 9559) had said that Gandhiji's contention that the main theme of the *Gita* was "oneness and therefore equality of all life" was perhaps based on verse 18, Chapter V, but according to the 'context and the subject' that verse referred only to "yoga by renunciation of action", and did not apply to the question of 'touchability' and 'untouchability' which were based purely upon action and the effects of action. He had asked Gandhiji to enlighten him as to the authority for his advocacy for the removal of untouchability.

Untouchability as it is practised today seems to me to be utterly contrary to this divine fact of oneness.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : C.W. 9560. Courtesy : Government of Mysore

65. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 24, 1932

DEAR BROTHER,

I had your precious letters.[1] Your criticism soothes. Your silence makes me nervous. Time only deepens my love for you. Our differences appear to me to be superficial. Deep down I feel and touch the meeting ground, and that is precious.

I do wish I never spoke of God or the Inner Voice or Conscience. But, like Ramanama, however much it may be abused, it has got to be repeated when it is relevant, and almost becomes imperative. Truth will receive a deep cut if, for fear of being misunderstood or even being called a fraud, I did not say boldly what I felt to be true.

I carefully read the typed notes you sent me. The reasoning failed to make any appeal to me. The implications of the *Agamas* are stretched too far by the writer.

I hope you are keeping well.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 245

[1] The source explains : "From other letters of the period we learn that among other points Mr. Sastri had raised these two : '(i) I took occasion to pick a bone with him. In several places in his writings, he seems to dethrone non-violence from its place of honour, and crown the pinchbeck god of physical courage instead. He actually prefers courageous violence to cowardly non-violence. This inconsistency in the apostle of ahimsa amounts to inconstancy. Like Arjuna in the *Gita*, having sent home my dart of criticism, I folded my hands and prayed : "Enlighten me, for my soul is cast in doubt and you know all."

'(ii) I have written objecting to his too frequent references to the Inner Voice.' "

66. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 24, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your previous letter[1] comforts me. It is enough for me that you are watching and praying.

With deep love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4636

67. LETTER TO ADA WEST

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

What an impertinent letter you had from Mr. R. Sole, if that indeed was the name of the writer. I do hope you had a hearty laugh over it.

Hilda must have become very clever to be able to assist Albert in his work. In these times of scarcity of work and distress I suppose it will be uphill work for Albert to command enough custom to make the two ends meet.

You are not to worry over the approaching fast. It is highly likely that things will shape themselves so that the ordeal might not have to be gone through.

Love to all.

Yours,
BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4436. Courtesy: A. H. West. Also G.N. 7622

[1] Dated November 15, 1932 in which Tagore had written: "The mighty liberating forces set in motion by your fast still continue to operate and spread from village to village . . . I . . . fervently hope that those who now stand in the way of truth will be converted to it."

CWMG - III

68. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

Mahadev to whom this letter is being dictated tells me that you do not like to be called 'Hoyland' by near or real friends—I suppose there are degrees in friendship—but I refused to change the mode, telling him there was no 'Jack' about your signature! But after all what is in a name? It is the heart behind that matters and the heart is with you whether the pen traces Jack or John or Hoyland.

Your letter this time is a book compressed in a single note-paper sheet. It tells me more about Russia than what I have read in my desultory reading and heard from travellers. I must confess that this partiality for your letter is largely due to my faith in the accuracy of your observation and your truthfulness.

I want to warn you and other friends against being agitated over the proposed second fast. Probably the ordeal won't have to be gone through. But it is the same thing whether it has to be gone through or not. I am safe in God's hands and the prayers of many friends in many lands are one of the many infallible proofs that I am under His absolute rule.

Love to you all.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4508. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

69. LETTER TO OLIVE ALEXANDER

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR OLIVE,

It was good Miss Howard gave me the information that your father[1] was no more. I do not know that either you or Horace[2] feel real grief over the death of dear ones. I have personally ceased

[1] John W. Graham; *vide* "Letter to Elizabeth F. Howard", p. 58.
[2] Horace G. Alexander, addressee's husband

for years to grieve over death at all. The shock is felt when a comrade is torn away from me, but that is purely due to personal attachment which in other words is selfishness. But I immediately recover and realize that death is a deliverance and has to be welcomed even as a friend is welcomed, and that it means dissolution of the body, not of the indwelling spirit. But I must not philosophize. To be true to you and to myself I had to declare my faith and at the same time let you know that Mahadev and I and your other friends here were not so indifferent as not to take note of the happenings in your circle.

May your father's soul rest in peace.

Love to you and Horace from us all.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1416

70. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

November 24, 1932

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Mahadev has gone through Purandare's manuscripts. I shall see him on Monday. I agree with you that he may be taken over by the League. I shall discuss with him what can be done.

I give you below the draft manifesto. I thought that you wanted it for Maharashtra only. I make myself responsible only for the draft. Whether it should be circulated or not and whether it will be widely signed or not, I cannot judge from here. Therefore that is a matter purely for those who are outside to judge. Here is the draft:

> We the undersigned believe that untouchability is a blot upon Hinduism and should be removed. We believe in temple-worship, and such believers respectfully urge the trustees of all Hindu temples to throw open their doors to the Harijans on the same terms as to the caste Hindus. We do not include in our request the *garbhagriha* which is only open to the professional ritualists, and as at present the attention of all India is directed to the Guruvayur Temple, we respectfully urge the Zamorin and all concerned to lead the way by opening that temple to the Harijans before the Ist of January next.

You will show this draft to as many friends as you like and make whatever changes are deemed necessary, so long as they

don't interfere with the scope of the request. If you need to see me on this point you should come with Purandare on Monday.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 20005

71. LETTER TO AN AMERICAN WOMAN

November 24, 1932

I am not enamoured of the idea of using divine healing for the purpose of proving the existence of divinity or efficiency of prayer. If Jesus came back to us, it is difficult to know what he would say to some of the uses that are being made of his powers of healing and other miracles attributed to him.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 275

72. A LETTER

November 24, 1932

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has come upon me like a shock.[1] Your letter written to me as you left Bombay left on my mind the impression that you were wholly with me in all I did and I think you allowed the public too, to think that you were with the majority. No one knew of your mental reservations. At least you could have let me know your mind for my guidance, knowing as you did my regard for your opinions. Truth was hurt by your silence when it did not mean consent. Friendship is hard stuff. It must be capable of standing knock-out blows. Next time please do not spare me. You will serve the cause and me by speaking out straight.

I think Radhakant was right in drawing my attention to the mine on which he thought I was standing.

All this is however for you only. I shall respect your wish by making no use of your letter which is being destroyed.

[1] The addressee had expressed his disagreement with Gandhiji in regard to the Poona Pact as well as the fast and written: "I have not done or said anything against my conscience as I was not present either at the Bombay meeting or at the Poona Committee."

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 273-4

73. LETTER TO "LARKS[1] OF ST. FRANCIS"

November 24, 1932

. . .[2] is truly a spendthrift scattering his love recklessly and captures people by playing the son to them. Of course you know that although he is in India we do not meet each other; but that does not, ought not to, matter. For I feel the presence of his spirit without needing the nearness of the body. Spiritual kinship can never be destroyed. Spiritual nearness can never be sundered. You say you are all trying hard not to forget the power of prayer. We can only do so at our peril.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 277-8

74. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 24, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Shindeji has a serious complaint against us, that of appropriating the name of his association. The complaint seems to be justified.[3] We are concerned only with work not with the name. Therefore my suggestion is to name our association 'Akhil Bharat Harijan Seva Sangh' and to use the same in English and vernacular too. You are coming here but this will possibly reach you before you start.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. G. D. BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

From Hindi: C.W. 7906. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] Sisters of an Italian Convent

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

[3] The recently-formed association for the eradication of untouchability with addressee as President had been named 'All-India Anti-Untouchability League' in ignorance of the fact that another association named 'All-India Untouchability League', was already operating under the presidentship of V. R. Shinde.

75. LETTER TO ELIZABETH F. HOWARD

November 25, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter and your sympathy and also your own poem. Let me confess to you that I am so overwhelmed with untouchability work that I have not had the time to go through the poem, but I did not want to delay writing to you till I was able to read the poem. I must also tell you that I am a slow reader of poetry.

It was very good of you to have informed me of John W. Graham's[1] death. I should not have known it otherwise. It was as you very properly say a very splendid way to die.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 864

76. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

You are regular against my irregularity. But you have need to be regular, I have no cause for regular writing, unless I was to describe to you the events concerning the family consisting of cats and trees—and why not pots and pans and stove? Even they are not quite so lifeless as we imagine them to be, and we feel the loss of them in the same way that we feel the loss of dear ones. The question is only that of degree. But if I were to begin to describe all these members of the family, my letter could be dry as dust after one or two trials. Therefore the one-sided bargain in which you give without expecting anything in return is in the circumstances the most natural thing. I am not going to [write] separately to Charlie. But tell him please that Gurudev and I are drawing nearer each other day by day. This news, I know, will please him more than anything else I can send him.

[1] Father of Olive Alexander; *vide* "Letter to Olive Alexander", pp. 54-5.

CWMG - LII

Love from us all.
Love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11460

77. LETTER TO KASHINATH N. KELKAR

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR KASHINATH,

I am grateful to you for a copy of your work on Hindu Law. Apart from the reference you have given to me, I shall prize the gift and hope some day to get the time to go through the whole work.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KASHINATH N. KELKAR, ADVOCATE
PUSHALKARI WADA, YADUGOPAL PETH, SATARA CITY

C.W. 978. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

78. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR BEARDED FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I am not going to send you the passport you want. The princes and the people of Kathiawar know you just as well as they know me and if your greater age, your smiles and your energy which youth can emulate cannot secure help from the princes and the monied men of Kathiawar, no appeal that I can arm you with will do so. And I will not have you betray want of faith in yourself, in your cause and[1] God. But if there must be a passport, then let this serve the purpose.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9581

[1] The source has "am".

CWMG - III

79. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

November 25, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are not to worry over the approaching second fast. It may not come at all. But if it does come, let it be a matter of joy to you. Life to be true must be a continuing sacrifice. Enjoyment does not come after. Sacrifice is the enjoyment. All taking must be for greater giving. This is becoming more and more clear to me. Therefore you will watch in utter calmness, joy and prayer what is happening and may happen.

I must not give you more time. Untouchability work leaves no time for love-letters.

Love to you all and kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 116. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 96-7

80. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH[1]

November 25, 1932

The key to Satyavan's[2] purity is perhaps in your own hands. You have to be patient like the Himalayas and have the charity of the ocean. You must not irritate him on any account whatsoever nor sit in judgment upon him if he yields to his animal passion. You do not need to go through the struggle because you are a stranger to that passion. Your *brahmacharya* therefore is no merit in you, but Satyavan's *is*. All the time he is struggling against the Devil and if he finally subdues it, it would be indeed a great merit and a singular triumph. Let us all therefore pray for him that he may have the necessary strength to overcome the enemy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 279

[1] Named Savitri by Gandhiji

[2] Frederic Standenath, addressee's husband

81. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SAMUEL E. STOKES[1]

November 25, 1932

What a joy it would be when people realize that religion consists not in outward ceremonial but an ever-growing inward response to the highest impulses that man is capable of.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 279

82. LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON[2]

November 25, 1932

There should be no difficulty in getting an accurate referendum as to the wishes of the temple-goers. The reformers assure me with as much firmness that popular opinion is in their favour, as you assure me that it is against temple-entry. I suggest referees being appointed by either party and an honest referendum taken without any undue pressure being exercised on either side. The question on which vote is to be taken should be properly framed and explained to the voters. There need be no heat imported into what is a purely religious matter.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 280

83. LETTER TO SECRETARY TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 25, 1932

I can sense his (Gurudev's) agony even from this distance, but I suppose it is inevitable. This curse of untouchability will not be removed from our midst, the hearts of the orthodox will not melt without the purest souls in our land passing through the agony that Gurudev is passing through just now. Let us pray

[1] American missionary who had naturalized himself as a British subject and made India his home.

[2] Who, on behalf of the Guruvayur branch of the Sanatana Sabha, had written: "How did you conclude that public opinion is on your side? It is with us."

that God may sustain him and keep him in our midst for many years.

Gurudev's firm letter to the Zamorin ought to move him. During these days of travail Gurudev's blessings and help are of inestimable value to me. Please give my love to him.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 281

84. A LETTER[1]

November 25, 1932

I appreciate your care for my body and I fully endorse your proposition that it belongs to the nation. But the nation belongs to God and if God imposes a task upon the body, who can resist it?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 281

85. REPLIES TO RATLAM CORRESPONDENTS[2]

November 25, 1932

1. Great things have been misused from times immemorial, and will continue to be misused. That is no reason for rejecting them. There is nothing in this world in whose name as much evil is done as in the name of religion. If, however, we were to banish religion for that reason, the world would perish.

2. Shri Kelappan's error was a very small one. It could be rectified and has been rectified. If a fast in itself was an improper means, I could certainly not have supported him. Since he has fully atoned for his error, as his co-worker and as inventor of the weapon of fasting, it was clearly my moral duty to give my support to him.

3. The Zamorin's duty is to support neither me nor the orthodox Hindus who are fasting. His clear duty is to uphold justice. Two persons may fast against each other, but both may be in the wrong. When that is so, the way of truth and non-violence tells us that we should let both of them die, and do only what is

[1] The addressee was a Bengali Assistant Accountant-General who in his letter to Gandhiji had observed: "Your body is a trust and you have no right to go on fast again and again."

[2] The questions were contained in their joint letter.

CWMG - III

just. It is not we who can save or kill people. God does that. People have survived long fasts, and, on the other hand, we see men and women, who have not been fasting, dying every moment through innumerable causes.

4. I am quite aware that the personal element is bound to have an effect. But should I, therefore, forsake dharma? And if anybody gives up the practice of untouchability even under the spell of my personality, surely he would not be violating dharma.

5. I pray to God, and also hope, that even if millions of people fasted against me to make me betray truth, I would make my heart as hard as a stone and not yield to them. In considering all these factors, however, we should not lose sight of one thing, namely, that not many people will come forward to lay down their lives by fasting in order to keep injustice alive. The truth is that very few people are likely to come forward to die even for justice.

6. A crore of people may act in the name of their inner voice, but they may be impostors or fools. How, then, should a man who is really urged by his inner voice act? Should he suppress his inner voice and deny God for fear that others may follow his example and falsely claim to be inspired by their inner voice?

7. If I believe that the orthodox Hindus have no popular support, why should I hide my view? If, however, they do have such support, I cannot suppress that fact and it is easy for them to prove their claim.

8. In the first place, my political, religious and social ideas are different branches of the same tree. Hence they are not inconsistent with one another. But those who see no connection among them should not forsake what they think to be dharma in order to make use of my political strength. If anybody, however, through foolishness or cowardice, is ready to barter away the diamond of dharma for the pebble of political advantage, should I for that reason forsake my dharma? It is doing violence to language to use the word 'coercion' in this connection. There will always be such powers like personal influence and, if we regard them as forms of coercion, there would be no room for determined human effort to achieve anything.

9. The question is improper.

10. Mixed dinner parties with Harijans are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability.

11. There is certainly some difference between Bharatbhushan[1] Panditji's views and mine, but I don't know if there is any diffe-

[1] An honorific used by Gandhiji for Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya

rence regarding this fast. If there is any such difference, however, it is for the people to think what they should do. They should follow the view which appeals to their reason and their heart.

12. The fast is not intended to convert the orthodox Hindus. My aim is to arouse those who have risen above custom and realized the sin of untouchability so that they may begin working and to make those who have no conviction in the matter start thinking.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 282-3

86. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 25, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I have your long letter, the first after you were informed about Dahyabhai's illness. You are worrying unnecessarily. You ought to be aware that when both Father and you are in jail, those who are outside would not fail to do everything necessary. As soon as the condition was diagnosed as typhoid, Walchand[1] asked Karamchand to engage two nurses for day and night duty and to arrange for any doctor he thought necessary to visit Dahyabhai every day, and offered to pay all the expenses himself. They come to 30-40 rupees a day and are met by him. Thus Dahyabhai gets better nursing at home than he would in a hospital. Those looking after him are Karamchand, Chhotubhai[2] (who is constantly by Dahyabhai's side) and two nurses who are very kind and whom Dahyabhai has come to like very much. Bakshi[3] and other friends too are there. It is natural for you to feel unhappy at not being by Dahyabhai's side at this time. But God imposes the severest tests on those who love him. We receive daily reports from Karamchand, Chhotubhai and others. This is the third week. The temperature now does not rise above 102°, and was even normal yesterday. Doctors hope it will be completely normal from next Monday. I had even sent to you the letter received by Vallabhbhai from Dr. Madan, who is attending on Dahyabhai. You will see from it that the Doctors, too, give him loving care.

[1] Walchand Hirachand, the industrialist
[2] Addressee's cousin
[3] Jamnadas Bakshi, a Sharebroker of Bombay

He is being given *mosambi* juice, butter-milk, etc. In typhoid as a rule the patient suffers from diarrhoea from the very beginning. But Dahyabhai has had no such troubles. So there is no cause at all for anxiety. You should go on doing your work there and pray for Dahyabhai's speedy recovery. You should not be unhappy at Grandmother's death. How many have the good fortune to meet such a death? Whenever we feel that we did not get an opportunity of nursing someone whom we loved during his or her last days on earth, we should console ourselves with the resolution that in future we would never let go an opportunity to serve people.

We are all well and all our waking time is taken up by Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro – 4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 92-3

87. A LETTER

November 25, 1932

You can ask the applicant whether he would do some work. Since we wish to train workers from amongst the *Antyajas*, it is necessary to make such a condition. In a very deserving case you may help generously even if you have to strain your means. We should be able to say that, if ten thousand such deserving boys applied for scholarships, we would give to all of them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 280-1

88. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 25, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

We exchanged a few letters some time ago. In this letter, however, I have to humbly register a complaint against you. A young man has sent me a farce by you entitled *Brahmacharyashram* and has criticized it with a sad heart. Sardar went through it first. Mahadev glanced through it and read out to me some

sentences. If prizes were to be awarded for appreciating innocent humour, I suppose I would win a small one even at the age of sixty-four. Co-workers like you have also noticed my ability to understand humour. In your farce, however, I see no pleasant humour but the most offensive jesting, almost bordering on obscenity such as uncultured men might slip into, during their idle gossiping. One is entitled to expect you to produce, from jail, something really beautiful. I will not enter into detailed discussion; but having stated my criticism, I make this plea, write to the publisher and withdraw the farce. That young man informs me that some persons actually wish to stage the play, and the poor man is, therefore, all the more upset. I also feel that the farce should never be staged. A person who laughs at himself is not entitled to employ any type of ridicule or, under cover of self-ridicule, to ridicule the world and its ideals. This need not be explained to a person of your keen intelligence. I hope you are taking care and improving your health there. Convey my *vande-mataram* to all the friends.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7518. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

89. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 25, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Shri Natarajan writes:

> I have every hope and pray that Dahyabhai will pull through the remaining few days without complication. His age and active habits and his naturally strong constitution are most potent assets. He is a favourite at our home, having been with us nearly all the time when he was living with his uncle. He calls Kamakoti '*Akka*', like her brothers and sister, and is always a welcome visitor without any ceremony.

This is an extract from his reply to my letter. Karamchand's letter was received yesterday rather late, and I could not reply being engaged in a discussion with visitors about Harijan work. The range of your temperature seems to be gradually coming down. Provided that the patient takes proper rest and due care is taken about nourishment, an attack of typhoid proves beneficial in the end, for it removes all toxins from the body.

I hope you are cheerful.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro – 4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 150-1

90. LETTER TO GOVINDLAL SAHA

November 25, 1932

BHAI GOVINDLALJI[1],

Prabhudas writes and tells me that you have fallen sick so much so that you were all set to leave for Ranchi to undergo an operation. I trust you are better now. Do send me the full facts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10675

91. INTERVIEW TO KHIMJI AND J. K. MEHTA[2]

November 25, 1932

Mahatma Gandhi urged that there should be propaganda of a vigorous character for the removal of untouchability and specially for temple-entry at present. His attention was drawn to the fact that a referendum was going to be taken by women workers and others in Bombay for allowing untouchables to go to the temple of Guruvayur and he said that such a referendum was most welcome as it would show to the people all over India and the trustees of Guruvayur Temple what were the feelings of the caste Hindus. He added that Provincial Boards should identify themselves with the referendum work.

He stressed, of course, the importance of the referendum near Guruvayur itself and he wanted it to be clearly understood that even if people all over the country were in favour of the entry of the untouchables into the temple of Guruvayur and the actual temple-goers to the Guruvayur Temple opposed it, he would abide by the decision of the Guruvayur people themselves, who should be considered the last authority on the question. He suggested that *Shastris* of note might also be asked to give their opinion regarding the authority of the Shastras on this question.

[1] Gandhiji's host during his visit to Takula, Nainital, in May 1931

[2] They met Gandhiji on behalf of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League.

He again emphasized the importance of a census being taken of the depressed class in the city, specially regarding the education of their children of different ages.

He also urged that adults of both the sexes among the untouchables had, through different sources, expressed a desire for education and night schools should be opened out for them. He favoured scholarships being given to students of the depressed classes in high schools or colleges so as to give an encouragement to higher education among the depressed classes, who, after their education was over, might very well give one or two years' service to the cause of social uplift of their brethren.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-11-1932

92. *STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–IX*

[*November 26, 1932*][1]

As January 1st is nearing, the correspondence on Guruvayur is increasing. Instead of answering one by one the questions that arise from the correspondence, it would perhaps be simpler to answer them by way of a mere statement of my position. The fast will begin on January 2 next if, before that date, the Guruvayur Temple is not opened to Harijans on the same terms as it is open to the caste Hindu sin general; but the fast will be postponed, if it becomes clear that the temple-going Hindus in the neighbourhood are opposed to the temple-entry of Harijans or if it is clear that although everybody is willing to open the temple to Harijans, there is a legal difficulty that cannot be overcome before Jannuary 2, next.

The majority of letters received by me assure me that the temple-goers are in favour of admission of Harijan worshippers to the temple. One or two correspondents vehemently contest the position and claim that a proper referendum will result in an overwhelming majority against such an entry. These correspondents have given me no proof in support of their opinion, whereas others say that they have actually taken referendum after their own fashion and found it to be in favour of temple-entry by Harijans. If the orthodox people will agree, a fresh referendum can at once be taken in the presence of referees appointed by both the parties. I need not repeat here the scheme suggested last Saturday in answer to a question from *The Times of India* corres-

[1] *Vide* the following item.

pondent. Anyway, the reform party should lose no time in fortifying their contention with incontestable proof.

They, however, say that, although the opinion of the temple-goers may be overwhelmingly in their favour, the key of the temple is held by the Zamorin. That is no doubt technically true, but he is not the owner. He is a trustee representing the temple-going public. Therefore, he cannot resist the clearly expressed wish of the majority of them. It is his duty to overcome the legal difficulties if there are any, and if he fails to do so, it simply means that the force of the public opinion has not become strong enough to compel the performance of his obvious duty.

The fast will then further solidify public opinion so as to make itself felt. The key to the temple, therefore, is in fact in the hands of the public. But as the legal maxim has it, law or equity helps the watchful, never the slothful. Let Kerala reformers, therefore, not blame the Zamorin.

It is discourteous and wrong to impute motives to him. If he refuses to open the temple to Harijans, let us think that he is not convinced of the public demand. His refusal must be a signal not for abusing him, but discovering the weakness in our position. It is surely more dignified and proper for the public to feel that it is a clearly expressed wish and cannot be flouted by its representative which the Zamorin is.

Guruvayur has already become an all-India concern. Let the caste Hindus all over India bestir themselves and declare their opinion that they desire Guruvayur Temple to be opened to Harijans. The moral force of such an opinion honestly and freely expressed will be irresistible.

I have already warned the reformers against using unbecoming language in respect of orthodox sanatanists or no-changers, as they have called themselves, in a petition addressed to H.E. the Viceroy. They are entitled to their opinion. I look upon this untouchability question as primarily religious, and I would like both the no-changers and the reformers to work in a religious spirit without imputing motives to one another. No reform, much less religious reform, can be or should be carried by compulsion. I have repeatedly stated in unequivocal terms the limitations and functions of the proposed fast.

But a correspondent writing in Gujarati for himself and others says in effect:

> It is all very well for you to say that you do not want to coerce anybody, but your position cannot but compel

> some people to act against their will. Some of us have no respect for your religious views or your social reforms, but we want you to live for your political power, and, therefore, if you persist in fasting, we will have to pocket our convictions and help you in your fight for temple-entry. If this is not coercion, we do not know the meaning of the word.

My answer is, I must not be expected to surrender my cherished convictions because I hold a prominent position in the Indian world, or because I have some political influence; I cannot barter away my faith or suppress its movement for the sake of retaining my social position or political influence. Everything is subservient to and is derivable from that faith. Ask me to deny or suppress it, and it would be worse than asking me to commit suicide. I would also venture to suggest that those who subordinate their convictions to their regard for my position or political influence can only have shallow convictions if any at all.

Convictions are made of sterner stuff. People have been known to stake their all for the sake of their convictions which may then be called religion.

The correspondent asks:

> What is the poor Zamorin to do? On the one hand you and Mr. Kelappan will fast. On the other, 1,000 no-changers are said to have decided to do likewise. Whom is the Zamorin to please?

I answer without the slightest hesitation that he is to please neither party. He is there to please God, which is Truth. He is there to do his duty, and if it demands the sacrifice of thousands of no-changers, Mr. Kelappan and myself, he should have the courage to do so and he will deserve the honour of his own generation and posterity.

God will take care of the fasting fraternity. Those who fast will do so for defending the truth as they see it, and God of Truth will do what He likes with them. If their fast is in answer to an inner urge, it will be its own reward, and it will be well with them whether the purpose to which it is directed is apparently fulfilled or not.

The same correspondent persists:

> But it is all very well for you to talk of the call of God, the conscience, the inner voice and all that. Others also can and do put forth the same claim. What are we who have no inner voice and who have no God to parade before the public to do and which are we to believe?

I can only say: You have to believe no one but yourselves. You must try to listen to the inner voice, but if you won't have the expression 'inner voice', you may use the expression 'dictates of reason' which you should obey, and if you will not parade God, I have no doubt you will parade something else which in the end will prove to be God for, fortunately, there is no one and nothing else but God in this universe. I would also submit that it is not everyone claiming to act on the urge of the inner voice who has that urge. After all like every other faculty this faculty for listening to the still, small voice within requires previous effort and training perhaps much greater than what is required for the acquisition of any other faculty, and even if out of thousands of claimants only a few succeed in establishing their claim, it is well worth running the risk of having and tolerating doubtful claimants.

So much for the Gujarati correspondent. I must now conclude this statement with a question from a correspondent who writes in English. His is a long letter containing elaborate argument, but I think the following epitome correctly represents him:

> Hitherto I have known you to be free from any trace of communalism but you now suddenly appear in a communal garb. I could have understood and justified your fast for swaraj or for all-India unity, but I cannot understand this fast on behalf of Hinduism. I have never taken you as a Hindu at all, certainly not as a narrow Hindu. What is there in opening the temples to Harijans, who do not want to go there?

I am glad of this question. I have no desire whatsoever to appear to anyone as other than what I am. I am not ashamed of Hinduism or of the Hindu. I totally deny being narrow. I fancy I could not be held for one single moment by a narrow creed, and it is because the super-imposition of untouchability would make Hinduism a narrow creed that I have rebelled against it, and I would count my life to be a cheap price to pay for the removal of that blot.

I have nothing of the communalist in me, because my Hinduism is all-inclusive. It is not anti-Mussalman, anti-Christian or anti-any-other-religion. But it is pro-Mussalman, pro-Christian and pro-every-other-living faith in the world. To me, Hinduism is but one branch from the same parent trunk, whose roots and whose quality we judge only by the collective strength and quality of the different branches put together, and if I take care

of the Hindu branch on which I am sitting and which sustains me surely I am taking care also of the sister branches. If the Hindu branch is poisoned, the poison is likely to spread to others. If that branch withers, the parent will be the weaker for its withering.

If my correspondent and those who think with him have followed me hitherto, they will discover that if God gives me the privilege of dying for this Hinduism of my conception, I shall have sufficiently died for the unity of all and even for swaraj. Finally let me repeat what I have said before now, that the question whether Harijans want to, or would enter into temples, if they were open to them, is irrelevant. The removal of untouchability is not a matter of bestowing patronage on Harijans. It is one of penance and purification by the caste Hindus and one of the penances they have to do is to open the Hindu temples and invite the Harijans to them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-11-1932

93. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

November 26, 1932

I appreciate your letter. You should study the statement[1] I am issuing today. When I talk of criminal neglect of comrades or reformers, I have no one in particular in mind. If we are true and active, the walls of untruth must come down. It is no use saying that the Zamorin is hardening. You will find that if the temple-goers *demand* the entry of Harijans to the temple, no power on earth can prevent them. The fact is that our agitation is only now beginning. It must be intense and yet gentle. Not a word need be uttered against the Zamorin. Of course if the law is really against us, it must be mended. And that too cannot be stopped if the public voice is clear and emphatic. We must not lose faith in ourselves or the cause. Am I clear? Do not hesitate to write again, if I am obscure.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 287

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

94. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

November 26, 1932

DEAR DR. ALAM,

Your good wife has been keeping me informed through her beautiful Urdu letters of your health. Her beautifully written letters have opened my eyes to the culture among Muslim sisters. I have three such fair correspondents—Begum Alam, Johra Ansari and Raihana Tyabji. Their diction is good and handwriting of two, i.e., Begum Alam and Johra, is like copper-plate. Raihana is a spoilt girl. Being a poetess, she has not kept up her handwriting to the high level that the other two have. But I must not take up this letter in telling you of my good fortune, part of which, due to your unconditional release, would be now taken away from me, for Begum Alam would now consider herself to be absolved from writing to me. But let her know that I am not going to give her any such easy release. I do hope that your illness has not marred your sense of humour and that you are fit enough to receive nonsensical letters and amuse yourself over them.

You can't receive any congratulations from me on your ill-earned discharge, but we must make the best of it and fulfil the purpose for which the discharge is granted. You have therefore to hasten to [be] well. On receipt of Begum Alam's telegram I sent a wire to Dr. Deshmukh. I have wired to you his opinion and of local medical friends who consider you to be fit enough to travel to Bombay. You should do so and let Dr. Deshmukh take charge of you. If an operation is considered by medical advisers to be necessary, I do not believe in waiting. Please let me know what you are doing and what is the exact condition of your health. May God keep you long for His service. Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 19

95. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 26, 1932

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have just been given the happy news of your having been brought here.[1] I hope you did not feel the strain of the journey. Now that you are here, eat all the fruits which doctors recommend for you. How is your cough? I am trying to secure permission to see you. We are all happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2905

96. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 26, 1932

CHI. MANI,

The report about Dahyabhai today is even better than yesterday's. The temperature did not rise above 100.5° and went down to 98.5°. It may, therefore, be said that the temperature is now returning to normal. Doctors hope that it will be completely normal tomorrow or perhaps the day after and will not rise any longer. Dahyabhai is weak of course, but such weakness is only to be expected, and there is no cause at all for anxiety. You need not now make inquiries by wire and I also will not send you any wire.

Father has already written to Karamchand yesterday asking him to send you money. All three of us are well. I have forwarded your letter to Dahyabhai. Why do you not say anything about your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 93-4

[1] The addressee was transferred to Yeravda Central Prison, but was confined to another ward. *Vide* also p. 38.

CWMG - LII

97. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

November 26, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your postcard. Keep the resolution which you have made. A person who learns to keep his small resolutions automatically acquires the strength to keep big ones. You must do something to improve your health. I hope there is no cause now to make you inwardly unhappy. If you come here and live with me, I would daily give you fresh goat's milk to drink. Whose handwriting do you see above? Try and recognize it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9146

98. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

November 26, 1932

Persons who are ill bemoan their inability to do anything for others while they themselves have to accept people's services. This is a grave error. Such a person can do service by thinking pure thoughts, by exacting the minimum of service and by bathing in love those who serve him. He can also serve by keeping cheerful. We should never forget that meditating on God with pure devotion is also service.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 286

99. LETTER TO ANAND SWARUP

November 26, 1932

BHAI ANAND SWARUP,

I have your letter. All the questions are good, but I do not have sufficient time to answer them all. I am not sure when I shall be able to reply through the newspapers, and so I think I may write at least this much.

Ramanama and *Omkar* are one and the same. Tulsidas too has shown this most clearly. He has extolled the name precisely because one lacks concentration while reciting prayers. All the Shastras assure us and the experience of devotees shows that anyone can ultimately gain concentration of mind if one goes on praying with a feeling of reverence. Closing eyes while chanting the prayer is enough but it is certainly good if the thoughts are centred on the point between the eyebrows.

The assertion that God himself is truth has a drawback that it implies some further qualities possessed by God. That God has many names, a thousand, is quite true. But remembering God as the possessor of many names is fraught with the possibility of a diminution in the significance of the entity to which we wish to offer total surrender. But all other attributes fade away when we proclaim that Truth alone is God; only the idea of truth remains in mind and this is more prevalent in monism. Atheism has no place here as even an atheist accepts existence which is a development of *sat*. Here truth does not imply merely truthfulness of speech; its meaning here is unity of thought, word and deed and yet more. Whatever is in reality here, what existed in the past and will remain in the future is the substance, truth, Parameshwar[1] and nothing but that.

Now for the scavenging and hygiene of commodes. A commode should be placed in a room which constantly receives sunlight. It should be constructed in such a way as to be removed daily and cleaned. Two buckets should be placed on a wooden frame, one for urine and one for stools. After evacuation of the bowels the excrement should be covered with sand or mud. A bucket full of earth should be kept in the room. If the house is near

[1] God

a field or a garden the excreta should be regularly buried there for being converted into manure. Except during the rainy season, the roof should be removable during the rest of the year so that the room receives sunshine throughout the day. With this arrangement and daily washing out of the buckets and the room, the lavatory will be and should be as clean as a bed-room. This arrangement is very convenient in the villages and it should not prove difficult in towns like Meerut.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

It is not essential to place the buckets in a wooden frame. They can be placed on a frame made of stone or bricks.

From Hindi: C.W. 9452. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

100. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

November 26, 1932

Certain people who visited Mr. Gandhi this week left Yeravda Jail under the impression that Mr. Gandhi had assured them that once the Guruvayur temple-entry matter had been settled he would extend his fast in order to compel the temple trustees throughout India to open all temples to the untouchables. They have told their friends about this and the news has spread quickly. This morning I sought Mr. Gandhi's confirmation or denial of this as I felt that a mistake had occurred somewhere. He immediately denied its accuracy. Mr. Gandhi said:

Such a course on my part would disturb public opinion and would be a breach of faith. Once the fast is over and the temple is open many other temples are highly likely to be opened to the untouchables because by the time Guruvayur is opened so much propaganda work will have been done and public opinion will have been so much affected that it is not likely that there will be much hesitation on the part of other trustees to open the temples under their charge. Should it prove otherwise, I should not think of restarting the fast without the greatest deliberation and without an absolutely just cause. So far as I can say now no such fast for a particular item in the anti-untouchability programme is contemplated.

In reply to my query as to whether he had any detailed information as to the actual situation in the neighbourhood of the Guruvayur Temple, Mr. Gandhi said that so far as information is available the caste Hindus in the neighbourhood, who were in the habit of visiting the temple, were overwhelmingly

in favour of Harijans being admitted on precisely the same terms as they themselves were admitted.

But I also have letters from people in the neighbourhood casting aspersions on the accuracy of my information. I have, therefore, suggested that a quick public referendum of the caste Hindu people within a radius of say ten miles from the temple be taken in the presence of referees, one to be appointed to act on behalf of the reformers and one on behalf of the sanatanists. If it is thought necessary there may also be an umpire. These gentlemen should supervise the taking of votes so as to avoid any chance of undue pressure being exercised, impersonation or any other malpractice.

If, however, as a result of this quick referendum it is found that the information at my disposal was wrong I will unhesitatingly advise Mr. Kelappan to postpone his fast until public opinion is sufficiently educated to warrant the opening of the temple to the Harijans.

Meanwhile he has asked[1] Urmila Devi, sister of the late Mr. C. R. Das to go south and assist in the campaign there.

The Times of India, 28-11-1932

101. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

November 27, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

Today there is even better report of your health.

I said in my letter yesterday that even a sick person can do service. This is how he can do so. He may spend the period of rest in meditating on God and, controlling his impatience and anger, bathe in love those who are nursing him. I know of one example from the West and one from our country. An eighteen-year-old French girl spread so much fragrance during her illness, which ended in her death, that she has been canonized a saint. She now sleeps the sleep to which there is no end.

Ladha Maharaj of Bilkha, near Porbandar, was suffering from leucoderma.[2] He went to the temple of Shiva in Bilkha and took up a seat in an *asana* posture. For the whole day he would repeat Ramanama or read the *Ramayana*. In the end he was cured

[1] *Vide* p. 43.
[2] *Vide* also Vol. XXXIX, p. 31.

and became a famous *kathakar*[1]. I had seen him and heard him narrating a *katha*.

A devotee of God puts to good use even his illness; he does not give way to his illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 151

102. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 27, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I hope you got my letter[2] in which I wrote to you about your constipation. Do not eat for some time any cereals or pulses which you cannot digest just now. I will write again and make further suggestions after I have more information.

The *takli* affair is a sad story. I have, of course, written about it. It is strange that anybody should not understand the importance of observing silence. Do what you can without losing patience. Even if there is only one person who is ready to learn, teach him. I should like at least one person to learn the art from you and master it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6745. Also C.W. 4488. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

103. LETTER TO BHIKHIBEHN

November 27, 1932

CHI. BHIKHIBEHN,

You have introduced yourself all right. May you be happy in the Ashram and learn service and *bhakti* with sincere devotion.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1747

[1] One who narrates stories from sacred books
[2] *Vide* p. 39.

104. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

November 27, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN[1],

I got your letter. Just now, both of you should look after each other and the children. When Valji is completely all right, I shall be happy if your suggestion is acted upon. With whom do you live there? I think it would be very good if you could stay there for a long time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. V. G. DESAI
SANJAULI, SIMLA HILLS, N.W. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7444. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

105. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

November 27, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Learn Gujarati well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1731

106. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

November 27, 1932

CHI. OM,

You seem to be a very cunning girl. Because you don't spin fine yarn, you gift away the coarse yarn which you spin and take credit for voluntary service. Is it Vinoba or Janakimaiya who teaches you this?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 335

[1] Wife of Valji G. Desai

CWMG - III

107. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 27, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

Kusum and all of us are in God's hands. Don't even think about [the condition of] my elbow.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 864. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

108. LETTER TO JAMNADAS AND KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

November 27, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I got your beautiful letter. Self-depreciation is good to a certain extent, but beyond that it proves harmful. Even a veteran like me may envy your descriptive power. Your language is definitely beautiful. Why, then, do you feel diffident? You have also ability for practical work. May you live long.

Send me the names of your trustees.

I cannot write more at this stage. About the second fast, try to understand as much as you can from my articles. It is true that the people get upset by such news, but such fright is sometimes necessary. It is in fact self-examination. No great reforms can be brought about without self-examination. But the fact is that my fasts are not undertaken by me of my own free will. I believe them to be inspired by God. I am looking forward to your letter about untouchability.

Blessings from
BAPU

RESPECTED MURABBI BHAI,

If you can, I want both of you to send me your sincere blessings for success in my work. To you both,

Humble pranams from
MOHANDAS

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

CWMG II

109. LETTER TO LAKSHMI D. DAFDA

November 27, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I got your letter. If you feel really hungry, I am sure you would relish salted gruel of *jowar*. I relished it very much. A diet of *rotlas* and vegetables is better for health than of rice and pulses. In the course of time one comes to relish every kind of food. Did you not eat gruel in jail? Or didn't you relish *rotlas* and vegetables?

Maintain excellent health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10492. Also C.W. 7756. Courtesy: Lalchand Jaichand Vora

110. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

November 27, 1932

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. I like your idea of going to Wardha. Countless people have benefited by fasting. I know, however, that you did not. I attribute that to my insufficient experience. But you can continue the *asana* exercises and other remedies. Do go to Lonavala for some time. The air and water of a place certainly have an effect on health. However, I don't wish to bother you with my suggestions just now. Do what you like, but improve your health.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 905. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi.

CWMG - LII

111. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 27, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Those who understand the value of self-control will find nothing but interest in the experiments about diet. Who gave the news in papers that in the Ashram you have started eating food supplied to prisoners? No harm, of course, will have been done if this is true. But we take milk, ghee and many similar things. How, then, can we say that we have started eating prison food? If you have been able to trace the source of this rumour, let me know.

You are right when you complain that it is I who am the author of rigid rules and that I, too, am responsible for self-indulgent men coming to the Ashram. I have often said that all of you can oppose such persons and that you are not bound to admit anyone whose needs you cannot meet. I can merely advise. It is entirely for you all whether or not to act upon my advice. I do feel, of course, that though we follow very rigid rules in our own lives, we should be able to meet the needs of anyone who comes to the Ashram but cannot follow these rules, and be generous towards him or her.

I will keep in mind your suggestion. . . .'s[1] case is a painful one. "What then will constraint avail?"[2]

Find time and discuss about Indu[3] with Narandas.

I don't feel worried about Babu[4]. I am sure he will come round sooner or later.

At the moment I can say that both of you may come when you wish to.[5] I don't know, though, what the position will be tomorrow.

If we can fulfil any pledge, big or small, we should no doubt thank God for that.

[1] The name has been omitted.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 33

[3] & [4] Pupils in the Ashram school and the kindergarten, respectively

[5] The addressee had sought permission to see Gandhiji along with her friend Sushila.

Have a talk with Lakshmi. May it not be that she wishes to marry?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10312. Also C.W. 6751. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

112. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

After commencing silence, *November 27, 1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter from the school for handicapped children for the information of you all. I have written about that school before. I have happy memories of it. I would very much wish something like that to be done in the Ashram, too.[1] . . . I was half-asleep when I wrote the sentence which I have scored out. I find now that it made no sense. The love which the teachers of that school show to the pupils and their patience are worth emulating. Anybody who wants more information about the school should write to it and get it.

If you know the whereabouts of Khadagbahadursing[2], please inform me.

I hope Kusum gets the postcard which I write to her daily. I could not write yesterday.

It seems after grinding the *jowar*, the flour is not sifted. It should be enough if the *jowar* is carefully cleaned before grinding it. And the same about wheat. I suppose you get the wheat ground in a flour-mill outside. If we grind it ourselves in the Ashram we should use the flour as it is without sifting it. If these cereals are eaten with all their contents intact, they provide substances which help bowel movement. If anything is removed by sifting, many essential elements are lost.

Purushottam should not wait there till he falls ill. Wherever he goes, he is bound to get opportunities for work and service. He may certainly return when his health has improved a little and can be depended upon better. If your experiments succeed, anybody can come and live in the Ashram. I do feel that you will succeed.

[1] In the source, the sentence which followed has been scored out.
[2] An Ashram inmate

I have already dropped a letter[1] to Bhau. I hope he sees you from time to time.

I have also written to you about Parashuram.

I am sending Madan's book[2]. I forgot to send it immediately.

Tell everybody this about *takli*. If the spinning-wheel is the king, the *takli* is the queen. Without a queen, a king is no king, and without the king the queen can do nothing. It should also be realized that without a queen the royal house cannot go on. If the spinning-wheel is for thousands, the *takli* is for millions. It is surprising that, though Bhau has demonstrated the great power which the *takli* possesses, all the inmates of the Ashram do not learn to spin on it. In the past people spun even the finest yarn on the *takli*. The *takli* which they used was made of bamboo. Even today, the Brahmins in the Madras Presidency spin the very fine yarn required for the sacred thread on the *takli*. Making a spinning-wheel takes time, but a *takli* can be made anywhere. It does not get out of order and makes no noise. It is quite possible that the *takli* will one day win over the spinning-wheel. We, of course, do not wish either to lose ground to the other. On the contrary, we wish to acquire equal and great mastery over both.

If you have heard more news about Joshi, let me have it. Where does Nanibehn[3] live?

Send by registered post the receipt from the Goseva Sangh for Mahadev's signature.

I hope Kanti is all right now.

Ask Hari-ichchha to write to me.

I have not received Appasaheb's letter.

You did right in keeping back Maganbhai's and Raojibhai's letters. If you feel the slightest doubt about any letter, you should keep it back. I have no desire at all to know anything which should not be communicated to me. Any information concerning matters about which I can say or do nothing cannot be anything but a weight on my mind.

I get letters from Mirabehn regularly. She has again given up salt. Since Kisan has been removed to Thana, Mirabehn is once again without a companion. If we give up attachment to particular individuals as friends, all human beings, and, if we can see more truly, even animals, birds, trees, plants, even stones, are

[1] *Vide* p. 79.
[2] On fasting
[3] Wife of Pannalal Jhaveri, Manager of Ashram goshala

our friends. The yoga of non-attachment does teach us that lesson. My weight came to 103 pounds this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 45 letters in all, including the letter from the school for handicapped children.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8270. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

113. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

November 27, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

You gave a good reply to Mother. If the new food does not agree with you, you should immediately complain. A thief gets into the habit of stealing. Some thieves steal because they see others doing that, and some make stealing their profession.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1746

114. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 27, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Today's report is better even than yesterday's. [Dahyabhai's] temperature had gone down to 97.5° and did not rise above 101.5°. He sleeps well. You should devote all your attention to your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

All the friends jointly bear the expenditure on account of Dahyabhai.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 94

CWMG - LII

115. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 27, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your long letter. I can write only a short one. As regards going to Delhi and all other matters, do whatever Narandas suggests. You must be convinced that sick persons too can serve. I have mentioned two individuals[1] in the letter to Kusum. Read it. Give up thinking of too many matters. May God keep you safe and fulfil all your wishes to render service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 265

116. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MANMATHA ROY[2]

[Before *November 28, 1932*][3]

I quite agree with you that no one should be treated as untouchable, and I am sure that when we have ceased to treat forty millions of Hindus as untouchables we shall cease to treat Christians and Mussalmans as such.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-11-1932

117. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 28, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

Do you know the reasons for the changes in food which the Ashram has introduced? Observe the effect of the new diet on your body and mind and write to me about it.

[1] The available text of the letter to Kusum Gandhi, p. 75, though it is on the same subject, does not contain the names. *Vide* also "Letter to Dahyabhai Patel", pp. 78-9.

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji whether his campaign against untouchability was universal in its application or limited to Hindu untouchables alone.

[3] The letter was published under the date-line, "Balurghat, November 28".

Bhau says that none of you likes to spin on *takli*. You can produce a sufficient quantity of yarn and of good quality with *takli*, only if you spin on it with concentration and in silence. Bhau believes that you are not capable of either. You cannot stop talking even for a few minutes. If this is true it is very bad. *Takli* is very much superior to the spinning-wheel in teaching us silence. You should know the full power of *takli* and must benefit from it. It is certain that a person who cannot live in solitude, remain silent or work with concentration can never be a true *brahmachari*. And all of you are *brahmacharis* at present. Discuss this with Bhau and see that every one of you does the *takli yajna*.

BAPU

[PS.]

This has been written on my silence day morning, immediately after the prayer.

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

118. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 28, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I have today astounding news that a co-worker of mine, Sjt. Appasaheb Patwardhan, a civil disobedience prisoner in Ratnagiri Jail, is semi-fasting because he and some other prisoners who were permitted to do Bhangi work have been suddenly deprived of it under your orders. My fear is that this order was a result of my having said in the course of our conversations that your policy was inconsistent in that you were allowing non-Bhangi prisoners to do Bhangi work in the Ratnagiri Prison and you would not allow it in this. It is difficult for me to understand why those prisoners who volunteer to do such work should be prevented from doing it. Surely you do not want forcibly to keep up untouchability in prisons when it is crumbling to pieces outside. Appasaheb is an M.A. of the Bombay University, is a great social reformer and a man of character whom any State would be proud to have as a citizen. Service of untouchables is an article of faith with him. He underwent a fast in 1930 for the above reason in that very jail. I had even then to intervene on his behalf.[1] If I am misinformed about the present position you will let me

[1] Appasaheb Patwardhan was not allowed to spin; *vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 105 and 107.

know what it really is. If I am correctly informed I would ask you in view of the circumstances brought to your notice please to telegraph instructions that my friend and his associates may be allowed to resume Bhangi work under whatever written guarantee as to its voluntary nature you may deem fit to take from them.

Though I am a prisoner, you will not expect me to see a comrade dying by inches, not for any crime, not for any indulgence he desires, but for deprivation of humanitarian service for the prosecution of which Government have recognized the necessity of giving me special facilities.

Here perhaps you would allow me to remind you that during this incarceration and the two previous ones in my own humble manner I have on several occasions helped the authorities to preserve prison discipline. I mention this fact not in order that it may be counted as a merit. I gave that assistance as a matter of duty imposed upon me by the law of satyagraha. I mention it here in order that you or the Government may know that in seeking relief about prisoner friends I am not guilty of any officious interference with the administration.

I am sure that you will treat this as a matter of urgency involving as it does the possibility of great damage being done to a fellow-being under your custody.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp. 11-2. Courtesy: National Archives of India

119. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 28, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I got the oranges, the slivers and the *takli* [sent by you]. I ate the oranges as if they had been sent by Maganlal. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev also ate some. I feel that the orange plants still require some special manure, for the oranges were not sufficiently juicy and sweet. You should also get our soil analysed to see what it lacks.

I have completely stopped spinning for the time being because of the pain in the elbow. I, therefore, cannot use the slivers and the spindle.

I will write to you when I use them. Nonetheless I had reached 54 counts with your slivers.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9469. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

120. APPEAL TO PUBLIC

November 29, 1932

I find people have now begun to come to see me merely for *darshan*, as it is called. I am sorry I had to refuse to meet some of them today.

Under the relaxation of restrictions on interviews, I may see people only in connection with *bonafide* untouchability work and no other. I would, therefore, ask all concerned to take note of the limitation, and even in connection with untouchability work only those should come who have some important work to be done or consultation to be held. The pressure on my time is already proving greater than I can cope with. Wherever possible, it would be better if a previous appointment is made.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-11-1932

121. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

November 29, 1932

THE SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

I am grateful to Government for letting me meet Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj soon after his admission to this prison. The Government now know the relations that subsist between him and me. Both he and I asked the Superintendent at the interview today whether we could meet each other frequently and he told us that he had permission only for that single interview. If Sheth Jamnalal had not been suffering from a bad disease, and without the cause to be just mentioned, I should have been satisfied with an occasional interview like the one I had today. But seeing that he has been specially brought to Yeravda for the sake of his health, it would be putting an undue strain on both of us if we were not allowed to see each other frequently, of course subject to restrictions as to conversation. I have no desire to hold any political conversation with him. But I should want to discuss

with him problems of untouchability, as he was Chairman of the Anti-Untouchability Board appointed by the Congress in 1929 and he had specialized on the question of temple-entry, having himself been instrumental in opening to the Harijans his own family temple and in having a number of other temples opened in many parts of India.

His special medical adviser Dr. Modi has advised distraction from brooding over his illness. For him to be interested in the untouchability problem would be itself like a tonic. Indeed he was tempted to discuss the problem today, but it was impossible for me to do within the limited time allowed for the interview.

Alike therefore for the sake of his health and of the work for which the Government of India have given me facilities, I request permission to have frequent interviews with Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj subject to the restrictions as aforesaid.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p. 399; also G.N. 3871

122. LETTER TO A BENGALI YOUTH[1]

November 29, 1932

You should make a fixed resolution to be good. Always pray to God to make you good and you will be good.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

123. A LETTER[2]

November 29, 1932

There is no institution but has some evil attaching to it. But my opinion is that in spite of the undeniable evil attaching to the temples, the millions who visit them are unaffected by the evil and derive the comfort they need from them.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "I am neck-deep in sin. My passion is roused on seeing women and I have also got into the habit of stealing. Save me."

[2] The addressee had raised the question of the impurity of temples.

CWMG - LIII

124. LETTER TO A SINDHI DOCTOR[1]

November 29, 1932

We must differ as to the interpretation of the *Gita*. You cannot keep your cake and eat it at the same time. *Gita* or no *Gita*, if you must have secret remedies not for the benefit of humanity but for your own pocket, there is no surrender to God, or reducing yourself to zero. Look at the Bhangis, how they eke out their living by doing unclean work for the community. If you will reduce yourself to nothing you have to do voluntarily and joyously the kind of service that the Bhangis do and at the same time give the poor and the afflicted the benefit of your medical knowledge free of charge. Do not call this impractical because many have been able to do it successfully.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 291-2

125. LETTER TO VASANTRAM SHASTRI

November 29, 1932

Somebody sent me a copy of your pamphlet[2]. I went through parts of it. I never thought even in my dreams that you could write and tell such lies. What you are doing will not harm me, but don't you think it harms Vaishnava dharma?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 291

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "How can I surrender myself to God? I have to keep my remedies secret and if I do not I will lose my income."

[2] *Sathina Sath Sutro* ('Sixty maxims from a Sexagenarian', suggesting that Gandhiji had become senile.)

126. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 29, 1932

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. What can I write to you? I am tired of writing to you over and over again. My letters do not reach you at all; hence how long can I go on writing? Why should you take it to heart if you do not get the letters I write from this end? Why can't you be confident in the belief that I can never forget you or keep you without a letter? You regularly received letters from me when you were outside, there is no reason to suppose that I no longer write to you. So forget your anguish and console yourself by imagining our predicament if we were not allowed to write at all.

One's true support is not mother, father or anyone else but God alone.

I am keeping good health. My weight is 103 lb. and I take milk, bread and vegetables. The milk intake is about 2½ pounds.

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev too are keeping well. Jayaprakash is all right and has excellent company. I hope that this reaches you and that on getting this you will write whatever you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

PRABHAVATI DEVI
A-CLASS PRISONER, CENTRAL JAIL, LUCKNOW

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3426

127. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

November 29, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I did receive your letter and sent a brief reply. You will get it now if you have not already received it. Make an effort to find the answers to your doubts from my letters.[1] You cannot have satisfaction by merely addressing every doubt to me, you

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 227, 264-5, and 323-4.

must try to find the answer in your own heart. I suppose you are aware that I have no time left over from my work for Harijans.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4265

128. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 30, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your prompt reply to my letter[1] regarding Appasaheb Patwardhan, but I am sorry for the attitude you have taken up. Since the matter has gone up to the Government, I would like to draw their attention to the following facts:

1. Appasaheb Patwardhan is wedded to the idea that he should work side by side with Bhangis and it is most repugnant to him to have to observe in prisons untouchability which he does not do outside.

2. He had to fast in 1930 for this very reason.

3. I must adhere to my statement that Appasaheb Patwardhan had been actually doing Bhangi work in the Ratnagiri Jail, until he was stopped.

4. *There was no question of his issuing any threat* and, in my humble opinion, statement of his moral claim and consequence of rejection of that claim should not be considered as a threat.

5. *In considering a moral or religious question*, the question of shortage of labour does not arise.

6. In my opinion it is unjust to say of an absolutely docile prisoner like Appasaheb Patwardhan who has been always prepared to do any task asked of him that he is fighting for "a particular variety of work". He wants to do Bhangi work in addition to whatever task may be given to him.

7. There are many prisoners in Yeravda, *including us three*, who are anxious to do their own conservancy work, and it is because you have not looked upon it with favour that I have myself remained silent and with difficulty prevented my co-workers from making it an issue of conscience.

8. As you are yourself aware the conversation about this matter and about hand-spinning by civil disobedience prisoners has remained in abeyance because of the more important matters

[1] *Vide* pp. 88-9.

arising, and absorbing my time and attention. But these two are matters of deepest importance to many of us.

9. With due deference I cannot help repeating that to prevent Appasaheb Patwardhan from voluntarily working side by side with his Bhangi co-prisoners because he does not belong to the Bhangi caste is a perpetuation in prisons of the bar of untouchability when that bar is being swiftly removed outside prison walls.

I would therefore implore you personally to revise the uncompromising attitude you have taken up and to let humble Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates do conservancy work. Believe me that there is no defiance in their request. Some of us who are convinced civil resisters leave our resistance outside prison walls and having entered them are anxious to carry out and promote prison discipline to the utmost extent that our conscience would allow and we do so in order to show that our resistance is always civil and never incivil or criminal.

But if I cannot make you or Government appreciate this obvious and just position, I have with the utmost regret to inform you that from Saturday the 3rd proximo, so far as I am concerned, I must join Appasaheb in his protest and respectfully claim to do my own conservancy work, *and if he does not get the relief, I must put myself not on reduced rations but on a complete fast.* I would ask you not to treat this as a threat, but as a human being to appreciate the feelings of a fellow-being. I have already hardened my heart, but I have not hardened it so as to see an honourable colleague wasting away in defence of a cherished principle without my at least sharing his agony and sacrifice. Believe me it is no pleasure to me to have to write such letters.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp. 16-7.
Courtesy: National Archives of India

129. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

November 30, 1932

MY DEAR MARY,

You have asked for only a postcard, but that won't be adequate for me. Because I do not find a particular thing helpful for me, I may not be indifferent about others and not take the trouble of knowing whether it is helpful for them. I know that that particular form of idolatry is helpful for millions, not because

they are less developed than I am, but because they are differently constituted. What must not be forgotten about me is that not only do I not consider idol-worship to be a sin, but I know that in some form or other it is a condition of our being. The difference between one form of worship and another is a difference in degree and not in kind. Mosque-going or church-going is a form of idol-worship. Veneration of the Bible, the Koran, the *Gita* and the like is idol-worship and even if you don't use a book or a building but draw a picture of divinity in your imagination and attribute certain qualities, it is again idol-worship and I refuse to call the worship of the one who has a stone image a grosser form of worship. Learned judges have been known to have such images in their own homes. A philosopher like Pandit Malaviya will not eat his meal without offering worship to the household deity. It would be both arrogant and ignorant to look down upon such worship as superstition. Again in the imagination of the worshipper, God is in a consecrated stone and not in the other stones lying about him. Even so, the sanctuary in a Church is more sacred than any other place in it. You can multiply for yourself instances of this character. All this is a plea not for laxity in thought or worship, but it is a plea for a definite recognition of the fact that all forms of honest worship are equally good and equally efficient for the respective worshippers. Time is gone for the exclusive possession of right by an individual or a group. God is no respector of forms or words, for He is able to penetrate our actions and our speech and read and understand our thoughts, even when we do not understand them ourselves and it is first our thoughts that matter to him.

I am glad you are with Maria and your picture of her family which includes our four-footed kinsfolk is instructive and it is just like her. I do not mind her not writing to me. Whilst I welcome her letters when she has anything to say to me, I do not want her to steal a single minute merely for writing to me because somebody else is writing.

I am glad you have fourteen months' grace. I like your programme. So far as I recall you have not been to Santiniketan. You ought to go there at least. I do not want to harness you for untouchability work before you have gone through your touring. Untouchability work is a long programme and you can be fitted in whenever you are quite ready and you have a definite call from within. I would like you also quietly to study this movement in all its ramifications and assimilate the spirit lying behind it, and if you give yourself to it I want you to do it with

your whole heart without any mental reservation. I want you therefore not to hesitate to place all your doubts before me and offer yourself for the service when both your head and heart are completely satisfied. Of course in connection with the untouchability work you can see me any time you like.

Please share this with Maria. My love to both of you in which Mahadev joins.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat: G.N. 5986. Also C.W. 3313. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

130. LETTER TO CHITTOOR RAJAGOPALACHARI

November 30, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Your suggestion puts the movement in a different frame from what I conceived. Untouchability is an evil of caste Hindus' creation. They have, therefore, to remove the evil and everything else will follow from it. The purification of Harijans—if 'purification' is the word that can be used in this connection—will follow removal of untouchability. It must not be a condition precedent for removal. But whilst I would not like to identify myself with a movement such as you suggest, you are free to take it up and it will be a step in advance, if Harijans are admitted after going through the ceremonies prescribed by you. Of course I remember our meetings and etc., etc.

In whatever you do please confer with your namesake.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
CHITTOOR

The Hindu, 21-1-1933

[1] The addressee, in his appeal to C. Rajagopalachari, had said: "I put it to Mahatma Gandhi that this authorized method of *samskaras* and temple-entry thereafter will 'scientifically and automatically lift the status of the Harijans. . . .' "

131. LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH[1]

November 30, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is my firm opinion that the Yeravda Pact is much better than the Premier's decision. It gives many more seats than the Premier's decision and it provides against the election of any candidate who is not in the first place approved by the majority of Harijans. So far as the vow is concerned, I suppose I must be allowed to judge whether it was broken or kept. I am certainly not in favour of special electorates for merchants, landlords and others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. CHINNIAH, S.M.P.S.
9 SARASWATHI VILLAS
PONNANGI STREET
NUNGAMBAKKAM
MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 5071

132. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 30, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN,

I enclose Dr. Kanuga's letter received today. You will see from it that there is no cause for anxiety about Dahyabhai. The fever may persist for a few days more but that does not matter. We three are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 95

[1] Convener of All-India Adi-Dravida Mahajana Sabha

133. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

The Bavas have proved quite a challenge for us. You did right in going. That temple also will be opened to Harijans one day. However much disheartened you may feel by the atmosphere in the surrounding villages, you should continue to visit them. Love will melt all knots.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 238. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

134. TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON

[*December 1, 1932*][1]

YOUR WIRE. GLAD REFERENDUM BEING TAKEN METHODICALLY. HOPE THOSE WHO VOTE WILL HAVE THE ISSUE CLEAR BEFORE THEM.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

135. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 30/December 1, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hope you read the slips to Radha and Kusum which I sent in today's mail. Call both of them and ask them everything, and then literally follow the advice of the doctor whom you have consulted. Both you and I can then stop worrying. We are not masters of life or death, nor are doctors, but we can try. We may try as our reason guides us and then be unconcerned.

It is nothing but God's kindness that . . .[2] left. You had actually sanctioned him leave, and it was pure chance that you

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

[2] The name has been omitted.

detained him afterwards for some days. It was as though God had willed that he should be tested. Such things have often happened in the history of the Ashram. Evil got exposed of itself.

I indeed wish to write at great length about food, but I don't think I shall be able to do that. I shall have to be brief. It is not right to serve *rotlas* of *bajri* every day. If *rotlas* of *bajri* and *jowar* and *rotlis* of wheat are served by turn, the inmates would get the benefit of all the three cereals. Every time the grain taken out for consumption should be weighed and the *rotlas* also should be of uniform weight. What the weight of each *rotla* should be, you will be able to decide only through experience. If you follow this practice, everyone will be able to know how much he should eat. Here the smallest *rotla* weighs six ounces. If people wish to derive the full benefit from the morning gruel, they should eat nothing else with it. The quantity of flour in the gruel should be measured. If the quantity of water also is measured, it will be easy to know how much flour each helping contained. If a person is not satisfied with one helping, he may by all means have another, but nobody should exceed the limit that he has fixed for himself. He may eat less sometimes if he has not enough appetite. But he should not exceed the fixed limit even if he feels more hungry than usual. This will do him no harm.

If the grain is properly cleaned before being ground, the flour of every cereal should be used without sifting. I approve of Dr. Talwalkar's suggestion for increasing the quantity of milk and ghee, but not at all of his suggestion for including chutney. Even those who eat chutney suffer from constipation. If you wish, you may make this experiment. You may prepare chutney for those who suffer from rather severe constipation. Let them try it. If the effect on them is undoubtedly beneficial, you may try it, if you wish, for others. In preparing the chutney, you should use black pepper instead of chillies. Read the letter which I shall write to Dr. Talwalkar about this. My own experience of chutney is not encouraging. Before I went to England, I may say that I used to eat pepper and chillies in fairly good quantities. At that time good food was my chief interest in life. In England, we get extract of chillies. I must have eaten it for about a month. I had to suffer for that. Afterwards, that is, in about a month or so, the pattern of my life changed and I left off eating spices, never to eat them again. Since then I have experimented on hundreds of persons, but I do not remember any case in which spices were used as a medicine with beneficial effect. Personally

I am convinced that constipation is a sign of indigestion. Food which is digested does not cause constipation. All food leaves some residue and, if it is properly digested, the bowels throw them out. However, I don't press you to follow my advice. It is well known that spices are inimical to physical celibacy. For that reason, too, we should think a hundred times before including spices in our food. We may certainly serve any spices purely as medicine for a limited period. It is possible that, so long as they act as medicine, they may not endanger celibacy. For instance, if a person feels extremely cold, pure brandy will make him warm but will not intoxicate him, for the power of the brandy will have been used up in overcoming the cold. I think I have dwelt long enough on chutney. Dr. Talwalkar's suggestion about including ground-nut should not be acted upon in any circumstances. I have experimented with ground-nut more than anybody else is likely to have done. It has been tried for a long time even in the Ashram. On the whole the result was discouraging. In the current experiment, you seem to have excluded dal altogether. It is all right if the effect has been good. For checking the effect, you should get everybody weighed, and should know from each person how he or she feels. It is for you to judge whether you can cope with all this work. If you do not get the fullest co-operation of most of the inmates for this experiment, you would do better to abandon it. If all of them co-operate, probably you will not feel it as a burden.

I should be happy if you can solve the problem of Ramji.

About other things, I will write in the weekly letter on Monday. Every inmate of the Ashram should understand one thing, namely, that he should eat or munch nothing between the three meals which are served. If anybody does so, even cuts a green tamarind or plucks any *bhaji* from the beds to eat, he will have violated the vow of non-stealing and jeopardized the success of the experiment.

December 1, 1932

Give Dr. Talwalkar's letter to him after reading it and only if you approve of it.

I send with this a cutting about the primus stove. Ask everybody to read it. Isn't Keshu keeping good health?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8271. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Unrevised *December 1, 1932*

CHI. MIRA,

Again this is Thursday morning before 4 o'clock. Mahadev is taking his time so as not to hurry you.[1] I should never have taken you to be 40 unless someone had told me so. Let us hope you are at least 40 times as wise as you were when you were a baby one year old and if we increase in wisdom moment by moment then the increase becomes incalculable if not infinite. May the increase in yours be infinite!

For your health, I have shared with you the new knowledge I have gained. You will now find out what is good for you. Add to your food some salad, lettuce, ripe tomatoes or tender leaves of some *bhaji*. It is undoubtedly good for the bowels. But you should know best what is good for you.

Verrier[2] came back about a month ago. He sees nobody and has given himself exclusively to good work. He is, I believe, quite well. Shamrao[3] is ailing and had to go to a hospital.

Tilakam[4] is at the Ashram. He is not quite strong. I have told him he can take up untouchability work whenever he likes. His desire is to work among the Christian untouchables.

Your time-table *reads* crowded. You should have more relaxation than you have given yourself. I do not think you should be rigid with yourself. There should be a feeling not of perpetual fatigue but of freshness. Are you giving yourself ample sleep? There should be no brooding.

For me, I have to report an extraordinary result. From 103 I have jumped to 106 lb. Dried milk continues. But there is not a corresponding increase in energy or a decrease in the pain in the elbows. Even the absence of spinning has yet made no difference. Therefore addition of weight may not be an unmixed blessing. I am carefully watching this sudden development.

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "Not to hurry Bapu's letter to me."

[2] Verrier Elwin

[3] Shamrao Hivale, a close friend of Verrier Elwin

[4] An Ashram inmate

All my reading is suspended. Nothing but correspondence and interviews. Ba has gone to the South taking Velabehn[1] and Bal[2] with her. Urmila Devi has also been sent there. There is no doubt that Hindus have never thought about their religion so much as they are now doing.

I must stop now. It is past 5.30 a.m. I must go to the 'library' and then to the walk.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Hope you have received the book on Buddhism.

From the original: C.W. 6252. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9718

137. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

December 1, 1932

BHAI NANALAL[3],

I have received the Government's permission today to see you. I had sent the following names:

Manekbai Mehta[4]	Nanalalbhai
Chhaganlal Mehta[5]	Ratubhai Sheth[9]
Lilavati Mehta[6]	Manilal Revashankar[10]
Manjula[7]	Ratilal Desai[11]
Mayashankar[8]	Jayakunvar Doctor[12]
	Chhotalal Shah

It was not necessary to send the names of Champa[13], Ratilal and Prabhashankar[14], since they had already been approved. You

[1] Wife of Lakshmidas Asar
[2] Bal Kalelkar, son of D. B. Kalelkar
[3] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's business partner and manager
[4] Dr. Mehta's wife
[5] Dr. Mehta's eldest son
[6] Chhaganlal's wife
[7] Wife of Maganlal, Dr. Mehta's youngest son
[8] Dr. Mehta's business partner
[9] Lilavati's father
[10] Dr. Mehta's nephew
[11] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son-in-law
[12] Dr. Mehta's daughter
[13] Wife of Ratilal, Dr. Mehta's second son
[14] Champa's father

CWMG - III

may consider now whether you will come first or after Chhaganlal and Maganlal have seen me. If you have not already started in reply to my wire, kindly spare me as much as you can, as you know how busy I am these days in Harijan work. However, you need not spare me in respect of any matter for which my advice is essential.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9470

138. LETTER TO BECHARDAS J. DOSHI

December 1, 1932

BHAI BECHARDAS,

I got your postcard. I cannot write more about Punjabhai than I have already done. You must have seen what I wrote.[1] You can use it. I had got the books sent by you, except *Sanmati-prakaran*. I hope your health is improving. There is no change in the condition of my elbow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1343

139. LETTER TO SHAMJI MARWADI

December 1, 1932

BHAI SHYAMJI,

I got your letter and the copies of replies received by you. Send a copy also of the final reply that you receive.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5207

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, "Long Live Punjabhai !", pp. 282-3.

CWMG - LII

140. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

There can be only one explanation for Bhau getting fever, namely, that he must have started eating cereals too early. If my guess is correct, he should very strictly refrain from cereals for about a month. That is, he should only drink milk and eat fruit and vegetables. Among vegetables, he should eat only greens and not roots and tubers. He should start eating cereals only when he passes stool without difficulty. A person who knows how to resume eating gradually after a seven-day fast will never get fever.

Madan's book had been misplaced and I could not find it till today. I am now sending it by registered book-post. Bhau should read most of it carefully, but chiefly the explanation on pages 149 and 173 of the method of ending a fast. It is an extremely easy book to read and he will be able to finish it in a short time. I am sure you also will read it. The person who has sent the book about Zanzibar has written something with pencil on the inside of the cover. It is worth reading to understand his faith and love.

I hope Kusum and Radha are all right now. I hope I shall get news about Puratan Buch in your next letter. How did Jamna get an attack of asthma so suddenly?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8272. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

141. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 2, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

You write regularly now. You will see that you will not be tempted any more to postpone writing through lethargy, nor will you forget. You are ill there and Radha is ill in the Ashram. We should be cheerful even in illness. We should learn to welcome any condition that God ordains for us. We should exer-

cise as much self-control as we can and leave the rest to God. Observe this one rule that you should not exert yourself so long as you continue to get fever. How is the ventilation in the house? Chhaganlal will now be brought to me to help me. . . .[1] is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9147

142. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

December 2, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have not written to you recently because you are receiving all the news as Satisbabu is here. I continue to receive news of you. I have explained to Satisbabu regarding those localities. Your work[2] is very much to my liking.

You have raised a pertinent question about the Ashram and the answer is a simple one. If we wish to run the Ashram only through disciplined men and women we must admit only those who are willing to exercise self-control. They will come with full understanding of the rules and willingness to abide by them. We cannot impose our rules on those who come simply for earning a living. Their status is only that of employees. But we must not treat them as employees. We must regard them as our companions and keep them as long as they perform their duties conscientiously. The problem is that even those who come with the intention of observing regulations turn slack. Discrimination is essential on such occasions. In the name of God and by His Grace we must do all we can.

Do you follow all this? If not, ask me again.

No time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1693

[1] A word is scored out, probably by the jail authorities.
[2] The addressee was working among the Harijans.

CWMG - LIII

143. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 2, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I was glad to see a letter from you after a long interval. Father had told me that you had gone to Ahmedabad. We should be equal-minded towards both joy and sorrow. We should regard illness, too, as a gift from God. I wrote[1] to Dr. Alam that I had among my correspondents three who wrote to me in Urdu: Zohra, Begum Alam and Raihana. The first two write Urdu like copper-plate, but Raihana, being a poet, writes in beautiful hand-writing of her own. But I see that this time you also have sent copper-plate.

Have you ceased to be my poetess daughter now? Is it only a Rabindranath who can both be a poet and write copper-plate, or will Raihana also follow his example now? May God give you peace of mind.

A thousand blessings from
BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O D. D. NANAVATI, ESQ., I.C.S.
POONA

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9665

144. INTERVIEW TO DEPRESSED CLASSES LEADERS[2]

[*December 2, 1932*][3]

Mr. Gandhi heartily welcomed them. They told Mr. Gandhi that the movement for temple-entry was making slow progress in Ahmedabad; only two temples having been so far thrown open to them. Mr. Gandhi admitted that he knew about it, and advised them to see what the local Anti-Untouchability League could do in the matter. Mr. Gandhi added that his efforts were, however, directed to that end, as he regarded temple-entry as essential for the removal of untouchability.

[1] *Vide* p. 73.
[2] Kikabhai, Dudhabhai, Lavjibhai and three others
[3] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

The interviewers agreed with the view, already expressed by Mr. Gandhi, that untouchability should be abolished by law. They also expressed satisfaction at their having secured Mr. Birla as the President of the Anti-Untouchability League, through the influence of Mr. Gandhi.

In conclusion, the interviewers requested Mr. Gandhi to contribute articles on the uplift of the Depressed Classes in the vernacular magazine *Vijay* which they had recently started. Mr. Gandhi said that he was getting a copy of that magazine, and promised to contribute articles to it.

One of the interviewers drew a sketch of Mr. Gandhi while the interview was going on, and asked Mr. Gandhi to sign it. Mr. Gandhi refused to do so, saying that it was against the rules of the jail.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

145. TELEGRAM TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR[1]

[*December 3, 1932*][2]

YOUR TELEGRAM. MAY GOD REVEAL TRUTH.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 7-12-1932

146. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 3, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

At about 7.15 this morning Major Mehta handed me the following message:

> Mr. Gandhi may be allowed to do his own conservancy work if he wants to. But he should be informed that Government cannot accept his intervention on behalf of convict Appasaheb Patwardhan.

It seems to me that Government have not appreciated the position. The permission to me to do my own conservancy work is of little moment. Relief for Appasaheb Patwardhan is the chief and central thing. My fast began this morning as per my letter[3] to you and, I am sorry to say, has to continue till relief is granted to Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates. It should be understood that they have asked not for doing their own conservancy

[1] The addressee had sought Gandhiji's blessings in a telegram informing him that anti-untouchability campaign had been started in Guruvayur at a conference opened by Kasturba.

[2] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

[3] *Vide* pp. 94-5.

CWMG - LII

work, but for joining the regular file and this they have done as a matter of sacred principle. Government should also know that it is not Bhangis alone who are given this work but others described as low castes are compelled to render this service although they have never done it outside prisons. Reformers like Appasaheb Patwardhan who were civil disobedience prisoners in 1930 in Ratnagiri could not suffer the misery of non-Bhangi prisoners being forced against their will to do the work and submitted to the authorities that they should be allowed to replace such men. This was, in my opinion, a laudable offer which the authorities should have gladly, if not thankfully, accepted. It was a voluntary offer made to help the Government. Meanwhile the Delhi Pact[1] came. The same offer was renewed this time and these prisoners were permitted to do the work. Suddenly orders seem to have been sent to prohibit the work. Hence Appasaheb Patwardhan's putting himself on reduced diet. I ventured to seek relief as soon as I came to know of this tragedy.

In rejecting my humble and helpful intervention, Government seem to have suddenly reversed the policy which they adopted as early as 1922-23 in connection with me and have continued ever since. When during my first incarceration in 1922—and that as a convict—I sought to intervene on behalf of two hunger-striking prisoners, it was at first resented and then on reconsideration the Government accepted it.[2] The then Inspector-General of Police who was deputed by His Excellency, Sir George Lloyd, to carry on negotiations with me and the Superintendent of this Prison thanked me for the happy result of the intervention. Two precious lives were saved and a beneficial circular was issued by the Government as a result of my humble effort. In 1930 under similar circumstances the new Superintendent who knew little or nothing of the event just described of 1922-23 disliked my offer, but subsequently it was accepted by you yourself again with happy result and the practice was then established of my being allowed to see fellow-prisoners for the definite purpose of my being able to render the humble office of intermediary between them and the administration. That practice has been continued up to now, not I hope with any unhappy result. Each time I have intervened, I hope the officials concerned will testify, I have done so in a helpful manner. It is, therefore, difficult for me to understand the Government without any apparent cause reversing this policy,

[1] Gandhi-Irwin Agreement of 1931; *vide* Vol. XLV.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XXIII, pp. 168-71.

and that too just when I have been obliged most reluctantly to embark upon a fast. I must regretfully adhere to the fast until relief is given to my friends and the human right of intervention that the Government have hitherto recognized is restored to me.

There is one thing I should mention. I am carrying on concentrated conversations about untouchability from day to day with many friends who come to see me. Just at present the strain is greater than usual because of the members of the Anti-Untouchability League being in Poona. The visitors are bound to notice the weakness that must overtake me even today and they are bound to inquire about the reason. I shall be unable to conceal the truth from them and yet I have no desire whatsoever that they should know anything about the unfortunate *contretemps* between Government and myself. For I am hoping that the Government will recognize the utter reasonableness of my request.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, pp. 40-2. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also G.N. 3872

147. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR[1]

December 3, 1932

You say Harijans should be allowed to enter temples, because all have broken the Shastras. This is an immoral attitude. If in 99 cases we have broken the Shastras that is no reason for breaking them in the 100th case. That is no reform but deform. My point is that not to allow Harijans to enter temples is wrong and against religion. This is a religious movement for elevation of religion.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 302

148. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL[2]

December 3, 1932

Whatever one has learnt about dharma is tested only at a time like this. If what we have read and thought does not help

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's which read: "The *Shastris* have very often violated the Shastras. Why should they then stick to their word in this case?"

[2] Mahadev Desai refers to the addressee as Mani, in the third person singular, from which it appears that the letter was addressed to Manibehn Patel who was young enough to be so addressed by him.

us in any way, we should take it that we have learnt nothing. If a doctor or a lawyer is well read in his subject and discourses learnedly on it but cannot handle even one case, he is a doctor or a lawyer only in name. Similarly, a man may be a great authority on religion but if his knowledge of dharma is confined to what he has read in books or remains only in his mind, he is a dharma pundit only in name.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 302

149. INTERVIEW TO FREE PRESS

[*December 3, 1932*][1]

I have never said that I will not concentrate all my energy on that service [emancipation of the Harijans], but I cannot previously bind myself not to do anything else. Circumstances may compel me to do things, which it would be sinful on my part not to do.

Replying to a question as to why he should not carry on the Anti-Untouchability propaganda from outside as he is doing it from the prison now, he said:

I am doing nothing but concentrating the whole of my energy on the Harijans now.

Q. As you attach a great importance to fast, would you advise others to carry on the campaign by the same methods?

A. Fasting is a very special method and nobody can fast unless there is a definite special call for him to do so. Therefore there should be no fast in imitation, and I would be so presumptuous as to say that if anybody wants to fast in connection with untouchability out of sympathy he or she should refer to me and obtain my consent before so doing. But I can say that on that single issue of Guruvayur, none but Kelappan and I should fast. But everybody can and should carry on the campaign in hundreds of other ways which are open to all because the methods of service are so many and varied.

Q. Having dedicated yourself to the Harijans, does not your life belong to them now?

A. To say that my life belongs to Harijans is only half truth. The whole truth is that my life belongs to God and therefore it

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

CWMG - III

belongs to the Harijans and, for that matter, the whole of creation, and it is God who can keep me, or can take me away.

Questioned if, when fighting the untouchability battle, he should fritter away his energy on other issues by fasting, Mahatmaji said:

This was also along the same lines. There was therefore no question of frittering away any energy.

It will be a year now, since the campaign was launched.[1] What should be our next step? Would you give any message for the New Year?

A. That question is outside the scope of permission granted to me.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 7-12-1932

150. STATEMENT ON FAST TO ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY COMMITTEE[3]

December 4, 1932

Although the Inspector-General gave me permission to say whatever I liked about the origin of the fast and what passed between Government and myself I do not want to take full advantage of the liberty he has given me. I shall only give you the substance of what happened so that you can be at ease and my position may not be misunderstood. The fast which commenced yesterday, was, you will be glad to know, broken just before I came here. Mine is a peculiar position. Though I have hardened my heart there are things about which I have an exceedingly sensitive nature. To me there is no difference of degree in matters of moment and as I am capable of giving my life for a great cause I am equally capable of laying down my life for the life of a comrade.

Now in the present case, the question before me was one of choice either to allow a dear comrade to die and myself live unconcerned or in an attempt to save his life put mine in jeopardy. Appasaheb Patwardhan, who is a prisoner in Ratnagiri Jail is an incorruptible man and a dear comrade whom I know to be cent per cent honest. I came to know through regular channels that

[1] The reference is to the resumption of the civil disobedience movement; *vide* Vol. XLIII.

[2] *Vide* also Appendix II.

[3] Members of the Committee met him at 1 p.m. He was lying in bed and spoke in a low voice.

Appasaheb had to put himself on the lowest diet consistent with bare existence for the service of untouchables which he wanted to do and which he was not permitted to do. I wrote to Government[1] in mildest language possible that if relief was not given to Appasaheb, I would have to go through the same agony and sacrifice as he was undergoing. He was and is going through slow death. I said I should have to fast. If I deserted him I would be capable of deserting the Harijans, and a man who deserts his comrades is not worth much. I had necessarily to give short notice because there was no choice for me.

Although I know that Appasaheb is a man of iron nerves, I could imagine what agonies a man on reduced rations would be going through and so I could not help giving short notice. I am glad to say that circumstances have arisen enabling me to break my fast though it does not mean that the chapter is closed. The Inspector-General of Prisons who was here is conferring with Government and pending Government's decision, which he hopes to get from Government on or before Wednesday morning, the fast stands suspended. But I have hopes I will not have to resume it. So far as my physical well-being is concerned I may say that I could not be better looked after than here and no one should run away with the idea that Government are not at all concerned about my life or they would like me to die in jail. They honestly want to see me discharged, if I am to be discharged at all, in full possession of health, that is to say, consistently with my age. In the present case I had asked for very little but perhaps Government thought it was too much; but I think they will now understand the delicate position and grant the relief which is sought for.[2] There are other matters also regarding the fast, but I do not like to go into them. It will certainly be very good if the Government publishes the correspondence I had with it. But I leave it to the Government.

I hope what I told you is enough to give an assurance that I have not acted stupidly or hurriedly or unwisely. Knowing me as you do, you would wish me to act in the same manner should a similar occasion arise again. So far as I am concerned I should lose all my self-esteem and consider myself a despicable creature if I did not do all I was capable of doing in the contingency. For a man like me, who may not commit violence and who has taken a vow to observe non-violence in thought,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", pp. 94-5.

[2] What follows has been translated from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, pp. 470-1.

word and deed, has self-sacrifice as a last resort. I depend on wisdom given by God to a small man like me and the weapon that I possess is readiness to fling away my life when there is a desperate cause. In this way my life is based on many such fasts. This is the highest form of prayer. The world has known it recently but I knew it for many years. It is not a thoughtless action. In it there is no coercion on others. It does bring pressure on individuals and the Government but is no more than the natural and moral outcome of self-sacrifice. It shakes and awakes the slumbering soul and impels a loving heart to action. The person, who has to introduce basic reforms in man, social conditions and atmosphere, has to create fermentation in the public. It cannot be brought about without causing a shake up in the society. There are only two ways of doing this —violence and non-violence. Violence affects the body and degrades both the person who commits it and the person who is the object of it. But in fasting the person suffers himself and the pressure brought about is of quite different kind. It does not affect the body of the person at whom it is directed but strengthens his morale or nature. I hope what I have told you is enough. Who knows I may have to go through a series of fasts and die by inches. But if that does happen I want you to feel proud of my action and not feel that it was the action of an imbecile. My life is largely governed by reason and, when it fails, it is governed by a superior force, that is, faith.

The Times of India, 5-12-1932, and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 470-1

151. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 4, 1932

BRIJKRISHNA
CARE MOHUR
DELHI

FAST BROKEN. NO CAUSE ANXIETY. SEE STATEMENT.[1]

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2395

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

152. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 4, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I am writing this after having taken my silence.

It is better to put down in writing what I have understood to be the position.

The fast remains suspended till Wednesday morning so as to give the Government time to come to a final decision.

The fast is not to be resumed if the Government give permission to Appasaheb Patwardhan and his associates to do conservancy work in common with the regular file, it being considered sufficient even if permission is restricted to such service in the yard they occupy.

The larger question of such permission being given to volunteers to be settled as soon as possible.

By the breaking of the fast today I do not give up the human right of intervention on behalf of fellow-prisoners. The Government have called my assistance intervention. I do not regard it as such. All my previous interventions[1] have been helpful as I believe Majors Jones, Martin, Bhandari and perhaps you could testify.

I enclose herewith a letter to be sent to Appasaheb Patwardhan. I am most anxious to know how he is faring.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 21, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 121

153. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 4, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Many thanks for your note.[2]

I did say during the morning conversation that the present practice of employing the so-called low-caste prisoners could not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to E. E. Doyle", pp. 108-10.

[2] *Vide* Appendix III.

be suddenly changed and that therefore there was all the greater reason why real volunteers should be encouraged for conservancy work whenever they make the offer spontaneously. I recognize too that the experiment can only be made cautiously till the barrier between high and low is broken down.

After I made the statement[1] about the fast, the committee released me from the task of a discussion on untouchability.

Thanks for sending the letter to Appasaheb.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 23, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 125

154. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

December 4, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

You will find with this a letter from Pragji. I hope you were not upset by my short fast. A fast by me has become a common occurrence and so nobody should get upset by it. I hope you have adhered to your decision to leave.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4802

155. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1932

MIRABAI
PRISONER, ARTHUR ROAD PRISON
BOMBAY

GOD IS OUR ONLY ROCK. FAST BEGUN SATURDAY BROKE YESTERDAY TOOK MILK MORNING. NO ANXIETY WHATEVER. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6254. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9720

[1] *Vide* pp. 112-4.

156. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1932

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

DOING WELL. HAD ONLY FRUIT YESTERDAY. MILK TODAY. NO MORE PAYMENT TO MAHAVIR.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8275. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

157. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December [4]/5, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is surprising that you had not got my chief mail till Friday. I will inquire what happened.

The harassment by Chharas[1] seems to be increasing. You should find a remedy. Hasn't Mavalankar any suggestion to make? You can write a letter to the Collector. I think that, after consulting Mavalankar, you can write a letter somewhat to this effect: 'We cannot take any step to get anybody punished but I request you to consider how far the policy of settling a people who are habitual thieves in the neighbourhood of the Ashram is a proper one.'

Take immediate measures for Keshu's fever.

I feel a little afraid now about Radha and Kusum. If we are under the treatment of one doctor and wish to call in another, we should do so only through the former. This is not only courtesy, but it is necessary in our own interest. The new doctor will then be in a position to benefit from the experience of the first. If you have not given up Dr. Talwalkar completely, request him to see Dr. Harilal.

Write to Mahavir and inform him that I have asked you not to send any more money to him.

[1] An ex-criminal tribe of Central Gujarat

Morning, Monday [*December 5, 1932*]

My fast was short and soon over. In one-and-a-half days, I became fairly weak. I think I also overworked. But probably I shall recover strength very soon. Nobody should worry. My fasts are a daily affair now, and should cause no worry.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8273. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

158. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 5, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I am writing this after prayers. You should not expect long letters from me, but you should go on writing such letters to me. I learn much from them. I do wish to know all that.

What does Taradevi[1] wish? Does she wish to go to the Punjab?

You should listen to what Amina says. Really speaking, you should listen to what anybody may say. Anyone who carries responsibility on him or her, has no choice but to do so. If we thus listen patiently to what others have to say, many problems will get automatically solved.

I used to hear about Kisen, but, now that she is transferred, that will no longer be possible. But I hope she is all right. Please send on to Sushila the letter which is enclosed.

Why should not Lakshmibehn[2], you and others go and mix with the Chharas? I know that none of you can get time for that. But you may stop work for a while and can go. What is their number? How do they spend their days?

About my fast, you will read in my letter[3] to Narandas.

You should now get a letter from Dhurandhar. I have no letter from Krishna Nair. Write to Brijkrishna and ask him to tell you about him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10313. Also C.W. 6752. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Pyarelal's mother
[2] Narayan M. Khare's wife
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - I, II

159. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 5, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

You are not to be affected by the little fast which began on Saturday and ended on Sunday at 1 p.m. It was on account of Appasaheb, that noble worker. Can you recall him? I took only fruit yesterday and milk this morning.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6253. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9719

160. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

December 5, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Narandas informs me that your fever has gone. See that you do not get it again. Drink milk and eat *bhaji* and fruit. In fruit, you may eat black raisins soaked in water. Figs also are excellent. You should eat them dry, chewing them thoroughly. It would be good if you can drink milk up to three pounds. But drink only as much as you can digest. *Tandalja*[1] *bhaji* or fenugreek *bhaji*, and gourd and pumpkin among vegetables are beneficial.

You should also eat a few oranges or *mosambis*. Do not mind the expense.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6746. Also C.W. 4489. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] Amaranth

CWMG - III

161. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

December 5, 1932

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got your letter. Narandas will not be one of the Trustees. Have some patience. Nothing will be finalized without showing it to you. The fence will not be put up just now. The expense will be too heavy. We shall know whether we can afford it when the accounts are brought up to date and we know the value of the total property.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8755

162. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

December 5, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Let me know whether or not you eat the gruel served in the morning. Do you relish it? Where is the *jowar* ground?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1733

163. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

December 5, 1932

MANUDI,

I got your letter. I did not intend to reprimand you in what I wrote about foreign cloth. Take care of your health and be strong. You should not cry. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LII

164. LETTER TO MATHURADAS P. ASAR

December 5, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

If the weaver is not intelligent and honest, he is not likely to be of much help. The finer the yarn, the less will be the value of the result of the mechanical testing. But as the weaver points out its defects to us from time to time, we should go on eliminating them.

Ramji is a different problem. Our atonement lies in winning him over. We have harassed the Harijans so much that, if, on becoming free, they harass us twice as much, we should endure that patiently. We should not do so through selfish motives or under pressure from somebody. If we do so because we want to take work from them our motive is selfish. If you endure his conduct because I want you to do that, you will be doing so under pressure. Nor should you endure it with anger or pity in your heart.

If, however, you do not find it possible at all to work in co-operation with him, do not give him any more work. Do nothing unwillingly or if it makes you unhappy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3759

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters, of the 3rd and the 4th, together. I understand from what you say in your letter that Kusum will follow Dr. Talwalkar's advice, but Radha will not. She will derive any benefit from the treatment that she is likely to get only if she carries it out with determination. Qureshi's decision to go to Lucknow is correct. You did right in not sending Hasmukhrai's letter. See if you can still reason with Parvati and restrain her.

I would not have the courage to undertake the experiment which you are making with regard to Ratilal. This does not

mean that you should not continue it. But it can certainly mean that you have more love in you than I, and it should not be surprising if that is so. The real test of a teacher lies in his success in training his pupil to do better than himself. In other words, he should give to the pupil all he has. If, however, he had had to struggle hard to acquire what he has, his knowledge and skill would be limited. On the other hand, if the pupil whom he is training has great natural aptitude, he can considerably increase what he receives from the teacher. I have not, therefore, paid you an idle compliment in saying what I have written above. It is nothing but an expression of my sincere wish, and that has always been my nature. Whenever I try to impart to somebody what I possess, my only wish is that the other person should improve upon what I give him. In small matters this has actually happened.

Prema seems to be deceiving herself. She overworks and falls ill. She had said in her last letter that the pain in the back had completely disappeared and that she was confident that it would not come back. Take the necessary measures immediately. If it is absolutely necessary to get her tonsils removed, do so as soon as possible.

Chhaganlal is at Hyderabad. I expect him to return here in two or three days.

I have not received *Flowers of St. Francis*. You need not, however, send it if it is with you. I have been able to get another copy.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8274. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

166. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 5, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should rejoice, and not get upset, whenever I fast. You should not speak without thinking and without reason, let alone gossip. In other words, when eating or working you should speak only if it is necessary. To speak loudly is a sign of immodesty. All of you should acquire complete mastery over the *takli*. Know that the skill which Bhau possesses is very useful.

BAPU

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

167. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

December 5, 1932

CHI. RADHIKA,

What should I write to you? Put yourself entirely in the hands of God.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8690. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

168. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

December 5, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

You seem to be progressing satisfactorily. In order to purify the mind, you should busy yourself in good work and go on repeating Ramanama.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1748

169. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

December 5, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

You have given me useful information. I have requested Nanasaheb to intervene. Keep me informed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9445

CWMG - III

170. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 5, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Be content with whatever work God permits you to do. It does not seem proper that we should be wrapped up in warm clothing while others shiver with cold. But we have the right if at all to wear essential garments.[1] We must try to provide them for others too, although God is the true Provider. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 266

171. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 5, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your postcard. I am very glad that you have come to Poona. Your health should improve now. You can come whenever you feel like. A judge's daughter can come when she wants to. Inform me in advance when you intend to come. Come about 1 p.m. except on a Sunday. I had a letter from Father. I had got your previous letter and I had also replied[2] to it.

As my right hand pains, I use the left hand and so the Urdu letters are very badly written. Come soon.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9664

[1] The addressee had expressed a sense of guilt for being warmly clad herself, while serving the scantily clothed Harijan children of Vadaj.

[2] *Vide* p. 107.

[3] These two sentences are in Gujarati.

172. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

December 5, 1932

My future is in the hands of God.

Gandhiji was resting on a cot when I was conducted to the ward. A lady visitor, who had entered the jail premises ten minutes before, was sitting near Gandhiji, carrying on a one-sided conversation, as Gandhiji's day of silence had not yet ended. Mr. Mahadev Desai, the Mahatma's Secretary, was busy attending to the correspondence. Punctually at 2 p.m., the Mahatma broke his silence.

The Mahatma, referring to the referendum that is being taken in Guruvayur, stated that he was glad it was being done in a thorough manner. Instructions were printed on the back of the voting-paper, and to each householder the issue was to be clearly explained.[1]

Referring to the legal difficulties[2], Gandhiji said that it was not his province to study those difficulties. He was prepared to be guided by the legal friends. The Mahatma stressed that every difficulty ought to be overcome. He was satisfied with Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill[3] published in *The Hindu*. Asked whether he would postpone his fast now, in view of the efforts being made in that direction, Gandhiji said that if the referendum was in his favour, and legal difficulties had to be overcome before 2nd January, so far as he could see the fast must be suspended. But if Dr. Subbaroyan was not granted leave to introduce the Bill, the fast would commence on 2nd January.

Commenting on the suggestion made in the Press that the surest way of preventing him from commencing the fast in connection with Guruvayur was to vote against temple-entry, the Mahatma said:

I cannot get out of the fast by such a dodge. I shall then have to impose upon myself a far more severe ordeal than a fast unto death.

[1] *The Times of India*, 7-12-1932, had reported: "Nearly 300 volunteers are carrying out systematic visits collecting three sets of statistics of (1) municipal voters who favour temple-entry, (2) all males favouring or opposing it and (3) all women favouring or opposing it."

[2] Arising from the Act governing religious observances in Madras Presidency

[3] In the Madras Legislative Council. It sought: "to empower the Hindu residents in any locality to secure an alteration by a majority vote in the established practice regarding the admission of untouchables in the local temple" (*Mahatma*, Vol. III, p. 189).

One of those sitting round him, and listening to the answers he was giving me, remarked that there could be nothing more severe than a fast unto death. Gandhiji retorted:

No. Hitherto I have made my fast conditional. A more severe resolve would be a thirty days' fast. If I go on a thirty days' fast, I am bound to carry it out, irrespective of whether the temple is thrown open to Harijans or not.

Questioned regarding the suggestion of some pundits in South India for a compromise between sanatanists and reformers, that if Harijans underwent a purification ceremony they could be admitted into temples, Gandhiji said:

I am not in favour of such a proposal. It is the caste Hindus who have to undergo purification for having done a violent wrong to the untouchables.

The Mahatma would not agree to put a black mark on the Harijan and to say, for instance, that unless he put on a turban he would not be allowed into the temple. All Hindus going to temples were expected to give up carrion-eating.

Dr. Ambedkar had brought to Gandhiji's notice an incident that took place in the neighbourhood of Poona. There Harijans decided on giving up eating carrion. They were prepared to forgo the gain they were getting from the job of removing dead animals. Caste Hindus did not like the Harijans' decision not to remove dead animals. They forced Harijans to eat carrion, saying that it was their dharma. Caste Hindus were the real instigators, and just as in law the instigators were not exempted from punishment, caste Hindus should be taken to task. It was they who had to undergo purification.

Asked whether asking for the allotment of a particular kind of work in jail by the prisoners amounted to a breach of the jail discipline, Gandhiji said:

It is not open to any civil disobedience prisoner to ask for any particular work in the place of some other work. All jail discipline will be broken if it was for the prisoners to demand so.

Mr. Patwardhan had not demanded, the Mahatma continued, a particular work in the place of some other work. What he had said was that he should not be debarred from doing scavenging or conservancy work. He would do the task allotted to him, and also do conservancy. He wanted to be placed in the same category as the so-called low-caste men. It was not merely Bhangis that did this work. All low-caste men were doing it. Every jail did not contain Bhangis. The jail authorities were confining this unclean work to low class people. If they did not do so, there would be a violent agitation by caste Hindus that the Government were breaking their religion and asking them to do low-caste work. Government did not want such an agitation. It had been the rule to exempt high-caste Hindus from doing scavenging work. Mr. Pat-

wardhan could not possibly take advantage of the exemption and so pleaded that he should be allowed to do this work. His case was under consideration by the Government. Gandhiji said that making such a request to the Government did not amount to violation of any jail rule. It did not amount to disobedience of jail regulations.

Gandhiji declared that the future was in the hands of God, and not in the hands of the Government. In respect of last Saturday's fast, there was a divine call, and he had responded to it.

It was true, the Mahatma continued, that he was now devoting all his twenty-four hours to untouchability work. Even while sleeping, he was thinking of it.

Asked whether he would devote so much of his time to this question even when out of jail, Gandhiji with a twinkle in his eyes replied:

I shall not certainly neglect it.

The jail doctor arrived at this stage and examined the Mahatma. The doctor declared that Gandhiji was having a 'tennis-elbow'. One of the visitors said, "Gandhi has never played tennis." On this, Mahatmaji humorously remarked:

Yes, it is true. I call this '*takli*-elbow'.

Mr. Thakkar reminded Gandhiji that it was nearing 3 p.m. and Press correspondents were taking up all the time. Mahatmaji cracked a joke with him saying:

Mr. Thakkar should obey his President.

Mr. Birla (the President of the Anti-Untouchability League) declared that he had no grievance against the Pressmen.

Gandhiji expressed his satisfaction at the progress of the work going on in the country for removal of untouchability.

Gandhiji declared that he would not accept conditional release. Questioned whether he would accept 'parole' for fifteen days, to go to Guruvayur, the Mahatma remarked:

Parole is conditional release.

The Hindu, 6-12-1932

173. ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY[1] PROGRAMME

December 6, 1932

Door-to-door collections of funds for the work of the Anti-Untouchability League should be made everywhere.

A few caste Hindus can set an example to others by cleaning the quarters of Harijans and being of service to them in similar and other ways.

Games, sports and parties should be held by mixed gatherings of Harijans and caste-Hindu children.

Processions and *kirtan* parties of Harijans and caste Hindus should be organized and general efforts should be made to bring the two together, especially in the quarters of the latter.

Public meetings should be held everywhere at which evils of all forms and grades of untouchability should be clearly explained and prayers offered for their speedy and total eradication.

Also, resolutions should be adopted at these meetings for carrying on unremitting propaganda for the purpose of special resolutions in favour of entry of Harijans into all Hindu temples, especially Guruvayur.

The Hindustan Times, 7-12-1932

174. TELEGRAM TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

December 6, 1932

APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
PRISONER, RATNAGIRI PRISON
RATNAGIRI

HAVE LEARNT SOMETHING ABOUT PUTTING YOURSELF ON REDUCED RATIONS BECAUSE OF REFUSAL BY GOVERNMENT LET YOU DO CONSERVANCY WORK. ON HEARING THIS I BEGAN FAST ON SATURDAY SUSPENDED IT SUNDAY PENDING GOVERNMENT CONSIDERATION. GOVERNMENT APPRECIATE YOUR POINT BUT THEY REGARD IT ALL-INDIA QUESTION. THEREFORE UNABLE GIVE DECISION OFF-HAND IN YOUR AND COMRADES'

[1] To be observed on December 18

CWMG - III

CASE. THEY THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT PENDING CONSIDERATION ON ALL INDIA BASIS YOU SHOULD SUSPEND PARTIAL FAST AND TAKE FULL RATIONS RESERVING TO YOURSELF RIGHT TO RESUME PARTIAL FAST EVENT UNFAVOURABLE DECISION. IF I HAVE UNDERSTOOD YOUR POSITION CORRECTLY I REGARD GOVERNMENT SUGGESTION QUITE FAIR. IF YOU APPROVE THEREOF PLEASE RESUME FULL RATIONS AND TELEGRAPH GIVING ME SAME TIME STATEMENT YOUR HEALTH.[1]

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10

175. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*December 6, 1932*][2]

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT COMING HERE UNLESS CAUSE REQUIRES IT. YOU MUST NOT ENDANGER HEALTH TO COME.

BAPU

The Hindu, 12-12-1932

176. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December 6, 1932

Are you able to follow the "Ram Gita"[3]? Its central idea is *bhakti* and its fruit. Pure *bhakti* is bound to lead to non-attachment and true knowledge. If *bhakti* does not produce such results, it is not true *bhakti* but mere sentimentality. True knowledge means the discrimination between the essential and the non-essential. The book-learning that does not give this power of discrimination is not knowledge but bookishness. You can see that once this is realized and the "Ram Gita" grasped accordingly, all worry and impatience disappear.

I am writing this letter soon after the morning prayers. I intended to write about the fast, but began with comments on the "Ram Gita". The fast is now a thing of the past. As it lasted

[1] The addressee's reply of even date read: "Your kind wire. Agree postpone action. Letter follows. Health quite all right."

[2] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date

[3] A selection of verses from the *Gita* made by Gandhiji for the addressee; *vide* Vol. LI, pp. 372-5.

CWMG - III

only a day and a half, I feel no effect of it at all. The weakness came rather quickly but it also left as quickly as it had come. I did a lot of work on the day of the fast and also on Sunday. I can now take sufficient quantity of milk. You should not, therefore, worry about my fasts any time. You should know one thing, i.e., that it is not I who undertake a fast. It may be said that God does it, as my fasts are inspired by Him. You should not, therefore, feel unhappy when I fast, but, if anything, rejoice that I follow dharma by doing so. It should also be remembered that no one is to fast in mere imitation of my action. And particularly those who have close relations with me should fast only after consulting me. Of course it is possible to imagine circumstances in which there might be no time at all to consult me or when the inspiration from within might be unmistakable. However, the tradition among spiritual seekers has been that one should take a new step only after consulting the person one has accepted as more experienced than oneself as long as such a person is physically with us. Everybody cannot hear the inner voice as a matter of course. What one hears may be only a semblance of the inner voice or in fact the voice of the ego. The ego means Satan, Ravana, Ahriman or the Demon. We cannot always recognize whether it is the voice of Rama or Ravana. Very often, Ravana appears in the garb of a sadhu and he looks like Rama. We should, therefore, consult a person of more experience if such a one is available. I intended to write a short letter, but I have written a long one. Show this to all.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 307

CWMG - II

177. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 6, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Sjt. S. B. Medh is an old co-worker from South Africa. He is due to sail from Bombay on the 14th and is anxious just to see me. He is not covered under the existing orders. Permission has therefore to be received from Government before I can see him. He came from South Africa only two or three months ago and is in no way connected with the political situation here. In his letter which I enclose herewith the operative sentence runs, "Before leaving I am anxious to receive your blessings. God only knows when I shall be able to see you again." I would like to respond to the letter if I may and this is only possible if you could obtain the permission by telephone or telegram.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

178. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR HARIJI,

I have your note. In the light of your letter, I have re-read the clause, but I do not see any inconsistency in the previous sentence by retaining the word 'confine'. However, I do not mind the change suggested by you, if you think that that carries out our purpose better; but I have made certain other changes which you will please note, and I have added the proviso which I had hastily omitted. You will see that the proviso is absolutely necessary. I am returning the original with corrections, and enclose herewith a copy with all the corrections carried out leaving you to make your choice of "confine its activities to" or "work for".

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ENCLOSURE

By untouchability is meant the pollution of a person by the touch or approach or sight of another person, but as the practice of classifying people as untouchables in the different provinces does not always conform to the definition and having considered the variety of practice, the Servants of the Untouchables Society has decided for the time being to confine its activities to or work for the removal of the following among other disabilities so as to secure for these classes the same status as the other Hindus enjoy: Prohibition to use public temples, wells, roads, schools, parks, dispensaries, hospitals, crematoria and the like.

It is however understood that removal of untouchability shall not include interdining as it is generally understood or intercaste marriages.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18662

179. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter. You do not need to apologize, and under the stress you are going through, let only one person write, and that too for giving me the necessary report. Urmila Devi, of course, writes and she won't be happy until she has written something practically every day.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18661

180. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY[1], *A.I.V.S.S.*

December 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall be glad to receive a visit from any sanatanist friends, and if they convince me of my error, I shall gladly retrace my steps.

If a meeting of no-change *Shastris* and pro-change *Shastris* can be held, I would be delighted. It would certainly be instructive, and to a certain extent, useful. Being a prisoner, I can-

[1] Hiralal D. Nanavati

CWMG - LII

not arrange for such a meeting[1], and even if I was not, being a layman I should have great hesitation in taking the lead in calling together such an assembly, but I would ask you to send your suggestions to Acharya Dhruva of Benares Hindu University, and perhaps you and he might be able to call together the meeting you have in view.

So far as the insinuation of coercion is concerned, I can only give you my assurance that none is intended, and I fail to see how my fast can coerce a person who holds strong views opposite to mine.

Yours sincerely,

THE GENERAL SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH, RAMBAG
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 18659

181. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 6, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I do not want you to be writing to me when you are so fagged out that you want immediately to go off to sleep. Your sleep is more precious in these days of strain and stress than mere writing to me. When writing is an absolute necessity of course you have to sacrifice sleep, but in that case you must use your words like a miser, and if you can manage with one sentence, do not give me two, and send only a postcard, and in emergent cases you may also use the wire. In other words, please conserve your energy for the work before you. One person alone giving me the necessary report of work from day to day will be quite satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18663

[1] The meeting took place on December 7; *vide* Appendix IV.

CWMG - III

182. LETTER U. SUBBA RAO

December 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would advise you to approach the Untouchability Board of Andhra Desh. It will be difficult for me to take up individual cases and equally difficult for the Central Board to judge them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. U. SUBBA RAO, MANAGER
SHREE HARIJANA ASHRAMAM, PONNAMANDA
EAST GODAVARI

From a photostat: G.N. 6702. Also C.W. 4448. Courtesy: U. Subba Rao

183. LETTER TO A GUJARATI STUDENT

December 6, 1932

To ensure that my fast does not by any chance pass as blackmail, the opinion of the people living in the neighbourhood of the temple is being collected. If the majority is in favour of the reform, the reform is a duty and should be effected. This in no way involves injustice to the minority. If the minority desires, a fixed time can be set apart for them. Otherwise, it is open to them to build a temple of their own. If three of the four brothers living as a joint family change their religion, it will be justice if they become the owners of the joint family property and give the fourth brother his share. In the present case the utmost that the minority can demand is money to build a separate temple for themselves. However, they cannot do even that if an exclusive time is set apart for them when they can worship in the temple. If we apply this line of reasoning to your case, the conclusion is this: The Grandfather should have the freedom to follow dharma as he understands it, and you to follow it as you understand it. If, for this reason, he asks you to leave the home, you have no choice but to endure the boycott. If your wife refuses to live with you unless you undergo ceremonial purification, you should

CWMG - LIII

endure boycott by her too. You should not live with her against her will. A husband has no right whatever to force his wife to do or believe anything. But it is probable that the wife will say this: 'What else can I do even if you do not undergo purification? I will live with you.' If your wife says this, it means that she cares for you more than she does for the custom of untouchability. In other words, as between the custom of untouchability and living with you, she regards it as her duty to live with you. We have to make innumerable such choices every day in our life, but we make them spontaneously and, therefore, are not conscious of doing so. This contains a reply to all your questions. Ask me to explain again if you do not follow anything in this. If you wish to put other questions, you may do that too.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 308

184. A LETTER

December 6, 1932

For a guilty party to write about injustice having been done to him is not a sign of repentance. Nobody who has sincerely repented has ever looked upon the punishment given to him as punishment. On the contrary, such persons have always felt that the punishment was not severe enough. You compare yourself with . . .[1] and believe that you are less guilty than he. I don't know anything about . . . 's[2] misbehaviour. You don't even seem to be aware that you have come with a sullied reputation and that you have misbehaved many times in the Ashram too. I don't mind the mistakes. All of us commit mistakes. But what makes me unhappy is that you feel no sincere repentance for your errors. Till you do that, I think it improper on your part even to wish to go back to the Ashram. I am afraid sincere repentance is not in your nature. All the same, if you can convince Narandas about your sincerity and if he accepts you, I will not stand in your way.

Blessings from your unhappy
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 309-10

[1] & [2] The names are omitted in the source.

185. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

December 6, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Dahyabhai's temperature was expected to return completely to normal on Sunday, but it did not. It does become normal but again rises up to 99° to 100°. So the fever may perhaps persist a week longer. But the doctor has ceased to worry. He has started giving Dahyabhai Sanatogen as a tonic, besides a pound and a half of milk, which is well digested. Ambalal[1], Thakkar[2], Ba and others went and saw Dahyabhai during the last two days or so. All of them report that Dahyabhai is cheerful. No one would believe that he had been suffering from typhoid for as long as four weeks. You should not, therefore, worry in the least.

My fast is now an old story. I hope you read all about it in *The Times of India*. Such fasts are a frequent occurrence in my life. You should, therefore, regard them as normal and devote yourself to your daily work. I hope you are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 95-6

186. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON[3]

[Before *December 7, 1932*][4]

DEAR FRIEND,

It seems to me that if the letter addressed to the Zamorin and signed by all students who believe in the removal of untouchability be sent, it will be a striking thing showing the Hindu world that the rising generation is bent on removing the black mark and it would be a great thing if the example of the Hindu

[1] Ambalal Sarabhai
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar
[3] Professor, Benares Hindu University
[4] The letter was published under the date-line: "Benares, December 7".

University was followed by the Hindu students throughout India.

Yours sincerely,

The Hindustan Times, 9-12-1932

187. INTERVIEW TO SRIPAD SHANKER[1]

[Before *December 7, 1932*][2]

Questioned whether he would be satisfied with the admission of Harijans up to the flag post[3], Mahatmaji made it perfectly clear that there was no half-way house in the house of God. There is no such thing as temple-entry step by step. It should be unconditional and unqualified. The Harijans should be given the same equality of status as the other caste Hindus in the matter of public worship.

Asked whether he would accept some elementary test like purification and giving up eating beef, etc., Mahatmaji said that though he was always advocating the purification and the social uplift of the Harijans in all respects, he has made it a point of honour not to accept any conditions whatsoever as conditions precedent for admission of Harijans into temples. Some of the caste Hindus who enjoy the right of free entry need as much purification, if not more.

The status of Harijans today is in direct proportion to the shameful treatment the caste Hindus have been giving them for generations past. In fact the conditions calling for purification are the result of such treatment. The position of the caste Hindus in this respect is exactly similar to that of a debtor in a commercial transaction. A man who has contracted a loan is only doing his duty by paying back a portion of it and need not consider himself generous for paying back half of what he owes.

Asked whether he would allow sympathetic fasting on the issue of the temple-entry, Mahatmaji emphatically asserted that Mr. Kelappan held the field on the issue of fasting on the Guruvayur temple-entry. If the fast came off he would strongly object to anybody else fasting in sympathy with them or offering satyagraha on that issue. This does not preclude legitimate country-wide propaganda in the cause of anti-untouchability movement and temple-entry.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-12-1932

[1] Of Madras, who interviewed Gandhiji about the problems of temple-entry in South India

[2] The report was published under the date-line: "Bombay, Wednesday, December 7, 1932".

[3] *Dhwajasthambha*, which stands in front of the shrine in the temple premises and to which people offer salute before worshipping the deity inside

188. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7, 1932

NARANDAS
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

KANTI SHOULD GO RAJKOT RECOUP. PREMA SHOULD UNDERGO OPERATION.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8276. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

189. TELEGRAM TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 7, 1932

KANHAIYALAL MUNSHI
PRISONER
CENTRAL JAIL BIJAPUR

JUST RECEIVED YOUR LETTER. HAVE GIVEN NO OPINION OUTSIDE. DO NOT WANT YOU TAKE ANY STEP WITHOUT CONVICTION. WILL READ PLAY[2] AND GIVE YOU CONSIDERED OPINION WRITING.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7519. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

190. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

December 7, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have had a long chat with Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, as also Satisbabu regarding the Anti-Untouchability Board for Bengal. I have also several letters from Bengal complaining about the formation of the Board. Before it was formed Ghanshyamdas had told me that he was going to ask you to form the Board, and

[1] *Vide* also p. 122.

[2] The reference is to the play *Brahmacharyashrama* mentioned in "Letter to K. M. Munshi", pp. 65-6 and 149-50.

without giving any thought to the suggestion I at once endorsed it. But I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal, especially so far as Satisbabu and Dr. Suresh are concerned. They think that the Board is bound to have a party colour about it. I do not know how far this fear is justified, but I do know this that the work of anti-untouchability should not become a party affair in any way whatsoever. We want all who desire the reform to associate themselves freely and whole-heartedly with any organization that may be formed. I would therefore suggest that you should call all the workers representing different groups and parties and place yourself at their disposal and let them then choose whomsoever they like as President, offering to give your whole-hearted co-operation to the President and Board of their choice. I know that this requires self-abnegation. If I know you well, I know that this is not beyond you. Of course if you feel that there is nothing in the complaints made and that you will be able to smooth down all the difficulties and that you will be able to bring all the parties together, I have of course nothing to say. In making the suggestions that I have made I have assumed the impossibility of securing the association of all parties with the Board as it is constituted at present. I have now placed the whole thing before you. You will do whatever is best in the interest of the cause.[1]

Sjt. Khaitan gave me your message about Basanti Devi. I told him that I wanted her to make her own choice, but wanted her to work effectively and ceaselessly in the cause of anti-untouchability. I am not enamoured of her accepting any office in any organization. When I was there at the time of the Deshbandhu collections, both she and I had come to the conclusion that hers was not to run any organization, but simply to work whenever she was free and had the mind for it.

You will please tell me all about Dr. Alam[2].

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
WELLINGTON STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 7907. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18667 and *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 76-7

[1] For Dr. B. C. Roy's reply, *vide* Appendix V; *vide* also "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", 15-12-1932.

[2] He was under Dr. B. C. Roy's treatment in Calcutta.

191. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 7, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Write to me immediately today and inform me about the condition of your health. I am trying to secure permission to see you. Appa's problem[1] seems to have been solved for the time being. The intended semi-fast and complete fast have been postponed. It seems the problem will be solved completely. I have regained two pounds of weight. I will get a copy of *Ashramvasi Pratye* and send it to you. If you want any other books, let me know. It is very necessary to send Kamalnayan to Ceylon.[2] He writes and tells me that Janakidevi also has agreed now. The climate and water there will certainly suit him, and his desire to learn English will also be satisfied. The present atmosphere in India cannot but have a disturbing effect on his mind, but in Ceylon he will remain calm. He will be away from home, and yet not too far away. He will be able to return home whenever he wishes to do so. And he will get excellent facilities for learning English. Thus I like the idea from all points of view. Let me know what you think; I will then take the necessary steps to arrange for his going. I shall have to write to a few persons.

Ghanshyamdas left yesterday. He could not, of course, see you. Devdas is still here. Rajendrababu's health cannot be described as too good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2906

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Fast to Anti-Untouchability Committee", pp. 112-4.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Janakidevi Bajaj", p. 40.

192. *INTERVIEW TO STUDENTS*

POONA,
December 7, 1932

How can you fight them?[1] What do you generally do when you want your things done? You cry. Is it not?

STUDENTS: (laughingly) Yes.

GANDHIJI: Then cry and weep. (Laughter)

One student said that as their fathers were Government servants, they were afraid to join the anti-untouchability movement.

GANDHIJI: But this is not political work. Government servants could do many things, contribute to the funds, engage in their houses untouchables, bring up the Harijan boys and girls and there was no politics in that.

How can we serve them in schools?

GANDHIJI: In schools you cannot do anything. You go there to learn. Do not bother your little heads there but out of school hours, you can do.

How?

GANDHIJI: Where the untouchables are living, mix with them, play with them and see that their quarters are kept clean, take broom and sweep and teach them to be clean. Show by your own life that you do not observe untouchability, show them that you love them. Treat them as your blood-brothers. You are too young. Day by day you will learn better the knack of doing the right.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 9-12-1932

[1] The source had reported: " . . . a group of young high school students . . . informed Gandhiji that they wanted to serve Harijans but their fathers would not allow them to do so. Gandhiji laughingly asked them to fight them . . ."

[2] The report had concluded: "The students . . . thanked Gandhiji and offered him yarn garlands and withdrew."

193. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

POONA,
December [7][1], *1932*

The Government have regarded the question as of all-India importance. From the point of view of prison administration, they had difficulty in giving a decision in connection with the request of Appasaheb Patwardhan, but they have consented to consider the whole question and announce their decision as early as possible. In the circumstances, I recognized the Government's difficulty myself, and was permitted to send a telegram[2] to Appasaheb advising him, pending Government decision, to suspend the partial fast. The following telegram was received from him this morning:

> Your kind wire. Agree postpone action. Letter follows. Health is quite all right.

The result is Appasaheb begins to take his full rations from today, and my fast stands, naturally, further suspended. From my point of view as an anti-untouchability worker, the matter is quite simple. The so-called high-caste Hindus, like Appasaheb Patwardhan and his co-workers, who voluntarily offer to do conservancy work, purely from a humanitarian motive and in a spirit of service, should be permitted to do that work. The existing practice seems to be to confine this service to the so-called low-caste prisoners, although they may never have done conservancy work outside, and although they may not belong to the Bhangi caste, and this they are made to do whether they wish it or not.

People who are in prison for conscience sake cannot afford to arrogate superiority to themselves. At the same time, there are obvious administrative difficulties in suddenly disturbing a practice that has prevailed for a number of years throughout the prisons in India. I have, therefore, no hesitation in suspending the fast myself, pending an examination of the whole question by the Government of India and the Local Government. Appasaheb has specialized in this subject and therefore knows much more about it than I do. I am glad he has appreciated the Government's difficulties and has suspended the partial fast. Let us hope that an

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-12-1932
[2] *Vide* pp. 128-9.

early and satisfactory decision will be arrived at by the Government so as to enable the reformers now undergoing imprisonment to render conservancy service, without in any way impairing the smooth administration of the various gaols.

The Hindu, 8-12-1932

194. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 7/8, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your weekly letter to hand. I hope you had my wire[1] and postcard[2] regarding the fast.

The above was written last night. It is now 5 a.m. after prayer and the drink and the oranges. Of the loss of 6 lb. not in one day but in four days, I have regained 2 lb. This shows that I can gain a few pounds as quickly as I lose. In other words it is merely the weight of superficial food and water I carry about me. The fast lasted only 44 hours. It can produce no permanent harm. You are right when you say that I could not have rebuilt the muscle lost during the last fast.

But the fast has become the normal course of my life. It is the spiritual medicine applied from time to time for diseases that yield to that particular treatment. Not everyone can gain the capacity for it all of a sudden. I have gained it, if I have, after a very long course of training.

Co-workers should not be unhinged or the least disturbed whenever they hear about my fast. They should rejoice at it, if they believe in my purity and sanity. For then it must be good for us all and the whole world, even as every spiritual effort is. It must be for us all an encouragement to greater heart-searching and purification.

I am glad you have again some company of the ordinary kind.

I do not want to start the saltless experiment just now. I am watching the elbows. There is no discomfort. Suspension of spinning is a deprivation. I should bear it for the time being.

Manilal and his wife are off to South Africa next week. Their presence is necessary there. They must not be diverted from their duty by my fast and the like. They cannot alter the

[1&2] *Vide* pp. 116 and 119.

course of events and can render me no help. They should not have rushed here at all.

Ba and Urmila Devi are doing well in the South.

But I must stop now.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6255. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9721

195. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 7/8, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this Liladhar's letter. He has said something in it against Prema. What are the facts? Parashuram also complains bitterly. And, besides, there is the general complaint that she beats children. I have no time just now to write to her and for the present leave the matter here. If, moreover, she is to be operated upon, I should not like to harass her at this time.

I return Liladhar's diary by registered post. . . .[1] came and saw me yesterday. I don't think her relation with . . .[2] is absolutely pure. They have not actually sinned, but I have no doubt in my mind that they have impure feelings for each other. They certainly cannot live together. There were long letters from . . .[3] which were painful to read. He also believes that they cannot live together. I shall consider now what we should do. This is not your worry, but mine. God will solve the problem. I will write more when I get time.

BAPU

December 8, 1932

I felt that I should somehow find time and write to Chhaganlal, and, therefore, have done so. Read the accompanying letter before sending it on to him, so that I need not write anything about the matter again to you. I shall have to write to you, if some new thought occurs to me or if I take some concrete step. If you wish to write and suggest anything, by all means do so.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8277. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1], [2] & [3] The names have been omitted.

196. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 8, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

A pamphlet published by certain prisoners recently discharged from Ratnagiri Jail has just been received by me. I enclose the original. I have marked certain portions and I send you for immediate reference a free translation of some of the most important portions. From this two things stand out prominently. Quite a large number of the so-called high-caste Hindus were actually doing conservancy work with satisfaction, till the work was stopped under your orders. The party was organized and its work supervised by Appasaheb Patwardhan himself. At the time there were not sufficient Bhangis in the Jail, therefore the so-called low-caste prisoners had to be imported from another jail. If this information is correct, it makes Appasaheb's case stronger than I had imagined. But that is not now of much moment. What however is clear to me is that this is a case which demands early and sympathetic handling.

Could you please ascertain from the Government when a decision may be expected, especially in view of my contemplated fast on the 2nd January next?[1]

Yours sincerely,

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (6), p. 191. Also Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 31. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Originally Gandhiji had written: "In any case, I hope that the decision of the Government of India will be reached before the 25th instant." For Doyle's comments on the change, *vide* Appendix VI.

197. LETTER TO S. A. K. SUBRAMANIAM[1]

December 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that those who prevent the use of the Hindu burial-ground for the dead bodies of Harijans are acting contrary to their religion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-1-1933

198. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

December 8, 1932

Many thanks for your letter. A thousand apologies for my stupidity. But you will please excuse me. I could not help mentioning the lady, because I had her often in my mind.[2] Within the course of a few days I had had two stupid lapses of memory. What you say about Mr. Pandya's article is quite true.[3]

I understand what you say about the death anniversary of Swami Shraddhanandji. I did mention your proposal to some members of the new organization, but they thought, and I agree with them, that it would be wrong for the organization to observe the day under its auspices. There is already an organization brought into being by the marvellous activities of Shraddhanandji himself. Its scope is much larger than that of the Anti-Untouchability Society. There is every danger of its activity being misunderstood if it celebrated the anniversary under its auspices, and

[1] Of Salem

[2] Gandhiji had confused the addressee's late daughter with his wife (S.N. 18654).

[3] The addressee had written: "I have to invite your attention to the article of Mr. Pandya, because it is symbolic of the numerous attempts that have been made to bring down the numbers of so-called untouchables since 1928. If to deny the existence of the untouchables were a solution of the problem, there was some sense in these attempts. The attempted denial is only for relieving the caste-Hindu leaders of their responsibility" (S.N. 18654).

CWMG - LII

it would be wrong if it limited the scope of the observance so as to keep it in a line with its objective.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18671

199. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

December 8, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ[1],

With reference to your letter of the 3rd instant, here are my answers to your questions[2]:

1. If, as a result of the referendum, it is found that the majority of the temple-going population in the area covered by the referendum is against temple-entry by Harijans, the fast will undoubtedly be postponed. The postponement is likely to be indefinite, and resumption, if there is to be a resumption, can only be determined by circumstances over which I can have no control and which I cannot foresee.[3]

2. I think that it is premature to talk of satyagraha about other temples if and when Guruvayur is opened. We should always hope that the opening of Guruvayur will clear the way to the other temples.

3. I should hope that the Zamorin will not influence the people one way or the other, but even if he does, I should expect

[1] Honorary Organizer and General Secretary of the Depressed Classes of India Service Society, Poona

[2] (i) "If after the referendum it is found that the caste Hindus are against temple-entry, will you fast? You stated that you will postpone your fast. How long will you postpone?

(ii) When Guruvayur Temple is opened, satyagraha will be offered at other temples. Will you render your active support?

(iii) As the Zamorin is a big landlord and influential man, will he not be able to carry a large section of the caste Hindus with him? Will it be a proper and genuine expression of the opinion of the caste Hindus that we obtain through the referendum?

(iv) Are you not aware that many caste Hindus eat beef? In your fifth statement in reply to my question you asked Harijans to give up beef. Some people take it as a condition for entry into temples. In that case are all caste Hindus who eat beef eligible for temple-entry? You might be aware that there are several untouchables who neither eat beef nor lead unclean lives. Why are such untouchables prevented from entry into temples?" (S.N. 18652)

[3] *Vide* also Appendix VII

people at least on a religious question such as the one before them to think independently. In any event, I should consider myself bound by the opinion of the majority. The referendum will merely determine the question of the fast, not the question of opening the temple. If the result is hostile to temple-entry by Harijans, ways and means will have to be found of educating public opinion and preparing it for the opening. This is clear to me that there should be no forcible opening of any single temple. It would be an unseemly thing to have hostile sections looking daggers at one another, using the same temple.

4. I am firmly of opinion that there should be no condition made for the entry of Harijans to temples that are not applicable to the other Hindu worshippers. There should be therefore one regulation for all. I personally do feel that beef being forbidden food in Hinduism, it should be given up by beef-eating Harijans, whether the temples are opened or not. They should impose that condition on themselves without any prompting and without any consideration in the shape of temple-entry or other. There can be no doubt that every reform voluntarily made by Harijans among themselves is bound to hasten the removal of the black mark. It would make the task of caste-Hindu reformers infinitely easier than it is, and wind will be taken out of the sail of the opponents of the removal of untouchability. I hope therefore that no Harijan will say, 'First remove untouchability, and then we shall abstain from beef or do many other things expected of us.' Such an attitude will be just as bad as the attitude of those who would impose conditions on their admission to temples and the like.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. N. RAJBHOJ
207 GHORPADE PETH, POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 18672

200. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

December [8][1], 1932

MY DEAR ANGADA[2],

You do not [know] how glad we all are when we hear from you. So we were delighted to have your letter of 10th November. This is your 3rd letter. As my companions I have only the Sardar and Mahadev. Ba and Pyarelal were naturally taken away soon after the fast was over. But Ramdas, Surendra have been in this jail for some months and now there is Jamnalalji —the last having been transferred here for the sake of his health.

I hope you are well in every way.

With love from us all.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4544. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

201. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 8, 1932

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I hope you got my wire[3] and that it has healed your wound a little. I was pained to know that you had felt hurt, but at the same time I was also glad that you had such love for me. It is only the words of one whom we love that please or pain us.

You wrongly feared that I had communicated to that critic, too, the opinion I expressed to you.[4] On the other hand, I wrote to him and told him that I had no right whatever to give an

[1] As written in the source by an unknown hand, the original date having been defaced by the prison stamp

[2] Rama's monkey-emissary in the *Ramayana*. He was sent to plead with Ravana to restore Sita to Rama. Before launching the Salt Satyagraha in 1930, Gandhiji had sent his ultimatum to Lord Irwin through Reginald Reynolds. Narandas Gandhi gave him this name. *Vide* Vol. XLIII, pp. 2-8 and 185.

[3] *Vide* p. 138.

[4] *Vide* pp. 65-6.

opinion from jail. The youth has not replied to my inquiry as to who intended to stage the play. You should rest assured that I would never criticize your writings without ascertaining your views. I have great attachment for you both and have told you that I want a good many things from you. How can I have them unless I am able to win your heart? I shall never forget that early morning scene on the beach. I will go through your farce if I get the time. I will read it with your eyes and write to you if I have anything to say. I would not use the freedom you have granted me, and you also need not stop the sale. I do not wish to persuade you to do that even through strength of our mutual love. It is true that I have not read any of your books. I will, therefore, try to read them if you recommend any.

We shall discuss art in person if and when God brings us together. I have been able to understand you from your letter to some extent.

What shall I write to you about untouchability? You should learn to see unity in my life in spite of its multiplicity, and, if you understand it, explain it to your co-workers. All my activities spring from one source.

I had received an interesting letter from Lilavati[1] just a few days before I got yours. I have still to reply to it.

I have written this with the left hand as my right elbow is paining more than usual. Our regards to you all.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From Gujarati: C.W. 7520. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

202. A LETTER

December 8, 1932

If there was any error in this, let the blame be mine, for I have drawn all of you into a very risky experiment. It is as dangerous as putting one's hand into a snake's hole. I don't regret it. It will be continued and I am sure that its ultimate result will be good. It will require sacrifices and we will make them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 313

[1] Addressee's wife

203. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–X

December 9, 1932

One of the friends who attended the meeting of Anti-Untouchability League, which because of the prior body founded by Mr. V. R. Shinde bearing practically the same name will henceforth be called, and in my opinion more appropriately, the Servants of Untouchables Society, gave me a list of several questions with argument woven into them. For the sake of brevity, I reproduce the most important of these questions in the form of a letter:

> As the Society has been formed at your instance and for the purpose of carrying out the programme for the removal of untouchability, workers naturally would expect your definite guidance. The first question that occurs to me then is this: Are the workers to constitute themselves as reformers, doing work of uplifting untouchables or uplifting themselves and if it is to be the latter, should not the greatest stress be laid upon work amongst caste Hindus themselves, and if so how is that work to be done?

This is a comprehensive question and in answering it, I hope to be able to cover the main points raised by my friend. I have repeatedly declared in unequivocal terms that caste Hindus are sinners who have sinned against those who are called untouchables. Caste Hindus are responsible for the present condition of the untouchables. Immediately, therefore, they repent for the sin and purify themselves by removing the load of untouchability from off the backs of untouchables, we shall discover perfect transformation among the latter. Not that they will at once shed the habits of a lifetime, but there would be conscious effort on their part to shed those habits and everywhere the multitude of caste Hindus will be helping them to give up those habits.

It would be like the suppressed members of a family rejoining the suppressors, feeling the warmth of reunion and suppressors receiving them as if they were never separated. I am painfully conscious of the fact that such a consummation will take some time before it comes, but it will never come unless some of us understand and adopt the right attitude. Even among the liberal-minded workers, I have often heard the opinion expressed that untouchability should be removed only when the Harijans give

up their bad habits, educate themselves and live clean lives utterly forgetting that Harijans cannot do these things whilst they remain untouchables. Even if they would, they forget also that individual Harijans who are living decently are not received on terms of equality by caste Hindus and the very best amongst them are denied the ordinary amenities of life every day and contact with caste Hindus. Their birth constitutes the automatic cause for the penal servitude for life which cannot be commuted by any change in manners or any other consideration. Hence there is and can be no incentive to better their mode of life. The idea has taken deep root in their minds that they may hope for no redemption at least during their present lifetime.

The only way therefore is to undo the mischief and make them realize the dignity of their status as men. Caste Hindus should first unconditionally take them up as their very own and then and then only can a change in their condition on a vast scale take place. Therefore the first and foremost items in the programme of work should be a whirlwind propaganda for educating and canvassing opinion among caste Hindus. This work can be done by personal visits on a most intensive scale and by flooding the country with literature on the subject.

In my opinion untouchability is as self-demonstrated a sin as untruth. The proposition does not need the support of Shastras. Nevertheless, as there is a body of learned men who invoke the aid of Shastras in order to justify untouchability by reason of mere birth, it would be well for workers to arm themselves with pro-reform literature. There is a growing body of learned men in Shastras who emphatically hold that untouchability as it is believed and practised today, has no support whatsoever in the Shastras.

This propaganda can only be entrusted to workers who have character to lose, those who will not be easily ruffled by insults, who have patience to listen to counter argument and wit enough to combat it. In a movement of religious reform, there is no room whatsoever for coercion in any shape or form. Reformers will have to submit to their fate if as a result of this personal canvassing it is discovered that a vast majority of Hindus have no sense of sin about untouchability or even otherwise are averse to its removal and the consequent raising of the Harijans' status. They will have then without being irritated against the majority shown by personal suffering that they are in the right and the majority in the wrong and this they can best do by making common cause with Harijans and voluntarily denying themselves those rights and conveniences which are today denied to Harijans.

Such an act of self-denial by a large body of men and women will by itself fill the Harijans with hope and raise them in their own estimation and encourage them to an effort for self-improvement. The most effective work that can be done among caste men is to induce them to take one Harijan at least per family either as member or at least as domestic servant. There is an ancient practice in well-to-do households never to take their meal without having at least one guest to share it with them. Nowadays this is more observed in the breach than in the performance. This act is described as one of the five daily *yajnas* or sacrifices. I cannot conceive of a better mode of offering this *yajna* than that of having a Harijan to share the meal with us.

This must not be confused with interdining. For me, interdining means dining with those who may touch your food and whose food you may touch but dining together under the same roof without the mutual touch does not mean interdining.

If untouchability of Harijans is removed there can be no objection to their sharing the family meal precisely on the same terms as other castes. There are again innumerable social functions and ceremonies to which Harijans are never invited by caste men. Their cattle and other domestic animals may share their joys and sorrows but not Harijans or, if they do, these are occasions when they are pointedly reminded that they are not the same sort of human beings as caste Hindus.

I have pointed out only a few illustrations of the kind of propaganda and work that can be and should be done amongst caste men to purge themselves of the sin but, even as special treatment and care are bestowed upon a banished member of the family when he is recalled, so will caste men do the work amongst Harijans themselves when the sense of sin has really dawned upon them. They will then go to the Harijans not as teachers or donors but as debtors going to their creditors to discharge their obligations and in that humble spirit they will offer to teach them, their children and otherwise help them in every way possible for them.

It has been suggested that if this constructive programme is taken up, it would prove too expensive and too long-drawn-out to be of immediate service, and to do it would be a programme by itself on the part of a handful of reformers. It assumes a different shape when it is conceived as an item in the programme of self-purification. A tree is judged by its fruit and so has the changed spirit of caste men to be judged by its results. It is, therefore, not enough for them to be able to say that they have touched half a dozen Harijans during the day or even that they

have fed a Harijan but their newly born affection for them should make them impatient to render this neglected portion of humanity every help that it is in their power to render.

After all, Harijans themselves have to feel the effect of the new awakening in Hinduism and they cannot do so unless caste men come in contact with them in every walk of life and every activity. If the awakening is universal, constructive programme will not prove expensive. Local volunteers will work in their own localities without needing any payment and if the awakening is not universal it becomes the double duty of workers to tackle the constructive programme.

Therefore, whether it is slow or quick, expensive or inexpensive, I have no doubt it must be the integral part of the activities of the society. It may not be able to overtake all Harijan children, or all Harijan sick needing medical aid but whatever is done in that direction will count and should be an earnest of more to come.

Moreover the monetary contributions will be the index of the extent to which caste Hindus have responded to the call of the age. In this programme temple-entry occupies the most important place, for, when the innumerable public temples are opened to Harijans they will immediately feel the dawning of a new era for them. They will forget that they were once the outcastes of the society. Intermingling at temples will of itself induce a change in their outlook and in their lives. They will forsake their objectionable habits. But say some of my correspondents:

> What are temples worth today? They are dens of iniquities. All kinds of practices are going on there.

I have a cutting before me containing a letter from a lady drawing an ugly picture of what is going on in a famous temple. I do not know how far charges made against some of these celebrated shrines are true. There is no doubt that temples are not what they must have been when they were built. Temple-reform in itself is a separate subject. Their deterioration cannot be pleaded as valid reason for not opening them to Harijans and I know that vast mass of poor people who visit these temples are untouched by corruption that may be going on in them; and whatever may be true of famous temples is undoubtedly not true of village temples. Village temples were and even now are a place of refuge for villagers. It is difficult to conceive the life of a Hindu villager being regulated without his temple. Whether it is birth or death or marriage in Hindu family, temple plays a prominent part.

Therefore, Harijans must have access to it. But says another correspondent:

> If you do not insist on Harijans conforming to certain regulations such as cleanliness, you will lower the already tottering reputation of temples.

I anticipate no such catastrophe. What I have said is that no special condition should be laid down for the entry of Harijans that is not applicable to every other Hindu worshipper.

I heartily endorse that suggestion of Dr. Bhagwandas that instead of untouchability senselessly attaching to birth, it should attach to individual's outward conduct.[1] One cannot regulate inward cleanliness but it is possible to regulate outward conduct and therefore those whose habits are unclean, who are unwashed and unkempt, who are drunk, should be regarded untouchables till they have cleaned themselves even as every human being all the world over in decent society is untouchable whilst he is in a dirty condition from any cause whatsoever. But under the cover of specious argument as cleanliness, etc., Harijans should no longer be kept without payment of the debt due to them by caste men.

The first step therefore is to receive them as they are, subject only to general regulations, not specially imposed for the occasion, but the regulations that have been in vogue before reforms came. New regulations may undoubtedly be framed after freedom of Harijans is honestly declared and assured to them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1932

204. TELEGRAM TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 9, 1932

HEAR THAT VOTES TAKEN FROM ALL HINDUS IRRESPECTIVE WHETHER THEY ARE TEMPLE GOERS OR NOT.[2] IF THIS IS SO REFERENDUM WILL BE TOTALLY VALUELESS. PLEASE WIRE[3]

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Bhagwandas" 14-12-1939.

[2] According to *The Hindu*, 12-12-1932, "A correspondent wrote to Gandhiji expressing apprehension that the referendum at Guruvayur was not being taken in the proper way. *Vide* also the following two items.

[3] The addressee's telegram is not available, but a telegram dated December 10, 1932, from Rajagopalachari read: "Every precaution taken ensuring exact count votes of only *savarna* temple-goers. See statement Press issued along with this" (S.N. 18683).

WHAT PRECISELY IS BEING DONE. IF ABSOLUTE PRECAUTION NOT BEING TAKEN VOTES HITHERTO RECEIVED SHOULD IN MY OPINION BE CANCELLED.

GANDHIJI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18676

205. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 9, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I think that you are keeping the opinion of *avarnas* also. I quite recognize that the opinion based upon a knowledge of the local situation should prevail. I am glad that things are shaping themselves quite well there.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18675

206. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER[1]

December 9, 1932

I have certainly meant *bonafide* temple-goers for it is only the opinion of those who believe in temple-worship that should count.

Those who are wholly uninterested in temple-going have in my opinion no right to vote one way or the other.

The Hindu, 19-12-1932

[1] In his reply dated December 16, the addressee, an ex-chairman of Trichur Municipality wrote: "I thank you for your kind reply of the 9th instant. I had clearly mentioned in my letter to you as follows: 'I have to request you to make it clear whether the opinion of the majority of the caste Hindus (no matter whether they are *bonafide* temple-goers or not) will prevail with you or is it the opinion of the majority of *bonafide* temple-goers' and I had concluded my letter as follows: 'If you are convinced that the majority of caste Hindus who now worship in the Guruvayur Temple (not the majority of the caste Hindus who are eligible for worship) will desert the temple if Harijans are allowed entry, will you still fast?' " (S.N. 18723)

CWMG - III

207. LETTER TO A. S. ALTEKAR

December 9, 1932

DEAR DR. ALTEKAR,

I thank you for your letter and the pamphlet sent by you. Copies sent by you before were also received. Your pamphlet is very seasonable.

You say that my view that untouchability is not countenanced by Hinduism will not be acceptable to the average orthodox Hindu. Whether it will be acceptable or not is not the point. The question is whether there is any warrant for belief in untouchability as it is practised today. I am fully aware that there is untouchability in the *Smritis*, and perhaps also in the Vedas; but that attaches not to birth but to external practice. If you do not mind, I would like you to examine the question from the standpoint suggested by me. According to the *Smritis*, what is the definition of untouchability? Is that untouchability incurable by any penance whatsoever? And what are the disabilities of untouchables?

Yours sincerely,

DR. A. S. ALTEKAR
HINDU UNIVERSITY, BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 18678

208. LETTER TO R. L. BISWAS

December 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can entirely enter into your feelings, but I would plead for a little patience. If caste Hindus do anything in connection with untouchability, I fully recognize that it must be in the spirit of service and not that of patronage, and I am quite clear in my mind that there should be no idea whatsoever of taking any political advantage of the suppressed classes. The Society[1] that has been formed has therefore been kept

[1] The Anti-Untouchability League, renamed as the Servants of Untouchables Society; *vide* p. 151.

wholly free from politics. I have repeatedly said that removal of untouchability for caste Hindus should mean repentance. I therefore share your sentiment to the full that you should not be spoon-fed and that you should work out your own salvation. I would like you to keep yourself in touch with me and draw my attention to anything which you may consider to be improper or undesirable in the programme or work of the new Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. L. BISWAS, B.A., B.L.
59 BADRIDAS TEMPLE ST.
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18674

209. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 9, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter of 12th November only today. If it was an airmail letter it should have been received about the 22nd of November. Your letter therefore seems to have gone through the whole circuit of examination before being delivered to me. I shall enquire. I am surprised that there should be any question arising as to whether I could do untouchability work more effectively as a free man than as a prisoner. I should think that it is a self-evident proposition that I could do more effective work as a free man. At the same time I can fully appreciate the Government standpoint. So long as they feel that civil disobedience must be put down at any cost and that their plan might be frustrated or checked if I was left free to carry on civil disobedience propaganda, they are bound to keep me under detention unless I would give them an assurance, be it even verbal, that I would not carry on civil disobedience propaganda. For my part, however much I may wish to confine myself wholly to untouchability work, I cannot without a full knowledge of the circumstances outside give any undertaking as to my future action. After all civil disobedience under given circumstances is as much an article of faith with me as removal of untouchability. I can therefore never say beforehand what will occupy my attention exclusively or for the most part at a given moment and since a civil resister bargains for the punishment he receives for his resistance, he must not fret

over it. Therefore and to that extent I am content with my lot. I hope this tells you clearly how I stand.

I hope you got there no alarming report about my little fast over Appasaheb Patwardhan. I need not, give you the details about the event for you must have seen them in the papers. All I need say is that except for a little weakness there is no ill effect left of the fast. I hope too that you are finding no difficulty in understanding and appreciating the temple-entry question and the contemplated fast.

I hope that you are keeping your health in spite of the stress.

Dr. Ansari is wonderful. If he is there give him our love and tell him that our prayers always ascend to heaven for his complete recovery.

If what you say about the communal decision turns out to be true, it is a silver lining to the dark cloud.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 977; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (3), Pt. III, p. 423

210. LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI

December 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to questions 1 and 2, they are beyond my scope and capacity.

With reference to 3, I know from personal experience that untouchability as it has been practised in India within our generation has retarded the evolution of Hindu society and by contagion of the whole of India.

No. 4 is again beyond me.

As to No. 5, I freely grant that the conscience of no one man can be sufficient warrant, or, for that matter, any warrant for changing anything, let alone customs of ancient society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. M. JOSHI
171-A BUDHAWAR PETH, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18677

211. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

December 9, 1932

DEAR DR. ICE,

I have your letter. We must agree to differ about temples. People are allowed freely to see me only when they have real untouchability matters to discuss. To meet you in connection with my health special permission has to be obtained. This is quite unnecessary. I am being well looked after and am rapidly regaining strength.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. S. KELKAR
172 AUNDH ROAD
KIRKEE, POONA

From a photostat: G.N. 6643

212. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was glad that you visited Puratan. It is necessary that somebody should visit him occasionally. I hope you got the letter about . . .[1] which I gave for posting yesterday.

I send with this letters for Puratan, Raghavan and Kusum.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8278. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] The name has been omitted; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", p. 144.

213. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

December 9, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I believe that you must be getting regular reports from Bombay and so do not write to you every day. Dahyabhai is steadily improving. There is still a slight rise in the temperature for a couple of hours every day, but he is fast regaining his strength. Devdas came here today. He said he saw Dahyabhai in Bombay and found him in very good condition. The doctor is gradually increasing the nourishment. Besides milk, he is also given vegetable soup. He remains very cheerful. There is a letter from Natarajan today, and he also reports to the same effect. So stop worrying altogether. I will send a reply to your long letter when I get some leisure.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 96-7

214. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 9, 1932

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your telegram to which I replied promptly by wire[1]. You must have got it by now. I had to undergo a fast, but that too is an old story now. Some weakness was already there, but strength will gradually come back. Fasting has become a permanent and inseparable feature of my life. Those who understand me and those near to me should not be agitated on that account. Have faith that God will never let me die until He has extracted from me service to His own satisfaction. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] *Vide* p. 114.

[PS.]

Where is Krishna Nair?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2396

215. TELEGRAM TO K. L. DAFTARI[1]

[*December 10, 1932*][2]

COULD YOU PLEASE REACH POONA ON THE 23RD MORNING TO TAKE PART IN A SMALL CONFERENCE WITH SANATANIST SHASTRIS OPPOSING TEMPLE ENTRY BY UNTOUCHABLES? IF YOU CAN WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU BEFORE THE 23RD.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 12-12-1932

216. LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing copy of a letter addressed to me by 300 ladies of Guruvayur. The proper course in all such cases is to send the original to the addressee.

With reference to the second paragraph of your letter, I am surprised that you should make reference to complaints about the fraudulent manner in which referendum is taken. I expect according to your promise details in proof of the charge. Meanwhile, I can only give you my assurance that every care is being taken to take the referendum openly and impartially, without using any pressure upon any person. Elaborate precautions have been taken in order to ensure complete fairness. If therefore any departure from fairness is noticed by you, I would suggest your promptly bringing it to the notice of the organizer, Sjt. Madhavan Nair, at the same time keeping me informed of any such irregularity.

I did receive a copy of the memorial to H.E. the Viceroy. I went through it carefully, and I am sorry to say that, instead of

[1] Sanskrit scholar of Nagpur

[2] From "Diary, 1932" entry under this date

argument, I found it to be full of invective and irrelevant matters.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KOZHIPURATH RAMUNNI MENON, B.A.
"RAMACHANDRAM", GURUVAYUR P.O.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18680

217. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 10, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Shree K. Ramunni Menon has forwarded the enclosed document[1] to me. He tells me that the original is in his possession which can be produced whenever required. You will please tell me all about it. The covering letter also I am enclosing herewith together with copy of my reply.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOPALA MENON
CHALAPURAM, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18679

218. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD[2]

December 10, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I have your letter. I am glad you have given me a detailed description of the activity there. The only thing I can say about secret propaganda is that you should ignore it, but you should redouble the effort to be absolutely fair and honest. It does not matter if the referendum goes against us, but there should be no undue pressure exercised by any of our workers. The opponents

[1] Copy of the letter addressed to Gandhiji by 300 ladies of Guruvayur; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] In his letter dated December 5, 1932, the addressee, giving a detailed description of the activities relating to the Guruvayur temple-entry movement, had also written: "Our work is being hampered by the secret plans of the sanatanist representatives. . . . They are holding secret meetings of a select few. The resolution come to in their deliberations . . . is that outright and unadulterated non-co-operation is to be the policy that is to be adopted by them towards our men . . ." (S.N. 18657).

should be treated with perfect courtesy, no matter what they say or do. If you remain absolutely straight, you will find that the poison will become sterilized.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD
C/O GOPALA MENON
ADVOCATE, CHALAPURAM, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18684

219. LETTER TO CHAS. PEACOCK[1]

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to write to you earlier. You have faced an interesting question. I think that Christians who have no desire to proselytize can render substantial help to the Anti-Untouchability Movement by working under or with the ordinary Hindu organizations. The constructive work to be done covers such a wide field that there can never be too many workers. In so far as Christian Untouchables are concerned, I do not mean to say anything. I observe from the correspondence I am receiving from Christian friends that the Hindu movement has quickened the conscience of Indian Christians and they are impatient to get rid of the taint of untouchability in their midst. I think I have sufficiently answered your question.

Yours sincerely,

CHAS. PEACOCK, ESQ.
HEAD MASTER, BOARD MIDDLE SCHOOL, SALUR (VIZAGAPATAM)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18682

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated November 17, had asked Gandhiji as to what were "the duties of an Indian Christian towards Harijans". He had written: "I am an Indian Christian employed as a teacher in a Board School. I have been a teacher for nearly twenty-five years now. I wish to devote my spare time for the raising of the *Adi-Andhras* of whom there are thousands living both in this town and in the neighbourhood. I should like to work for them without surrendering my Christ and . . . without trying to change their religion . . ." (S.N. 18633).

CWMG-LII

220. LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN

December 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I see clearly that you have not been studying my writings. I must adhere to my statement that there is no coercion about the temple-entry movement and so far as I am concerned there will be none.

2. No temple will be touched, caste or no-caste, where the majority of *bonafide* temple-goers within the locality surrounding a particular temple oppose the admission of untouchables.

3. There will be no defiance of law.

4. If the managers are owners, unless they consent no entry will be attempted, even if the temple-goers may be in favour of untouchables' entering.

5. Where managers are trustees in respect of a public temple, they should be expected to carry out the wishes of the majority of temple-goers.

6. No coercion will be exercised against the minority. I have already suggested that for them, if they are agreeable, certain hours of the day according to their numbers may be set apart for exclusive worship by them. In short, every attempt is being made not to hurt the religious susceptibilities of any person. I do not know the meaning of your reference to my statement about Sankaracharya.

I would ask you to re-read what I have said[1] about the unfavourable verdict in the referendum at Guruvayur. You have wholly mis-construed my position?[2]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. V. PATWARDHAN
BHUDHAWAR PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18681

[1] *Vide* pp. 68 and 147.

[2] In his reply dated December 16, 1932, the addressee refutes the charge of having misunderstood any of the statements made by Gandhiji and says: "Your declared vow is altogether unjustifiable" (S.N. 18726).

221. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before *December 11, 1932*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got both your letters. I have to cope with extremely heavy pressure of work, and, moreover, since my views regarding Kamalnayan are not the same as yours, I did not think it necessary to write immediately. I had, therefore, intended to write to you at the first available opportunity. I was going to write today in any case when I got your second letter. One may feel after reading it that your health had become a little worse, but I have no fear of that happening. It is good that the discharge has started again. It will not help you in any way if it is stopped with artificial means. The cause for the cramp in the stomach may be that you probably ate something in excessive quantity. On one or two days recently the bread was not properly baked. Perhaps you will find toasted bread easier to digest. You have sufficiently strong teeth for that. I am sure you know that bread should be chewed thoroughly. The bread can be toasted for you here, for it is supplied to you from our ward. And as I have a hand in baking the bread, there will be no difficulty in supplying you toasted bread. If you eat bread at all the three meals, fresh toasts can be prepared for all of them and supplied to you.

You should also not give at present, as you have been doing, too much time to interviews connected with business. According to Dr. Modi, complete rest is essential. It is not advisable even to talk much. To derive the full benefit of the air of this place, it is extremely essential that you should take complete rest and talk very little.

Colonel Doyle talked with me about you for a fairly long time. We had a talk just the day before yesterday. His advice was that you should go to Europe. I don't think that necessary at all. We should do our best with whatever help we can get in this country and rest satisfied. Do let me know, however, if you wish to go to England. I also expect to get in a day or two a reply to my request[2] for permission to see you frequently.

[1] From the date of receipt entered in the source

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", pp. 90-1.

And now about Kamalnayan. You will require special permission if you wish to send him to South Africa. He will not get proper facilities for education there. He will not be admitted to any English school or college. They have started a college for Indians, but from our point of view it can have nothing special to offer. Facilities for private education will also be meagre. As for Phœnix, it is in the midst of a jungle. If Kamalnayan goes and lives there, he will have to spend most of his time working in the press. From all points of view, therefore, South Africa should be left out of consideration. But it is otherwise with Ceylon. Kamalnayan can join any one of the schools there. The climate of Nuwara Eliya is excellent. There is hardly any place which can surpass it in the beauty of natural surroundings. We will also find there a large number of persons whom we know. Bernard Alovihari is a close friend. He is a very good scholar and a man of character. He was on the same boat with me when I returned from England. He belongs to one of the ancient families of Ceylon. If Kamalnayan does not feel happy there, we can immediately call him back. You can also write to him frequently and so can he to you. According to me, therefore, Ceylon is the only country to which we can send Kamalnayan to satisfy his desire for learning English, without sacrificing our principles. He also likes the idea. If, however, you do not approve of it, let him remain at Wardha for the present. If he is happy there, we can desire nothing better than that. But I gathered from my conversation with him and knew from his letter that he was not happy in Wardha. That is how the problem arose.

Manilal, who was to leave on Wednesday, has had to postpone his departure. He can now leave on the 29th.

Chhaganlal Joshi arrived here yesterday to help me. This will not lighten my burden, but work will not remain unfinished to the same extent as it did every day till now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2907

222. LETTER TO DEONAYAKACHARYA AND HIRALAL D. NANAVATI

December 11, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 8th instant.[1] Your interpretation in para 2 of your letter is correct. You will therefore please correspond with Acharya Dhruva and arrange for the discussion suggested.[2] The object of such a joint discussion will, I take it, be to act upon my mind and heart. I would naturally follow the discussion with an open mind and respectful attention. If you mean more than this in para 4 of your letter you will please explain.

Your admonition in the two concluding paragraphs does not call for any reply.

MESSRS DEONAYAKACHARYA AND HIRALAL D. NANAVATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18688; also *The Hindu*, 19-12-1932

223. LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI

December 11, 1932

I thank you for your frank letter.[3] I would ask you not to feel so nervous about myself. Through a period of active service covering more than forty years you will not recall more than perhaps twelve occasions of vicarious fasting. It came into my life, as I conceive it, after I had become a fit instrument for doing it. No one can do it in a hurry and my claim you know. I do not act on my own, but I act in obedience to the inner prompting. Whether it is the voice of the divine or the devil, it is not always easy to say. Nevertheless in each case the claim to the inner prompting may be held to be justified. So far as Mr. Mate's reproduction of his conversation between him and me is concerned, your deduction is too sweeping. In order to have

[1] *Vide* Appendix VIII.

[2] In the source, what follows is written in Gandhiji's own hand.

[3] The addressee had written: "It is a matter of regret that you do not compromise on any point and yet keep the threat of a fast ever hanging. How can one deal with you?"

a proper clearance it would be better perhaps if we meet, and I shall await you on . . . at . . . ”

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 318

224. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

December 11, 1932

First about Appasaheb. One should serve untouchables wherever one finds them. Moreover, persons serving the cause of anti-untouchability ought not to be silent witnesses to people who are not untouchables being treated as such. Appa's *tapash-charya* in this regard is not a new thing, and his demand was not that he should be permitted to do a particular kind of work in place of another, but that he should not be prevented from doing what he regarded as his dharma. I cannot go into further details on this subject. However, I did not have even a moment's doubt about the propriety of Appasaheb's step or about the step I intended to take. Nor have I any doubt about it now after the matter is over.

Now about the issue of temple-entry. It would of course be illegal on the part of the trustees if they go beyond their authority in doing anything. The present movement is not intended to force the trustees to take any illegal step. However, if the people on whose behalf they are acting as trustees desire a particular step to be taken, it becomes their duty to secure legal sanction for it. If the people are against a proposed step, a fast [to force the trustees to take it] would be blackmail, and a poll is being taken to prove that the intended fast is not of such character. If the majority of people express themselves against Harijans being permitted to enter temples, then I will not fast on that issue. But other more difficult duties will arise for us then, which it is unnecessary to discuss now. If a temple belongs to a particular sect, we cannot insist on people outside its fold being permitted to visit it, but the Harijans belonging to that sect must have the right to enter it. This question, however, does not arise at all in the case of the Guruvayur Temple. The idea of fasting has a purely spiritual aim. Without it, it would be impossible to overcome our inertia. Whenever a religion had lost its vitality, men of sincere devotion went through extreme *tapashcharya* to restore life to it. Without such *tapashcharya*, no religious awakening can be brought about. If a person disappears into a jungle and undertakes an indefinite fast, nothing can be said against his step.

It would of course be considered foolish if anyone did that ignorantly. But the step would be regarded as irreproachable if taken with a spiritual aim. A lighter step than that by me in the present circumstances would be fully justified. I say 'lighter' because my fast will not be absolute or unconditional. The fast will end if a certain condition is accepted. In laying down a condition one should exercise discretion and self-restraint, and I believe that I have done so in the present instance. Being conditional, the fast will shock the people less to that extent. My relation with the people has now become a family bond. For many years I have trained myself for such a bond, and I have seen from personal experience that, within certain limits, fasting has a place in domestic relationships. Even in that sphere, one must of course exercise self-restraint. It is after experimenting in the small family circle that I have widened the field of practice. I have tried to explain the idea so as to convince your reason, but the truth is that I have never undertaken any of my fasts after rational consideration, but that each one of them was undertaken in obedience to the inner voice. I do not mean to say that there can be no error in this. There goes on in the heart a ceaseless battle between the divine and the demoniac. We cannot always judge when it is the demon that deludes us or the divine that leads us. It is for this reason that religion enjoins that everybody who wishes to awaken the divine in him should walk on the razor's edge of the *yamaniyamas*.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 320-1

225. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 11, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

You should know that I have suggested[1] the changes in food in order to improve the health of the people and increase their self-control and peace of mind. Those who do not like them may not try them. Those who have tried them and found that they do not suit them may give them up. Nobody should accept them unwillingly or out of false shame. I hope you observe silence during meals and when spinning for *yajna*.

BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 34-5, 87 and 100-1.

226. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

December 11, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

It is not good that you, who used to write to me regularly should have stopped writing altogether. However busy I may be, I must get letters from you all. I hope your health is improving.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3950

227. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 11, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read my letter to Sitla Sahai. Read the letter to Lakshmi too.

Chhaganlal has returned. He told me that *jowar* gruel is the most popular item of food with prisoners. I am making further inquiries. Let me know the result of your observation. From time to time, ask all those who have joined the experiment. I hope you get everybody weighed.

I have been getting your letters in due time. For some time, keep on writing as often as necessary. Is wheat, *bajri* and *jowar* flour consumed whole ? Where do you get the grain ground ? Those who eat four times a day may continue the practice. My point was that nobody should eat between meals. Eating off and on does a great deal of harm. I hope that the shortage of ghee has been met. Does not Shankarbhai take milk? He should not pay excessive attention to his piles.

Raojibhai's demand seems to be reasonable. I hope Dahibehn has taken away Balbhadra.

Ask Soman to write to me. He should increase his weight. But he should take care that in his attempt to do so he does not fall ill. How did Jamna become ill ? I hope she is all right now.

In all there are 25 letters. All of them are stitched together.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8279. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

228. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 11, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Your tonsils must have been removed by now. I am awaiting a detailed account.

If thinner gruel agrees with you better, you should take that. My only point is that, if you take only gruel in the morning that will help evacuation. But I don't insist on anything against your wish. If you think it necessary to eat boiled vegetables, you may do so. Drinking water slowly may also help.

You must have sent some slivers to Dhurandhar. I shall expect Sushila and you at the end of this month.

When you write to Kisen, send my blessings to her.

Try to know what is in Lakshmi's mind. Try to understand Padma.

Is it true that Shanta has come? Have a talk with her and know all the facts from her. I did not like her conduct. I am writing to her.

However short my letters may be, you should go on sending me your narratives.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10314. Also C.W. 6753. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

229. LETTER TO PADMA

December 11, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I hope you have become calm now. Do you understand now what true freedom means? If you have understood it, tell me what it is. You may come again if you wish to see me. I see that your discontent also is a cause of your ill-health. Understand this properly and become calm. If you feel the slightest desire to marry, let me know. Take complete rest there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6142. Also C.W. 3494. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

230. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

December 11, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You have not replied to my question. I hope your health is all right now.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 301. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

231. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

December 11, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

I don't like your behaviour, for I don't understand it. You seem to be going and returning at will. I also did not understand why Mangala took away Pushpa with her. Probably you have sufficient reason for all this. But it is your duty to explain it to me and to Narandas. Write to me and explain every thing. You may come and see me if you wish.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4068

232. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

December 11, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got two letters from you. I want an account from you of the yearly increase in the number of charkhas, the expenditure, the number of carding bows, the quantity of cotton carded, or spun or woven, and other activities—an account like the one maintained in all offices. I was glad to learn that you are keeping good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6542

233. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 11, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Neither the mother nor the wife can be with you for all time. Dharma is the only companion, so do the bidding of dharma.

Parameshwar and *prakriti*[1] are not different, therefore *prakriti* too has no beginning. What is not Parameshwar is only an attribute.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 772

234. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 11, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter. Give up all worries; leave everything to God. It is good if Dr. Sharma[2] comes to the Ashram. We must have only nature cure but up to now we did not find anyone willing to observe the Ashram rules too. These days long letters should not be expected from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 267

235. LETTER TO T. CHINNIAH

December 12, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3] of 9th instant. I do not know that I can convince you through letter-writing. I should be very sorry indeed if through my fast which was intended purely to serve the

[1] Nature
[2] Dr. Hiralal Sharma, the naturopath
[3] For extracts, *vide* Appendix IX.

CWMG LII

Adi-Dravida, any injustice was done to them, consciously or unconsciously. If you feel that you are part of the Hindu community, I should have imagined that you would not mind election of untouchable candidates by all Hindus including caste Hindus.

I do feel that without having lived in a *paracheri*[1] I know what you want to convey to me.

If landlords and merchants were a helpless class like the untouchables, I would certainly have felt like fasting, if special electorates had been designed for them, for I am convinced that their helplessness would be increased. Even as it is, whenever we have a popular assembly, it will be discovered that those who have special electorates would not find them a method of protection, but would find them rather a method of weakness. For the reasons I have stated above, I cannot be a consenting party to the reduction of penal to two, and in any case, no one man can alter the Yeravda Pact. I have very little doubt that as time passes you will yourself be convinced that, of the two schemes, the Premier's and the Yeravda one, the Yeravda one is better.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18693

236. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

December 12, 1932

My fast ought not to disturb you. It is part of discipline. It is a privilege earned by hard spiritual toil. It is a most powerful weapon in the armoury of a worshipper of truth and ahimsa. It has therefore to be used sparingly. Not every one can use it. You should therefore rejoice that I can use it. This assumes that with me it is spiritually used. If I am self-deceived, Heaven help me and all you who have faith in me. But if you grant its spirituality in my case, then coercing fast of mine should be a thrill of joy and a source of strength for you. It must move all those who have love for me but that movement should mean a spur to greater performance of duty. I know you can have no difficulty in grasping what I have written. You shall no longer therefore grumble when you learn about my fast in future. Who knows when the next fast will come!

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 321

[1] The place where the depressed classes live

CWMG - III

237. A LETTER

December 12, 1932

I have seen *Bleeding Wound*[1] but did not like it. What was the purpose gained by obtaining and printing so many opinions? Should we do for books what the vaidyas do for their medicines? If an introduction was needed, Sjt. Chintamani's was enough. His introduction had lost some of its weight by the addition of so many opinions. And there is no artistic merit apparent even in the type chosen for printing them. Date, place and such details have not been given at the end of all the articles. There are other mistakes too. My remarks are not intended to discourage you but only to warn you for the future. We must have self-confidence in our undertakings, and one who possesses it need procure no introduction, but one who does not should be satisfied with a single introduction.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 322

238. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 12, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

All of us deserve to be regarded as unfit for public work—one of us suffers from pain in the elbow, and another from neuritis of some limb, and so on. All of us are sick people. It does not matter when the pain in my elbow will disappear, but you must get rid of your neuritis. If it cannot be cured Dr. Gilder should renounce his degree. It is of course very excellent work if you wrote your letter with the left hand and if this was your very first attempt to do so.

I suppose Jijima is the same lady I saw at a public prayer, and with whom I even joked a little. The news of her paralysis has not shocked me very much. She must be older than I at any rate. Write to her and tell her that all of us are bound to

[1] Compiled by the addressee with introduction, foreword, preface and blessings from four eminent men.

fall into the eternal sleep through some cause or another. Why, then, should we mind whether it comes through paralysis or some other illness? By all means she should hope to live for a hundred years; but if she must embrace our friend, Death, she should do so smilingly. The prayer that was recited at the prayer-meeting which she attended is recited here daily at night, so that we may learn how to die with a smile on our face. She should ponder over its last verse.

I wrote a letter[1] also after sending the telegram[2]. You must have received it. In it I have reassured you even more clearly than in the telegram. If you do not get that letter, let me know. I will write again whatever I remember from it. Write to me from time to time.

I got your letter after I wrote to Lilavati this morning. I am dictating this reply at night.

If I am fit to bless you,

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7521. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

239. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

December 12, 1932

All descriptions of the *atman* are of its pure state, just as a description of water can be of pure water only. There cannot be one description of dirty water. If water could think, every pool of dirty water would ask the same question that you have done, and one of them might describe the qualities of pure water and exhort its fellows to become like that. This is exactly what Shri Krishna, who knew the qualities of the pure *atman*, did. We should know what these qualities are and try to become such *atman*. If you ask me how the *atman* becomes impure, my reply is that I do not know it, nor need we know it. We know that impurity is a fact, what the qualities of the pure state are and how we may get rid of the impurity. That should be enough for us. If I have not answered your question, you may ask me to explain again.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 322-3

[1] *Vide* pp. 149-50.
[2] *Vide* p. 138.

240. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 12, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter of the 10th. Radha's case is rather alarming. As she has been running continuous temperature going up to 103 degrees, I think she must have become very thin and weak. Kusum seems to be improving slowly. If you have now got more information about Jethalal who died in the Sabarmati jail, to what term he was sentenced and of what he died, for what offence he was arrested, etc., please let me know.

I got Mithubehn's, Bhansali's and Kanti's letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8280. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

241. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

[*December 12, 1932*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

This letter of yours is quite perfect. Hindu ladies usually write an atrocious hand, but the letters from Muslim ladies are all good. That is why I do mind when any letter is not up to the mark. Good that my teasing has accomplished all this! Let us hope that Doctor Saheb makes a full recovery this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 23

[1] It is evident from the contents that this letter was written after the letter of November 26, 1932 to Dr. Mohammad Alam, the addressee's husband. Another letter addressed to him on December 22, 1932 and "Diary, 1932", entry under this date, mention a letter to his wife which in all probability is the present letter.

242. LETTER TO C. V. VAIDYA

December 13, 1932

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] so full and instructive. I wish you could have discussed your position with me before sending your letter to the Premier; but nothing is lost yet, and if you can conveniently spare the time, I would love to see you and discuss the thing with you. Meanwhile, I present my doubts:

1. Do you mean to say that under no circumstances can Hindu Law or Hindu practice be changed by Hindu public opinion?

2. Do you say that *Smritis* are unalterable and that everything said in them has to be carried out to the letter by a devout Hindu?

3. Were not *Smritis* written or revealed in response to the requirements of the age in which they were written?

4. Were not the *Smritis* written at different times?

5. If you hold that under no conceivable circumstance can legislation alter prevailing practice, how would you deal with the legal difficulty which is supposed to exist in Madras, viz., that even one man can under the law decided by the present courts, prevent the entry of untouchables to certain temples in spite of the consensus of public opinion in favour of such entry?

[1] Dated December 8, 1932 which read: " . . . I have addressed a letter (dated November 18, 1932) to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, President, 3rd R.T.C. . . . The reason which led me to address the letter is that I apprehend that hasty reformers will force by legislation, temple-entry and such like reforms down the throats of the orthodox Hindus of India who are voiceless, not being represented in the R.T.C. or the Legislative Councils. . . . Subsequently came your declaration published in *The Times of India*, that if you had the power you would make it an offence under the Penal Code for anyone to refuse to touch the Harijans. This was the last straw that broke the back of my silence and I at once addressed a letter on the subject to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, President, 3rd R.T.C., requesting him to introduce a section in the new Constitution like the one existing in the present Government of India Act, prohibiting future legislatures from passing any laws forcing reforms in religious and socio-religious matters. . . . I feel strongly on the subject of non-interference by the State Legislatures in such matters and I thought it my duty to do what I can for it at this juncture" (S.N. 18669).

6. Or, do you hold that the existing temples can never be opened to untouchables?

7. Or, is not your opposition to legislation based on the assumption that the mixed legislatures would be interfering with Hindu religion, although if Hindu opinion was taken, such legislation would be found to have no public backing?

8. What objection would you see to the mere Hindu legislators first passing legislation regarding Hindu religion and then for the sake of formality it being passed by the whole House or Houses as the case may be.

9. Who are untouchables according to the Vedas, or, if you like, traditional Hindu religion?

10. Does untouchability attach to birth and persist from generation to generation?

11. Is such untouchability incurable by any penance or purification undergone by such untouchables?

12. Is prohibition against interdining and intermarriage an integral part of varna dharma?

13. Is varna dharma fully performed if a man belonging to one varna desists from dining with those belonging to a different varna and from contracting marriage relations with people of a different varna?

14. Does a person so interdining or intermarrying forfeit his varna?

15. Is not occupation the test of varna, and does not a person who changes his occupation, say, Brahmin, to that of another varna, pass on to that varna, or, it may be, forfeit his right to any varna at all?

I will not exhaust your patience nor tax your energy by adding to the already long list of questions, nor do I want you to burn midnight oil in order to be prompt in your reply, as you always are. Perhaps you will be able to give in a sentence or two an exhaustive answer which will cover all the points that have occurred to me. Anyway I shall look forward to your reply, and still more eagerly to your saying that you will make time to come to Yeravda to see me. I suppose you are older than I am, but I am sure that it does not interfere with your vigour.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. V. VAIDYA, M.A.,LL.B.
GIRGAUM BACK ROAD, BOMBAY NO. 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 18695

243. LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR NAGESWAR RAO,

I have your letter. My message to you is that I hope Andhra will be to the fore in removing the blot of untouchability of Hinduism.

As to the interview[1] with Shree Suryanarayana Rao, I do not think there is anything to send to the Press. Nearly three-fourths of the long time I gave him was passed in reading some correspondence with his guru and then discussing with him his own credentials or qualifications for knowing all about Hinduism. He quoted some verses from the *Bhagavad Gita* to convince me that untouchability was countenanced by it and that it attached to birth, but he left on me the impression that public opinion in the general interest of the community demanded removal of the bar against the entry of *avarnas* to temples, and that so far as the other disabilities were concerned they should certainly be removed. But he was emphatic that there should be no force used in connection with temple-entry, but that efforts should be made in a conciliatory manner to persuade custodians of temples to throw them open to untouchables wherever public opinion was ripe. Naturally there was no question of our agreeing, but the attempt was made to understand each other's position and he said that as he understood what it was that I was exactly fighting for, he would try to collect together the sanatanists in the South and procure a settlement. Whilst I am dictating this, Ramchandra Rao is here, and he generally confirms my impression. If Sjt. Suryanarayana Rao has said anything that is inconsistent with this statement, you should show this to him before publishing it, or, if you come to the conclusion that my statement should be published in any case, then, too, it should not be published without its being first shown to him.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NAGESWAR RAO
"ANDHRA PATRIKA"
THAMBU CHETTY STREET, GEORGETOWN, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18698

[1] On December 3, 1932; *vide* "Diary, 1932", entry under this date.

244. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I am glad you are keeping me informed of your doings there. The resentment even against Ba was bound to come. We should submit to all this cheerfully as a matter of course, and if we do, that is to say, do not even mentally resent the orthodox resentment but appreciate that if we were in their place probably we would have done likewise, you will find that in an incredibly short time this resentment will spend itself for want of resistance. That anger can be conquered by want of it by the victim is a scientific fact capable of verification in day-to-day life. But I know that it is a difficult task; but whether difficult or easy, in this matter of pure religion we dare not lose self-control and retaliate in any shape or form.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

From a microfilm: S.N. 18699

245. LETTER TO RAMTARAN MUKHERJI

December 13, 1932

Thank you for your letter.[1] All cannot have the gift of Shankaracharya. I am using in my own humble manner such gifts as God has given me. Just as religious preachers like Shankaracharyaji have time after time dedicated their great learning for the sake of religion, so have others promoted religion on prayer and fasting.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18660

[1] *Vide* Appendix X.

246. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

December 13, 1932

MY DEAR APPA,

I have got your two letters[1]. Just at present I do not want to deal with many of the important issues you have raised in your letter of the 7th instant, but there is one thing which has complicated the matter. The Inspector-General did not know and has even now no official knowledge that you were actually doing conservancy work. The previous orders were therefore passed in ignorance of this very material fact. It is very difficult now all of a sudden to have alterations made simply in your case. After all, what you were and are fighting for is the principle, and the question of principle is now before the Government of India. It will be decided, I am hoping, within a few days, certainly not months. For the present, therefore, I think that you should be content with the progress that has been made. Your telegram to me was unequivocal and therefore I think that you should take proper nourishment. Full ration does not therefore mean to me the ration as it is issued to healthy prisoners. For you to lose ten pounds is a big loss. I think, therefore, that you should take the food that may be medically prescribed, if it is not otherwise forbidden food. The Inspector-General of Prisons has kindly given instructions, so far as I understand, that you should have the food that your constitution may at present require. I hope you have no objection to taking milk.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., 1932, p. 71. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(6), p. 253

[1] Dated December 7 and 8

247. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA J. SOMAN

December 13, 1932

BHAI SOMAN,

I could find your letter last night. I had a faint impression that I had received one letter. So at the time of the weekly mail there was some confusion in my mind and I asked you to write to me. But now I have found the letter I wanted.

You have raised questions of a subtle nature. It is of course likely that forbearance may result in unmanliness or cowardice. Were it not so, we would not be faced with difficult problems of what is dharma and what is not dharma. Generally speaking, we may say that we ought not to tolerate an insult if it would be spiritually degrading to do so. This does not happen frequently. If the question is not of personal convenience or amenity, we ought to resist even at the cost of physical suffering what we were not prepared to tolerate. Everybody should decide his own limits in such a matter. Moreover, we ought to distinguish between pride and self-respect. A proud person will take offence at every little thing. He who has got rid of selfishness will probably be able to distinguish between the two. Be satisfied with this. I did not lose six pounds in a day, but lost four pounds. I will not explain about the Appa affair in this letter. You ought to learn not to worry on account of my fasts. One should rejoice at a fast if it is inspired by spiritual motives. I am sure that my fasts are so inspired.

I hope your weight is increasing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4049. Also C.W. 94. Courtesy: Ramachandra J. Soman

CWMG - III

248. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–XI

December 14, 1932

Supposing on the strength of your statement[1] that in the event of the Referendum going against you, you would have to postpone your fast indefinitely, voters, although they may be in favour of Harijans entering the Guruvayur Temple, give their votes against you for the sake of preventing the fast, what would you do?

This is a question asked of me. I should hope there would be no such trickery resorted to by the voters. If, however, it is discovered that they have resorted to any such trickery, I can only say that they would be endangering my life more than if they voted honestly and according to their convictions.

Having put my life at stake for the removal of untouchability, I hope I shall not be found so cowardly as to save it by taking advantage of any dodge. What I have said about the postponement refers only to honest voting.

If I am satisfied that the majority of temple-goers in the neighbourhood of Guruvayur are really against temple-entry by Harijans, and if I still persisted in fasting, I should be guilty of using coercive measures in order to secure my end. I am not conscious of ever having done such a thing in my life, and I am not likely to do so now, when I may be nearing my end, to deny the practice of a lifetime.

I am most anxious to preserve the approaching fast against the slightest taint of coercion, and I have no doubt that at the end of it, it would be found to have been free from reproach. I am watching, as a scientist would watch, the effect the contemplated fast is producing, and it fills me with hope and delight. It has set the people thinking, and it will certainly not compel any person to act against his conscience; but it is making sluggish people shed their sluggishness and act promptly, that is to say, that it is moving to action those who bear affection towards me.

I am not sorry for that movement. Those who think that I am attempting to corrupt Hinduism, write to me angry letters and invite me to anticipate the fast and thus hasten my death. I do not mind such letters. I am used to receiving them. I

[1] *Vide* p. 147.

merely refer to them to show that those who are opposed to the removal of untouchability are not likely to be affected by any fast that I may embark upon; and much less by the mere contemplation of it, and this is as it should be. I should like to say more about the origin of the fasting method under the given circumstances in my life. I must, however, postpone this to a future date. At the moment, I can only say that neither Srijut Kelappan nor I can be deterred from the step which has been dictated to us by our consciences.

When every effort is being made to ensure the honesty of the Referendum, it comes as a painful surprise to me that the Zamorin is making charges of fraud against those who are engaged in the Referendum work. I regard him as an honourable man. He knows that Srijut Madhavan Nair, who is the chairman of the Referendum Committee, is a well-known advocate respected throughout Kerala, and is assisted by Srijut Rajagopalachari, who is on the spot. I do not know of any of the leading workers who would tolerate any questionable practice.

It is, therefore, the duty of the Zamorin or any other person who may hear anything about the fraudulent practice, to bring it to the notice of the Committee. It is impossible to deal with the general charge unsupported by any evidence. There is no occasion to import passion or partisan feelings into what is purely a moral and religious question; but the orthodox party and the reformers can, if they will, work in close association for the elucidation of truth. I can only repeat my assurance so often given by me that if I found I was wrong about the local public opinion being in favour of temple-entry, I should immediately retrace my step. I have no other end to serve but that of truth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-12-1932

249. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

December 14, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Will you kindly send the enclosed[1] to Appasaheb Patwardhan?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10

[1] *Vide* "Letter to S. P. Patwardhan", p. 183.

250. LETTER TO SUNDAR DASS

December 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 8th instant. It is difficult for me to prescribe your future programme without knowing your special condition. I would therefore ask you to see the local workers and fix the programme in consultation with them. But in any case, please give me the following information:

1. What is the population of the Balmik *Achhuts*[1] in your district?
2. What is their occupation?
3. How long have they settled there?
4. What are the disabilities they are suffering from?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUNDAR DASS
SECRETARY, BALMIK ACHHUT MANDAL
KOHAT (N.W.F.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18700

251. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY[2]

December 14, 1932

DEAR MOTI BABOO,

I have your letter, and now your telegram. I hope you received my telegram. I can trace through everything you write and wire your enthusiasm and optimism. It is a good thing you have decided to see me and to bring Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna[3].

But I want you to be quite sure of your foundation. The trouble is one for making Hinduism a living faith[4]. There is

[1] Untouchables

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter of December 7, asking for a telegraphic message for a conference against untouchability being held on December 25 in Bengal (S.N. 18666).

[3] A Sanatanist leader

[4] The source has "phase".

therefore no room for compromise on fundamentals. It does not matter, even if at the present moment, we cannot see the revival with our physical eyes, but in our impatience we may not compromise with untouchability as we know it today. Untouchability of a type is universal. Our quarrel is against the monstrosity as we see it today.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SAMGHA, CHANDERNAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11040

252. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 14, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. I did not understand what you said about the conditions as to cleanliness. I had noticed it in the forms that were sent to me, but I had put the interpretation that you have, that it was a condition of universal application. Naturally, the Harijans come under the general conditions.

I am glad that villagers are proving a tough job. It is good education for them and for us. The workers should neither lose faith in themselves nor patience with the villagers.

I am glad that both Urmila Devi and Ba are keeping their health.

I came upon Madhavan Nair's letter after having dictated this letter to you. Please therefore share this letter with him and let it be regarded as a joint letter. Though I cannot compete with you in the strenuous labour you are going through, I have my work cut out for me and I have to economize time in order to be able to overtake the growing correspondence and the increasing number of interviews.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18705

CWMG - LII

253. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

December 14, 1932

DEAR BABOO BHAGWAN DASS[1],

I have your most touching letter[2] of the 10th instant. I do not know in what connection I could have told Devi Prasadji that you and Paramarth Baboo should go to Guruvayur. I knew the condition of your health. I cannot now recall the conversation. I can blame no one, least of all Devi Prasadji, but it is not yet, thank God, too late to mend.

In reply to Dhruvaji's letter I sent a telegram saying it was unnecessary for you and Paramarth Baboo to come to Poona, or to go to Guruvayur. If your presence had been a necessity, I would not have hesitated to risk damage to your health, but there is no such necessity. I did want Dhruvaji, not merely as a Sanskrit scholar, but also as Malaviyaji's accredited agent, and I told Kerala friends long ago that they should telegraph to Malaviyaji not to trouble to go to Kerala. We do not want to rush to Guruvayur. If the caste Hindus near Guruvayur are ready to admit the out-castes to that temple, nothing can stop their entry; if they are not, we shall have to wait for their conversion. I wanted someone, well-versed in Shastraic lore to see the *Shastris* of Malabar face to face, and if that someone went with Malaviyaji's authority at his back, it was enough, but now even that may be unnecessary. Nevertheless, I want Dhruvaji to meet some sanatanists here, if only for the satisfaction of the latter. Some of them have been at me. I told them that whilst my conviction was deep and had been proof against assault for the past 45 years, since I was a fallible mortal I was open to be acted upon by any of the sanatani friends, and if I discovered that I had mistaken darkness for light, I would have no hesitation in going back upon 45 years' conviction and be witness to truth, and it is in that spirit that I shall approach the 23rd instant, if the sanatani friends will attend the contemplated

[1] Dr. Bhagwandas of Varanasi, a philosopher and Sanskrit scholar

[2] The addressee had said in it that "despite the unfitness" he would start either on the 20th or the 21st and reach Poona on the 22nd and see Gandhiji with Anandshankar Dhruv on the 23rd and then, despite his indifferent health, proceed with the latter to Guruvayur (S.N. 18685).

meeting. If, after all this, you feel drawn towards Yeravda, do by all means come, and if you do, do not come to rush away. There will be work enough and to spare for you for a few days. It is unthinkable to disturb Malaviyaji. I know that he has his hands full.

I hope you did not miss my statement[1] wherein I wholeheartedly endorsed your suggestion that whilst there is and should be no untouchability regarding birth, there should be as there always has been throughout the world untouchability with regard to particular kinds of work, and that such untouchability was always curable after due cleansing.

Your last paragraph[2] is the most touching in your touching letter. I would not be truthful if I did accept your certificate, for it has been a lifelong effort to hear the voice of silence and to reduce self to zero. It has been a terrific though joyful struggle. It has not ended yet. The final result God only knows. I have no doubt that my recent acts have given a shock to dearest friends but all of them have been more than good to me. I was helpless, for in reality the acts were not mine. I was dominated by the Architect of us all.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18706

[1] *Vide* pp. 151-5.

[2] This read: "Together with the large majority of the Indian people, I have great faith in the dictates of your pure heart, even when we may not be able to understand the reasons for them; for indeed always prayerful heart must see much further and much deeper than any head; and I feel that I should obey your least wishes at this juncture as far as may be possible for me, trusting that the needed fitness will come to me through your good wishes. Dhruvaji and Prem Nathji possess, of course, all the Sanskrit learning and debating power that may be needed, and it will be a pleasure and a privilege to work in company with them."

254. LETTER TO KAMAL KUMAR BANERJI

December 14, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I am quite clear in my mind that having given your word and heart to the girl, whether she is called a Shudra or what not, and as she is deeply attached to you, you cannot get out of this sacred pledge, no matter what befalls you. I assume that the girl herself is a virtuous one and that the same can be said of you. In other words, this is a case of pure love between you two. If, on the other hand, there is the slightest irregularity or flaw about your position, you should obey your parents. If the girl and you are really virtuous and would become model householders, your parents will forgive the difference in caste and give you both their blessings.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KAMAL KUMAR BANERJI
CENTRAL HOTEL
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18707

[1] Dated December 6, 1932. This read: " . . . some years ago when my discretion had not become sounder and intelligence had not ripened, in an unguarded moment I gave an assurance to a girl of tender age that I would be her husband. I could not foresee then that she would cling to me passionately, my assurance having become an article of faith in her. There might have been no difficulty in our union if she had been a Brahmin, to which caste I belong, but unfortunately she is a Shudra . . . The idea of a marriage between a Brahmin and a Shudra is revolting to my parents and they much resent it. I am in a fix. I dare not offend my parents who are my makers and to whom I still owe my existence. On the other hand I cannot disown the girl who has considered herself to be my betrothed for years and to discard whom now will probably cause her death. This, I frankly confess, militates against my conscience but I see no way to bridge the difficulty in which I am placed, viz., to marry the girl and at the same time to earn the blessings of the parents. I therefore earnestly appeal to you to take my hapless case into your kind consideration and hold out to me the torch so that I may see a path in the darkness which has enveloped me and is threatening to wipe out the existence of two poor souls" (S.N. 18666).

255. LETTER TO A BENGALI BOY[1]

December 14, 1932

It is quite clear to me that you should make a clean breast of everything before your parents. The shame was in committing the sins you admit, but there need be no shame in making a clean confession before your parents. If you do it with a pure heart, you will find an accession of strength coming to you which you never had before.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 335

256. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

December 14, 1932

It is but natural that palate of a person in good health should be sensitive to, and relish for himself, the tastes of various foods, and even the man of the highest degree of self-control will recognize and ought to be able to recognize, such relish. Only he should have no attachment to it. When one becomes accustomed to abstinence from a harmful thing—whatever the reason for abstaining from it, such abstinence benefits the soul as well as the body as the hankering for that thing disappears. The effect of a complete or a partial fast varies with different men according to their natures and in the same person at different times. You will be able from your numerous experiences to think of cases in which the mind or the body or both of them were the cause for such difference. Not only do I feel no hardship in observing silence, but every week I eagerly look forward to one o'clock on Sunday. The fact is that we feel hardship in doing a thing for which we are not mentally ready. Anything for which the mind is ready or is made ready becomes quite easy to do. The person who becomes absorbed in silence ceases to hear the idle chatting of people around him. I hope you remember the secluded hut

[1] The letter was in reply to addressee's which read: "A sinner as I am by what means should I absolve myself of the sins? You had confessed your sins before your father; how can I develop the courage to do likewise? I have read your *Autobiography*; how can I gain the strength to admit my sins?"

erected for Kishorelalbhai. There could be nothing but peace and silence in such a place. For two or three days Kishorelal found the rattling noise made by running trains unbearable, and I suggested that he should close his ears with cotton plugs. However, when I went to him the next morning, he told me that he had heard neither the train whistle nor the noise of the running wheels on that day. Of course both these things had been there, but he had stopped paying attention to them. In other words, he had become accustomed to silence. My suggestion about the cotton plugs had roused him, for such artificial aid would be repugnant to one who has voluntarily retired into solitude and taken a vow of silence. Those who come to love silence begin ultimately to listen to the divine music within, and are so absorbed in it that they cease to hear the sounds occurring around them.

Our cat family has three members. They present themselves daily without fail at both the mealtimes, without a bell being rung for them or without being called. If we all become as punctual as these dear creatures, we would save millions of hours of time. And we have doubtless been taught how time is money. This is perfectly true, and so money saved is money earned. Who can compute the loss of wealth to this world through people who do not value time?

I certainly do not wish that the number of anti-untouchability workers should increase artificially. I would never wish that those who have a clear duty before them should leave it for Harijan work no matter how dear such work may be to them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 334-5

257. LETTER TO SHIVPRASAD GUPTA

December 14, 1932

If a temple is somebody's private property, it is true that it would be coercion to try to get it thrown open to Harijans.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 338

258. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 14, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the weekly mail. I am writing this after reading Anandi's letter.

The rule about eating three times only does not apply to anybody who is ill or weak in health. Nor does it apply to children. The rule which applies to all is this:

Everybody should eat in the same manner as he takes medicine—in measured quantity and at fixed times. Somebody may even have to be fed two teaspoonfuls of something every hour. If so he should not be given that thing every half an hour.

Thus the habit of munching something in between meals is a bad one and is violation of the vow of not indulging the palate. One should not even eat a green tamarind. But a girl like Anandi may need to eat more often than thrice. She ought not to do so just to please herself, but she may eat what is necessary for the sake of her health and as often as necessary. Children of the age of Babla may eat four times. Of course nobody should swallow in three meals the quantity that he would eat in four meals. It may help if the quantity consumed in three meals is divided into four meals, but it would be harmful to eat in three meals the quantity that one might eat in four meals.

When one has got fever, one should not eat solid food, by which I mean wheat, *jowar*, *bajri*, rice, pulses and tubers, that is, articles which contain starch and protein. If, however, one feels hungry and passes normal stools, one may drink milk in small quantities. Fruit juices may be taken in practically any condition, though even these should not be taken if one has no appetite.

Anybody who cannot digest *jowar* and *bajri* must not eat them. Anybody whose body—not palate—demands rice, may eat it. For those who are ill, the water in which rice has been boiled sometimes proves the ideal food. Ordinarily, rice is not essential for health and, sometimes, even does harm. Rice-eaters are generally seen to be flabby. They have round bellies. This is a common sight in Bihar and Madras. I hope I have now made myself clear.

What shall I write concerning the Chharas? Our *tapashcharya* is imperfect. Our faith in God is not strong enough. We do not look upon the Chharas as our own brothers and sisters. We are afraid of them. I deserve this charge more than anybody else. My shortcomings have taken visible form as the camping of Chharas in the neighbourhood of the Ashram. Endure them. Please remember that I have not advised a letter of abject supplication to be written to the Collector. I had suggested the substance of the draft after careful thought. I am, therefore, certainly eager to know what action Mavalankar has taken. I hope you yourself had followed my meaning. I see in this situation a severe test of our devotion to dharma. From here, I see our dharma quite clearly. Any man or woman, old or young, who has courage and faith in God, should go and live among them, plead with them and, even if they beat him or her, show them the right path. We should know how they live. If, however, we do not have the necessary strength to do all this, we should think and decide whether we are willing to defend ourselves by fighting the Chharas. If we are willing to do that, we should decide whether we should seek the Government's help and, if not, whether we could engage paid watchmen and from which community or class we would select them. If, on the other hand, we do not wish to engage such watchmen, we should decide whether we would fight as best as we could, or whether we would prefer not to abandon our path and, though we did not possess sufficient strength to follow it well, we would be content with as much as we could do in that direction. I think I have said enough. I hope nobody will get scared. I have written all this so that people there may think over the problem.

Prema's operation must be over.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please let me know what Mavalankar has done. I am thinking what can be done in that direction.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8281. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

259. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

[*December 14, 1932*][1]

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter. I have understood the *Subodh Patrika*. Do you have any doubt about it? If you have, please let me know. I shall explain the thing. I find it very difficult to spare time for *Bhajanavali*.[2]

I have written about the Chharas. We should have the strength to win them over.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 256. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

260. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO DHARMADEV[3]

December 14, 1932

Although what you write about the caste system is true still we cannot mix up reforming of the caste system with the work that is being done today. I have no time at present to state my views on this subject. I shall certainly do so when I find the time for it.

[From Hindi]

Vishva Jyoti, October 1959

[1] From the reference to the Chharas; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] Gandhiji wished to offer some suggestions for a new edition of the *Bhajanavali*, the Ashram hymn-book; *vide* Vol. XLIX, p. 78.

[3] Quoted in addressee's reminiscences of Gandhiji. The addressee had said that as long as people were considered high and low on grounds of birth, and no effort was made to abolish the caste system, the propaganda for eradication of untouchability would serve no purpose.

CWMG - LII

261. INTERVIEW TO DEPUTATION OF ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY[1]

December 14, 1932

In response to '*namaste*' by the deputation, Mahatmaji welcomed them with a smile. He spent an hour and a half in discussing the subject of untouchability from Shastraic point of view. He said that he was aware of the activities of Arya Samaj in this direction, and hoped that Arya Samaj would continue it with more vigour. He directed that Arya Samaj should do propaganda work by lectures and literature and also continue more enthusiastically the constructive work among the untouchables.

Mahatmaji said that he was fully confident about the success of the Guruvayur question from the information received from the workers. He said hundreds of volunteers had reached Malabar and the work was going on satisfactorily. Some of the sanatanist *Shastris* were also supporting him. The work of referendum was also going on well. He showed his indifference towards the mischievous propaganda which some of the persons had started by misrepresenting his writings, taking a sentence from here and another from there without giving reference to the context.

On request Mahatmaji selected three books from the big bundle brought by the deputationists and being asked to have a copy of *Satyarth Prakash*, the 'Magnum Opus of Rishi Dayanand', he said in reply that he always kept that book with him.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1932

[1] The deputation, which consisted of Dwijendranath, Shivdas Chapsey, Vijayashankerji, Parbhubhai Sharma, Vallabhdas R. Mehta, Jammubhaiji and Shanker Rao, "impressed upon Mahatmaji that it was essential to counteract the propaganda started by the so-called sanatanists against the work of the removal of untouchability. There was no mention or sanction of so-called untouchability in the Vedas and other ancient scriptures of the Hindus. The criteria to determine the *Chandalas*, etc., as prescribed in Manu and other *Smritis*, were in no way applicable to the present so-called 'untouchables', and Arya Samaj following in the footsteps of Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati had been propagating the message of equality among all human beings. In accordance with the mission of Maharshi Dayanand, Arya Samaj was doing the work of removal of untouchability for long, and with more vigour after the epic fast. The deputation showed its readiness to help the Guruvayur cause, and thanked Mahatmaji for fulfilling the mission of Swami Dayanand Saraswati."

[2] For correction in regard to this report, *vide* "Letter to Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bombay", 19-12-1932.

262. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–XII

December 15, 1932

I thought I had made my position quite clear about the limitations of the temple-entry agitation. But I see sanatanist friends are still agitated over a fancied danger which they think sanatan dharma is facing from this agitation. I, therefore, summarize below what I have said in published statements and letters to correspondents:

1. The method of fasting is at the present moment confined only to Guruvayur. There are historic reasons for the fast from a reformer's standpoint. There was no escape from it. Those reasons I know will not be accepted as any justification by the opponents of reform or even by all who believe in temple-entry. My purpose in referring to it is merely to state the limitations of the fast.

2. The fast as contemplated will not be undertaken if the referendum goes against the reformers. It will be postponed if it is found that the existing law is against reformers and that every effort is made for the necessary legislation and Viceregal sanction has been obtained for the introduction of a permissive Bill, that the Bill cannot go through the Legislature before 2nd January, 1933.

3. I would not be a party to any forcible temple-entry in defiance of the wishes of a majority of worshippers at the respective temples and the agitation will be confined only to public temples. Therefore, the opening of private temples will depend entirely upon their owners and the restrictions applicable to caste Hindus will naturally be applicable to Harijans.

In my opinion, these limitations ought to satisfy any reasonable Hindu, but I know there is a body of opinion which will not tolerate the opening of any existing Hindu temple to Harijans on the same terms as to other Hindus. For such uncompromising opponents, there is no method of conciliation that I can devise short of a programme of new temple building. That means a sharp additional division in an already divided society, but I am convinced if the reformers will loyally and honestly abide by the limitations I have suggested, the unreasonable opposition will die for want of support. Those who have arrogated to themselves the name sanatan dharma, should not be surprised or shocked if opponents also derive authority for reform from the same scrip-

tures that the sanatanists profess to believe in. There is a growing body of *Shastris*, well versed in Sanskrit lore, who believe that it is not only permissible in Hinduism to admit 'untouchables' to public temples, but that it is wrong to prohibit them from offering worship in common with other Hindus at these temples. These pundits also believe that there is no such thing as untouchability, attaching to birth and incapable of being cured by any penance or purification. They do believe in untouchability attaching to acts and occupations, but this is no peculiarity to Hinduism. It is common to all religions and is based upon sound hygienic principles.

I believe, too, that the alarm caused over the proposed legislation is also based on ignorance. So far as I understand the proposal, it simply amounts to this. If a two-thirds majority of worshippers at a particular temple express their desire through a regular channel devised by the legislature, such temples should be thrown open to Harijans on terms of equality with others. In my opinion, the proposal itself is so intrinsically sound that no reasonable person can have anything to say in opposition to it.

Anyway, let the opponents of reform understand exactly what the reformers seek to achieve. As it is, I am sorry to have to observe an agitation against reform being conducted in disregard of facts and that it is being sustained by statements that are contrary to truth and by baseless insinuations and imputations. Such methods can do no harm to reform if it is sound in itself, but it hurts Hinduism if the reformers or their opponents resort to methods that are less than fair and just.

The Hindu, 16-12-1932

263. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

December 15, 1932

ANDREWS
WOODBROOKE SETTLEMENT
BIRMINGHAM

REMAIN THERE. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 978

[1] In reply to the addressee's of December 8, which read: "Discount over-anxiety my letters. Everything clear now. If my help needed India cable. Otherwise remaining London" (Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 431).

264. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 15, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has arrived in due time. It is now nearly 4.20 and we have finished the morning prayer. Chhaganlal Joshi makes the fourth member of the human family and if we add the feline members, we make seven. Only the latter won't attend the prayers. Their recognition of kinship is confined to the common board.

Chhaganlal's arrival has facilitated despatch of work, but has not reduced my hours of labour. It was not expected to. Things that must be attended to by me, have to be. The pressure must continue at least till 2nd January.

What is it that prevents the heart from following or co-operating with reason? Can it be want of faith? Though I have not come to any final decision, my opinion tends in that direction. Though my reason tells me that there is no need to avoid a snake if I have love in me, it must be my want of faith that prevents my association with him. Instances of this character can be multiplied. I would like you to make researches in this direction and try to trace the cause of conflict between the heart and reason in every case you can recall. By so doing it may be possible for you to make the heart co-operative with reason. If it is good for me and everybody that I should fast, why should the heart refuse to rejoice? The heart does rejoice if I am healthy. It is better in certain cases that I should fast than that I should be healthy. Reason says so, yet the heart rejects the clear testimony of reason. Does it do so for want of faith? Or is there here self-deception and as a matter of fact reason has not perceived the necessity for fasting as it has for the preservation of health? Here I have simply stated the problem for you without presuming to decide. I cannot have sufficient data for coming to a decision even if I wanted to come to a decision. I must leave this subject at this point for the time being at any rate.

My weight is now 103. I have reduced the quantity of milk, knocked off bread and increased the quantity of oranges from eight to sixteen. Dates too have been dropped for the time

being. Of milk I am taking just one lb. Presently I hope to increase the quantity of milk.

I have sent you Dr. Gour's book for the information it is likely to contain. Justice Amir Ali's is likely to be a superior book as a historical work. I may be mistaken.

It is useless to appeal *The Times of India* to publish my statements[1] in full. I shall try to get someone to send you copies of the statements. There can be no objection to your receiving them for they are to be found in the papers allowed to you if you took them in.

Ba is expected to finish her tour on 16th and come to Poona.

Appa[2] is not the Anna of Madras. Appa belongs to Maharashtra. He is a learned man. He was a teacher in the Ashram before you came. He is very lean. His brother Shripatrao you must have seen. He was in charge of the sales department. The whole incident was deeply interesting and very human.

We are all doing well. Dahyabhai has had a slight relapse but no complications.

Love from us all.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending the first nine statements save seventh and eighth.[3] These I must find out. . . .[4]

From a photostat: C.W. 9511. Courtesy: Mirabehn

265. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

December 15, 1932

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter[5] stuns me. I sent you a telegram[6] immediately I read it. I had thought that we were so near each other that you could never misunderstand a friendly letter from me. But I see that I committed a grave blunder. I ought not to have written that letter[7]. I have therefore unreservedly and uncondi-

[1] On untouchability
[2] Presumably Appasaheb Patwardhan
[3] These were sent with "Letter to Mirabehn", 22-12-1932.
[4] Some lines here were censored by the jail authorities.
[5] *Vide* Appendix V.
[6] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 15/[16]-12-1932.
[7] *Vide* pp. 138-9.

tionally withdrawn it. That letter being withdrawn, you need not take any of the steps adumbrated in your letter. Do please, therefore, go on with the Board as if I had never written anything to you. The mental hurt that I have caused you, you will generously forget. I shall not easily forgive myself for writing that letter to you. Someone had suggested, I cannot recall who, that you might misunderstand my letter and I foolishly said that you would never misunderstand anything I wrote to you. Pride goeth before destruction, and vanity before a fall. After these amends, I hardly think you need to publish the correspondence between us. But if, for the sake of the cause, you think it necessary to publish it, you have my permission, in so far as it may be necessary.

Please tell me how Kamala and Dr. Alam are doing,[1] and ask Kamala to write to me.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 7908. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18715

266. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

December 15, 1932

MY DEAR RANGASWAMI,

I have your letter enclosing a Session Judge's commentary on the present agitation. I read it through. It gave me pain to find that a judge could lose balance of mind over reform carried on as it is with the greatest restraint and many limitations. The letter is one more proof to show that the reform was overdue. In some shape or form the agitation for temple-entry and complete removal of untouchability as it is being practised today has been on for years, and I am glad that the proposed fast has put life into it.

I hope that your wife is now thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR
THE HINDU OFFICE
MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18712

[1] Kamala Nehru and Dr. Mohammad Alam were under Dr. B. C. Roy's treatment.

267. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

December 15, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. I understand what you say regarding Kamalnayan. No arrangement can be made for him to stay in Poona. I had discussed the matter with Vakil. They do not accept a young man of his age, for they simply don't have the necessary facility for that. We shall discuss the matter further when we meet. Shri Kateli knew that we had a stock of the swadeshi ink for fountain pen which you wanted, and, therefore, we have sent a bottle of it for you. We have quite a large quantity of it.

The sugar used in the bread made here is probably swadeshi, for very little foreign sugar is available in Poona. Even if it is foreign, I would not consider it wrong to eat the bread for that reason, for the sugar is used for preparing yeast. That is, it mixes with the other ingredients of yeast and produces a new substance altogether—as two gases combine in a certain proportion and produce water. Hence we cannot say that when eating bread we consume two different articles, wheat and sugar. Three things are used for preparing yeast—*mahura*, sugar and salt. The *mahura* is indigenous. According to me, therefore, bread is innocent food even for a person who has taken a vow not to eat foreign sugar. However, after knowing all these facts it is for you finally to decide what you should do. If the chapatis which they prepare here agree with you, I certainly would not press you to eat bread.

I have received no reply as yet to my request[1] for permission to see you.

I understand your reason for not going to England just now for an operation. Personally, I entertain no such fear at all. Thousands of people get discharge from their ears and suffer from no other disease. Since the affected parts adjoin the brain, extreme consequences may follow in some cases. The possibility may alarm doctors and they, in turn, frighten the patients. I would, therefore, willingly rest satisfied with whatever help is available

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay", pp. 90-1.

in India. But this discussion is unnecessary just now. After there is a settlement, we shall know what to do.

There is no change in the condition of my elbow. The weight is 103 pounds. General health is good on the whole.

I send with this Janakibehn's letter. Please read what she writes in regard to Kamalnayan. I have told her in my reply that I would certainly not agree to a tutor and a cook being sent with him. That will deprive him of the benefits of staying away from home. I have also told her that we have been discussing the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2908

268. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 15, 1932

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I had advised Narandas to consult you about the problem of harassment by the Chharas.[1] Please let me know what advice you gave. Before you take any step, I should like to know what it is. Any way that you find must be one which would become us, and if you cannot find such a way we would prefer to endure the harassment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1229

[1] *Vide* p. 117.

CWMG - LII

269. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAJAJ

December 15, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. I am very glad that your health is improving and that you are now gaining confidence. How fine it would be if you become as strong as you did at Deolali! I am sure you get news about Radhika and Kusum from time to time. Their health is not quite satisfactory. Kusum, however, seems to be coming round gradually.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9148

270. MESSAGE FOR ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY DAY[1]

December 16, 1932

I hope the message of hope born of the movement for the abolition of untouchability will penetrate Harijan quarters in every village in India on next Sunday which has been fixed by the Central Board for the removal of untouchability. Every Hindu child can do something by way of some little service to his or her Harijan brother or sister in this mass movement of self-purification. I have been listening to discourses of sanatanist friends with respectful attention with a perfectly open mind, and I shall continue to do so as long as they will strive with me with a view to conversion to their interpretation of Hinduism, but the conviction is daily growing upon me that untouchability as it is interpreted and practised today has no sanction whatsoever in the Hindu Shastras taken as a whole, as they must be taken. There can be no doubt that the present interpretation and practice of untouchability is utterly contrary to every canon of morality.

When therefore the evil is banished from our midst, it will be the greatest single act of purification in modern times on the

[1] The day was to be observed on December 18.

part of caste Hindus. I, therefore, hope that there will be full response to the programme issued by the Central Board.

I would invite the *sanatani* friends not to stand aloof from this movement on the ground that they cannot reconcile themselves to temple-entry. Service of no human being can be contrary to religious precepts; much less can the the service of Harijans be contrary to the Hindu religion which regards them as a part of the Hindu society. There are innumerable acts of kindness that they can perform by way of serving the Harijans who are truly children of God forsaken by us.

I have seen a paragraph in newspapers about the fast of one described as Avadhut Swami. It is true that this gentleman wrote to me some letters some months ago. They were, like the many letters that I often receive, long, incoherent and irrelevant. The impression left on me was that the writer of those letters had lost his balance. He said in his letters that he had met me in 1909 or thereabouts. I have no recollection of any such meeting, and I wrote to him to that effect. He never challenged my denial.

I have no knowledge of the notice referred to in the Press message as having been received from him when he is supposed to have met me. At that time years ago, there was no question of fast either.

Someone telegraphed me a few days ago saying that Avadhut Swami was fasting and would continue to do so, unless I gave up anti-untouchability propaganda. I wired to the sender of the telegram saying that he should wean the Swami from the fast.

The movement that I hold as a part of my living faith cannot be abandoned even if a million people fast to make me give it up. To everyone the living faith comes from God, and God alone can turn him from it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-12-1932

CWMG - III

271. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 15/[16], 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have sent you one telegram today about the name of the League and another about the Bengal Provincial Organization will go tomorrow.

First, about the name. I enclose herewith Rajaji's letter[1]. I think that his argument is conclusive, and if it is at all possible to adopt his suggestion, you will alter the name accordingly. I was so possessed with the idea of service that I missed the implication to which Rajaji draws pointed attention.

Now, as to the Bengal Organization, I fear that I have committed a grievous blunder. I overrated my influence with Dr. Bidhan. I am sorry because I have given him pain; and I am sorry because I have placed you in an awkward position. He will survive the pain; you will surmount all awkward difficulty; I shall not easily forget my folly.

I have sent Dr. Roy the following telegram:

> Your unsigned letter received today. Correspondence not meant for publication. Have told you distinctly if you feel confident you should continue work already begun. Accept my apology for what I now recognize was undue interference and what I had meant to be friendly suggestion. Please therefore treat my letter as absolutely withdrawn.—Gandhi

and I enclose herewith a copy of the letter[2] I am sending him. I do not need to add anything more. I hope that the incident will close without causing much worry to you. I enclose also a copy of Dr. Bidhan's reply.[3]

I have received your letter of the 12th December. The definition that Sjt. Thakkar has sent you has been further altered by me. I enclose copy of the altered definition. Pandit Kunzru had sent me the definition that Sjt. Thakkar had sent you. I

[1] *Vide* Appendix XI.
[2] *Vide* pp. 201-2.
[3] *Vide* Appendix V.

made alterations and sent him the altered copy.[1] I see that Sjt. Thakkar had not received the altered copy when he wrote to you.

I had about seven friends and followers of Dr. Ambedkar today. They complained or stated (because they said they did not want to complain but merely to make a statement) that Dr. Ambedkar's letter to Sjt. Thakkar written on board the steamer making certain suggestions was not mentioned during the meeting of the Board in Poona. I told them[2] I did not know that it was not mentioned, but I told them also that the letter could not have been passed by and it must have been considered by the Board. You will now please write to them or me as to what was exactly done in connection with that letter.

These friends also stated that our organizations were keeping up the split amongst the Harijans and wherever possible favouring Rao Bahadur Rajah's[3] party. I assured them that such never could be your intention and that the endeavour of the Board would be to steer clear of party divisions, and that the endeavour of the Board and its Branches everywhere would be to cement the relations between the two parties for which now that the political part of the question was settled there was absolutely no need.

Although I have got additional assistance in the shape of Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi having been sent to me, as also efficient shorthand assistance, I can have no leisure. This much-needed assistance enables me to keep abreast with the growing work. Interviews take up a great deal of time, but they are all necessary. I do not therefore grudge them.

I hope you are keeping fit. You must do something that would induce sound sleep, not by way of drugs, but through natural means or dietetic changes. Have you tried the prunes in the manner I suggested? Some of the easy *asanas* and deep breathing, which is what *pranayam* for health means, might assist digestion and induce sleep.[4]

Yours sincerely,

[*December 16, 1932*]

PS.

Since dictating the above letter, I have received the following telegram from Dr. Bidhan:

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. N. Kunzru", pp. 131-2.

[2] For an account of the discussion, *vide* Appendix XII.

[3] Government nominee representing the depressed classes in the Legislative Assembly

[4] For addressee's reply to this letter, *vide* Appendix XIII.

Thanks for telegram. Respectfully submit don't understand what you mean feeling confident. As explained in letter in view of present enthusiasm in Bengal any President and Board can perform anti-untouchability work. If however you mean confidence in obtaining co-operation from those who refuse it when offered no one can ensure it. Measure of success will depend on funds and proper utilization thereof. Please wire whether I and Board can rely on your full support if we continue.—Bidhanray

to which I have sent the following reply:

Thanks your wire. By confidence I mean self-confidence. Of course you can rely upon such assistance as is within my power.—Gandhi

From a copy: C.W. 7909. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18715

272. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

December 16, 1932

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

With reference to my letter dated the 29th[1] ultimo regarding permission to see Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj from time to time, both in respect of his health and untouchability, I shall be grateful for a reply.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(2), Pt. I, p. 417

[1] The source has "30th"; *vide* pp. 90-1.

CWMG-III

273. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

December 16, 1932

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I had your letter yesterday. I could not send you the reply as Sjt. Agashe gave your letter to me too late for me to send you a reply through him. I note that Sjt. Deodhar will come along with Sjt. Natarajan on Sunday. You and Sjt. Deodhar and other friends can decide whether to invite Dr. Kurtukoti or not. I would warn you against accepting reports. You must be sure of his views.

With reference to the expenses, I think that the Provincial Board should approach the All-India Board. With regard to the guests who would be coming in the course of a few days, it would be best to see me about their residence, etc.

As to the other invitations including Sjt. Vaidya, you and Sjt. Deodhar should decide. Personally, I have very great regard for Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. At the same time, the list ought not to become unduly long on my account.

I do not know that I can give any opinion upon the artificial tea or coffee that you brought me the other day. Unless I knew how many ingredients it contained, I could not test it, and if I do not, I could not give any opinion. If the manufacturer will give you the ingredients, and if I can take it, I shall be prepared to experiment upon it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HARIBHAU PHATAK
SADASHIV PETH, POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18721

274. LETTER TO S. NEELAKANTHA AYYAR

December 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I am sorry that the Diwan Bahadur should look at this movement in a bargaining spirit. I must say what I hold to be good and true, irrespective of consequence, and so should every responsible Hindu. I hope that a humble man does not cease to be humble when he gives expression to his innermost thoughts which he holds to be true. I have judged no individual in saying that caste Hindus as such are sinners before God and man in their treatment of Harijans. An individual who is most pious may have to perform *prayashchitta* for the sin of the class to which he belongs. I see no dictation, either, in

[1] Dated December 11, 1932. It read: ". . . I had an interview with Dewan Bahadur T. R. Ramachandra Ayyar last month when I found him in a fairly reasonable frame of mind towards the movement. I again met him this morning and asked him why he had changed his mind. He said it was Gandhiji's uncompromising attitude in the matter that had made him also uncompromising. Previously when Mr. K. Bhashyam and other leaders in Madras had approached him, what they proposed was, what he regarded as a compromise, viz., to admit the Harijans as far as the *Dhwaja Sthambha*, i.e., to admit them within the temple, but in the outer round, ... He was also agreeable to admit Harijans into the inner round once or twice such as on *Ekadasi* days.

"Now in view of Gandhiji's demand that they should be treated absolutely on the same terms as the higher castes, which he regards as most uncompromising he also assumes an equally uncompromising position and leads a movement organizing the orthodox with the support of all the *Mathadhipatis*.

"What has given him greater affront was Gandhiji's statement that it was the caste Hindus who were the sinners and were to perform *prayashchitta* and not the Harijans. He was very much excited over the idea that Gandhiji should have asked pious people like him to perform *prayashchitta* in their old age for their pious past conduct. He felt that in dictating like this Gandhiji's usual humility had entirely deserted him and made him an avatar of haughtiness . . . " (S.N. 18690).

stating the truth and it was said by me in 1915 and was repeated since from a thousand platforms.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. NEELAKANTHA AYYAR, B.A.,L.T.
SECRETARY, COCHIN-TRAVANCORE ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD
TRICHUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18730

275. LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S.

December 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 13th instant. You may perhaps know that some *Shastris* from Pandharpur have had long discussions with me, at the end of which we agreed that on the 23rd instant there should be a discussion between them and those *Shastris* who generally support the view I have taken. I therefore think that there will be a discussion on the 23rd and I suggest that the *Shastris* whom you have in mind should also take part in the discussion. Personally, I do not think that any terms need be previously fixed, but if it is necessary, they can be fixed on the 23rd, and if a chairman is considered necessary, one could be appointed from those *Shastris* who will be present on the 23rd. Acharya Dhruva will reach Poona in any case on the evening of the 22nd, and he will be available so long as the discussions last. My own object in listening to such discussions is to allow my mind and heart to be acted upon, and if I discover a flaw in the attitude I have hitherto held, I should have no difficulty in owning my mistake and retracing my steps. Whether a discussion induces a change in my attitude or not, a friendly conversation between *Shastris* representing different views cannot but do good and result in removing bitterness. I quite agree with you that the number of those taking part in the discussion should not be more than seven on either side.

I do not at all anticipate that the discussion to be started on the 23rd can go on for more than two or, at the outside, three

days, three hours being devoted each day. There is therefore no occasion just now to think of the 2nd of January next.

Yours sincerely,

GENERAL SECRETARY
SANATANA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18728

276. LETTER TO MANGALDAS M. PAKVASA

December 16, 1932

BHAISHRI PAKVASA,

Dhirubhai told me that you had to get yourself operated upon for hernia. All of us felt worried on hearing this. Dhirubhai said that you had become quite weak. Write and give full details. May God restore your strength soon.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4677. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

277. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

December 16, 1932

BHAI MANMOHAN,

I got your letter and the books sent by you. Just now none of us get any time to read such things.

There is no cause for worry about my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 17

278. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 16, 1932

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

From what Dhirubhai told me yesterday, I see that your pain is more serious than I had thought. Let me know what the doctors say. Dictate the letter and do not write it yourself.

Do you feel the pain only in one arm? Does it remain all the time? Is there any improvement after your release?

I hope Jijima is quite well. Give my *pranams* to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7522. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

279. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 16, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your postcard. I hope Premabehn did not suffer much after the operation. At the time of the operation one is not conscious and does not feel the pain, but very often the patient suffers afterwards. I hope that did not happen in this case. It was in order to save a day that I wrote directly to Mavalankar yesterday regarding the problem of the Chharas.

Just now I asked Chhaganlal the name of Liladhar's father, and he tells me that it is not our practice in the Ashram to note in the register the full names of the inmates. Only the name by which a person is generally known is recorded. If this is the general practice, or even if it happens only in exceptional cases, it should be immediately changed. For, if the full names are not recorded, we may sometimes find ourselves in a difficult situation. When a name is first entered in the register, full particulars including the address should be recorded. Even when a child's name is entered the full name should be written down. The last place where the person lived before joining the Ashram

CWMG - LII

should be mentioned in brackets. This is how I learnt to keep registers. If you look into the old registers, you will find in them all such information. You should, therefore, examine the whole record and, wherever the names are incomplete, write them in full.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8282. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

280. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday morning, December 17, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter, as also the other letters enclosed. I saw Narayanappa yesterday. He told me that he had written several letters to you, to which he had got no reply. Let me know what the position is. He wishes to return to the Ashram. I told him that was for you to decide, and that he could return only if he satisfied you. There is still some time before he will be released.

You did right in fasting for a day. That is the best remedy when one feels liverish. Do not eat *jowar* and *bajri* if they do not agree with you. You may reduce their quantity. It is possible that they may not agree with some people. Do not harm your health for the sake of this experiment. What is your food at present?

Kusum's ship is in mid-ocean. I hope Talwalkar examines her carefully. Did he say anything after reading my letter?

I understand what you say about Shanta. The Chharas seem to be quiet now. Did you come to know where Gangabehn and other women are kept?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8283. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

281. LETTER TO S. K. DATTA[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR DR. DATTA,

I was delighted to have your letter, giving me the only thing you could properly give in my present condition. In discovering the use of Indian words among the Gypsies, President Masaryk and you have perhaps made a discovery of great value. How nice it would be if some painstaking and accurate scholar could follow up your discovery and ascertain whether the few common words that you discovered were a mere accident or whether they are evidence of a recent common origin or of intimate intercourse, or may it be that the Gypsies are a set of universalists for whom the whole world is their country? The information you give about the old President is also very instructive. I wish that we could emulate his energy and vigour.

Mahadev is with me, Devdas sees me fairly often, and Pyarelal was able to see me practically only during the fast. Please send our love to Mrs. Datta and your boy. I can feel your difficulties in your new post, but God will give you strength to grapple with them. All this however is preface to the question I want to ask you: "What are your boys doing for the Harijans?"

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. K. DATTA
PRINCIPAL, FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18733

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 9, 1932, which read: "Last August my son and myself went to spend two days with President Masaryk. The President talked to me a great deal about you. You remember that they invited you to stay with them at Prague, but you were unable at the end to accept the invitation. He is a wonderful old man—85 years of age—who rides his horse every day not like an old man, but athletically. I must tell you of an experience that I had when staying with him at a small village in Slovakia. . . . The inhabitants were a colony of Gypsies. . . . The strangest experience was to hear these folk speak. There were scores of words which I could understand—almost pure Hindi—such as *behn* for sister, *pani* for water, *aag* for fire, etc., etc. When I went back to the Presidential House, he and I studied with a little care that evening Bible stories written in Gypsy language and I recognized in them Hindi words . . ."

282. LETTER TO DUNI CHAND[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR LALA DUNI CHAND,

You have done well according to your wont in writing to me on the burning question.

I think you are quite right in rejecting the evidence of the inner urge. I was bound to meet that statement, as I believe it to be true. But the public has not only the right but [it is] its duty to examine the question dispassionately and from a common-sense point of view. I have myself endeavoured therefore to reason out the justification for the steps I have taken and those that are contemplated. Therefore you do not want me to reiterate the argument I have publicly advanced in my own statements in justification. One issue however I have not dealt with publicly. You are quite right in saying that my body is not my own, but that it belongs to the nation. You will however recognize that it also belongs to God, or rather, it belongs to the nation because it belongs to God. And here I have got to state that it is God who is dealing with this body, and He will keep it intact against the whole world if He wants to use it for a service, great or small, and the whole world will not be able to keep it if God decides to take it away. Let us therefore wait upon Him and trust that whatever He does will be for our good.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. LALA DUNI CHAND, B.A.
KRIPA NIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18735

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's of December 11, 1932, requesting Gandhiji not to go on fast from January 2, 1933 (S.N. 18689).

283. LETTER TO N. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR[1]

December 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. Do you not remember the saying of a wise and learned man that the things you cannot say and intelligibly explain well inside of an hour are not worth saying or explaining? But I promised you full one hour. You can still take that hour if that will satisfy you.

Here are my answers to your questions:

1. A Hindu temple is one built by Hindus for worship by Hindus in accordance with the requirements of Hinduism.

2. There is no such thing as Indian caste system in Hinduism, but there is varnashrama. And varna is wholly different from the current caste.

3. Custom that is not repugnant to the moral sense must be recognized by courts of law.

4. Those who want to enforce a custom have to show that it has been in vogue for a long time and that it is not in conflict with the moral sense, but the burden may be shifted if a custom already recognized is challenged.

5. A self-respecting court will not be bullied into giving decisions by agitations, but it would be governed by well-recognized rules.

6. The question is answered in No. 1.

7. When the religious texts differ, evidence as to usage will be one of the determining factors.

8. Private property lawfully acquired is entitled to protection.

9. Communal property is also entitled to protection if communal ownership is not in conflict with the common weal.

10. A private temple is entitled to the same protection as private property.

11. I am not aware of anybody having agitated for confiscation of temples.

12. Simple suicide is an offence under the present Law as I have been told.

[1] Senior Dewan Peishkar, Travancore

[2] Dated December 10, 1932 (S.N. 18687)

13. If Gandhi took up his stand at the Viceregal gateway and threatened to fast even for one day unless the British Government withdrew from the country, the Government would be justly entitled to arrest him and imprison him till he came to his senses.

14. The contemplated fast does not make it impossible for anybody to deal with the temple-entry question in a fearless and reasonable manner; nor do I see any sign that the opponents are in any way deterred from their purpose, and I think that they are quite right in ignoring the contemplated fast.

15. I am sorry to have to remark that this question[1] is packed with ignorance of the true situation and is outside my limits.

Although I have, out of regard for you, answered your questions, you will permit me to say that many of them are argumentative and take no note of the existing situation, and some of them are based upon mere assumptions. It has filled me with sorrow to discover that learned men have imagined a woeful state of things to exist and have thrown themselves into rage over the imaginary woe.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR, M.A.
C/O THE RESIDENT MEDICAL OFFICER
GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, ROYAPETTAH, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18731

284. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

December 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. You will please pardon me for the frankness with which I propose to discuss it in the hope that it may open your eyes to the untenability of the position you have taken up and which you say represents orthodox opinion.

[1] It read: "15. Is not this movement—against which orthodox opposition is only being just mobilized and is bound to rise to a proportion which neither the Government nor its present engineers have any idea of, and started at a stage of India's death and religious decline when faith in temples is steadily waning and is absolutely non-existent among the people who are projecting and conducting this movement and who are doing so more as a political stunt against the Government for winning swaraj than as a measure of religious catholicity—calculated to create increasing discord in the country, rioting and even bloodshed—and to indefinitely postpone the prospect of swaraj which is the common aim of all?"

[2] Dated December 14, 1932 (C.W. 9561)

Before I do that, let me ask why your letter-paper is so grotesque. It cannot add dignity to the sanatan dharma by having your letter-paper printed with borders as on an address-paper, still less to have a portrait of the agent surrounded by other figures. Advertisers do sometimes adopt ornamentation for their letter-paper, but I have never seen anything so wholly inartistic as the paper which you are using. I restrained myself twice against drawing your attention to the incongruity of a religious agency using ornamentation, and that, too, utterly inartistic, but though my claim may be rejected, I am or am trying to be a humble representative of sanatan dharma, and therefore, whenever anything unbecoming is done in the name of that dharma, it pains me deeply. So much by way of preface.

Now, regarding the contents of your letter. Surely, it ought to be easy for you to see that since you admit that untouchability is quite contrary to the divine fact of oneness of all life, the only way to realize that oneness[1] is to have as little differentiation as possible, and wherever it exists, it should be accepted as an evil to be removed at the first opportunity. There is no such difficulty or impossibility about the removal of untouchability as we practise it today. You say that untouchability is based on "physical, moral and mental purity", and you have stated as if it was a self-proved proposition. I find it most difficult to understand your statement so utterly at variance with daily experience. To claim permanence for untouchability, as you evidently claim for it, is to indefinitely postpone realization of oneness, unless you were to postulate that that realization is to come to humanity from outside sources. But I have never heard anybody saying so; on the contrary, there is complete agreement that realization of oneness can only come by incessant striving. In other words, it can only come when, in a daily increasing ratio, we obliterate differences and begin with those which are of our own creation and which have no moral justification.

Nor can we be oblivious to the practices followed in other religions. If there is oneness of all life, there is oneness of all religions. It is, therefore, instructive, if not absolutely necessary, to test our own practice by a reference to that of other religions, and then we find that untouchability as we know it today does not exist in any other religion. For justifying our untouchability, therefore, we have to prove that the other religions are defective

[1] *Vide* "Letter to M. M. Ananta Rau", pp. 51-2.

in that they do not practise untouchability and that it is so essential to the realization of the common goal that those religions which do not practise it will be driven to it whether they will or no. I have never heard anybody making such claim.

Those who claim to be sanatanists have put themselves in a state of rage as if I was about to violate all that is good in Hinduism, and they have rendered themselves incapable, first, of understanding what I am after, and then, of knowing what they are attacking. I can safely say that no two letters from among the mass of letters I am receiving from sanatanists have agreed about the definition of untouchability. They either swear at me or enter into argument that has no bearing on the subject. All this cannot be good for sanatan dharma. The correspondence I am having is to me a painful sign of decadence of Hinduism.

I invite you to ponder over what I have written, and if you find any force in my argument, study the whole question dispassionately, and if you feel with me that untouchability is an evil, courageously proclaim the truth and fight the evil.

You refer me to the four Sankaracharyas.[1] What shall I do by worrying them? I entertain no doubt about the correctness of my position. It is as clear to me as noon-day light. If they think that I am immersed in darkness, it is for them to show me the light.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. M. ANANTA RAU
AGENT, SANATANA DHARMA AGENCY
40 ISHWARDAS LALA STREET, TRIPLICANE, MADRAS

From a copy: C.W. 9565. Courtesy: Government of Mysore. Also S.N. 18736

[1] The addressee had written: "You are eager to know about true orthodox opinion about the subject of untouchability. You can do full justice to your desire to know this if you wire to (1) His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya Swami of Kamakotipeetam, now camping at Madras, (2) His Holiness the Jeer, Sri Ahobila Matam, Srirengam, (3) His Holiness Sri Sankaracharya Swami of Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, (4) His Holiness Sri Satyagnanatirtha Swami of Uttaradimatam, now camping at Benares, requesting them to send the best pundits amongst them under their nomination for the conference you intend holding. Without this your true object cannot be fully fulfilled."

285. LETTER TO N. S. VARADACHARI

[*December 17, 1932*][1]

I have your letter. Whoever is responsible for the so-called blessings, I am not. Yours is the first intimation that I have of any swadeshi exhibition in Kumbakonam. I do not and cannot under the limitations of jail life send messages on anything except untouchability. You may therefore make whatever use you like of this letter.

The Hindu, 21-12-1932

286. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 17, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

This time also you are having repeated attacks of asthma. Doesn't this mean that you should live somewhere else and do whatever service you can? You may go and live at Wardha this time if you wish. You can do much service even while living there. If you have imbibed the spirit of the Ashram you may look after the girls who are being brought up in the Ashram, at Wardha. Moreover, Purushottam is there at present. Balkrishna also is there, and Krishna frequently visits the place. Have you tried Vijapur? It is a different matter if you have decided to remain in the Ashram, irrespective of how you keep there. If, however, you can preserve better health at some other place and the spirit of service has become part of your nature, it is your clear duty to go and live there. Experience shows that one who has the spirit of service in him or her will feel at home wherever he or she goes.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 865. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From "Diary, 1932", entry under this date. This appeared under the date-line: "Madras, December 21".

287. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 17, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

You are still not out of the wood, but I know that you will not lose heart. I suppose you know that to get well is something that is in the patient's own hands. He should never lose hope nor get impatient. He should suffer bravely as long as it is his lot to suffer and fight on. If you try it, you will find that Ramanama is a more powerful remedy than all diets and drugs put together. The power of electricity is nothing before it. It will give you peace of mind and keep you cheerful. It seems that you are eager to write letters. Resist your desire. At present your duty lies in taking perfect rest. If you wish, you may dictate a few sentences to us or to friends for fun, but you must not think about office work. I hope you will follow this advice. God will surely preserve you.

I have written this letter with my left hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 152-3

288. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 17, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your beautiful letter. If you have come away from the hospital against the doctor's advice, I would blame you. Don't you know that you can go on doing service even while lying in a hospital? See that you don't speak much. For some time live only on milk and fruit. Where did you learn that a sick person should not eat rice? Don't make haste and fall ill.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10315. Also C.W. 6754. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

289. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

December 17, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. Of course I can understand your remaining behind in India for the sake of your health or some such reason. Otherwise, we at any rate have a simple rule of duty. Just as Sita followed Rama wherever he went, so the husband and the wife should live together not for carnal pleasure but for mutual service. It is, therefore, proper that you should accompany Manilal.

Fasts, etc., have become a part of my life. You need not postpone your departure for such a reason. One can understand either of you staying back at such a time if that is necessary in order to look after me. As there is no such reason on this occasion, from every point of view it seems proper that you should accompany Manilal. You should, therefore, decide to leave for South Africa without feeling anxious for me.

I will await Tara's letter attacking me. If she requires any evidence, I will send it from here. She should not mind if she loses in the argument. Her defeat will be the first step towards victory. And if she wins, that will not be surprising either, since children's victory over their elders is in fact the victory of the latter.

Does not the fact that Sita cannot be cured of her boils prove your own deficiency as a mother?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4803

290. LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI

December 17, 1932

As a general rule I can say that where there is a possibility of a riot and we are also likely to get no help from the authorities, we should abandon the idea of holding a meeting or taking out a procession. We should slowly cultivate public opinion at such a place, and at the same time go on with the work for the welfare of the Harijans. For that purpose, some persons may even have to go and live among them.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 345

291. LETTER TO PYARELAL NAYYAR

December 17, 1932

You seem to have taken a vow not to write to me. Well, I must live as God wills, or as Pyarelal wills. If your health is good and you have nothing to write to me about, I am quite content.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 345-6

292. LETTER TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

December 17, 1932

. . . behn[1] is like a milch cow. Her shortcomings are countless, but her virtues are far greater in number. Remember what Tulsidas taught in this regard, and look only to the virtues and disregard the shortcomings. We should know that all of us have shortcomings and bear those of our co-workers.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 346

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

CWMG - III

293. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

December 17, 1932

Just now I cannot write long letters. Parashuramji knows the new *takli* method. He does not have the same speed as Bhau but he may be able to teach you.

Narandas is quite right in saying that any boy or girl who has not undergone training in khadi work, carpentry, farm work, tanning, dairy work, etc., has remained uneducated. It seems you have still not understood one special feature of the Ashram. It is that farm work, carpentry, etc., also are a part of your education, and develop your intellect and also some of the bodily senses. If these crafts are taught as part of your education, they would do more good, as I have already explained in one of my previous letters[1] to the Ashram, than a purely literal education[2] does. If you have forgotten what I said in that letter or cannot find that letter, let me know and I will write to you again about it, for the point deserves to be understood by all. Do not think that I say this because I wish to run down book-learning. I fully understand its value. You will not easily come across many men who put such knowledge to better use than I do. My purpose in saying this is to put training in crafts on the same footing as education in letters. Those who thoroughly understand this point will never be eager for a literal education at the cost of training in crafts. Their book-learning will shine better and also prove of greater benefit to the people. If you understand this fully, all of you will be ready to take out the cattle for grazing.

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

294. LETTER TO KUSUM GANDHI

December 17, 1932

Every person who is ill holds the key to his life in his own hands as long as recovery is possible. If he or she gives way to despair, no medicine will help, and, on the contrary, if he or she does not lose heart, even a simple powder will be a priceless

[1] *Vide* Vol. L, pp. 182-3.

[2] Literally, 'knowledge of letters'

remedy. You should, therefore, remember three rules: Do not lose courage; follow the advice of the person in whose hands you have placed yourself; and, however much you suffer, go on repeating Ramanama, remain cheerful and never cry.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 346-7

295. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 18, 1932

DEAR SATISBABU,

No letter from you. I have failed miserably in my endeavour to have the Board reconstructed. I have apologized to Dr. Roy and withdrawn my letter[1]. You should forget that I ever tried. Things must take their own course. You will act as may seem best to you.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1619

296. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 18, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I read your letter which arrived with the general post [from the Ashram]. I would advise you to go and stay somewhere else.[2]

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 866. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

297. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI TRIVEDI

December 18, 1932

CHI. CHHOTUBHAI,

You have been rendering good service. You will learn the job with practice. You may not expect specific advice from me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10471

[1] *Vide* pp. 201-2.

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", p. 222.

298. LETTER TO KOTWAL

December 18, 1932

BHAI KOTWAL,

I got your letter. The doubt which has occurred to you is a natural one.

Following the path of dharma would not have been compared to walking on the razor's edge, if no occasions ever arose when in doing one's duty one found oneself on the horns of a dilemma. A thing which is ordinarily forbidden may with a little change in the circumstances become a duty. The thing is similar to the manner in which a chemical compound is formed. Appa's demand was not for a right or privilege, nor for any personal facility. It was for permission to do his duty. It was my duty—and I have not the least doubt about this—to join Appa in his fast, as, when we were all free, I had already given my opinion that Appa could undertake a fast in the circumstances which actually arose. As this argument appeals to reason, it is not necessary for you to go by faith in what I say. As long as your reason is not convinced, you should not accept anything more than what you have been able to understand about the ethics of fasting. Do not think too much about the matter and get confused. Ask me again if my explanation is not clear to you. But you need not, if you do not wish. The situation in which I found myself was no ordinary one, and in such situations too much thinking is to be avoided.

It seems to be my clear duty to fast with Kelappan if it becomes necessary for him to do so, since it was I who had asked him to give up his fast. This involves a number of other issues, and I have no time to explain them in this letter. You will have no question to ask if you carefully go through all that I have written on the subject.

It need not be assumed that the fast will start on the 2nd. There are many complications. The date was not fixed recently, but was fixed at the very time that Kelappan gave up his fast.[1] The agitation is not for depriving any people of their right, but for restoring their rights to those who were deprived of them. I think that I have now answered all your questions.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 150.

What you read in the newspapers about the time limit of thirty days has no basis in fact. There is no such intention even. There is no end to the misunderstandings being spread at present by the men who come to discuss things with me. No one, therefore, should believe anything said about me. People should go by only what I myself say.

There was no need to ask the Zamorin before fixing the 2nd as the date; he himself had wired suggesting postponement of Kelappan's fast. I fixed the date that seemed to be the most suitable.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3606

299. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

December 18, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. I am very glad that you keep good health. All your actions should be straightforward and all your thoughts clean.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2770. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

300. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 18, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

So at last you also have fallen ill. All of us do. You and all others should carry out the new experiment only to the extent that it agrees with you. For some time, you should only drink milk and eat fruit. You may also eat vegetables. If you feel the need for rice, you should eat it unhesitatingly. I have suggested its exclusion purely for health reasons. Hence anybody who needs it for maintaining good health may certainly eat it. Nobody should feel ashamed to eat it. If the results do not seem beneficial, you may give up the whole experiment.

I cling to the suggestion which I have made concerning Jamna.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8284. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnabehn Gandhi", pp. 222 and 227.

301. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 18, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I wrote to you some letters in the course of the week. This one is in reply to your weekly letter.

I have decided to obey your order forbidding me to show your letters to Chhaganlal. Of course I had to show him your order. I think you, too, would not wish that he should remain ignorant of what you wrote about him. I showed him the relevant part of the letter and asked him not to read the rest. All the same, I did not like your order. Why should any person in the Ashram hide anything from another inmate? I can understand a child or a grown-up who knows no better feeling thus. But what can you have to hide from anybody? The fact that others read your letters doesn't lessen, but rather increases, the sanctity of your letters. You should not at all feel embarrassed if the whole world knows your thoughts. We have no right to think any thoughts which others may not know. If we follow this as a fixed rule in our life, we automatically learn to control our thoughts. Every human being is God's representative on the earth. He knows all our thoughts, but we do not know that He does, because we do not see Him face to face. If, however, we look upon human beings as God's representatives on the earth, we should not mind others knowing our thoughts. Moreover, since we see a representative bodily, it becomes easy for us to acquire control over our thoughts. I wish that you should voluntarily withdraw your order. I had hoped that I would be able to write with my right hand, but I see that I ought not to use it and, therefore, I shall not perhaps be able to write all that I wished to say. I don't mind your writing about Ramabehn whatever comes to your mind. She does know indeed that you will write nothing out of ill will for her. So you may write anything you may wish to. I will carry out any suggestion you may make.

You seem to have left the hospital much too soon. If you are carrying out the doctor's instructions faithfully, there will be no difficulty. It will be fine indeed if the operation succeeds in its purpose.

. . . 's[1] story is a sad one. I am not ready to blame . . .[2] without knowing his side of the case. . . .[3] is man of pure heart; he is not cruel. He knows his duty. If I had more time at my disposal, I would have explained the matter in greater detail. You should serve . . .[4] as well as you can. If she feels lonely she is not altogether blameless in the matter. But she should not be left uncared for because of that. . . .[5] has quite a few good qualities too.

Indu is of course careless. He is a simple-hearted boy and loves play a little too much. I have written to his father and told him that he should take the boy under his loving care.

Take milk and fruit for some time and think that they are medicines. Don't eat *kanji*, etc., for a while. If you wish to eat rice, you can. See the doctor regularly.

A letter for Sushila[6] is enclosed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10316. Also C.W. 6755. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

302. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

December 18, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You should always keep a margin on the left side of the sheet. You can see such a margin in this letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1734

303. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 18, 1932

CHI. BABU ALIAS SHARDA,

Is it that you have boycotted me? You used to write beautiful letters every week and now you are silent. Why? If you are taking pity on me, I have no use for it. What I want is beautiful letters, even if I do not write.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9959. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1], [2], [3], [4], & [5] The names have been omitted.
[6] Sushila Pai, addressee's friend

304. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL TRUST

[Before *December 19, 1932*][1]

We hardly find a greater benefactor, a truer sympathizer of Harijans than Swami Shraddhanand[2] at the present day. The memory of Swami Shraddhanand can fittingly be celebrated by doing every possible service to Harijans and at least those that have means should contribute to the Shraddhanand Memorial Trust.

The Hindu, 20-12-1932

305. LETTER TO NIROD RANJAN GUHA

December 19, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long but instructive, well-reasoned and sympathetic letter. I listened to it from beginning to end. You rightly do not expect any answer to your argument. I will however say this that the argument advanced by you was not new to me; and whilst I could subscribe to almost all you have said in your letter, I could consistently defend the course I have adopted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIROD RANJAN GUHA
P 215-A RUSSA ROAD (SOUTH), P.O. TOLLYGANJ
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18744

[1] The letter was published under the date-line: "New Delhi, December 19".

[2] He was assassinated on December 23, 1926.

306. LETTER TO R. B. TALEGAONKAR

December 19, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Here are answers to the questions you left[1] with me:

1. The reformer has to convert the people by patience, gentleness and purity of character. My fast can only prepare the ground for the reformer's work and make the reformer also more active than before in the execution of his mission.

2. I would just as soon fast in respect of Dakornath Temple[2] as Guruvayur if the call came. I had no notion that I should have to contemplate a fast regarding Guruvayur, as everyone knows it came to me; but it would be wrong on my part to tack on other temples. Nevertheless, there are many other ways in which the movement for opening other temples is being, and should be, carried on.

3. If I refuse to be party to conditional temple-entry by Harijans, it is not because I feel less for the cow, but because it is the best way of weaning Harijans from taking beef. In matters of religion, there should be no bargaining. Every Harijan knows that one of the essential conditions of being a good Hindu is to abstain from taking beef or carrion. Therefore my formula is that those Harijans who are in the habit of taking beef or carrion should be induced to give it up, irrespective of whether the temples are opened to them or not, purely on the ground that beef and carrion-eating is prohibited in Hinduism. Similarly temples should be opened unconditionally. Even as it is the duty of Harijans to abstain from beef and carrion without asking for or receiving any consideration therefor, so is it the duty of caste Hindus, irrespective of consideration, to throw open the doors of temples to Harijans without claiming any consideration. Even today there is no inquisition held as to the Hindu practice of temple-goers. Very properly it is taken for granted that temple-goers conform to the rules applicable to them regarding temple-entry. So must we expect Harijans to do.

[1] On December 16, 1932 (S.N. 18722)
[2] In Gujarat

4. There are many courses that we can adopt in order to ensure success in a movement. There are some courses, however, which are beyond our capacity to adopt. My release is a course which it is beyond my capacity to adopt.

5. To seek to abolish untouchability amongst untouchables before caste Hindus abolish untouchability with reference to untouchables is like an attempt to twist a rope of sand foredoomed to failure. When caste Hindus really abolish untouchability, the other will crumble to pieces practically without an effort.

6. In my opinion, seeing that the society now formed is one to do penance or to discharge an obligation due to Harijans, it should be composed of penitents or debtors, but there should be a corresponding committee or society of creditors, that is Harijans, whose wishes should be ascertained from time to time.

7. No law will abolish untouchability before caste Hindus are ready to do so. Law can only help them when they need its assistance. But it can never compel them.

8. In Hinduism, and for that matter in every religion, every activity of a religious man is governed by his religion. A man cannot be religious that is guided by his moral and spiritual sense in some activities and not in others. When there is religion about a person, it pervades his whole being.

9. All the three statements[1] are not inconsistent with one another, but they represent the same truth. Without Guruvayur there will be no Kelappan fasting, without Kelappan there would have been no inspiration for me to fast for Guruvayur.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. B. TALEGAONKAR
1034 RAVIWAR PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18722

[1] The reference is to statements on different occasions attributed by the addressee to Gandhiji to the effect that he was going to 'perform the fast for the sake of Guruvayur Temple'; 'for the sake of Mr. Kelappan'; and 'for the sake of God's wish inspiring him to go through this ordeal of fast' (S.N. 18722).

307. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ARYA SAMAJ, BOMBAY

December 19, 1932

I was pained to see the published report of our interview[1]. I do not carry a copy of the *Satyarthaprakash* with me. I only said that there were several copies of it in the Ashram library. I did not ask for the books, but Mahadev did.

When you offered your help to the temple-entry movement, I advised you not to interfere with it and you also accepted my advice. But the report suggests that I desired your help. The cause will suffer through such misrepresentations. I, therefore, consider it necessary that for the sake of truth and the cause you should immediately publish a correction to the report. I should like you to publish it as soon as you can. A false report can never help a cause, and it cannot but harm dharma. A correction, therefore, is desirable from every point of view.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 354-5

308. A LETTER

December 19, 1932

It is true that I refused to eat eggs. Still I believe that cod-liver oil is objectionable, milk is less objectionable than cod-liver oil and unfertilized eggs are less objectionable than either. However, people have become accustomed to cod-liver oil but not to eggs, and so even unfertilized eggs are regarded as objectionable.

In the statement: ["And if any man will sue thee at the law] and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also",[2] it is understood that the man who asks for your coat is a deserving person. But the statement also means that, if anybody tries to rob us of a thing and if it is not our duty to resist him, it would be better to let him take more than he wished. The golden rule behind this precept is that of non-possession. Nobody can practise

[1] On December 14, 1932; *vide* p. 197.

[2] *St. Matthew*, v. 40

it to perfection. If, however, we have understood it fully, we should try to follow it more and more in our lives to the extent that we can.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 360-1

309. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I can judge whether or not you can write only after I see a copy of the letter which Shri Mavalankar has written. Obtain one and send it to me. Tell the German lady[1] that, if she wishes, she may certainly write to me. It is highly unlikely that she will be permitted to see me. If Parashuram told the story of the cat not merely as a joke but to argue that we might do the same thing, some pain would mingle with my amusement.

I hope you are completely all right now. All the same, be careful about your food.

BAPU

PS.

I send with this a letter from Bhai Umedram. He stayed in the Ashram once, alone. I think that, after his talk with me here, I had dropped a hint to you that he might come to live in the Ashram with his children. He has now written to me. Admit him to the Ashram. He knows its rules. He also said that he would abide by them. I think the best course would be that he should come and stay in the Ashram for some time and that, after you have had experience of each other, he should decide finally. However, you are the best judge, therefore, do what you think best. Do not think, because I wish him to be admitted, that it is your duty to admit him. I am writing to Umedram also to tell him what I have told you.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8285. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Margarete Spiegel

310. LETTER TO GOPIKRISHNA VIJAYAVARGIYA

December 19, 1932

BHAI GOPIKRISHNA,

Received your letter. If we exist, God exists, for God is the sum-total of all life just as the sun is the aggregate of rays. In order to have faith in God we have to have faith in ourselves, which is acquired through service without consideration of results. Another way is to have faith simply because the rest of the world has it.

I do not even think what the goal of independent India will be. This goal will be clear with the coming of independence. The rest you can see from my writings.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From a facsimile of the Hindi]

Madhya Pradesh aur Gandhi, p. 137; also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 355

311. LETTER TO KRISHNAN NAIR

December 19, 1932

No new idea of mine warrants anyone getting upset over it and I would not expect it to be followed unless it is digested. I am translating the English word 'assimilation' as 'digesting'[1]. Invariably when we follow anything without assimilating it, we are either too involved or hurt [in the process]. There is no need to resort to faith regarding anything that can be grasped by the intellect. To do that would be a sign of mental lethargy.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 361

[1] "*Hajam karna*" in the source

312. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

December 19, 1932

BHAI SOHANLAL,

Your letter. Do whatever you can, but only peacefully.[1] Keep me informed.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BHAI SOHANLAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT, HINDU SABHA, PUSHKAR, AJMER

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2828

313. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

December 19, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your postcard. I had the registered letter too. I did not reply to it as it contained nothing new and I have no time these days. If you read carefully all my letters and your questions alongside, you will find the answers there.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4266

314. LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER[2]

[Before *December 20, 1932*][3]

I have your letter. I forwarded your telegrams to Calicut. Beyond that I would do no more. The vote of the *avarnas* is

[1] The addressee at this time was engaged in securing temple-entry for the Harijans.

[2] The letter was in reply to the addressee's regarding the Guruvayur referendum.

[3] The letter was published under the date-line: "Coimbatore, December 20".

CWMG - LII

wholly unnecessary. The call is not in answer to what the *avarnas* want, but it is a call to self-purification, penance, and discharge of an overdue debt and when a man pays his debt, he is unaffected by the fact whether the creditor demands payment or not.

The Hindu, 21-12-1932

315. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, A.I.V.S.S.

December 20, 1932

SECRETARY
VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
RAMBAG
BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER[1]. SORRY CANNOT FIX OTHER THAN TWENTY-THIRD AS OTHER SHASTRIS ALREADY INVITED FOR TWENTY-THIRD. I WOULD GLADLY MEET SHASTRIS ON YOUR BEHALF ON ANOTHER DATE AND RESPECTFULLY LISTEN WHAT THEY SAY BUT IF POSSIBLE I WOULD LIKE THEM ATTEND TWENTY-THIRD. THERE ARE OTHER POINTS IN YOUR LETTER ABOUT WHICH THERE IS DIFFERENCE OPINION BUT THIS CAN BE BEST SETTLED TWENTY-THIRD OR BEFORE IF YOU WILL SEND REPRESENTATIVE FOR DISCUSSION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18754

316. LETTER TO RAMAGOPALA SHASTRI

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. It is wholly unnecessary for you to trouble to come to Poona, and in any case the interpretation of an Arya Samajist will be discounted by the sanatanist *Shastris*.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMAGOPALA SHASTRI
SECRETARY, PUNJAB DALIT SEWA MISSION, LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18755

[1] Dated December 19; *vide* Appendix XV.

317. LETTER TO G. M. JOSHI

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I am not sure that the meeting of the 23rd is actually coming off, but even if it is, for me it would be a deeply religious function, and nobody should be there except those pundits who are to take part in it. You will therefore kindly excuse me.

Yours sincerely,

Sjt. G. M. JOSHI
171-A BUDHAWAR, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18758

318. LETTER TO VAKKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for sending me a copy of the plaint in the Guruvayur Case. Have you not the judgment with you, and can you not send me a more detailed history of the Temple, as also a map of it with a detailed specification?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VAKKAYIL ACHUTHAN NAIR
GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18759

CWMG - LII

319. LETTER TO K. RAMABHADRA ROW

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. In matters so deeply personal as you have stated, you must be the sole judge as to your duty.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMABHADRA ROW
PODURI HOUSE, INNESPETA, RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18757

320. LETTER TO G. H. PATWARDHAN[1]

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. There are some people who will deliberately misrepresent me. How shall I overtake such deliberate misrepresentations except by trusting the truth in me to make itself felt in its own time? I have said repeatedly that Guruvayur was not my choice. It thrust itself upon me. If Dakorji had done likewise, I would have joyfully proclaimed a fast. I am in God's hands like clay in the potter's, and had that come my way, probably the public would have found me wrestling with the Gujaratis with greater vigour than with the Malabaris. I can throw nothing at the latter, because they are at such a convenient distance from me, whereas the Gujaratis are within a stone's throw. But as a proverb says, "You can wake up a man who is really as-

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 14, 1932, which read: "Since you declared that in the event of the Guruvayur Temple not being opened to the Harijans till the 1st of January 1933 you would go on a fast unto death, a Marathi newspaper has been insinuating in its columns that your choice of a distant temple like Guruvayur is due to your consciousness that were you to choose the Dakorji's Temple for this purpose you would be severely attacked by the Gujarati community who have been your staunch followers in politics, and this probably is the reason of your choice of the temple of Guruvayur. Your explanation on the point would, I submit, be greatly useful in clearing the ground with regard to this" (S.N. 18703).

leep by a simple tickle in his ear, but a thousand tickles will fail to wake up a man who is pretending to sleep.''

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. H. PATWARDHAN
DHULIA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18756

321. LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN[1]

December 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can only say in reply to one part of it that I have signed letters asking me to anticipate the 2nd and thus end my earthly life. I do not mind these letters. I merely state the fact.

For the rest of your letter, I can only give you my assurance that behind every step I take, and every word that I utter, there is great and prayerful deliberation. I ask *sanatani* friends to give me the same liberty of thought and action as they claim for themselves. Without such mutual toleration, no reform is possible.

I may also tell you that I am leaving no stone unturned to reach some workable compromise. But I must regretfully confess that I have failed hitherto.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18760

[1] The addressee in his letter dated December 16, 1932 referring to Gandhiji's statement dated 16th November had objected to it as ''a most cruel and objectionable charge against the sanatanists who are opposed to temple-entry'' and the fast. He had also written: '' . . . If the Zamorin and the Trustees bend before your threat of fast, do you believe that it would be due to a real change of heart and not to the suppression of their honest convictions? . . . Such a suppression is the worst kind of tyranny; it is more reprehensible than the one foisted by the force of arms'' (S.N. 18726).

322. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 20, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[1] of the 14th instant. I hope I have made ample amends for my presumption and that there is no wound left anywhere.[2] If you think that there is still anything more left to be done by me, do please tell me. I hope not to repeat the folly.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD, NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18762. Also C.W. 7910. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

323. LETTER TO M. I. DAVID[3]

December 20, 1932

DEAR MR. DAVID,

I thank you for the letter and still more for the perseverance with which you are pursuing your scheme; and since you have willingly given me an inch, do not be surprised over my asking for an ell. Please prepare the whole scheme as you would have it, incorporating your latest suggestions. Then discuss it with Sjt. Mathuradas and Jaisukhlal Mehta, and if they approve of it, send it to me, and I shall devote to it exclusively a Press statement, but I must use your name as its father. After all, Sjt. Birla has already let the cat out of the bag.

And before you send me the scheme, I would like you to do a little lobbying and get as many scholarships as you can. I

[1] *Vide* Appendix XVI.

[2] *Vide* letters to Dr. B. C. Roy, pp. 138-9 and 201-2; also "Letter to G. D. Birla", pp. 207-9.

[3] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 15, 1932 (S.N. 18718), in which he had suggested a few additional points regarding his scheme for higher education of selected Harijans about which he had already written to Gandhiji in his letter dated December 2, 1932.

CWMG II

know this means a large draught of your time and energy, but you are a willing worker. Willing workers know to their cost how exacting I can be. The fact is with my dwindling physical capacity, I am hardly able to cope with the work day to day. Therefore, whenever I have a good thing suggested to me by anyone, I straightaway ask that one to present it to me ready-made, so that I should have very little to do but to put my signature to it.

Yours sincerely,

M. I. DAVID, ESQ.
4 QUEEN'S ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18748

324. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 20, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter[1] posted days after it was written, and I have your two dear cables. I was wondering whether the later developments in the anti-untouchability campaign including the prospective fast were thoroughly understood by you. Your wires show that you have understood them fully, and I am so glad, for, whereas the fast in connection with British decision was appreciated by many, the one contemplated to take place on the 2nd January next is misunderstood by many, and I am afraid that you might not understand it at all, whereas to me the necessity is clearer than when I fasted about the British decision. The British decision was a political issue, though with me it had a deeply religious significance. In the present instance, it is a purely religious issue. I have given many explanations in defence of it. All of them put together fall far short of what I feel about it, but what, I have no adequate language to express. Of course, for me personally, it transcends reason, because I feel it to be a clear call from God. My position is that there is nothing just now that I am doing of my own accord. He guides me from moment to moment. This is a thing which you cannot make other people believe, and it would be quite proper for them to reject such testimony. That has happened before now. That which was

[1] The reference presumably is to addressee's letter of November 10, 1932; *vide* Appendix XVII.

claimed as the voice of God proved to be the prompting of the Devil. What it is in my case will be partly judged by results and partly after my death, never wholly in any case and at any time except by God. After all, the intention behind an act is the final criterion, and that God alone can know, not even the author of the intention.

There is no knowing whether the fast will have to be taken on the 2nd January. It will depend upon the legal difficulty.

Yes, I read your book *What I Owe to Christ* immediately I got it. Both Vallabhbhai and Mahadev have glanced through it. Mahadev had not the time to go through it fully. The opening chapters are very good indeed. All the chapters are a great help to a struggling soul. They reveal you as nothing else that you have written can do, but there was a chapter in it which as I read I criticized and I thought I had written to you about it, but evidently I have not. I should have to look at the book again in order to be able to recall the chapter and the subject. I could do so without much trouble, and if I can find a few spare moments, I will look it up and give you my criticism. I shall await copy that you promise of Gurudev's thoughts on his reading your book.

I hope that you got my cable already in answer to yours from Birmingham.

I am quite clear that your presence is most useful there, and you are not to have anxiety complex if I have to fast. You at least will have no difficulty in believing that if I enter upon the fast, it would be by God's will, and He will keep me intact if He has more service to take through this body.

With love and greetings from us all,

Yours,

[PS.]

My love to all the other members of the family in both the senses. Please tell those who do not hear from me that I get little time to attend to all my correspondence.

From a photostat: G.N. 995

325. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December [*20*][1], *1932*

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. The workers undoubtedly deserve warm thanks for the zeal with which they have been working. Please give them all my love. If you will not become jealous of your wife, let me tell you that everyone who had returned from Calicut tells me that whilst you have been good, your wife has been ever so much better. She has been working tirelessly and with utter self-effacement and if all the women of Malabar are as good, Malabar must be an extraordinary good place to live in. I discount all this testimony, and Mrs. Gopala Menon must be an exceptional woman, for, if all the Malabar women were as good as she is, Malabar could not be the worst place in India for untouchability. All this is meant more for her than for you, so please share this letter with her and give her my warm congratulations.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GOPALA MENON
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18767

326. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 20, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

I had intended to write a long letter but now there is no time for it. Get well soon. Ba, Velanbehn[2] and Bal are sitting near me as I write this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 153

[1] *Vide* letters to the addressee, pp. 247-8 and 262. The source, however, has "21".

[2] Wife of Lakshmidas P. Asar

327. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*December 21, 1932*][1]

Since dictating this letter[2], I had your precious letter of the 9th instant. My whole heart goes out to you with reference to your brother. I know what it is to have a man with an unbalanced mind thrown on you. Perhaps you know that I have at the Ashram Dr. Mehta's son, Ratilal, just like that. I hope, however, that things are not quite so bad as they appear to me from this distance. My prayers are all with you and for you. I am glad that you did not run to India on hearing from Amiyo. I am absolutely clear in my mind that it is we as distinguished from you that have to solve this problem of untouchability. We have got to do the penance. As for the Zamorin, he deserves all the pity that one can extend to him, and even if you were here, I would not think of your going to him. That I would call undue pressure. God alone can work upon him if He will. All things considered, therefore, your presence is needed there.

This ought to have gone in as postscript to the letter dictated and posted yesterday.

Yours,[3]

From a photostat: G.N. 995

328. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Since dictating my letter[4] yesterday, I have read a notice or manifesto by Sjt. M. K. Acharya of which he has sent me a copy. I send you both the leaflet and Sjt. Acharya's notice. If the notice correctly sets forth the purport of the leaflet, it is disturbing, and the comments made by Sjt. Acharya are quite justified. The people of Ponnani Taluk are being asked not whether they would save

[1] From the last paragraph
[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", pp. 244-5.
[3] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".
[4] *Vide* p. 246.

my life or let me die, but whether they, being themselves believers in temples as an integral part of Hinduism, are prepared to have the temple doors opened for the admission of Harijans. According to the English notice, you have befogged the issue, and that is just the charge brought by sanatanists against us and especially me, as you know they say that the contemplated fast, instead of making the people decide on the rights and wrongs of temple-entry, will take their minds away from temple-entry and lead them against their wishes to give their votes any way so as to save me. If such were the result of my fast, it would be a tragedy. I should expect co-workers, therefore, to tell the people not to be affected by the fast, but to vote for or against temple-entry according to their hearts. You will now please write to me fully, first, as to the notice, and secondly, as to what has been generally done, and if you discover that people have been misled, do not hesitate to tell me so. I will have no compunction in owning the mistake, retracing my steps and postponing the fast. It would be farcical to take a referendum again if the people have been already misled by an altogether false issue having been presented to them. Whereas if Sjt. Acharya's charge cannot be sustained, you will please give me chapter and verse in support of your statement and it will give me new strength and new hope.

You will confer with Madhavan and Kelappan. I do not know whether Rajaji would be there, or Sadashiv Rao, at the time you receive this letter. You will please telegraph to me the substance of the reply you would make.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18765

329. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR C.R.,

I enclose herewith my letter[1] to Gopala Menon. You would not need to see Sjt. Acharya's notice. My letter sufficiently tells you the purport of its contents. I do not know whether you would agree with me in my conclusion if it is found that Sjt. Acharya's charge is sustained.

You have not told me, and I have not worried you about the state of the law on the subject. What is happening to the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

Bill?[1] I am told that before a Bill of a religious character receives the Viceregal sanction for introduction, he is to have clear two months. If such be the case, and if the law as it stands is admittedly against us, the fast has to be automatically postponed; whereas if the sanction is withheld or is delayed purely through want of popular expression of public opinion on it, the fast has to go on till public opinion is sufficiently mobilized, if it can be, so as to secure Viceregal sanction. If public opinion is against such legislation, the fast must stand adjourned. I would like you therefore to instruct me on the law. Ba tells me you are to be expected here about the 28th, if it is not possible for you to come earlier.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 18766

330. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

It is just like you to steal into Calicut and not say anything to me. How are you keeping, how is your wife, and how is your daughter ?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VENKATAPPAYYA
C/O SJT. GOPALA MENON, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18768

331. LETTER TO SADASHIV RAO KARNAD

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR SADASHIV RAO,

I am glad you are keeping me well-posted with progress of work. It was good to ignore the assault. We must be prepared for such things and bear them without retaliation.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIV RAO KARNAD
C/O SJT. GOPALA MENON, CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18769

[1] *Vide* "Interview to the Press", p. 125.

332. LETTER TO K. RAMUNNI MENON

December 21, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. The letter contains so many innuendoes and imputations. It is very difficult for me to answer them all. I can only say generally that the statements you make are inconsistent with the facts as I know them. Naturally the arguments based upon misstatements must be unconvincing. My own position has been abundantly clear in the statements that have appeared in the Press. If you had asked me a series of questions to ascertain first of all from me the position, I would gladly have responded, and you could then have built your case against me. I can only give you my assurance that I consider myself to be a humble follower of Hinduism constantly seeking to act according to its dictates.

In one thing I can heartily be with you with my whole heart. You are entirely right in saying that you and the members of the Sanatan Hindu Sabha will not be deterred from what you believe to be the right course by any fast of mine. My fast was never conceived with the purpose of influencing your decision, and for that matter any decision. My fast is intended to stir Hindus to action, and that, I am glad to say, is happening day after day, although the fast has yet to start.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMUNNI MENON
MANAGER, SANATAN HINDU SABHA, GURUVAYUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18772

CWMG - II

333. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL K. MEHTA

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I do not think I would trouble the Shastri you name or Dr. Kurtukoti to come all the way to Poona, but what I would like is a clear expression of their opinion on the temple-entry question. Let them answer three questions:

1. Who are untouchables?
2. Is untouchability curable in this life?
3. What are the disabilities of untouchables who are not entitled to enter the Hindu temples?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18773

334. LETTER TO PRAGNANESWAR YATI

December 21, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the three enclosures. I have gone through the dedicatory letter, as also Swami Kevalanand's, but you do not expect me just now to go through the synopsis of your treatise on transmigration. For me it is a fascinating subject but there are so many fascinating things that I am obliged to put aside.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PARAMAHAMSA PRAGNANESWAR YATI
329 SADASHIV PETH, POONA CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18774

CWMG LIII

335. LETTER TO KIRCHAND KOTHARI

December 21, 1932

BHAI KIRCHAND,

I got your letter, and also both the pamphlets. You probably know that we are at present four kept together in this jail. When your pamphlet was read, it seemed to be an occasion either for tears or laughter. Ordinarily, I do not read the letters but they are read out to me. But it happened by chance that I started reading your pamphlet, and at the very first sentence, since I could not weep as I have now grown stone-hearted, I burst out into laughter and went on laughing to the end. But it was a matter for tears, not for laughter. The language is not in the least that of non-violence. It is not civil either. You are under the vow to remain absolutely peaceful and non-violent. You have made no effort at all in your pamphlet to win over the *sanatani* friends with love. Every word of it is likely to make them angry. You have invited them to belabour you. Your language is theatrical. It will not teach the youths the lesson either of peace or of civility, let alone truth. And there is no limit to self-praise. However, what I fear is that I am not likely to succeed in explaining to people my ideas. How can people change all at once if they are accustomed to using such language?

I hope you got my reply to your previous letter. You must have seen that my advice had been quite the opposite to what has actually happened. If, however, you did want to hold a meeting, you could have done so without issuing violent pamphlets. Your duty was, before doing that, to see some reasonable sanatanists, or, if you did not find any, to seek the help of the State and hold the meeting if you got it. If you had not held the meeting, you would not have failed to serve the cause of Harijans. I see no victory in the fact that the sanatanists did not come to the meeting to break it up. They must have felt very angry, but they may have got frightened by the strength of your numbers. These things betoken violence on your part. Your variety of non-violence puts my non-violence to shame, and I learn some truth even from the poisonous writings of the sanatanists. This is not

the way to save dharma, and it is with that end in view that we try to serve Harijans. What more shall I say?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2861. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

336. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

December 21, 1932

BHAISHRI NANALAL,

I had a long and frank discussion today with Chhaganlal and Maganlal. Now you, Ratubhai and the two brothers should sit together and discuss the matter. I have of course advised that Manilal also should be present. But the brothers seemed to be rather lukewarm about it, though they said that Manilal did not wish it. When I explained to them the implication of that statement, they said that they would include him if necessary. My advice, which they seemed to accept, was as follows: Doctor's will should be fully respected as far as practicable, that is, the sisters' shares should be paid to them, though it would not matter if that cannot be done just now. It will be enough if their shares are credited to their names and they are paid interest at market rate. As for Ratilal, Doctor's wish should be respected. If, on dividing the property into three parts, Ratilal's share comes to more than that[1], the excess should be credited to his account. As for Manekbai, it is probable that the interest on the sum intended for her by Doctor will not be enough to meet her needs, and hence a monthly allowance should be fixed for her and arrangements should be made so that she gets it regularly. If, however, she insists on taking the amount intended by Doctor, it should be decided to pay it to her and she would then get nothing more. The sums which she has drawn after Doctor's death should be deducted from that amount. The three brothers' shares should be divided, Trustees should be appointed for Ratilal and his running expense allowance should be fixed. As for the other two brothers, they may, in mutual consultation, take whichever part of the business each likes. If this is not acceptable to them, the diamonds and the farms also should be divided into two shares and the whole management should be in the hands of Trustees or

[1] Probably the sum specified in the Will

Manager, and, as in the case of the mother, a monthly allowance should be fixed for them and the brothers should not exceed it. For the present, they should not interfere with the work of the Trustees or the Manager. When both have acquired sufficient reputation in business circles, they may take over the management if they wish but they should not interfere with it as long as the business has not been started again and put in order. For the present, Chhaganlal should stay at Rajkot or elsewhere in India, and for their education the children should be admitted in the National School at Rajkot or elsewhere. I have heard that Chhaganlal is addicted to a vice. He confesses that it was so, but I believe that he is still addicted to it. In their talk with me, both the brothers adopted a reasonable attitude. If they adopt a similar attitude in their discussion with you, you will be able to decide the matter in a few hours. After this has been settled, you may send for Prabhashankar, and also for Champa, if you wish. It is likely that Ratilal will get upset if Champa is called. If possible, therefore, you should settle the matter without calling her. I consider it essential that the whole matter should be settled before the 2nd. If it seems necessary to you to discuss the matter with me, you may leave your work and come any time you wish. I assume that all of you, or those of you for whom it is considered necessary, will come to me with the decision that is finally arrived at.

As for the amount to be paid to the Ashram, my advice is this. If any balance is left after paying the other contributions from the funds in the Trust, the Ashram may be given its full amount or whatever is left. It may be given nothing if there is no balance. All the other contributions which are usually paid should be fully paid. If the sum reserved does not bring enough income for this purpose, there should be a proportionate reduction from the amounts of those contributions. I understand that Rs. 800-900 are being paid every month. Maganlal believes that after deduction for taxes, etc., the net income does not exceed Rs. 500.

If that is so, the Ashram will get between Rs. 100 and 200. It seems that the receipts are enough to pay the other contributions. I do not think I have left out anything. You may certainly ask me about anything, if you wish.

Show this letter to Ratubhai, as it is intended for both of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9471

337. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your weekly mail. Prema left the hospital much too soon. And she was also very hasty in resuming work immediately on returning to the Ashram. If she does not become careful even now, I think she will suffer very much and will be unable to do the service which she is so impatient to do. Read the accompanying letter to Madhavlal [Shah][1] and apply to Prema every sentence of what I have said in it about the difference between what one loves and what is for one's good. At present her good lies in not talking to anyone and in avoiding exertion. And, though she loves to carry on work with determination, in fact her determination is a form of *duragraha*[2] and springs from ignorance and she should, therefore, give it up. I have still not heard from Mavalankar. I shall be able to think what to do after I know what he has done. Let me know the outcome of your meeting with the Chharas.[3]

Please let me know what you eat, and what Navin eats. Dhiru never writes to me. If anybody wishes to write to me, do not stop him. Let him write. It will be enough if at present he does not expect a reply from me. I may read letters at my convenience, but I cannot write or dictate letters in that manner.[4]

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8286. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, p. 524
[2] Obstinacy
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", pp. 194-5.
[4] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".

338. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

December 21, 1932

BHAI RATILAL,

Read the long letter I have written to Bhai Nanalal.[1] I have talked frankly to Chhaganlal about his vices. I also told him about the letter which Lilavati wrote to me. I thought that it was absolutely necessary to do so. He, too, confessed that he had those vices in the past. But I could see from his face that he had them still. I also tried to convince him that, instead of being angry with Lilavati, he should believe that she had done him a great service. He has definitely promised to reform himself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7170. Also C.W. 4664. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

339. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

December 21, 1932

CHI. VANAMALA,

You have become careless about your handwriting recently. Write the next letter with your right hand. You should write with both hands alternately.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5780. Also C.W. 3003. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Nanalal K. Jasani", pp. 253-4.

340. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

December 21, 1932

CHI. PREMI[1],

Your Hindi letter is extremely good. The characters too are very well formed. I did not write as I thought there was no letter from you. Inform Father when you write to him that we are all well. Jamnalalji too is quite well. I saw him only today.

This is in Mahadevbhai's hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

PREMI JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
MARKET ROAD, HYDERABAD, SIND

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9249. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

341. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 22, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your usual letter came in at the usual time but as yet without the notes from the book you are reading. For the first time perhaps I found your letter mutilated. Was it a reminder that you and I were prisoners? But I do not mind nor will you. Blessed are they that expect nothing.

You say our fears are not due to want of faith in God but want of faith in self.[2] But these are one and the same thing. Want of faith in self comes from want of faith in God. It betrays ignorance of what God is. Then again you say want of faith comes from our want of self-restraint. This is true but it connotes the same thing. Read the verse 59 of Ch. II, *Gita*. Objects of senses are eradicated only by seeing God face to face, in other

[1] Daughter of Jairamdas Doulatram

[2] "I cannot remember now exactly what my theory was. Spiritual truths come to one imperceptibly but surely so long as the search is unrelenting. Today I know the truth that fear means lack of faith in God." —Mirabehn

words by faith in God. To have complete faith in God is to see Him. Nor is the matter any better by assuming the existence of the fourth dimension. It ultimately points to the same thing, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all else will be added unto you."[1] When we meet Him, we will dance in the joy of His Presence and there will be neither fear of snakes nor of the death of dear ones. For there is no death and no snake-bites in His Presence. The fact is that the most living faith, too, falls short of the perfect. Hence there is no such thing as complete absence of fear for the embodied, i.e., imprisoned soul. The possession of the body is a limitation. It is a wall of separation. We can therefore but try to shed our fear, i.e., increase our faith.

My weight is now 103½ lb. I have just now eliminated bread and even vegetable and therefore also salt. The quantity of milk is slightly less than 2 lb. Under heavy strain of work milk and fruit is my diet. Ba and Bal are here. Jamnalalji is getting better. He is adding to his weight.

The missing statements[2] accompany this letter.

Our cats have suffered disgrace. The mother has been found helping herself to foods without permission and during nights dirtying our carpets and papers. Vallabhbhai has therefore cut off the food supply. Thus interdining has stopped. What other ordinances Vallabhbhai will promulgate I do not know. Ordinance rule is the order of the day even for poor kitty!

Love from all.

BAPU

[PS.]

It is just 5.30 a.m.

From a photostat: C.W. 9512. Courtesy: Mirabehn

[1] *St. Matthew*, VI. 33

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", pp. 200-1.

342. LETTER TO KOWTHA SURYANARAYANA ROW[1]

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. The way you have put the subject in your letter there is very little for me to disagree with. Untouchability of a type is not only to be found in our Shastras but is universal. But that is untouchability not attaching to birth but to work or occupation. Such untouchability can only be temporary and is always easily curable. If you can make other *sanatani* friends take that view and admit that in practice we have gone far beyond the Shastras and further that in so doing we have sinned against our religion, the so-called untouchables and humanity, I think that a middle course can be found without any difficulty regarding temple-entry. I have no desire whatsoever to do violence to the scruples of any sanatanists. So far as the contemplated fast is concerned, I again agree with you that fast from a religious standpoint can only be a spiritual act and can, therefore, never be exploited for secular or selfish ends. As I have told you, I believe my fast to be spiritual, both in intention and end; intention is to purify Hinduism and end is to secure religious justice for those of the Hindus who have been hitherto denied that justice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KOWTHA SURYANARAYANA ROW
95 BROADWAY, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18782. Also *Swarajya*, 25-1-1933

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 17 (S.N. 18739) in which he had requested Gandhiji to put off or give up the contemplated fast.

343. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

December 22, 1932

DEAR DR. ALAM,

I have your letter and it filled all of us with delight. I wonder if you got my letter[1] sent to you at Lahore. Then I wrote[2] to Begum Alam at the address sent by her, 57 Lansdowne Road. I hope she got that letter. If you are under a prohibition order, it is better for you not to write even to me. Begum Alam is with you as nurse, companion, secretary and many other things rolled into one. Therefore let her write to your dictation, and dictate to her in Urdu. She is a very careful writer, and her handwriting I have no difficulty in deciphering. What is more, I shall get a free lesson in Urdu. She must keep me informed regularly. I am glad that you have been keeping so well otherwise. I know that you could not be in better hands than Dr. Roy's. We are all doing well. With love to both of you and from us all and with our united prayers for your speedy recovery.

Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SHEIK MOHAMMAD ALAM
C/o DR. B. C. ROY, 36 WELLINGTON ST., CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 20

344. LETTER TO P. K. MATHEW

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[3]. I do not regard the Pulayas and the others as aborigines, and so far as I am aware Hinduism regards them as Hindus. That in spite of their being Hindus, they

[1] *Vide* p. 73.
[2] *Vide* p. 178.
[3] Dated December 17, 1932 in which, dissuading Gandhiji from his fast, the addressee had said that Pulayas and others were aborigines "who were in India long before the Aryan invasion and were never amalgamated into Hindu religion or society".

seem to be a class apart is the tragedy of Hinduism. You will not quote school-histories or any historical text-books in order to show that they are not Hindus but please understand the formula under which the temple-entry movement is being conducted. It is the caste Hindus who have to do an act of reparation by throwing open the doors of Hindu temples to those who are regarded as untouchables though still part of Hindu society. If Pulayas are not Hindus they will never enter Hindu temples. I quite agree with you that what is needed is a change of heart on the part of caste Hindus. Temple-entry would be one of the signs of that change of heart. If, as you say, it is quite possible that "these reformers care little for religion and temples", might it not be said with a little more truth that it is equally possible that these reformers do care for Hindu religion and temples? Seeing that they are working for temple-entry, is not the presumption in their favour till the contrary is proved? It would be proper to say that those who take no part in the movement, either for or against, care little for religion and temples. If the reformers take up the attitude of touch-me-not in their daily life whilst they advocate temple-entry, their advocacy is certainly hypocritical. But there again the evidence is contrary to what you think to be the attitude of "many a present-day reformer". Believe me that I would not risk my life "for achieving a sham". On the contrary I am trying to achieve on behalf of Harijans a most substantial thing from a religious standpoint.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. MATHEW, ESQ.
CHRISTAVA MAHILALAYAM, ALWAYE (TRAVANCORE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18777

345. LETTER TO J. R. GHARPURE

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that you were put to any trouble on account of my wire. Our common friend, Haribhau, told me that he had written to you as to two or three friends and that I was to telegraph in order to reinforce the letter, and the reason was to have you, Swami Kevalanand and other learned friends in Poona to have a quiet discussion on the temple-entry question and probably to join the argument between pro-reform *Shastris* and anti-

reform *Shastris* on the 23rd. As there is nothing certain now about this meeting of the 23rd being attended by the anti-reform *Shastris*,[1] I will not trouble you or Swami Kevalanand to come here, at any rate just now. But if you could send me your joint-opinion on the whole question, I should value it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. J. R. GHARPURE
GIRGAON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18778

346. LETTER TO N. V. THADANI

December 22, 1932

MY DEAR THADANI,

I thank you for your letter enclosing copy of the resolution passed by the staff and students of your college and the letter addressed to the Zamorin.

I am not treating your resolution and the letter to the Zamorin as your final contribution to the cause of the Harijans, but I regard them as an earnest of many services to come.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. V. THADANI
PRINCIPAL, RAMJAS COLLEGE, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18779

347. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 22, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Since dictating my letter[2] of the 20th I have read a copy of the manifesto or notice issued by Sjt. M. K. Acharya. He has attached to it a copy of the leaflet said to have been issued by you. Will you please send me your comments on it?

Yours sincerely,[3]

From a microfilm: S.N. 18780

[1] *Vide* "Letter to H. D. Nanavati", p. 263. However, the meeting did take place; *vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", pp. 280-1.

[2] *Vide* p. 246.

[3] The letter was signed by Mahadev Desai "for Bapu".

348. LETTER TO DIWANCHAND

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. You are wrong in thinking that Guruvayur is the only temple left to be opened, but whether it is the only one or one out of many yet to be opened, the fast is not my act,[1] therefore if it comes I shall be unable to avoid it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DIWANCHAND
GORJRA (DISTRICT LYALLPUR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18781

349. LETTER TO H. D. NANAVATI

December 22, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire of 21st instant. I am sorry to learn that you are ill. I hope you are fully restored. It was in pursuance of my agreement with you and other *sanatani* friends that I became party to an organized discussion. It would be impossible for me to get together again the pundits who have specially come or are coming for this discussion. At the same time I shall be pleased to meet your pundits on a day to be mutually agreed upon and try to secure the presence of some pundits who give general support to my view. You have in mind some elaborate conception of the discussion. I have failed to grasp all its implications. Mine is a very simple conception. As a humble seeker of truth, I listen to all who have honestly any light to give me. The discussion for me has no other interest apart from elucidation of truth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. H. NANAVATI
SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAM SWARAJYA SANGH
BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18783

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Ramdas Gandhi", pp. 129-30 and "Letter to C. F. Andrews", pp. 244-5.

350. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

December 22, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI,

The reports I get about you are so good that I need not write anything. But let me say this. Do not think either about the illness or about office work. If possible, turn all your thoughts to God and place yourself in His hands. Don't you remember this *bhajan*[1]: "My life is in your hands, Lord; may Thou protect it."

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 154

351. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

December 22, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I had got your letter in due time. How nice it would be if you maintain the slow improvement in your health and by and by become completely all right? Do you read any newspapers? Or is it that you get no time at all to read anything? If you read newspapers, which ones do you read? I suppose you have to speak in Hindi there most of the time. Do you read anything else? Do you visit any people? Have you made any friends?

All of us are well. These days I spend most of my time in Harijan work.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9149

[1] By Keshavlal Bhatt

352. QUESTIONS FOR SHASTRI PARISHAD

[On or before *December 23, 1932*][1]

1. Define untouchability according to Shastras.
2. Can the definition of untouchables given in the Shastras be applied to the so-called untouchables of the present day?
3. What are the restrictions imposed by Shastras on the untouchables?
4. Can an individual be free from untouchability in his own lifetime?
5. What are the injunctions of the Shastras regarding behaviour of the touchables with the untouchables?
6. Under what circumstances will the Shastras permit temple-entry by the untouchables?
7. What are Shastras?
8. How is authoritativeness of the Shastras proved?
9. How will the differences arising over the definitions or interpretations of Shastras be decided?
10. What are your conclusions?

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1932

353. TELEGRAM TO ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

December 23, 1932

UNDERSTAND GURUVAYUR IS OPEN ALL HINDUS INCLUDING HARIJANS THREE DAYS EVERY YEAR. PLEASE WIRE WHETHER THE INFORMATION IS CORRECT.[2]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

[1] The *Shastris* were to meet Gandhiji on December 23, 1932.

[2] The Zamorin in his letter dated December 26, 1932 replied: "Your telegram of the 23rd was received by me only this morning, as I had come away to Kottakkal on the 14th. I have telegraphed as follows: 'Your Telegram 23rd. Information is not correct. Letter follows.' " (M.M.U./XXII, and *The Hindu*, 3-1-1933)

CWMG-III

354. LETTER TO S. SEN

December 23, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 17th instant enclosing resolution of the students and staff of your college, for which please convey my thanks to them and accept them for yourself. You will not ask me to regard this resolution as the final contribution by your college. I take it by way of promise of tangible services to the cause of Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SEN
PRINCIPAL, COMMERCIAL COLLEGE
8 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 18788

355. LETTER TO MANINDRA NATH MITTER

December 23, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant. I showed it to Motibabu[1] who is in Poona at present. I am quite sure that Motibabu would not consciously be party to any sham, nor would he say anything to hurt anybody. Motibabu himself is a veteran reformer. He has banished untouchability, banished the *purdah*, and there is complete freedom in his Ashram at Chandernagar. His idea of drawing sanatanists to the reform was itself, you will agree, quite laudable. He has come here not to thwart or endanger the progress of reform, but to advance it. I would therefore ask you to utilize Motibabu's services and those of his Sangh to the extent that they can give their services.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MANINDRA NATH MITTER
SECRETARY, THE HINDU MISSION
32-B HARISH CHATTERJEE STREET
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18789

[1] Motilal Roy, Chairman, Reception Committee, Unity Conference, Bengal

356. LETTER TO MOHAN LAL

December 23, 1932

DEAR LALA MOHAN LAL[1],

I was glad to have your letter[2] after such a long time. Whatever the remnant of the untouchability in the Punjab, it has got to be fought against. Therefore, no province should say: "We are not as the others." Every province has to show an absolutely clean slate.

Yours sincerely,

LALA MOHAN LAL, ADVOCATE
"FIRGROVE", SIMLA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18787

357. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

December 23, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I must dictate this letter. It is a matter of such joy to me that our little circle has not misunderstood my latest venture, and that you can trace the finger of God in it. I have gone through your little pamphlet. I think that it is a fair presentation of the case about untouchability. Dr. Ansari has written to me at length about his meeting you, Andrews and other friends.

With love to you all from us all,

BAPU

PROF. HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE, SELLY OAK
BIRMINGHAM (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: G.N. 1417

[1] Mohan Lal, M.L.C., an Arya Samajist

[2] Dated December 15 (S.N. 18708) in which the addressee had written: "In Punjab the untouchability question is not so keen as in other parts of India."

358. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

December 23, 1932

MY DEAR WHITE BEARD,

I was waiting for your letter after your tour in Kathiawar. There is the negative satisfaction that if you hadn't gone, not even Rs. 17 would have been collected. To collect money in Kathiawar in these times of general depression for anti-untouchability work is like drawing a live tooth. I am glad however that the tour was successful from the health point of view. You were in need of a change from the humdrum of domestic life. You cannot be happy till you have got some service to do, and I know that nothing delights you more than serving those who are at the bottom. Do I not remember vividly your beaming face, when, years ago, we went to the Harijan quarters in Godhra and held the real reform meeting there? I had a letter from Hamida before I got yours. I sent her a reply which I hope she received.

Please send me as early as you can a description of the rowdy Wadhwan meeting. Were they really out even to assault you? What did the wreckers actually do? I have accounts which make one's hair stand on end. Were the rowdies quite so bad as all that? I should have thought that your glowing silvery beard would sweep all rowdyism before it.

With love from us all to you all,

Yours sincerely,
BHRRR

SJT. ABBAS TYABJI SAHEB
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9582

CWMG - III

359. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO KHORSHED NAOROJI[1]

December 23, 1932

Why do you think that my fast was due to disappointment? On the contrary it sprang from hope eternal. Fasting is as necessary for life as eating. It is a necessary part of prayer. We serve as well by dying as by living. But it is the privilege of the few to have to fast. Needless to say I write of spiritual fasts. I know that fasting may come also from despair. Then it is rank suicide. I should defend my fast against such a charge. For me it has always been a process of penance and purification. The fast of 1921 was not born of despair. The basis of all penitential fasts has always been faith in mankind, God and oneself. It gives an inward joy that sustains one. I therefore want you to share with me the joy of it. I hope you have understood my argument. Of course you know that there is no certainty about the 2nd January fast. It may have to be postponed.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 366-7

360. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 23, 1932

I am being visited by a great number of *Shastris* these days. Their plight is pitiful. It has become difficult to learn anything from them. They lack the capacity even to impart what they possess. And so I see them full of prejudices and hatreds. But I don't wish to narrate this painful story.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 367-8

[1] Mahadev Desai explains: "Khorshed's sad letter came yesterday. 'Are you going to fast because you are disappointed? Have you been disappointed in us? I gave up my artistic aptitude on the altar of service just for your sake and your cause. Why are you still disappointed?'

"Bapu telegraphed to her. But Major [Bhandari] said that the wire could be sent only through the Government. Bapu refused to send it and asked it to be sent back [to him] and instead wrote this letter."

361. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 23, 1932

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

The enclosed letter is for your information. I have replied and said that I do not know the facts and that I have faith in you that you would never do injustice to anybody. I have also advised that Keshavji should see you. You may write to me what you wish.

I am awaiting your letter about the problem of the Chharas.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1230

362. LETTER TO G. V. NARASIMHACHAR

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I appreciate your zeal but cannot endorse your action. I am quite sure in my mind that till the Guruvayur question is settled, no one should fast in respect of temple-entry. Try still more to convince the opponents of reform that it is necessary if Hinduism is to live. For the abandonment of your projected fast, you may make use of this letter, and seeing that the fasting method has been applied by me in the first instance, I would ask you to listen to my advice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. V. NARASIMHACHAR
"MADHAVA VILAS", BRAHMIN STREET, BELLARY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18798

[1] *Vide* "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", p. 204.

CWMG - LII

363. LETTER TO T. B. KESHAVA RAO

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am quite clear that there should be no fast by anybody in connection with temple-entry in any place till the Guruvayur question is finally settled. In the meantime a persistent but gentle propaganda should be carried on for convincing the orthodox people. I have written[1] to Sjt. G. V. Narasimhachar asking him to give up the idea of the fast.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. T. B. KESHAVA RAO
SECRETARY, DISTRICT ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE
BRAHMINS STREET, BELLARY

From a photostat: G.N. 160

364. LETTER TO R. VENKATARAMAN

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for giving me the particulars about S. Ponnammal.[2] Your letter was received by me two or three days after Mrs. Gandhi's arrival here. How and why it was delayed in delivery to me it is difficult to account for. If I would have received your letter in time I would certainly have asked her to meet Shrimati Ponnammal.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. VENKATRAMAN
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 18791

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to S. Ponnammal", 10-1-1933.

365. LETTER TO S. RAJAGOPALACHARI

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. If removal of untouchability is a necessary act, all the sufferings you describe have got to be undergone. Undoubtedly the movement has to be handled gently. No needless irritation should be caused to the opponents of the reform. But it is likely that in spite of all the precautions that may be taken to avoid wounding the feelings of the orthodox, some shock to orthodoxy may be inevitable. That is the price that every reform has exacted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. RAJAGOPALACHARI
713 NORTH ADAYAVALANJAN STREET, SRIRANGAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 18792

366. LETTER TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

December 24, 1932

DEAR DR. RAJAN,

I enclose herewith a letter[1] received from Srirangam. You will please tell me how far it correctly describes the situation.

Yours sincerely,

DR. T. S. S. RAJAN
TRICHINOPOLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18793

[1] Presumably from S. Rajagopalachari; *vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LII

367. LETTER TO SECRETARY, VAIDIK DHARMAVARDHINI SABHA

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter supplying me with the population figures for Ponnani Taluk. They will help me when I receive the result of the referendum.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
VAIDIK DHARMA VARDHINI SABHA, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18794

368. LETTER TO W. E. S. HOLLAND

December 24, 1932

DEAR CANON,

I thank you for your letter. It is a good thing that you have a night school for Chamars and other Harijans, but I hope that not only 30, which you tell me is the number out of a total of 450 giving their time to the service of the Harijans, but all those who are at all able will join this band of volunteers, and I also hope that those who give in their names will be very strict in the fulfilment of their promise. I have found again and again that those who give their service by fits and starts and can never be depended upon to keep time, often prove a hindrance rather than a help to the movement to which they promise their services.

Yours sincerely,

THE REV. CANON W. E. S. HOLLAND, M.A.
ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, AGRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18799

369. LETTER TO N. VENKATAKRISTNAYYA[1]

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I remember my visit to your Samsthanam. I am trying my utmost to avoid friction between the orthodox people and the reformers, but it is difficult on all occasions for a reformer to avoid hurting susceptibilities.

You may send your representative and I shall gladly give him at the most one hour any time after the 3rd or 4th of January, if I am not fasting. Before the fasting day I have a crowded programme. It would be wise and economical if you send me your suggestions in writing. But I leave the choice to you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. VENKATAKRISTNAYYA
KHADDAR SAMSTHANAM
HOUSE NO. 21/191 GOVERNORPET, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18796

370. LETTER TO MUKANDI LAL[2]

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your interesting letter of the 16th instant. I fully realize that it will be only by persistent and gentle effort that the deep-rooted evil can be removed.

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 18, 1932, which read: " . . . We hope you can succeed in finding out some way or other in the solution of Guruvayur temple-entry question, and revive in the Hindu community such generous spirit as existed at the time of the Poona Pact. The Guruvayur question is creating a sort of stiffness in the orthodox section of the Hindu community, and the spirit which led to the Poona Pact is now being weakened" (S.N. 18741).

[2] The addressee, Ex-Deputy President, U. P. Council, giving the details of the anti-untouchability work in Garhwal, had written: " . . . what is wanted here is financial help to give scholarships to the children of depressed classes in large numbers and to open an orphanage in which orphans could be taken from all castes. If we could do this, much could be done for them" (S.N. 18719).

As to the proposed scholarships, I would advise you to discuss your project with Pandit Kunzru who is the Chairman of the U.P. Branch of the newly formed Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MUKANDI LAL
BARRISTER-AT-LAW
LANSDOWNE (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18800

371. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

December 24, 1932

DEAR RADHAKANT,

It was impossible for me to reach your letter earlier. Meanwhile, I had a long letter from Sjt. Madhavan Nair. I have advised him to give to the Press the substance of his letter. Sjt. Rajagopalachari telegraphed to me that it was impossible to do more than they had done to ensure accuracy. You will find that if the referendum is a bogus affair or otherwise improper, I shall have no hesitation in postponing the fast.[1] After all, the referendum is designed to help me to come to a decision as to the fast.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
207 KALBADEVI ROAD, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 18801

372. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

December 24, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

Will you please read the enclosed letter about the lady mentioned therein, and tell me all about her, and whether the statements made in the letter are true?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18802

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to U. Gopala Menon", pp. 188 and 247-8.

CWMG - LII

373. LETTER TO B. VARADARAJULU[1]

December 24, 1932

DEAR VARADARAJULU,

The students of your school can fraternize with the Harijan children, play with them, go in for excursions with them, clean them if they are dirty, share their own refreshments with them if they are hungry and their own clothes with them if they are ill-clad. He is an ideal teacher who has a spotless character and loves his pupils as his own children.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. VARADARAJULU
26 PAPER MILLS ROAD, PERAMBUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 18797

374. LETTER TO R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your two letters of the 15th[2] and 19th[3] instant, respectively. I am sorry that I have no access to the literature refer-

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18764).

[2] This read: " . . . What they (*savarnas*) believe according to their Shastras is that the untouchable as every other individual in this universe, is born as such in the graded scale of caste only as a result of his own individual karma in his past life and that it is never the *savarnas* that made them so. There is thus no liability either self-contracted, undertaken or imposed to be discharged by the *savarnas* in this matter" (S.N. 18710).

[3] This read: " . . . please lay your cards clearly on the table as to what tenets of Hinduism you believe in . . . mention any religious authority quoting chapter and verse wherein it is said that an untouchable can enter a temple? According to the *Agama* Shastras if an untouchable enters a temple, pollution is caused to idol and purificatory rites should be done to remove it. . . . Do you believe in caste distinction as a fundamental tenet of Hinduism? . . . I shall thank you to favour me with clear and convincing answers to the above categorically. Lastly allow us to make this fervent appeal. . . . The underlying principle of your action is love towards huma-

red to by you,[1] and even if I had, I would not find the time to study it, nor is it necessary, because of the way I look at the whole question.

Whilst I believe in all the Hindu Shastras as such, I am guided by one supreme canon of interpretation provided in the Shastras themselves. It is this. Every rule and every interpretation thereof that is inconsistent with truth or morality (one and the same thing) is to be rejected. Without some such canon in the midst of a multitude of texts and interpretations a man in the street would feel utterly helpless. As a firm believer in the necessity of temples, I have held the opinion that public temples, except when they are designed for only particular sects, should be open to all Hindus and therefore to Harijans. If your application of the law of karma was to hold good, sacrifice becomes a meaningless term and help given by one person to another a purely criminal act. If an untouchable, assuming that he is so by reason of his past actions, may not be helped out of his degraded position, why should other people suffering from distress be helped? And since I deny divine authority for rules that are inconsistent with truth, I easily come to the conclusion that the disabilities that Harijans are labouring under were imposed upon them by caste Hindus. Hence I regard the latter as debtors.

You ask whether I believe in castes. My answer is "No", but I do believe in varnashrama—a totally different institution from the modern castes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. SANKARANARAYANA IYER
TIMBER MERCHANT
COIMBATORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18803

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nity and it is the sanatanists who will more truly realize its force and in practice do material good to the Harijans than the present social reformers. It is the imbedded religious instinct in a man that more prompts him to do good for a fellow-being and deters him from doing injury to another. No man however high, nor any man-made laws can keep an individual's action in the path of righteousness as the call of religion can do" (S.N. 18745).

[1] The addressee had listed the following: "(1) *Madras Law Journal 27*, pages 253-8, (2) *Indian Law Reporter 31*, Madras, page 236, (3) *Indian Law Reporter 13*, Madras, page 293, (4) *Hindu and Mahomedan Endowments* by P. R. Ganapathi Iyer (Second Edition), pages 203-10."

375. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] of 16th instant. I have since heard from co-workers and I find that every precaution that should be legitimately taken was taken in order to ensure voting on the part of those who are *bona-fide* temple-goers. Thus, the question was how to distinguish the *bona-fide* temple-goers from the non-believers in temple going. I accept Sjt. Rajagopalachari's statement that it was not possible to have "an inquisition or a confession of faith". When the referendum is completed and the whole report is before me, I should be better able to estimate the value of the referendum. After all, the referendum by itself is not going to decide the Guruvayur temple-entry question, but it would be a material factor in helping me to decide whether the contemplated fast is to be taken or postponed.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18804

376. LETTER TO C. NARAYANA MENON

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I quite agree with you that no person should give his or her signature on more than one paper. The principal use of Guruvayur referendum is for the satisfaction of my own conscience. I want to be quite clear that the majority of those

[1] Which read: " . . . the referendum that is now being taken is not in the sense as you have wanted it. Since a reformer can have no idea of the feelings of a no-changer in this matter, I humbly request you to give strict orders to take only votes of *bona-fide* temple-goers. I think the best and easiest way to take their votes will be from the temple-gates. Votes may be taken for three or four days at random" (S.N. 18723). *Vide* also "Fragment of Letter to T. S. Kalyana Rama Iyer", p. 156.

who live in the neighbourhood of Guruvayur are in favour of temple-entry by Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. NARAYANA MENON
BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY, BENARES

From a microfilm: S.N. 18805

377. LETTER TO NARAYANRAO KULKARNI

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. Where the villagers are so cruel as to threaten complete boycott of untouchables who would make use of public wells or tanks, the ideal course for Harijans would be to vacate such a village. Boycott of workers is a simpler matter. They should have the courage to brave all the risks attendant upon working for the reform. If they continue their service without retaliation, the opposition will die out. The other way of course is to await the conversion of the villagers.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NARAYANRAO KULKARNI
POST ASHTA (SATARA)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18806

378. LETTER TO PURNA CHANDRA DEY

December 24, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2], and had your telegram also. Why do you think that the proceedings of the meeting organized under the aegis of the Pravartak Sangha were a manoeuvre of Motibabu? He is here and tries his best to help the movement in his own manner, not to hinder it. He is a tried worker and head of a responsible institution of long standing. I think that it would be well to understand his view-point. You need not agree with it, but

[1] Dated December 17, 1932 (S.N. 18738)
[2] Dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18747)

it would be wrong to regard him as hindrance to the progress of the movement for the removal of untouchability.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PURNA CHANDRA DEY
SECRETARY, HINDU MASS MEETING, CHANDERNAGORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 18808

379. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

December 24, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Mahadev has told me all about what you felt over yesterday's gathering. I tried my utmost to keep the numbers inside of 25, but it was impossible to prevent the *Shastris* who had come from surrounding districts and they belonged to the sanatanist school and therefore I had to walk warily. I had hoped that today would be the last day but I find that I have to prolong the period. They are coming on Monday. It taxed all my strength and tact to keep the number inside of 25 as I had promised. I shall try to keep it at that on Monday also and thereafter. But I can make no promise. I am fully aware that you have to act under instructions. But they should not be inconsistent with the orders[2] of the Government of India. According to my reading of those orders, the number of visitors has been left open, to be regulated by me. I have been endeavouring to the utmost of my ability to suit your convenience both as to number and time, but occasions arise when it is impossible for me to restrict the number as you would wish. If therefore it is necessary for you to refer the matter to higher authority you will please do so and receive instructions as to the meeting on Monday and thereafter. As the 2nd of January approaches, I know that the pressure is bound to increase. I would therefore like a fairly free hand leaving me always to realize that I am a prisoner and therefore may not arrange things as if I have no restrictions to submit to. But I would like you and the Government to feel with me that I can consult the convenience of the administration only so far as not to inter-

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Manindra Nath Mitter", p. 266.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, footnote on pp. 336-7.

fere with the progress of the movement in furtherance of which extraordinary facilities have been given to me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. II, p. 115; also G.N. 3875

380. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 24, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your mail. I understand your point of view regarding Narayanappa. I cannot take the step about the Chharas which I wish to from here before I hear from Mavalankar.[1]

I do not know which ideas of Ramdas, Surendra is referring to.

Tara and Vasumati are at Thana. From this, I infer that Mahalakshmi also must be there. Do you get any news about Gangabehn ?

I feel a little afraid about the consequences of Prema's having left her bed. If she does not exercise self-control, not about food but about speaking, I am sure she will harm herself. I do not know how to put some check on her in regard to what she writes in her letters. One way is that you should stop sending me letters written by her in excitement. The last letter contained nothing but bitter criticism of Chhaganlal.[2] I would never keep such a letter from him, and so I read out to him the whole of it. The letter has had no effect on him, since he knows nothing about the allegations which Prema has made against him. His only reply, therefore, is to endure in silence.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8287. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", pp. 117-8, and "Letter to G. V. Mavalankar", p. 204.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", p. 289.

381. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

December 25, 1932

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter for which I have been waiting all this time. I hope you have passed on the result of your examination of the Kirloskar Wheel to Shankarlal. I have already told[1] you what passed between Dr. Bidhan and myself. I saw that, contrary to expectations, he resented what he regarded as my interference. I therefore unhesitatingly withdrew my letter and apologized.[2] That was the only thing open to me to do. I had no business to interfere except on the assumption that anything I said would be welcomed as a friendly suggestion. When therefore it was not, I had to tender apology and withdraw. You will now do exactly as your conscience leads you. Let me not guide you in such a delicate matter from this distance.

I do not mind the uttermost renunciation from you, but it must be from perfect assimilation, and the test of assimilation would be that it would give you perennial joy, there would be not a trace of anxiety in your face, and therefore in your mind. What is more, Hemprabha should go with you heart and soul and the result of such life should be freedom from illness. With you two, illness cannot be the result of dietetic error. It can only be the result of unconscious anxiety, if not even conscious. Mental worry and anxiety are as responsible for human illnesses as wrong air, wrong water, and wrong diet; but a life of natural, joyful renunciation has been known even to overcome compulsory limitations about air, water and food. Men of God have been found in utter destitution, in swamps with pestilential air, dirty water and wretched food to sustain them, and yet they have kept their health for prolonged periods and carried on their work. It is related of Mahomed that when a disciple questioned him about his own prolonged fasts and his prohibition to his followers against undertaking more than the regulation fasts, he said he was fed by God when he was fasting and therefore did not even know the privation, but such was not the case with the followers. Whether the tradi-

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", p. 227.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. B. C. Roy", pp. 201-2.

tion has a historical basis or not, what has been related is a permanent truth, verifiable by anybody, subject of course to the conditions laid down. Not having the capacity myself for such uttermost renunciation and being still dependent upon pure air, pure water and suitable food for retaining my health, I am incompetent to advise you. I can therefore only warn you against a hasty leap in the dark. I take it that you will not refuse monetary help if it comes in due course and without door-to-door begging. Will it not be wise of Hemprabha to do what was done for you, to come down to Poona and take rest, if necessary, for full one month if the climate is found suitable for her constitution? I dread the prospect of her developing beriberi. Let her not give up writing to me because you are there.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1620

382. LETTER TO P. P. SHENAI[1]

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

My fast is a process of purification and penance. Everything else flows from that fundamental fact.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. P. SHENAI
20 ANDIAPPA GRAMANI ST., ROYAPURAM, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18813

383. LETTER TO K. L. SAHU

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. Please convey my thanks to the Harijans for their gift of flowers. I fully appreciate the affection of which the gift is but a token. I would ask them to follow up the

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 22, requesting Gandhiji to justify his fast "as a means of solving a problem".

[2] Dated December 20, 1932 (S.N. 18746)

gift by making the necessary changes in their lives which are peremptorily demanded by the altered conditions. They will not wait to make the change till they see with their own eyes the alteration in the conditions that have prevailed hitherto.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. L. SAHU
BHANDARA (C.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18814

384. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 25, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter. You are at liberty to publish your own letter and this reply.

In the first place, it seems to me that you have misconstrued the proposed Bill. It is not sought to impose the views of a minority on the majority, but it is sought to restore the condition as it was before the decisions of Courts gave a permanent legal effect to a custom. Whilst a particular custom is in vogue without at any stage being made permanent by decisions of a Court or by legislation, it becomes stagnant and is not liable to the gradual and imperceptible change that every healthy custom undergoes in process of time and under pressure of the demand of the public governed by that particular custom. The proposed Bill will so alter the Court-made Law as to make it possible for the public interested by a majority to change the then existing custom. Instances are not wanting in Hinduism to prove that even the interpretations of accepted Shastras have suffered evolution, so much so that in some cases the original meaning has completely gone into disuse. All the fears that you have described in your letter are in my opinion groundless for the reason I have stated.

You will admit that there are rival schools of interpretation of the *Agamas*, as also there are *Shastris* who question the authenticity of certain *Agamas*. If Hinduism was not in a decaying condition, we would not find those versed in Vedic lore supine, whilst gross superstition is defiling a religion that was once pure and had inherent capacity for continually throwing out impurities and responding to the call of the age. I can only give you my assurance that I have no desire whatsoever to do violence to Hindu public feeling or to ignore the Shastras on which Hinduism is

based. I have, however, reserved to myself the right to determine according to my light the choice of interpretation in the midst of a variety, or even in all humility to give a new interpretation where in rare instances I feel the capacity for it, and this practice is quite consistent with the spirit of Hinduism. We would not have a variety of interpretations and make them acceptable to a large number of Hindus, not always ignorant of Shastras.

You say that whenever an idol is polluted, all that is needed to restore its purity is to do so by authorized purification.[1] Since there is no method of guarding an idol against pollution by the surreptitious entry of an untouchable or others who are prohibited from entering a particular temple, and since there is no infallible method of detecting intruders before they come within the pollution distance, does it not follow that the ceremony of purification has to be gone through every day in order to retain the efficacy of the idol?

Again, how would you guard against the so-called untouchables declining to be classed as such and insisting upon being classified as *savarna* Hindus at the next census? Do you contemplate courts of inquisition for determining the birth-status of tens of thousands of Hindus? If the *Agamas*, or rather the custodians of the *Agamas*, were at all alive to their trust, they would recognize the spirit of the age and draw from the very Shastras a meaning consistent with it.

From a copy: S.N. 18815

385. A LETTER

December 25, 1932

You meditate daily over the teaching of the *Gita*. In due course you will realize that one whose mind is pure will always be serene.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 371

[1] *Vide* also footnote 3, pp. 276-7.

386. A LETTER[1]

December 25, 1932

Take a lesson from your error. . . . You should never be alone with . . . behn[2]. Observe even seemingly unimportant rules scrupulously. Do not speak untruth even for Indra's throne. Prefer to give up your life by fasting rather than gratify your lust.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 370

387. A LETTER

December 25, 1932

If you stop worrying, I also would immediately do so. I hope you know that your understanding of the teaching of the *Gita* is being tested now. Even if you could read the verses with correct pronunciation and proper understanding of their meaning or learn them by heart, I would not hold you to have passed the test. You will get marks according to the measure in which you put the teaching in practice. One who can discourse in the principles of spinning fluently is not, therefore, an expert in spinning. He is the expert who follows those principles, that is, who spins and cards. The same is true about the *Gita*. It is the best remedy for all illnesses. If you use it properly, I would not worry much about you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 371

[1] The addressee wished to observe *brahmacharya*.

[2] The name is omitted in the source.

CWMG LII

388. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

December 25, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I got your letter. If you don't keep well there, you should immediately go to Rajkot and see if the climate of that place helps you. You will get milk there. Your *swadharma* means the work you are doing at present, namely, popularizing the *takli* and study. If cow-protection or other work comes to you unsought, you may do it. This is not the age for you to put into practice your own ideas about acceptable and forbidden food. For one thing you are not mature enough for that, and, secondly, being a member of an institution you should follow its rules in the faith that its practice cannot be contrary to dharma. If you do not understand this, ask me to explain it again.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6747. Also C.W. 4490. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

389. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

December 25, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. Please don't stop writing to me. It is good news that your health is improving.

Nanibehn had written to me about Navin and Mahesh having gone there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3951

CWMG-III

390. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I have been thinking hard about some way of improving Purushottam's health, but I can think of nothing except that he should try out different places. I have been thinking of a place as far as Almora. There is Hajira near Surat. It is a well-known health resort. I do believe that he should go and stay there as long as necessary and improve his health. At any rate, Lonavla is there. He has even thought about it. Think over this suggestion.

How are you?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 867. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

391. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

December 25, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Do write to me and let me know your views about the changes in food.[1]

I have received Mavalankar's letter about the problem of the Chharas. I don't think it is necessary for me to do anything from here.

I liked the description of cleaning work. I do remember about the *Bhajanavali*, but I am helpless.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 239. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", pp. 99-101.

CWMG - LII

392. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 25, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

Since we shall be soon meeting, I need not write this letter. You wanted my reply so that it should reach you before Friday, but because of your order [that Chhaganlal should not be permitted to read your letters] I could not read your letter immediately. Since Chhaganlal cannot read it, I cannot hear it read out to me while I pace to and fro. Afterwards I would be busy with other things. You have yourself created a difficulty both for you and me. I showed to Chhaganlal your lengthy story of complaints against him.[1] I am sure you did not wish that it should not be shown to him. I, at any rate, cannot be a party to that. What burning hatred, though, there was in what you wrote! Chhaganlal is altogether ignorant of those shortcomings. If he had the shortcomings which you have attributed to him, he could not have lived in the Ashram. And Surendra[2]! You will hardly come across in the Ashram a man as clean as he is. I had never thought that you had in you malice enough to remember for so long what he had told you in his goodness. I love your pouring out your heart to me. But it also pains me extremely to know that you can harbour such thoughts about anyone. Your duty now is to pray to God to forgive you for this grave sin and thereby purify yourself. Do that and remove the pain in my heart.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10317. Also C.W. 6756. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", p. 281.

[2] An Ashram inmate known for his strict observance of *brahmacharya*

393. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

December 25, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

I got your letter. You may follow the path which you think is for your good.

What I do not like is the following:

1. Your movements;
2. your want of sense of responsibility;
3. your failure to do your duty of guiding Mangala[1] and Pushpa[2];
4. your irresoluteness.

Probably you have an explanation about all these. If you have, your failure to tell me about it before is an additional cause for my dissatisfaction. You should remove that dissatisfaction.

What did Mangala and Pushpa not like in the Ashram? Along with the Ashram, have they left me too!

Is Kamala happy?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4069. Also C.W. 20. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

394. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 25, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I will make this letter short.

Read my letters to Radha and Prema. Explain to everybody my comments on the *Gita*.

I think that, if Amtussalaam wishes to go somewhere for the sake of her health, you should let her go. She is a very pure-minded lady. I would be very happy if going to some other place improves her health. If she can, she may also try and get her share of the money. But this opinion of mine may be based on incomplete data. You should be guided by your own judgment.

[1&2] Addressee's sisters

CWMG - LIII

I got Mavalankar's letter concerning the Chharas. I will do nothing just now. Nor need you do anything. We may, if we wish, try our own methods.

I hope you have completely recovered now.

Think over what I have written about Purushottam in my letter[1] to Jamna.

BAPU

[PS.]

In all there are 29 letters and they are stringed together.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8288. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

395. LETTER TO NARADEV SHASTRI

December 25, 1932

All the doubts will be resolved if you bear in mind the fact that I am working for Harijans while confined in jail. To write more would be to violate the restrictions. No Congressman is under any compulsion to join this work. No one need give up his dharma for the sake of this work.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 370

396. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

December 25, 1932

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Draw a circle and ask anyone to find its beginning and end. None can indicate it if the circle is drawn correctly. This being true of man's creation, what can we say of God's creation? I am unable to answer your queries because no answer will be adequate. Leave the thing alone.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 832

[1] *Vide* p. 288.

CWMG - III

397. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 25, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your letter. I was sorry to read about the piles. You should avoid *bajra roti* in this condition. Take bread with butter, milk and fruit. It may help to consult the doctor. Whatever Narandas advises should be done. I would approve of your going away if that is considered necessary for your health. In this matter too follow Narandas's advice. The German lady met me and gave me all news. Kudsia seems to be doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 268

398. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 25, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You just came and went away. I got no opportunity at all to talk to you. I did get your and Padmaja's kisses. Nobody else saw them, though. But I will tell the whole world that these two girls sent me their kisses again by post. I was looking into some letters today. I saw the two *bhajans* sent by you. How nice it would have been if I could have heard you sing them. But I am helpless, I get no time at all. Respectful greetings from us all to Father and Mother. Ask Hamida to send me some more of her copper-plate handwriting.

Blessings from
BAPU

CWMG - LII

[PS.]

You do not seem to have taken full advantage of the Poona air. You went back very soon.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O ABBAS SAHEB TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9663

399. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

December 26, 1932

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. I don't see any error in the step which you have taken. There was no such thought in my mind. I was only afraid lest my brief remarks might have been misunderstood. In fact, I myself had advised Narandas to seek your advice. A patient is ill-equipped to judge the action of the physician. In any case he has no right to do so. The poet's statement "the strong are never in the wrong" is true in all cases. I have not read the letter addressed by you, nor is it necessary to do so now. I had thought of taking some appropriate step from here, but now I have given up the idea. I will watch the effect of your letter.

All of us know very well that you are working very hard.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1233

400. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

December 26, 1932

BHAI MUNSHI,

Your letter did not require an immediate reply. Meanwhile, Anandshankarbhai gave me news about your health. He painted a more serious picture of it than I had thought. And that has prompted me to suggest my quack-remedy. Madan gives

[1] These sentences are in Gujarati.

nature-cure treatment. If, with Dr. Gilder's permission and after careful inquiry, you take it, it will probably help you.

It seems Jijima is not going. My congratulations to her. I do hope she will complete a hundred.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7523. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

401. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSI BAZAJ

December 26, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

You do write to me regularly, but you will have to make your letters more interesting. I will not be satisfied with such dry letters. You don't need to be taught how to make them interesting.

CHI. BENARSI,

I like your practice of writing a few lines in Rukmini's letters. If you want anything to be conveyed to Jamnalalji, you may write to me about it. Do you earn sufficiently from your business?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9450-a. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

402. MESSAGE TO HARI KIRTAN MAHA SAMMELAN, MEERUT[1]

[Before *December 27, 1932*][2]

I hope the Harijans would join you in your recitations of *bhajans* on the occasion of your Sammelan.

The Hindustan Times, 29-12-1932

[1&2] The message was sent in a letter to the Reception Committee. It was published under the date-line: "Meerut, December 27".

CWMG-III

403. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 27, 1932[1]

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter[2]. The dazzle of my presence is really a greater embarrassment to me than to friends like you, and I wish that we can work and speak to one another on a par. I hate to have any special credit given to my word than would be claimed by any other person saying the same thing. With this preface I must say that I wholly dissent from your diagnosis. If I had written a similar letter[3], say, for instance, to you, I do not think that you would have resented it. In other words, I would not have over-rated my influence with you. How could I help Dr. Roy in securing the co-operation of Babus Suresh and Satis when I knew that such a thing was not possible unless I simply coerced them into giving mechanical co-operation, but I would not think of such co-operation even between Suresh babu and Satisbabu? Even in the Ashram, where I may be said to have equal influence with all, there are incompatible temperaments where I cannot look for co-operation, much less can I impose it; and inasmuch as I believed that Suresh and Satis Babus were more effective people as plodders, I naturally desired the work to be in their hands, and I thought that Dr. Roy would appreciate my suggestion. Why should anybody feel hurt if a burden is shifted from his shoulders and put on to another, thought to be more able to carry it? And I, as it now turns out erroneously, thought that Dr. Bidhan would not misconstrue my letter, take it in good light, and contest, if he liked, the underlying assumption, but never resent the letter. And why do you say that I have rebuked Dr. Roy in my second letter? I think I have fairly put the position, but if you have not followed it, you may read it over again. I would like you to understand the motive underlying

[1] In the printed source, this letter is dated December 29, 1932, which seems to be wrong as the addressee referring to this letter in his reply dated January 2, 1933, says: "I have your letters of the 27th and 28th." For the letter of the 28th, *vide* p. 298.

[2] Dated December 21, 1932; *vide* Appendix XIII.

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's letter to Dr. B. C. Roy; *vide* pp. 138-9.

the first letter. I shall see if I can think of a good secretary for you who will work for the love of work.

I would warn you against issuing the English edition, unless it is properly got up and contains readable English and translations are all accurate. It would be much better to be satisfied with the Hindi edition only, than to have an indifferently edited English weekly.

Of course, I know that there is no question of partiality, but it is as well to bear in mind how Dr. Ambedkar's people feel about all we do.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 18825; also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, pp. 85-6

404. LETTER TO L. N. BHARGAVA

December 27, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I will deal with the matter of baskets[2] in one of my statements.

With reference to the temples, though they are in the hands of Goswamis, they cannot but be affected by the opinion of *bona-fide* temple-goers, if that opinion favours the admission of Harijans to the temples. You should also try to see the Goswamis and discuss the thing with them. I need hardly say that they should be approached in a courteous and sympathetic spirit.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. L. N. BHARGAVA
PRESIDENT, SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, MUTTRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18828

405. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

December 27, 1932

MY DEAR SHYAMLAL,

I sent the English article for *Dalit Sevak* some days ago to Sjt. Birla. You must have had it by this time. You will see to it that no mistakes occur, either of grammar or spelling in the Eng-

[1] Dated December 21, 1932 (S.N. 18776)
[2] Used for scavenging

lish edition. It is quite unnecessary to translate the Hindi article. Whenever a translation is necessary of any article I may write in Hindi, I will take care to send it from here or ask you to make it there.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18821

406. LETTER TO M. R. RAMASWAMI

December 27, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I shall certainly deal with the subject-matter of your letter publicly,[1] but that may take a little time. I may therefore give you this assurance, that it is not open to those who have no faith in temple worship to join the movement for temple-entry, and I should be very sorry indeed if any person who does not believe in temple worship joined the movement simply in order to destroy the veneration for temples, and I should be very sorry to find reformers resorting to abuse of sanatanists. I would like you to give me specific instances in which case I would be able more effectively to deal with cases of abuse.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. RAMASWAMI, B.A.,B.L.
VIVEKODAYAM, TRICHUR (COCHIN STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 18824

407. LETTER TO SITARAM K. NALAVADE

December 27, 1932

BHAI SITARAM,

I have your letter.

Come at one o'clock on the 7th. You can take . . .[2] from me.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.]

Do not take more than half an hour.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 800

[1] *Vide* "Statement on Untouchability–XIII", pp. 304-8.
[2] The original is mutilated here.

408. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 27, 1932

CHI. BRIJKISHAN,

Why so much attachment? Console yourself with the thought that if I die, it will be in the cause of dharma. Then why grieve? Anyway the body has to die of some cause or other. It seems at the moment that the fast of the second proximo will be suspended. Things will be clearer in a couple of days.

I shall write something about the condition of temples in the newspapers. Temples are pretty important. Temple-entry of Harijans is the first step and the internal reforms will follow.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2397

409. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

The Secretary of the Friends of India Society, London, writes to me saying that she has sent you a cheque or draft for £42-0-3 being the takings during the Fast Week.[1] You will please tell me whether the amount has been received.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

C.W. 7911. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 18832

410. LETTER TO T. S. KALYANA RAMA IYER

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. In spite of my desperate attempt to give you a detailed reply, I see that it is beyond my capacity just now to do so. I must therefore ask you kindly to await the statements that I issue from time to time which are designed to

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mrs. Hunter", 6-1-1933.

CWMG - LII

cover the points that several correspondents raise. You will please appreciate that it is not the want of will but want of ability that I cannot give you a detailed reply.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18831

411. LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 16th instant, and for your assurance of support in the great reform movement.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. A. V. NATHAN
EDITOR OF "JUSTICE", 14 MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18833

412. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your many love-letters. You had prepared me for them by your cable of cancellation and had evidently thought you had finished writing when the light had dawned on you. You do not want me to reason with you at all. I only want to repeat what I have already said that your being one with me gave me very great joy. As I have been saying to so many friends who know me, in all these things I am not the doer; I am merely the passive willing instrument in the hands of God. Of course, it may be a hallucination. No argument can remove hallucination. For that, God's light is needed. But hitherto, in no single case wherein I have claimed God's direction it has been found to be otherwise.

I do not wonder that your book is rapidly going through edition after edition, and I like very much the idea of your being settled in Woodbrooke.

Love from us all to you all.

From a photostat: G.N. 1305

413. LETTER TO AN ENGLISH WOMAN

December 28, 1932

MY DEAR SISTER,

I must dictate if I must write at all. You are pouring your love on me, not merely showering it. I have your well-marked book, your telegram, your letters laden with sacred cards, each bearing some verse or proverb written by you, and your gift of £6 for Harijans, for all of which God bless you.

You will not expect me to give you long letters. I can only send you a line to tell you that you are never out of my mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18834

414. LETTER TO M. SWAMINATHAN

December 28, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would like you to write to the Secretary of the Provincial Board yourself, giving him your credentials accompanied by introductions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. SWAMINATHAN
EDITOR, "SUTHANDIRA MURASU", 2 AZIZ MULK LANE
CATHEDRAL POST, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 18830

415. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Morning, after prayer [*December 29, 1932*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

The notes were after all received. Your letter came in at the usual time.

[1] "Undated, probably December 29, 1932, postmark December 30, 1932"—Mirabehn. At the top of the letter are the initials presumably of the Jail authority in Bombay with the date December 31, 1932.

It is a wrong thing to rehearse a calamity[1] (i.e., an event believed by us to be a calamity though in fact it may be a blessing) and to reproduce in advance the feelings one would have. It is enough that we hold ourselves prepared for the worst. This we do by an ever increasing faith in God, the Good, the Just, the Compassionate, the Bountiful, the Giver of the daily bread, the Help of the helpless, the All-powerful, the All-knowing, the Ever-vigilant, the Whole Truth.

Nirvan is utter extinction of all egoism, self. Its positive aspect is capable of being experienced but incapable of being described. But we know by inference that it is something vastly superior to any bliss that we can possibly experience on this earth.

Dr. Gour's book you can keep longer if you need.

Saltless diet continues without producing any effect on the elbow. Great pressure of work has led to reduction of milk and that has reduced the weight temporarily to 102 lb. No cause for anxiety.

There will be no fast on 2nd. The reasons you will see in the Press.[2] No time now.

Love.

BAPU

PS.

The dentist is Dr. D. M. Desai, Whiteway Laidlaw Buildings. Is it necessary for me to do anything from this end ?

From a photostat: C.W. 9513. Courtesy: Mirabehn

416. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

December 29, 1932

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. It was from Bhai Khimchand's letter two or three days ago that I learnt for the first time that Bhai Manilal had any hand in his case. I don't know anything at all about this

[1] "The teaching of this letter as likewise that of January 5, 1933 and January 19, 1933 has been one of the things that sank deep into my being and by now it has become a habit with me immediately to check my mind the moment it begins speculating and picturing. Cessation of mental imaginings of what might come to pass, either good or bad, is an essential condition to inner peace."—Mirabehn

[2] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press of India", p. 303 and "Statement on Untouchability–XIII", pp. 304-8.

matter, and I have no right to intervene in such a matter from here.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5815. Also C.W. 3038. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

417. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

December 29, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I liked it very much. If you show in your life the same freedom and frankness of heart as you do in this letter, I shall believe that I have succeeded in teaching you all that I wished to. The Bombay climate has certainly suited you. You should regard Gangabehn's home in Borivli as your own. You can stay there if they have a spare room for you. That would be the sea-coast you wanted.

You should give a trial to Vijapur also. You will stay there permanently only if you keep good health there. There is, therefore, no question of being a burden on Kashi. Nor need you stay outside the Ashram for all the months of the year. You may pass ten months outside the Ashram and build up your health, and then spend two months in the Ashram.

If it is a wife's duty to live with her husband, so also it is the husband's duty to live with the wife. However, just as owing to circumstances or for the sake of duty the husband has sometimes to endure separation from his wife, she too must bear separation from him for a similar reason. Dharma does not require that a husband or a wife should always remain present by the sick-bed of the other partner. We can know what the duty of either is in a given case only if we know the exact circumstances. It is true, however, that the two should have equal rights. I would even go further and say that the wife has more rights as long as she regards herself as the weaker one and suffers from handicaps.

I hope you keep better health now. Do think of going to some other place. I have already written[1] to you about the desirability of Purushottam going to Hajira.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 868. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* p. 288.

418. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

December 29, 1932

CHI. MANGALA,

We should not mind if anybody is offended as a result of our following a rule. It would be wrong for a girl who has been helping in rolling the dough to linger on after her work is over. Why, then, should another who is frying the cakes feel offended [if the former leaves]? However, if the work of rolling the dough is over before frying, it means that more girls are doing it than are necessary.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4086. Also C.W. 50. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

419. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

December 29, 1932

Reclining on a cot in the sun, Mr. Gandhi this afternoon talked with the Associated Press correspondent for two minutes. He said:

In view of what has happened in connection with Viceregal sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill[1] and inevitable delay that has occurred in regard thereto, I have decided after full consultations with Mr. Kelappan,[2] Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Madhavan Nair to postpone the contemplated fast indefinitely. I am trying to draft exhaustive statement on it but owing to tremendous pressure of work I have not been able to finish it. I hope to give it to Press at a very early date.[3]

More than this, he said, he did not want to say at this stage. He however jocularly added:

The sun's rays make me strong and I love them.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-12-1932

[1] The Viceroy's decision regarding sanction to the introduction of the Bill in the Council could not be reached before January 15.

[2] *Vide* Appendix XVIII.

[3] *Vide* the following item.

420. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–XIII

December 30, 1932

I had full consultation with Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. K. Madhavan Nair and Mr. Kelappan[1], who have come to Poona to confer with me. They have placed the results of the Guruvayur referendum before me. The referendum was taken of the Ponnani Taluk where the temple is situated.

Never perhaps was a referendum taken with such scrupulous care or with such scientific precision before this. Rarely to my knowledge, have 73 per cent of the eligible voters voted.

In order to find out the truth, voting was confined only to those who were actual temple-goers, that is to say, those who were not entitled to enter the Guruvayur Temple and those who would not, such as the Arya Samajists, were excluded from the voters' list. I had intended without thinking of all implications actually to find out by some method of examination, who were actual temple-goers, but I have found it to be utterly impracticable. It was enough to announce that only those should vote who believed in temple-going, who had faith in temple-worship as an integral part of the Hindu religion and who were entitled to enter the Guruvayur Temple.

The total population entitled to the temple-entry being approximately 65,000, the outside estimate of adults may be taken as 30,000. As a matter of fact, 27,465 adult men and women were actually visited for receiving their votes. Of these 55 per cent were in favour of temple-entry; nine per cent against, eight per cent were neutrals, and 27 per cent abstained.

It should be remembered that the referendum was taken amidst adverse influences. The Zamorin would not co-operate, and I am sorry to have to say, even cast aspersions upon the workers and the procedure they followed. The Ponnani Taluk is the stronghold of orthodoxy and yet there was a decisive majority in favour of admission of the untouchables to that shrine now made famous throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The figures were also instructive, as showing that both men and women had no hesitation in spite of the contemplated fast,

[1] *Vide* Appendix XVIII.

of expressing their dissent. I would also draw a fair deduction from the neutrals and non-co-operators. They could not at all, if they had chosen to give their decision, be regarded as against the temple-entry of the Harijans. It would not be a bad or unfair guess to make, if I suggested that a fourth of these, at least, were probably for temple-entry. The percentage of the voters favouring temple-entry would then be sixty-five per cent of the total eligible voters. If they be excluded altogether from the referendum, the majority would be 77 per cent.

Turn the figures as we may, the unchallengeable conclusion is that a decisive majority of eligible voters are in favour of the entry by the Harijans.

That fact shows that Mr. Kelappan's statement that the majority of temple-going population surrounding Guruvayur was in favour of temple-entry, is correct.

In view of the official announcement that the Viceregal decision as to the sanction for the introduction in the Madras Legislative Council of Dr. Subbaroyan's permissive Bill with reference to the temple-entry could not possibly be announced before the 15th of January, the fast contemplated to take place on the 2nd day of the New Year will be indefinitely postponed, and in any case up to the date of the announcement of the Viceregal decision. Sjt. Kelappan concurs with this postponement. As the contemplated fast was addressed to the public, let me, at the risk of repeating what I have said previously, state my own position clearly. My fast, I regard, as a purely spiritual act, and therefore not capable of being fully explained. But in so far as I can, I may say that it is intended to stir the public conscience.

Hinduism teaches that when evils and corruption are beyond control by ordinary means and, human endeavour is supplemented by *tapasya* or penance which, in its extreme form, means fasting either conditional or unconditional.

Therefore it is no new thing. But for the influence, supposed or real, I enjoy among the masses, perhaps no notice would be taken of it.

My conviction is that Hinduism has fallen from the purity and vitality it once had. Its very scriptures are evidence of the continuous progress and adaptability to circumstances that arose from time to time. Though it has retained unimpaired the claim to divine inspiration for the scriptures as a body, it did not hesitate to introduce new reforms and make changes. Hence it is that we have in Hinduism not only Vedas, but all later writings claiming authority. But a time came, when this healthy growth or evolu-

tion was arrested, and instead of the written word being used as an aid to the search for light from within, it was held to be all-sufficing, whether it accorded with longings and strivings of the spirit within or not. The descendants of those who wrestled with God Himself and drew from Him some of the imperishable things one finds in Vedas and later writings, felt too exhausted for further effort, either to wring out new meaning from an old verse or *mantra* or produce a new *mantra*. They felt that they had done with God and that God had finished His work, after inspiring the last verse of the latest Shastra. And so one finds an army of interpreters seeking to reconcile, often irreconcilable texts, unmindful as to whether they answer the pressing needs of the age or whether they can stand the light of searching examination. And even penances took mere outward form, instead of being an expression of the inward agonizing struggle. I may be wrong in my diagnosis, but such being my case and finding the Hindu society irresponsive to the central call of Hinduism, that is, progressive realization of unity of all life, not as a philosophical doctrine but as a solid fact of life, I thought that by continuous effort to live my religion as I understood it, I had the fitness for doing penance by way of fasting and that I had such a call from within.

I hope it is easy for the reader to see that there is no coercion behind the fast thus conceived. If my fast was fixed as an unconditional one, it is obvious there can be no coercion about it, for nothing that the public may do or not do could suspend my fast. Therefore, if a conditional fast is held to be coercive, it would be so considered because of the condition. My experience is that the fast has not deterred people from sticking to their principles or even their inclinations, as was seen at Guruvayur.

The public will now understand that the postponement is what it means and no more. The fast was intended to secure admission of the untouchables into the Guruvayur Temple, and if its resumption is necessary in a legitimate manner to secure the opening, it will certainly come, as for instance, if through the mere supineness of the reformers and consequent want of expression by public opinion in demanding the necessary legislation to remove the block created by decisions of courts and the Law of Trusts or the Madras Religious Endowments Act, which itself was a measure affecting religion, naturally the fast has to be resumed.

That is to say, it must be resumed, if the original vow is to be fulfilled. The fast must be resumed for the acts of omission or commission by those who are believed to be in favour of opening the Guruvayur Temple.

The Yeravda Pact was entered into between the representatives of the caste Hindus and the Harijans, and while confirming the Pact at the memorable conference in Bombay, the former resolved as follows:

> This conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth and that those who have been so regarded hitherto, shall have the same rights as the other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and other public institutions. These rights shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest Acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if they shall not have received such recognition before that time. It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by caste Hindus upon the so-called untouchable classes, including bar in the respect of admission to temples.[1]

If the distinguished caste Hindus that passed the resolution, represented, as they claim to, the Hindu portion of the Indian Nation, the claim has to be made good by increasing fraternization day by day with Harijans on the part of caste Hindus by way of opening to them public institutions.

Mr. Kelappan's fast over the opening of the Guruvayur Temple was actually going on whilst the Pact was emerging, and I asked him to suspend it principally at the suggestion of the Zamorin of Calicut. Moreover, as I have already said, when on the British Government's acceptance of relevant portion of the Pact I broke the fast, I solemnly assured Dr. Ambedkar and took a vow in the secret of my heart and in the presence of God that I would hold myself as a hostage for the fulfilment of the resolution above mentioned, and the general carrying out of the Pact by the caste Hindus. It would be a betrayal of trust and a betrayal of the Harijans if, in any shape or form, I slackened my effort or gave up altogether the intention of fasting in connection with the removal of untouchability.

I would like the voiceless and helpless Harijans to feel that thousands of Hindu reformers, as zealous of Hindu religion and scriptures on which it is based, as any Hindu calling himself a

[1] This resolution was drafted by Gandhiji and passed by the conference with Malaviyaji in the chair on September 25, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI, p. 139, where, however, "imposed by custom" is found instead of "imposed by caste Hindus".

sanatanist can be, are prepared, no less than I am, to sacrifice their lives, if need be, in an attempt to remove untouchability, root and branch.

There can be no rest, therefore, for me or those who, by word of mouth or show of hands, silently endorsed the resolution, until untouchability becomes a thing of the past. It would be only out of the ashes of untouchability that Hinduism can revive, and thus be purified and become a vital and vitalizing force in the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-12-1932; also *The Hindu*, 31-12-1932

421. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 30, 1932

As some misunderstanding has arisen about Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna's visit to me, it is necessary to state how he came to me, and what happened between us.

The Pandit came with Babu Motilal Roy, Director of the Pravartak Sangh of Bengal. Babu Motilal Roy has been trying to avoid a split among the Hindus over the campaign against untouchability and he was most anxious that Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna should accompany him when he came to see me to discuss and understand the whole position from my standpoint. When I heard that from Babu Motilal Roy, I telegraphed to him welcoming him and Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. It gave me joy, therefore, when the Pandit came to me. We had two very friendly conversations, as a result of which I think we came closer together and I began to entertain hope. Though he represents the ordinary orthodox sanatani attitude, he appreciated my viewpoint and he did not despair of finding a way of solving the temple-entry question. I have made a definite suggestion to him, which ought to satisfy the most exacting sanatanist. He is now in Guruvayur, and I hope a formula will be found acceptable to the Pro-Change and No-Change sanatanists.

The Hindu, 31-12-1932

422. *TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY*

December 30, 1932

VICEROY'S CAMP

RELUCTANT AS I AM TO SAY SOMETHING TO GOVERNMENT REGARDING PROPOSED BILL FRAMED BY DR. SUBBAROYAN AND FORWARDED FOR VICEREGAL SANCTION BY MADRAS GOVERNMENT PERHAPS HIS EXCELLENCY EXPECTS ME TO SUBMIT MY VIEWS THEREANENT SO AS TO HELP HIM TO CORRECT DECISION. BILL PROPOSED NO INNOVATION IN HINDU BELIEF. ON CONTRARY IT SEEKS CARRY OUT REQUIREMENTS OF HINDU SHASTRAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH OPINION HELD BY PUNDITS ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE WELL-VERSED IN SANSKRIT RELIGIOUS LORE. IT SEEKS TO RESTORE STATUS QUO AS IT EXISTED BEFORE BRITISH COURTS ENFORCED WHAT WAS HELD BY SOME TO BE ANCIENT PRACTICE IN MALABAR AND THUS CLOTHED IT WITH FORCE OF LAW AND IT DOES SO BY AMENDING RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS ACT OF MADRAS WHICH IN ITSELF WAS CONSIDERABLE INTERFERENCE WITH THEN PREVAILING PRACTICE. BILL EMBODIES UNANIMOUSLY EXPRESSED WISH OF MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL THROUGH ITS RECENT RESOLUTION. IT SEEKS TO RENDER TARDY JUSTICE TO VAST NUMBER OF HINDUS WHO HAVE BEEN ARBITRARILY DEPRIVED OF RIGHT TO RELIGIOUS CONSOLATION EQUAL WITH OTHER HINDUS. IT SEEMS BEST TO CARRY OUT REPEATED DECLARATIONS OF HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT TO AFFORD PROTECTION TO UNTOUCHABLES. NOT TO SANCTION MEASURE WILL BE TANTAMOUNT TO CONTRADICTION OF THOSE DECLARATIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO FORCES OF REACTION. SEEING THAT BILL IS IN RESPONSE TO MOVEMENT THAT SET IN AS DIRECT RESULT OF YERAVDA PACT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ARE IN MY OPINION MORALLY BOUND NOT IN ANY WAY TO HINDER MOVEMENT WHICH THEY WILL OBVIOUSLY DO IF THEY BLOCK BILL. BILL IS MERELY PERMISSIVE MEASURE IN THAT IT MAKES OPENING OF TEMPLES TO HARIJANS DEPENDENT UPON WISHES OF MAJORITY OF THOSE AT PRESENT ENTITLED TO OFFER WORSHIP IN PARTICULAR TEMPLE. TO THESE CONSIDERATIONS I WOULD ADD THIS VERY MATERIAL FACT THAT IF ORTHODOX OPINION

MUST CARRY WEIGHT OPINION OF FOUR CRORES OF HARIJANS WHICH MUST BE ASSUMED TO BE IN FAVOUR OF BILL SHOULD CARRY GREATER WEIGHT NOT TO SPEAK OF DEMAND OF EVER-INCREASING NUMBERS OF REFORMERS. A WORD IS NECESSARY HERE REGARDING FAST THAT WAS TO COMMENCE ON SECOND JANUARY NEXT IF GURUVAYUR TEMPLE WAS NOT OPENED BEFORE THEN. IF FAST WERE TO BE TAKEN ON THAT DATE IT COULD NOT BUT EMBARRASS GOVERNMENT. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH KELAPPAN THEREFORE I HAVE ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD BE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. BUT IT MIGHT HAVE TO BE TAKEN IF FOR LACK OF DECISIVE EXPRESSION OF PUBLIC OPINION SANCTION IS WITHHELD OR SOME UNFORESEEN BUT AVOIDABLE CAUSE OCCURS WHICH MAY PREVENT OPENING OF GURUVAYUR TEMPLE. I MAY STATE THAT PUBLIC AGITATION HAS BEEN PURPOSELY KEPT IN ABEYANCE UNDER BELIEF THAT CASE FOR VICEREGAL SANCTION WAS UNANSWERABLE. BUT IN VIEW OF GROWING AGITATION ON PART OF SANATANISTS I HAVE SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS AND THE LIKE FOR EXPRESSION OF PUBLIC OPINION IN SUPPORT OF BILL. BUT I DO FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF AGITATION ONE WAY OR OTHER OVER MERE QUESTION OF VICEREGAL SANCTION CAN BE AVOIDED. I THEREFORE HOPE THAT VICEREGAL SANCTION WILL SOON BE ANNOUNCED FOR INTRODUCTION OF DR. SUBBAROYAN'S BILL IN MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. I AM NOT SENDING THIS TELEGRAM FOR PUBLICATION. BUT OF COURSE I CAN HAVE NO OBJECTION TO ITS PUBLICATION IF HIS EXCELLENCY DESIRES IT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9555. Courtesy: India Office Library. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(7), p. 79

423. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

[*December*][1] *30, 1932*

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

I have your great and good letter quite worthy of you. I love and accept your correction, and say with you that we are near to each other; and since we are near to each other, let me say that my letter[2] had no complaint behind it. It simply went out as an advice in order to secure what I thought would be a better working of the organization, and I expected you, as a friend, if my advice did not find any response within your breast, to say plainly to me, 'You do not know the situation, and therefore I do not accept your advice.' Of course, your reply said the same thing, but in an unexpectedly different manner, but that is all dead and gone. After having tendered you my apology[3], I had dismissed the incident from mind, but you have revived the memory, and now rendered it sacred by your generous letter.

I am glad of the news you give me about your distinguished patients[4]. It is quite like Baby to have placed her flat at Kamala's disposal.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18493

424. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

December 31, 1932

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Sarup[5] came to me the other day to discuss her project about untouchability. She said you had advised rest in Ceylon. I regard it as unnecessary. She is quite able to do some work and she is quite willing to do some untouchability work. I think that she should be allowed to do the work so long as she wishes to do it.

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".
[2] *Vide* pp. 138-9.
[3] In a telegram; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", p. 207; also pp. 201-2.
[4] Kamala Nehru and Dr. Sheikh Mohammad Alam
[5] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

She told me you had some more teeth out while she was busy growing grey hair. But eye-witnesses tell me you were otherwise keeping quite fit. You still seem to be refusing to see visitors. I wish you would see them, if it is at all possible. It will give them satisfaction.

We are now a happy team of four, Chhaganlal Joshi having been added unto us. I do not know whether you are interesting yourself in the Harijan work. I am having a glorious time with the *Shastris*. My knowledge of the letter of the Shastras is better but of true religion they are able to give me but little.

With love from us all,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 108

425. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

December 31, 1932

DEAR MOTIBABU,

It was a matter of great joy to me to have you and your disciples with me for so many days. I have understood your resolve to work for the removal of untouchability. I entirely agree with you that whilst we may sacrifice nothing of what we hold dear as life itself, we must endeavour to bring round orthodoxy to our point of view, if it is at all possible. In any case we may do nothing to hurt anybody's susceptibilities. May God bless your effort.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11041

426. LETTER TO K. RAMACHANDRA

[*December*][1] *31, 1932*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the complication that has arisen there with reference to the temple-entry question.[2] I have no doubt whatsoever that whilst a non-Hindu may sympathize

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".
[2] *Vide* also Vol. LIII, "Letter to K. Ramachandra", 28-1-1933.

with the reform movement, he cannot and ought not to take part in any direct action.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. RAMACHANDRA
SRI WICKRAMA
WELLAWATTE
COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 18494

427. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

[*December*][1] *31, 1932*

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter of the 26th instant. Now that the fast is off[2] for the time being, I shall watch what work Kerala is going to put in.

The taking of signatures to the memorial[3] is, I hope, proceeding apace. You should report the number taken from day to day. You must have fixed a time-limit.

The work of educating public opinion should continue side by side with constructive work amongst the Harijans.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 18495

428. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

December 31, 1932

BHAI BHULABHAI,

We were all happy to have your letter. I wish that nobody should worry on account of the pain in my elbow. I am taking the necessary treatment. The [authorities] will themselves call for help from outside when there is need for it. I shall myself ask for it if I feel the need. There is not much pain.

We are all glad to know that all of you are doing well. Obviously one cannot study here as well as one can [outside].

[1] Inferred from the contents; the source, however, has "January".

[2] Gandhiji announced the postponement of the fast on December 29; *vide* p. 303.

[3] Presumably to the Viceroy for according sanction to introduction of Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill; *vide* pp. 309-10.

Regards to all from all of us. Dhirubhai will come again.

MOHANDAS

ADVOCATE BHULABHAI DESAI
PRISONER
CENTRAL PRISON
NASIK ROAD

[From Gujarati]

Bhulabhai Desai Papers, File No. 1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

429. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*December 1932*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. Do not worry about me. There is nothing much the matter with my arm to cause anxiety. I feel no discomfort in writing to you. I understand about the *roza*[2]. By all means observe it. I will not write any more today; there is no time. It is very good you are serving the Harijans.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 263

430. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

1932

CHI. RAMA,

I am a little disappointed about you. You know that I long for letters from everybody. If somebody does not write to me in order to save my time and because he or she is all right, that is another matter. But in your case I think the reason is in-

[1] In *Bapuke Patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaam ke Nam*, this letter has been placed after the one of November 6. However, from the reference to the *roza* fast it would seem that the letter was written just before or during the Ramzan, which commenced in December.

[2] Complete abstention from food and drink during the daylight hours observed by devout Muslims in the month of Ramzan

[3] The addressee was working at Vadaj near Sabarmati Ashram.

difference and lethargy. Am I right? If I am, your conduct should be regarded unpardonable.

Chhaganlal's weight has been steadily increasing. It is 115 now.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 285

431. DIARY, 1932[1]

NOVEMBER 16, WEDNESDAY, YERAVDA MANDIR[2]

Takli—43 rounds. Letters—Parachure Shastri, Mohanlal Bhatt, Keshavlal Manchharam. Telegram to Jamnalal, telegram to the Kumaon Social Conference. About untouchability—Vinoba, Kowtha Suryanarayana Row, Martand Upadhyaya. Nargisbehn, Gosibehn, Shirinbehn, and Jamnabehn called. Gave the seventh statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 17, THURSDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Mira, Ganga Gidwani. A packet of *Gandhi Vichar Dohan* to Martand [Upadhyaya]. About untouchability—Chaman, Natarajan, Mathuradas Vasanji, Hansa Mehta, Satavlekar, Michael, Vasantram Shastri, Yugudur Ramachandra Rao, Avantikabehn, Narasimhacharya, Satisbabu, Jivanlal, Pyarelal, Chandrashankar. Hiralal paid a visit. Gave the eighth statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 18, FRIDAY

Takli—52 rounds. Letters—Dr. Agrawal, Needu, Rastogi, Doyle (about Manibehn, and about Jamnalal), Padmaja. About untouchability—Haribhau Phatak, Ramachandra, Gadre, Lakshman Kumthakar, Anandatirtha, Sh[ankerlal] Banker. Telegrams to Govind, Gaur Gopal, Madhusudandas, Jagannath, Doddamati (about untouchability). Met Lady Thackersey, Shankarlal, Devdas, Pyarelal, Satisbabu, Girdhari, Raja. Met the three fellow-prisoners Shankar, Purushottamdas and Bhave.

NOVEMBER 19, SATURDAY

Takli—43 rounds. Letters—Shankarrao Godse, Mahomed Ali Habib, Vaze, Zaulinger, Rameshwar Bazaj, Ramsinhasan, Sha[nkarrao] Godse, Habib, Ghanshyamdas. About untouchability—

[1] Continued from Vol. LI.

[2] This place-entry is not reproduced under subsequent dates.

Priyanath Chatterji, Srikrishna Gautam, Hakim, Jenkins, Lahiri, Salivati, Sarup Rani, Faramji Mogul, Bhanji Rathod, Anandshankar. Mathuradas, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Chunilal, Devdhar, Hansabehn, Jaishri, Karsandas Chitalia, Surajbehn, Shanta, Kastur, Kanitkar, Devdas, Kamalnayan, Girdhari, Madalasa, Janakibehn paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 20, SUNDAY

Takli—51 rounds. Letters—Bhaktibehn, Manibehn, Kantilal Desai, Vasudev Naidu. About untouchability—P. A. Vinayaka, Devnandan Sannyasi, Sitaram Nalavde, Gopalakrishnamurthi, K. Ganesan, Anant Jayawant Sona[va]ne, Shardabehn, K. Vishwanathan, Jaishukhlal Mehta.

NOVEMBER 21, MONDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Narandas (42), Chhaganlal Joshi, Rukhi, Prabhavati, Chaitanyalalji, the Andhra Kala Parishad, Pyarelal, Thornberg. About untouchability—Labhshankar Mehta, Dhirubhai Bhulabhai, Manilal, Krishnacharya Sharma, Adar Ardesher Desai, the Bharat Dharma Office. Sadasiva Rao, Macrae, Satisbabu, Haribhau, Bhave paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 22, TUESDAY

Takli—48 rounds. Letters—Zohra, Ramanujachari, Himmatlal, Harjivan, Gudel (2), Bhatnagar, Col. Doyle, Dahyabhai, Manibehn Patel, Abhoy, Bhargava, Shankarlal, Mathuradas, Ja[mnalal] Bajaj, Miss Willy. About untouchability—Principal Dhruva, Nagini, Fulchand Gurjal, Vasant Chatterji, Krishnarao, Kashinath Kelkar, Sakat Bharucha, Thomas, Kanitkar, Haribhau, Gagannarayan, Iswaran, Chaman, Medhekar, Choksi, Baban Gokhale, Avantikabai, Ratanbehn, Devdas, Dhirubhai, Ramjibhai, Padmaja. Venkatachari, a lawyer and two others, with a message from the Shankaracharya of Kumbhakonam,[1] all these came to see me. Prof. Purandare gave a handwritten copy of his speeches on untouchability.

NOVEMBER 23, WEDNESDAY

[Letters–] The Shankaracharya of Kumbhakonam, Hiralal Amritlal, Devdas, Narandasbhai, Durgaprasad, Manibehn Kara, Sir Lallubhai, J. K. Mehta, Bhatt, Hiralal Shah, Devdas,

[1] In *Mahadevbhaini Diary* (Vol. II, p. 269), Mahadev Desai refers to him as Shankaracharya of Kanchi.

Dahyabhai, Mani. Telegrams to Begum Alam, Deshmukh. A gentle reproof to the Major about Devdas. Today the interviews took place under the tree where the fast was undertaken. Mrs. Cousins, Saraladevi, Shardabehn, Vidyabehn, Nandubehn called. Urmila and Jiten paid a visit. Satisbabu, Shanti the Chinese paid a visit. I told Dr. Mehta that I would not spin on the *takli* till Wednesday.

NOVEMBER 24, THURSDAY

Takli—Nil (Stopped since yesterday). On the doctor's advice decided to give my hand a week's rest. Letters—Pyarelal, Mirabehn, Kusum, Dharshi, Haridas Majmudar, Chintamani, Taramati, Effy, Miss Upton, Gilligan, Hendriks. About untouchability—Lakshmi, Vidyagauri, Gopala Menon (with a letter from Kelappan), Sastri, Gurudev, Revashankar, Gokhale, Jayantiprasad, Manilal Vyas, Shivratan Mohota, Ghanshyamdas, Patde, Nathan, Satyananda, Manibhai Morarjee, Nargisbehn, Shirinbehn Gadodia, his wife, Urmila Devi, Satisbabu and Nalavde of Wai (along with a Harijan and a Gujarati merchant) R. and also Jedhe.

NOVEMBER 25, FRIDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters—Nawale, Haridas Majmudar, Leonard, Esther, Natarajan, Horace, Devi West, Hoyland, Raghavendra Pratap, Mrs. Elwin, Goldburg, Miss Howard, Mrs. Howard, Polak. About untouchability—West, Sister Emetta, Salivati, Narayana Menon, Chatterji, Chimanlal Narkhi, Pratapsinh Mantri, Shyamji Kuvadia, Devkaran Joshi, Haribhau. Mathuradas, Jaisukhlal (with a friend), Nanabhai, Parikshitlal, Viyogi Hari, Satisbabu, Urmila Devi called.

NOVEMBER 26, SATURDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters—Kanaiyalal Munshi, Rukmini, Manilal, Ramnik Shah, Ambaram, Baba Narasinhdas, Dr. Deshmukh, Mani, Ganpatrao Godse, Nardev Shastri, Dr. Alam. About untouchability—P. A. Vinayaka, Deorukhkar, Pyarelal, Vasantlal, Nadkarni, Abbas Tyabji, Swaminathan, Ishwarlal Modi, Setu Pandian Pillai, Ramkumar, Amiya Chakravarty, Anandswarup, Avadhesh Prasad, Kashinath Kelkar, Sunderlal Poddar, Rishiram, Habibur Rahman, Bhagat, Valji. Dr. Nawle and his group, Sathe, Editor of *Shikshakanche Kaivari* [Champions of Teachers], Kanitkar (along with four of his friends), Urmila Devi, her son, and Satisbabu paid a visit. Arranged payment of Rs. 250 to Urmila Devi for the journey.

NOVEMBER 27, SUNDAY

Takli—Nil. Letters to—Mani, Dahyabhai, Kusum, A. Krishna Menon, Vasudevan Namboodripad, Jagannath, Pyarelal. About untouchability—Anandashankar, Atmaram Bhatt, Kowtha Suryanarayana, Bapi Needu, Ramachandra, Haribhau.

NOVEMBER 28, MONDAY

Letters—Narandas (45), Mohanlal Bhatt, Bhaktibehn, a book on *brahmacharya* to Ramdas, Khemchand, Valji Desai, the Gita Press, Banker, Madhavan, Ishwardas, Veerbhadra, Chaman Kavi, Nirantar, Upasak. Satisbabu, Kodanda Rao, Haribhau, Purandare and Kodanda Rao's friend Nayanar paid a visit.

NOVEMBER 29, TUESDAY

Letters—Siva Rao, Sudarisanam, Hirji Parmar, Prabhavati, Dr. Ghia, Gunvantbehn, Bhaktibehn. About untouchability—Nila Nagini, Patwardhan, Vasantram Shastri, Jenkins, Navle, Lallubhai Karamchand, Mahadev Shastri, Srinath Bhargava, Motilal Roy, Talegaonkar, Bhole, Nargisbehn. Met Shirin, Satisbabu, Lad, Kaligudu, Jagannathkunwar [of] Kotwa, Chhaganlal Malvi, Prof. Dandekar and his friends about Harijans. Personal meeting with Jamnalal.

NOVEMBER 30, WEDNESDAY

Mail—telegram to Manilal to come, telegram to the Lakshmidas Gordhandas [about] pinjrapole; letter to the Bombay Government regarding Jamnalal. Letter to Col. Doyle (about Appasaheb), Nathubhai, Sir Harisingh, Narasimhan, Viraraghavan, J. P. Trivedi, Kaka Kalelkar, Aggrawal, Nirmalchandra Ghosh, Kulkarni, Radha, Kusum. About untouchability—Anandshankar, Gundurao, Purandare, Chitre, Bapubhai Vashi, Vasantram Shastri, J. P., Bhaishankar Dwivedi, Narayana Menon, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Madhavan Nair, Brahmachari Ramtirtha, Kshetrapal Singh, S. C. Sen, Lallubhai, Nalin, Anasuyabehn, Ramanujachari, Tejumal, Bhagwandas, Lallubhai, Miss Barr, Rajagopalachari (Chittoor), Chinniah. Interviews with—Premlila, her friend, Satisbabu, Doddamati and his secretary, and among the prisoners Chhotubhai, Khandwala, Yashwant.

DECEMBER 1, THURSDAY

Takli—Nil. (The doctor advised that it should not be resumed for a few days more). Letters—Gangadharprasad, Pashabhai, Narandas, Mira, Maganlal, Secretary of the Dayalbagh, Agra.

About untouchability—Chandrashankar, Chandrasinh Thakore, Lele, Gopala Menon, Satyanarayana Shetty, Haribhau, Vinayak, Iyer, Rajbhoj, Shamji Marwadi. Telegram to Gopala Menon. Today private visitors were Manilal, Devdas, Harjivan and Sharda. Public visitors were Bhole, Jadhav, Bhonsle, Satisbabu. Nargis and Shirinbehn brought fruit and a mattress. Received approval of the names which had been sent[1] regarding Dr. Mehta. Moreover, Chhaganlal Joshi will come here.

DECEMBER 2, FRIDAY

Letters—Benarsidas, Raihanabehn, Mohanlal Bhatt, Nanalal, C. Mehta, Reynolds, Andrews, Dorothy Newman, Rachel Price, Jayakunwar, Bechardas, Hemprabha. About untouchability—D. V. Joshi, Daftari, Narasinhachari, Tahmankar, Bachu Karim. Telegrams to Charu Bhattachari (about Dr. Roy), Nanalal, Arya (Rangoon). This morning from 8 to 10.30 Birla, Khaitan and their two friends had a meeting with me. In the afternoon, Ramjibhai, Harilalbhai and two others from Amreli, Nageswara Rao and Bapi Needu from Andhra, Kikabhai Waghela, Dudhabhai, and four other Harijans from Ahmedabad, Satkodibabu from Bengal, a gentleman from Bihar and Birla's group of the morning as also Satisbabu called.

DECEMBER 3, SATURDAY

Started fast in connection with Appasaheb's satyagraha of eating less than normal food. Major Mehta came to reply on behalf of the Government at 7.15 o'clock to the effect that if I so chose I could engage myself in scavenging work but it would not countenance my interference in the matter concerning prisoner Appa Patwardhan. A reply was sent immediately. Letters—Powalkar, Dr. Chandulal, Pyarelal, Taramati, Kanti Chandraji[?], Mahendra, Zohra. About untouchability—the Chronicle Laundry, Mamad Rajabhai, Sadhak Siddhanand, Deshmane, C. V. Vaidya, Lakhabhai Sagathia, M. S. Kannamwar, Nanasaheb, Kanitkar. Telegrams—Madhavan Nair, the Raja of Kalakankar. Kowtha Suryanarayana, Ramachandra, Lallubhai, Vaikunth, his wife, Ambalalbhai, Devdhar, Mate, Haribhau and others, *The Free Press* representative, Nargisbehn, Shirinbehn, Satisbabu, Devdas called. All these met me in the evening. In the morning the Birla party, Thakkar Bapa, Parikshitlal, Harakhchand and others paid a visit.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 432.

DECEMBER 4, SUNDAY

The second day of my fast. Letters—Narasinhrao Bholanath, Ramprasad Bakshi, Elwin. Wrote two letters to Doyle. Letter to Appa. About untouchability—Shambhushankar, Lallubhai Sa[maldas], Nawle, Kelkar (Ice Doctor). Urmila Devi, Sinhanarayan. This time the fast has affected me very much. Have become very weak. The weight went down at once by six pounds and the hands and feet became stiff. Doyle called after 11 o'clock and asked for time till Wednesday morning. I readily agreed and gave up the fast. If the decision is not satisfactory, the fast will have to be resumed. Ate oranges and *mosambis* and also took their juice, as also pomegranate juice and grapes.

DECEMBER 5, MONDAY

Letters—Manilal, Mirabehn, Narandas (23 letters). About untouchability—Gopala Menon (with letters from Ba and Urmiladevi,) Raihanabehn. Members of the Anti-untouchability League arrived, but as they numbered more than 12, there was an objection to my seeing them. The difficulty, however, was resolved. Raihana, Padmaja, representatives of *The Hindu* and *The Times* [*of India*], Lady Ramabai Pattani and Anant Pattani and Upasak.

DECEMBER 6, TUESDAY

Letters—Medh, Narandas, Ramdas, Raghavendra, Chandraprabha. About untouchability—Upasak, Atmaram Bhatt, Nanabhai, Kelappan, Valia, Nila Nagini, Gopala Menon (with letters from Ba, Bal and Vali), Ramachandra, Puttanna Chetty. Three telegrams to—[The Raja of] Kalakanker, Soniram, Kelappan. Those coming to visit me tomorrow—the Birla group, Thakkar, Kunzru, three school boys, Ramachandra, Satisbabu, Devdas.

DECEMBER 7, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Narandas, Jethalal, Vithal. About untouchability—Thirukutasundaram, Kajrolkar, Narayana Menon, Somji, Sonavane, U. Subba Rao, Hiralal Nanavati, Gopala Menon, Mevade, Shivdutt Shastri, Lady Lakshmibai, Dhurandhar Shastri came early for typing. Interview with Padma, Devdas and Sarojini. Discussion for two hours with *Shastris* from Poona, Pandharpur, Jalgaon, etc. They were 14 in all.

DECEMBER 8, THURSDAY

Letters—Mirabehn, Narandas (along with those to Liladhar and Chhaganlal Gandhi), Nanalal Shroff, Munshi. About un-

touchability to—Dhaygude, Nawle, Tummala Basavayya, Tembekar, Manibhai Desai, Devdas, Arkate, Rajbhoj, Lele. Telegram to Belgaumwala, telegram about calling Ratubhai. The *Shastris* from Pandharpur and Jalgaon who had come to Poona for the Sanatan Dharma Sabha and others (15 in all) called on me. More will come tomorrow. Haribhau came with three women from the Seva Sadan.

DECEMBER 9, FRIDAY

Letters—Andrews, Geo. Andrews. Telegram to Subramanian, telegram to Narayana Chetty (both the telegrams about untouchability). [Letter to] Narandas (Kusum, Puratan and Raghavan). About untouchability—Subramanyam, Brijkrishna, J. K. Mehta, Pandharinath Bidkar, Ambalal, P. N. Shiromany, Shivbhakta Gandhi, Lady Lakshmibai, Radhakant and the sanatanists, Oturkar, Devdas called.

DECEMBER 10, SATURDAY

Letters—Khimchand, Margaret Cousins, Dalmia, R. Chowdhari, Damoda[r] Sundardas, Pande. About untouchability—Mathura Mohan Dev, Lachchhanrai, Sathe, Kanaiyalal Misra, Narasimhachari, Tulsiram Lodhi, Amritlal Desai, Khaladkar. Telegrams—Acharya Dhruva, Amritlal Thakkar, Daftari (all about untouchability). Upasak and his friends, Natarajan (with his son and daughter), Lady Vithaldas with her sister-in law[1], Haribhau and Divekar Shastri and Davre, Sonavane—(a Mang[2] member of the municipality) with other municipal councillors and Ratubhai called.

DECEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Letters—Vasukaka, Lalwani, Thakur, Balwant Singh. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Nanasaheb, Mary Gilette, Karunakara Menon, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Ramji, Joseph, Sivachidambaram, Navinchandra, Anandatirtha, Ramunni Menon, Peacock, Patwardhan, Sukhabhau, Suman.

DECEMBER 12, MONDAY

Letters—Bhaktibehn, Begum Alam, Miss Cora Fry, Narandas (25). Telegram to Motilal Roy. [Letters to] Hamida, Prabhudas, Ramnath Suman, Kamalnayan. About untouchability—Gopala

[1] Wife of her husband's younger brother

[2] A caste traditionally engaged in carrying carcasses

Menon, Secretary, Varnashram Swaraj Sangh, Talegaonkar, the Bombay Arya Samaj, Vijay Kumar, Sukhabhau (Ba, Urmiladevi, Raja), G. Behn Ghia, Kikibehn Lalwani, Godavaribehn, Purushottamdas Harkisandas, Hari-ichchha, Nanabhai, Sathe. Today Haribhau, Mahadev Shastri and a Zamindar from Satara as also *The Times* [*of India*] correspondent and a businessman named Vrajlal along with a *Shastri* from Porbandar paid a visit. [Also] Ramachandra Rao and his co-worker.

DECEMBER 13, TUESDAY

Letters—K. Munshi, Mrs. Bruener, Prof. Wadia, Narandas (Soman, Damodardas, Santokbehn). About untouchability—Annaiya, Vaidya, Davre, Venkataramanaiya, Ramtaran Mukherji, Talegaonkar, Narasimhachari, Nadkarni, Munshilal Gupta, Chidananda Das, G. Chetty, Vinayaka Lagu, Kulkarni, Nathan, Sadashiva Rao, Nageswar Rao. From Nagpur Lakshman Shastri, Daftari came. Prof. Purandare paid a visit. Pashankar and his party, Sathe of the Sholapur Mill called. [Also] Ramachandra Rao and his co-worker.

DECEMBER 14, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Mithubehn, Narandas, Shankarlal Vyas, Mani, Kamalkumar Bannerji. About untouchability—Chandulal Desai, A. Dhruva, Vishwanath Misra, Panikkar, Nagini, Gadre, Amulya Sen Meta, Varadachari, Bhagwan Shastri, Dharurkar, Sundar Dass, Thakur, Mishra. Telegrams to A. Dhruva, Khaladkar, Motilal Roy, Naik (Kurla). The Arya Samaj deputationists from Bombay (seven persons), Haribhau, Daftari, Talegaonkar, five students from the Nizam's State, Miss Cora Fry (along with an untouchable girl) paid a visit. Telegram to Shamjibhai.

DECEMBER 15, THURSDAY

Letters—Rukhi, Mavalankar, Shakrabhai, Kunwarji Gordhandas, Dharmadev, Shivprasad, Mirabehn. About untouchability—Bhagwandas, Gopala Menon, Motilal Roy, Devraj, Shivdas Champsi, Keshavdutt Maharaj, Rajeshwar Shastri, Nanalal Ganatra, Lakshmanachari, Rangaswami, Priyanath Chatterji, Dharmanandarama. Telegrams—Raja, Birla. Dhirubhai, his wife, Raihana, Padmaja, Ambedkar's secretary Chitre, Editor of the *Janata*, five others of another organization, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Maganbhai Nayak, Agashe called on me and met Smt. Sarojini Devi in the office.

DECEMBER 16, FRIDAY

Letters—Jamnalalji, Jamnadas, Pakwasa, Munshi, Jekibehn, Chhotalalji, Janakibehn, Narandas (Prema, Vithal), Liladhar, Manmohan Gandhi, Janakibehn, the All-India Swaraj Sangh. About untouchability—Rameshwar Oza, Sukhabhau, Vishnu Datta, Mishra, Hanumanprasad, Salunke. Telegrams to Bidhan Roy, Birla, Rajagopalachari, Birla (2). Among those who met me were Talegaonkar and Joshi with seven others.

DECEMBER 17, SATURDAY

Letters—Narandas (Kusum, Radha, Parashuram, Jamnabehn, Premabehn, [Ashram] children, Santok), Pyarelal, Manilal Gandhi, C. Gandhi, Dr. Datta, Varadachari, Yogesh Chatterji, Girdharilal. About untouchability—Nanabhai, Kirchand Kothari, Ratanshi Jetha, Davre, Dharurkar, Subra[hmanyan], Acharya, Ramachandra, Vidyarthi, Raghunath Banker, Mahadevan, Pragnaneshwar Yati, Neelakantha Ayyar, Dunichand. Babasaheb Poddar, Haribhau, Bapat Shastri, Khaladkar of Dhulia and four others paid a visit.

DECEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Letters—Mohanlal Bhatt, Fulchand, Kausalya Ram. About untouchability—Nrisinhprasad Bhatt, Manilal Dwivedi, Chhotubhai Trivedi, Vishnuprasad Trivedi, Chhotelal, Pranlal Ambalal, Subra[hmanya] Aiyer, Ananta Rau, Chandrashankar, Kotwal, Natarajan[1], Devdhar[2], Miss Barr.

DECEMBER 19, MONDAY

Letters—Lakshmi, Narandas (24), Gopikrishna, Keshu (Radha, Santokbehn), Sitla Sahai (Sarojini, Padma), Zohra, Surbala (Indumati), Madhumati. About untouchability—The Secretary of Arya Samaj, Satis Das Gupta, Sohanlal, Jivraj Solanki. Telegrams—Kasturbhai, Gidwani, Jaisukhlal Mehta. Motibabu and his two followers, the *Shastris* (Shridhar Shastri, Kokje Shastri, Lakshman, Chitrav) and also Haribhau, Poddar, Prof. Purandare called. Miss Barr and a man from the Christ Seva Sangh paid a visit.

DECEMBER 20, TUESDAY

Letters—Binod Ghoshal, Narandas (Champa), Umedram, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Chintamani, Babubhai Patel, Taramati, K. Aggrawal,

[1] & [2] For Gandhiji's discussion with them, *vide* Appendix XIV.

Jamnadas, Kamala Nehru, K. Nair. About untouchability —Nirendra, Suba, Jaisukhlal Mehta, Dhruva, Damodardas, Raghu[nath] Swami, Tandon, Dhoot, Haribhau Phatak, Talegaonkar. Ba, Velanbehn, Bal called. Got permission for Jamnalalji to see me at any time and he called. Met for the first time Chhaganlal, Maganlal. Motibabu's group came to see me along with Panchanan Tarkaratna. Dr. Maitra, Miss Barr, Satavlekar, Lakshman Shastri [of] Wai, Kokje Shastri, Daftari, Dave and others paid a visit. Telegram to Gopala Menon.

DECEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Premi, Nanalal, Andrews, Narandas (Madhavlal, Radhika). About untouchability—Vakkayil Nair, Joshi, Ramabhadra Row, Prabhakar, Gopaldas, Lakshmidas Dani, Kunzru, Ramgopal Shastri, G. H. Patwardhan, David, Birla, R. V. Patwardhan, Ramanath Nayak, Kikabhai Waghela, Mangalbhai Waghjibhai, Vanmali Parekh, Altekar, Bhambhania. Miss Spiegel, two American women (who came and under a misunderstanding gave me Rs. 270), Chintamanrao Vaidya, Vasukaka Joshi, S. Banker and Moolji Sikka, Miss Gilette and the Pocha sisters, Miss Barr, Motibabu and his group (along with two women), Vrajlal Sheth and Himmatshankar Shastri, Raja of Kalakanker, Raghavendra [came to see me].

DECEMBER 22, THURSDAY

Letters—Mira, Bhaktibehn, Gopala Narayan, Pyare Ali, Vanita Galiara, Ramprasad, Rukhi. About untouchability—Kirchand, Pratapsinh, Tarachand, Dhurandhar, Viyogi Hari, Pragnaneshwar Yati, H. Kunzru, Jaisukhlal, Ramunni Menon, Venkatappayya, Gopala Menon, Sadashiva Rao, Sukhabhau, Jaisukhlal, Ramunni Menon, G. Menon. Telegram to Krishnan Nair. Swarup, Raja of Kalakankar, Raghavendra, Spiegel, Panchanan Tarkaratna and Motibabu's group, Bhagwandasji, Haribhau, the Khandesh worker—Chhotubhai, Dighe [called].

DECEMBER 23, FRIDAY

Telegrams—Madhavan Nair, Shri Krishna Iyer, Khorshedbehn. Letters—Mohanlal Bhatt, Ansari, Narandas. About untouchability—Gopala Menon, Sadasiva Rao, Madhavan Nair, the sanatanists—Dharurkar, Neelameghachari (of Sholapur), Shridhar Shastri Vare, Nanasaheb Khasgiwale, Bhausaheb Lavate, Chandram Shastri [of] Nasik, the reformist *Shastris*—Anandshankar, Vaidya, Bhagwandas, Kokje Shastri, Lakshman Shastri Joshi, Chitrav Shastri, Poddar and others [called].

DECEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Letters—Maganlal (Jeki), Chhaganlal, Valji, Mavalankar, Mathuradas, Bhagwati Devi, Narandas (Bhau, Indu), Olson, Manindranath Mitra, Alexander, Sen, Gidwani, Muriel, Mohanlal, Abbas Saheb. About untouchability—K. Waghela, Harilal Parikh, Vishwanan Giri, Nargis, Nargis (Khorshed's letter), Vasantkumar Chatterji (an insured packet for Rs. 100 to Birla). All the sanatanist and reformist *Shastris* who had come yesterday [called again].

DECEMBER 25, SUNDAY

Letters—Siva Rao, Raihana, Rustom Dhondi, Shivprasad Gupta, Lakshmidevi. About untouchability—Rane, Venkataraman, Ponnammal, Gopala Menon, Poornachandra Dey, S. N. Iyer, Bhatnagar, the Vaidik Dharmavardhini Sabha, Rajan, S. Rajagopalachari, Venkata Krishnaiya, Narasimhachari, Keshavrao, Bhole, Varadarajulu, Canon Holland, Narayana Menon, Kalyana Rama Iyer, Kulkarni, Radhakant, Mukandilal, Shyamji Marwadi, Mulchand Parekh, Vasantilal Shankarlal.

DECEMBER 26, MONDAY

Letters—Lakshmidas, Munshi, Mithubehn Petit, Benarsidas Bazaj, Narandas, Dastane, Mohanlal Bhatt, Mavalankar, A. Patel. About untouchability—Parikshitlal, Harilal Vakil, Naradev Shastri, Parashuram Khare, Veniram Tatava, P. Tripathi, C. Pandit. Sanatani and reformist *Shastris* (today Kokje and Chitrav Shastris did not turn up). Shankerlal Banker, Krishnan Nair, Moto Roberto, Manilal, Sushila paid a visit and Jamnadas Dwarkadas visited me by special permission of the Home Member.

DECEMBER 27, TUESDAY

Letters—Satisbabu, Ernest Newl, Kikibehn. About untouchability —Sahu, Shenai, Brijkrishna. Anandshankarji, *Smriti*-reform *Shastris*, Devdas, Pyarelal, Ba, Nargis, Jamnabehn, Shirinbehn, Kamalabehn, Sonawala [called].

DECEMBER 28, WEDNESDAY

Letters—Jamnadas Gandhi, Parachure Shastri, Joseph (Chettur), Joseph (Madurai). About untouchability—Shri Pathak, Vasukaka, Pramathababu, Dattaram Upasak, Gajraj Kothari, Nawle, Uzgare, Nila, Jethalal. Telegram to Shivram Vaid. Rajaji, Kelappan, Madhavan Nair, Gidwani (along with his three friends), Ba,

reformist *Shastris* called. Narayan Shastri had his meal here. Devdas left for Madras.

DECEMBER 29, THURSDAY

Letters—Narandas, Miraben, (Silas, Effi, Andrews, Hodge, Rev. Kulkarni, Pashabhai, Bhagwanji. About untouchability—Ghanshyamdas, Kanan, Nathan, Swaminathan, Ramaswami, Kalyana Rama Iyer, Bhargava, Jaisukhlal Mehta. Telegram to Kausalya. Raja, Madhavan Nair, Kelappan, Vaidya, Joshi, Vasukaka, Padmaja, Sheshu Aiyar, Brahmachari Vishnubuwa, Ba, Pyarelal and others called. [Also] the Mehta brothers, Nanalal, Ratubhai.

DECEMBER 30, FRIDAY

Letters — Dinkar, Madhavlal Patel. About untouchability —Ghanshyamdas, Raja, Madhavan, Kelappan, Dharurkar, Davde (with three others), Keshavdutt Maharaj, Bhagwandas, Indira Raman, Joshi Shastri, the Mehta brothers, Prema, Sushila, Jamnadas, Urmila Devi, Jiten [called].

DECEMBER 31, SATURDAY

Letters—Jivram Shastri, Madhavlal, Shankar, Kanti, Bhulabhai Desai, Manekbai, Jawahar, Elwin, the Khaitan children. About untouchability—Madhavji, Virsut, Bidhan Roy, Vedpran Indapurkar, Karsandas, Hanumanprasad, Joshi. Telegram to Deshbandhu Gupta. Among the visitors were Raja, Kelappan, Lakshman Shastri, Haribhau, Bhagwandas, Indira Raman, Urmila Devi, Jiten, from the Camp Ramdas and a man from Karnataka, Jhinabhai Joshi.

[List of Books][1]

Durant [*The Case for India*][2]; Crozier [*A Word to Gandhi*][3]; Brailsford [*Rebel India*][4]; [Mahomedali][5] Al Haj Salmin's *Imam Hussain* and *Khalifa Ally* ; [Sir Samuel] Hoare's *Fourth Seal*; Ramsay MacDonald's travelogue; *The Survey of Matar Taluka*[6]; Rama-

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand on the last pages of the exercise book in which the Diary was written.

[2],[3]&[4] From "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932; *vide* Vol. XLIX, pp. 76-7.

[5] From "Diary, 1932"; *vide* Vol. XLIX, p. 506.

[6] By J. C. Kumarappa

nathan's Speech on Khadi; [Will][1] Hayes's *Indian Bibles*[2]; Ruskin's *St. George's Guild*; Shah's[3] *Federal Finance*; [Rothenstein's][4] *Ruin of Egypt*; [Hayes's][5] *The Book of the Cow*; [A. E.'s][6] *Candle of the Vision*; Kinley's *Money*; *Shankh ane Kodi* (Gujarati); [Andrews's][7] biography of Munshi Zaka Ullah; *The Golden Book of Tagore*; *Saket*[8]; Shah's *Sixty Years of Indian Finance*[9]; *Panchavati*[10]; Salvemini's *Mussolini*; Delisle Burnes's *Democracy*; Upton Sinclair's *The Wet Parade*; [Edward Carpenter's][11] *Adam's Peak to Elephanta*; Maithilisharan's *Anagh*; Stokes's *Satyakama*; Ruskin's *Fors* [*Clavigera*][12]; Letters of Narasinhbhai[13]; *Samarpana*, *Buddha* and *Mahavir*[14]; Second and Third Urdu Reader; Imam Saheb's and Nanabhai's[15] biographies of the Prophet; Heath's Astronomy; Rolland's *Ramakrishna*; Mander's *Astronomy* [*without a Telescope*]; [Rolland's][16] *Vivekananda*; Keay's *Hindu Astronomy*; Kirtikar's *Studies in Vedanta*; Sir Jeans's Astronomy; Lady Ramanathan's *Ramayana*; Ghanshyamdas's pamphlets: *Vaidik Vinaya*; Fourth Urdu Reader of the Lahore Anjuman; K. T. Shah's *Indian Currency* [and] *Exchange Banking*; Jamia's Urdu plays, *Shareef Ladka* and *Kheti*; *Kimiyagar*; Veda number [of *Ganga*]; [Premchandji's][17] *Ramacharcha*; Kharas's Astronomy; *Swadhyaya Samhita*; Iyer's *Foreign Exchange*; *The Way of the Cross*; *The Prophet's Message to the West*; *Sirat-un-Nabi*[18]; Locaire's Astronomy; Nadkarni's pamphlet; *Vedman Adhyatma*; Reports of Herschel and other committees; Maeterlink's *Magic of Stars*; Andrews's *What I Owe to Christ*; Jeans's *Mysterious Universe*; *Gandhi Vichardohan*; Prof. Wadia's *Southern Cross*; Thadani's Poems; Madan's [book on] fasting.[19]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

[1], [4], [5], [6]&[7] From "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 3/8-2-1932; *vide* Vol. XLIX, p. 77.

[2] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", Vol. XLIX, p. 77, has "*Essence of Hinduism*".

[3] Khushal T. Shah

[8] & [10] By Maithilisharan Gupta

[9] "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", Vol. XLIX, p. 77, has "*Sixty Years of Economic Administration of India*".

[11], [12] & [16] From "Diary, 1932"; *vide* Vol. XLIX, pp. 516, 517 and 527.

[13] Narasinhbhai Ishwarbhai Patel

[14] By Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

[15] Nrisinhprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[17] & [18] From "Diary, 1932"; *vide* Vol. L, pp. 458 and 460.

[19] From "Diary, 1932"; *vide* Vol. LI, p. 448.

432. LETTER TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

January 1, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 26th ultimo. Your letter has come upon me with painful surprise. In a matter that is purely religious to me, as it must be to you, I should expect the uttermost frankness and goodwill on either side. I miss the latter in your letter under reference. Have you ever turned out an untouchable on the Krithigai Ekadasi day? Surely, if hundreds, if not thousands, of untouchables, both men and women, enter the temple every Ekadasi, as can be proved they do, it cannot be difficult to detect some of them. The evidence in my possession goes to show that crowds of untouchables make use of the privilege every year on that holy day. You refer me to the judgment of the Madras High Court. That judgment, if I understand it rightly, shows clearly that untouchables enter the temple on the Ekadasi day, not stealthily but openly and as a matter of right.

Here is what I read in the judgment before me:

> The Guruvayur Temple is not a private temple, but a public temple and every Hindu has a right to worship in it, subject to such customary rules and regulations which have been prevailing from time immemorial. The high castes are allowed actual right of entry into the temple throughout the year. In that purpose they have a right of way over the roads leading to the temple and around the temple. The lower castes are allowed the right of entry only on Ekadasi Festival day, and on that day they have got the right of using the roads. On the other days they have neither of these rights. This was the situation from time immemorial.

[1] This read: "You ask whether the temple is open to all Hindus including untouchables for three days every year. In reply, I have to say that the information is not correct. The untouchables have no right to enter the temple on any day. But, as a large crowd admittedly enter the temple on the Krithigai Ekadasi day and as this crowd might possibly include untouchables and as in any case, it is difficult to ascertain the different castes to which the members of the crowd belong, a purificatory ceremony is performed on the next day (Dwadasi). Apart from this, the alleged entry of untouchables on the Ekadasi day is not a fact. They do not enter the temple at all. For more definite particulars I would refer you to the judgment of Mr. Justice Ramesam Pantulu of the Madras High Court, pronounced in the middle of June last, of which I presume you have a copy."

I read then from the same judgment:

> The lower-caste Hindus are after all Hindus and it may be with this consideration in view that for one day in the year the temple is thrown open to them with the ostensible excuse that on such a day it would be impossible to check the crowds, the inner object being to allow all castes' entry on that day. This was the view of Ramanuja, the famous Vaishnava reformer. According to him, all Vaishnava temples ought to be thrown open to all castes one day in the year.

Unless I am very much mistaken, these two paragraphs seem to be conclusive evidence that for that particular Ekadasi day untouchables are allowed to enter the temple without let or hindrance.

As this matter is of great public importance, I am sending the correspondence to the Press.

Yours sincerely,

RAJA MANAVEDAN RAJA
ZAMORIN OF CALICUT
KOTTAKKAL

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXII

433. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

January 1, 1933

DEAR MR. CHINTAMANI,

I thank you for your letter. The matter of the fast is not for me wholly one of reason, because you will have no hesitation in believing me when I tell you that all such fasts have been prompted by an unseen power. I deliberately use the expression "unseen power", because I do not exclude the possibility of that power being evil. But these fasts have appealed to my reason as they have to that of many utterly detached friends. The silent and invisible effects of all spiritual acts are far deeper and far more pervasive than their felt and visible effects. If therefore these fasts have amounted to moral coercion in some cases, they have imperceptibly undoubtedly moved to action a thousand times more than those who have acted under moral coercion, which therefore may be regarded as a negligible quantity. That such is the result of spiritual acts is not a matter of conjecture, but provable under given conditions like any other tangible result. So much for the moral coercion.

CWMG-III

As to the permissibility of fasts, I quite agree with you that the motive is irrelevant if the act itself is prohibited. In the first instance, a conditional fast is not a suicide, but if we accept the authority of the Hindu Shastras, then there is ample warrant not only for conditional fasts, but even unconditional, under some extraordinary circumstances. I have only recently found myself in possession of a pamphlet issued by Madras Advocates in which are collected instances of fasts like mine in the Shastras. If you would care to explore the subject, I would gladly send you my copy.

My regards to you and Mr. Krishnaram.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
17 HAMILTON ROAD, ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 19129

434. LETTER TO P. SUBBAROYAN

January 1, 1933

DEAR DR. SUBBAROYAN,

I thank you for your letter of the 28th ultimo. All these days I have kept myself in touch with you through Sjt. Rajagopalachari. He sent me a copy of the full text of your Bill. I went through it at the time not critically. I found then that it answered the purpose. I shall apply my mind to it critically after you receive the Viceregal sanction, which, I hope, will be forthcoming without undue delay. You will see that I had anticipated your letter by announcing indefinite postponement of the fast.

With my regards to you and Mrs. Subbaroyan.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. SUBBAROYAN
TIRUCHENGODU, SALEM DISTRICT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19133

435. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 1, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter of 27th ultimo. I had seen the Bill. It is not permissive in the sense you have evidently imagined. It is permissive in the sense that the Bill does not declare all temples automatically open. But individual temples can be opened by the vote of the majority of the temple-goers, not at the will of the Trustees.

I hope that your confidence about the assent will be justified by the event. Rajaji was here for three days, and we had long discussions about the Bill and the situation in Guruvayur in general.

I hope the formalities about the publication of the Weekly[1] have been completed.

BAPU

C.W. 7915. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, p. 86

436. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 1, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. The copy of the statement[2] was sent to you as soon as its last page was typed. Copies had been given to the Press reporters before then. The statement came into your hands the day before yesterday, and it appeared in the papers yesterday. The only news which came out a day earlier was that the fast had been postponed; and the statement was sent to you the moment it was ready. There was, thus, no delay. I shall send you the Gujarati translation when it is ready.

As for the letters, they are being despatched as soon as each is ready. There was no need to make another copy of the statement. I shall be able to supply a copy to anyone who may want it.

[1] *Harijan*

[2] On untouchability; *vide* pp. 304-8.

I believe that Raja, as also Ba and Shankerlal, left today for Bombay. Rajaji will leave for Madras by the night train today.

Manilal and Sushila did try to see you, but without success. They left on Wednesday.

We shall meet tomorrow at 10 o'clock. As I would then be observing silence, you may tell me what you have to say. We shall be able to discuss for an hour or an hour and a quarter. I will note down the points which require a reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2909

437. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

January 1, 1933

CHI. VINOBA,

Your love and faith bring me tears of joy. I may or may not deserve them, but they will bring their reward to you. You will be the instrument of some great service to the people. You did quite right in going to stay in Nalwadi.

For the future, I have to make only this suggestion just now: take care of your health and do not be rigid about excluding milk from your diet. Your *swadharma* at present is to work for removal of untouchability. Find time to read what I write from time to time. It is not much. Write to me regularly. It will be enough if you write once a week.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 392

438. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 1, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

You have made good progress with the Chharas. If you keep up your efforts, the result is bound to be good. I trust you did much work in Kashi.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 242. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

CWMG LII

439. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

January 1, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

You wrote after a long interval. Don't be lazy like this. If you work hard, you will surely become thin.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9529. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

440. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. KESHAV (JUNIOR),

I got your letter. You should regard all children as your brothers and *help them as much as you can*. There is only one friend, God. He never forsakes us and He fulfils all our aspirations. Why, then, do we need any other friend?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3285

441. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

January 1, 1933

CHI. CHAMPA[1],

Your name is included as one of the Trustees. The other names are from among those which you had suggested. Narandas's name is not included. Bhai Nanalal[2] will be meeting you and he will give you the details. I, therefore, don't write more here.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8756

[1] Wife of Ratilal, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son

[2] Nanalal K. Jasani, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's business manager and partner

442. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

January 1, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. In spite of more persons helping me as secretaries, the pressure of work remains heavy. Ba, Devdas, Pyarelal, Bal and Rajaji came and saw me. Premabehn, Jamnadas and Indu also came. Jamnadas has been very much reduced. He was ill. Isn't there a women's library? If there is one, why don't you become a member? Or is it that you have no love for reading or you get no time for it? I don't write separately to Benarsi this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9150

443. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I was glad that Sushila and you came and saw me. Today I need not write a long letter to you. I shall wait for your letter describing your impressions.

Give me news about Dhurandhar's health. Ask him to write to me.

You should find out the cause of your back-ache. Do see Haribhai in any case. You need not regret the removal of the tonsils, and don't harm your throat by speaking too much. You must cure your habit of speaking very loudly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10318

CWMG - LII

444. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

January 1, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

Your handwriting is improving. You should write the lines straight. I am very glad that you are learning to make bread.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2771. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

445. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 1, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

You are doing very good work. Keep it up. Once you learn farming you will find it more interesting than any other work. And when one gets familiar with plants, one feels they are part of one's family.

And service of Harijans itself is dharma.

Concentrate on whatever work you are doing.

BAPU

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

446. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 1, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get all your letters.

The drum announcing another fast of mine has stopped beating now. Let Shri Krishna start it again when He wills.

The burden of work on you at present must be quite heavy. Who visits the Chharas these days? Do you have some peace from that quarter now? I see nothing to object to in Bhai Mavalankar's letter. You or I need not write anything just now.

Ramji wants some arrangement for more light in his house, and also a hedge round it. See what can be done.

CWMG - III

The problem of Tilakam is a little difficult. He is still restless. He will go forward if somebody takes him under his charge.

Indu came and saw me. He cannot live anywhere outside the Ashram. Just now he will go to Cutch. Take him back when he returns. If such is his and our fate, we must submit to it.

I have just heard that Kishorelal cured his asthma by eating every night ten to fifteen roasted fenugreek seeds. Jamna should try this.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 27 letters, all tied together.

[From Gujarati]

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

447. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 1, 1933

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

I was glad to get your letter. You did well to start taking milk. The Harijan work is proceeding nicely. Have no worry. Where is Balvir?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHAND TYAGI
PRISONER, JAIL, SAHARANPUR, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3260

CWMG - LII

448. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

January 1, 1933

BHAI SOHANLAL,

I have your two letters. There is no need to send me *Ramanujacharit*. I am somewhat familiar with the life of the Acharya.

I am unable to offer any advice about the marriage. You can do whatever seems proper.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI SOHANLAL SHARMA
HINDU MAHASABHA
PUSHKAR, NEAR AJMER
RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2829

449. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 1, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. Sun-bathing should do you good. It would be excellent if you took some rest too. All our actions must be performed with detachment.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1694

450. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 1, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You should not move about when you have fever. You should take complete rest. You would do well to restrict yourself to milk and fruit only. You do not require anything more. Give up the idea of settling in the village. Stay in the Ashram and render what service you can.[1] It does not matter if you fall sick. Leave somethings at least to God. You did well in sending the [Ashram] regulations to Dr. Sharma. I shall write to him if he is willing to abide by them. Why do you grieve over the inability to join the prayers these days? Sick persons are always exempted. Remember God whenever you wake up. Forgo the temptation of working overmuch. Your thanksgiving to God consists in doing whatever little you can. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 269

451. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

January 1, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

Nobody need take any food which does not suit him.

It does not matter if you have taken up study of English. If you have in your hand the key of grammar, you can learn it well by yourself.

Don't be lazy about writing to me.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9967. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] The addressee was considering settling in the village Vadaj so as to avoid being a burden on the Ashram.

452. TELEGRAM TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 2, 1933

DOCTOR MOHAMMAD ALAM
57 LANSDOWNE ROAD
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. THANK GOD YOU ESCAPED OPERATION AND CAN EVEN MOTOR.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 20

453. LETTER TO MADHUSUDANAN THANGAL

January 2, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter enclosing Resolution passed by the Conference of Namboodiri Brahmins of Kerala of which you were the President.

You already know that the fast has been indefinitely postponed. I however hope that the Namboodiri Brahmins, both men and women, will put forth redoubled efforts to secure for the Harijans not merely the right of entry into temples, but all the other rights to which all the other Hindus are entitled.

Yours sincerely,

SREEMAN MADHUSUDANAN THANGAL, M.L.C.
PRESIDENT, 25TH NAMBOODIRI YOGAKSHEMAM CONFERENCE
KARLAMANNA (S. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19139

CWMG - LII

454. LETTER TO A. KALESWAR RAO

January 2, 1933

MY DEAR KALESWAR RAO,

I was delighted to receive your letter and to have the greeting and prayers from fellow-prisoners.

I have seen your contribution to the Press. Of course there is no lack of precedent for introduction of Bills of a religious character.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. KALESWAR RAO
PLEADER, BEZWADA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19137

455. LETTER TO G. S. B. SARASWATI

January 2, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. As I have no personal knowledge of your work, my recommendation to the Servants of Untouchables Society can carry no greater weight than your own. I would, therefore, advise you to approach the Society directly. Its headquarters are Delhi.

Yours sincerely,

SREE SWAMY G. S. B. SARASWATI
INDUKURPET, NELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19138

CWMG - LII

456. LETTER TO GOVIND RAGHAV

January 2, 1933

I have your loving note.[1] What a great thought! "He is not heavy, he is my brother." The heaviest things become light as feather when love bears them.

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

457. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 2, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. How did Radha and Kusum get fever again? If you have been able to discover the cause, let me know.

Your account of Mahavir's doings makes one feel sad about him. Speak to him plainly. There is no reason why the Ashram should bear the expenses of the person whom he has brought with him. And write without fail to everybody from whom he has borrowed money and find out the facts. Do so after informing him. Read the letter which I am writing to him. Brijkrishna, at any rate, should not have given him a single pie. If he is there, ask him why he gave anything. If he is not there, write to him. If you do not know the addresses of all the persons whose names are given to you by Mahavir, write to Sitaramji and get them. I hope you know his address. If you do not know it, write to him C/o Khadi Bhandar. The Bhandar is on Harrison Road.

BAPU

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

[1] The addressee had written to Gandhiji about the story of a bishop who met a little girl of about six or seven carrying over her shoulder a boy, about two years old. The bishop remarked that the boy was too heavy for her to which she replied: "No. He is not heavy, he is my brother."

458. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

January 2, 1933

CHI. NIRMALA,

I did not get from you as many letters as Sushila spoke of. I was wondering why there were no letters from you. Write the following letter to Kishorelal[1]:

"I am able to take up today, the Silence Day (January 2), your letter of December 6, which I had kept aside for replying. For the present the fast has been postponed, as it seems that the law stands in the way of the temple being thrown open to Harijans and has to be amended. Necessary steps are being taken for that purpose. However, all your arguments are correct. Those who are directly taking part in the movement for temple-entry should be people who are entitled to visit the temple concerned. The votes of only such people were taken, and the result was excellent. Nobody can enter a private temple without the proprietor's permission. It is acknowledged on all hands that the Guruvayur Temple is a public temple. In this matter, I am scrupulously following dharma according to my lights. The issue raised by Appa's demand was clear and that is why the problem was solved so soon. It might be regarded improper if I write more on this point. You will learn everything in future.

"I can see Jamnalalji from time to time. He is better. His weight has been increasing and the ear is all right.

"Ranchhodbhai told me that your asthma was cured by the use of fenugreek seeds. If the report is correct, the remedy was quite cheap. I find no time at present to read the remaining chapters of your book about the *Gita* and the other things, as Harijan [work] takes up all my time. You probably know that Chhaganlal Joshi is with me. Vinoba has gone to live in an *Antyaja* hamlet near Wardha. Kaka is coming in a day or two to see me. He seems to be keen to take up Harijan work. I neither encourage nor dissuade anybody. Manilal and Sushila seemed a little reluctant to return to South Africa, but I felt that it was their duty to resume their work there, and so they have left. There is no change in the condition of my elbow.

[1] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

I have started the massage methodically from today. There is no reason at all for worrying."

Write to Gomati[1] as follows:

"You must be hearing everything about me. There is no reason for any anxiety for the present as the fast has been postponed. Even otherwise, there was none. Tell the other women there to write to me when they can. I should get all news. Jamnalalji is quite well. I see him frequently. Chhaganlal Joshi is with me. I don't read anything at present. The Harijan [work] takes up all my time. Even spinning has been stopped because of the elbow, but you need not worry on that account."

Blessings to all from
BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN
C/O BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA BUILDING, SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1006. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

459. INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[2]

January 2, 1933

That in a spirit of compromise he had made a suggestion in order to reconcile opposition to temple-entry by Harijans at Guruvayur, was revealed by Mr. Gandhi to the Associated Press this afternoon in the course of an interview.

Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the statement[3] made by him on Pundit Panchanan Tarkaratna's visit to him in which he was reported to have made a definite suggestion to the Pundit which ought to satisfy the most exacting sanatanists. When invited to throw light on the suggestion, Gandhiji said:[4]

The suggestion I made was this: During certain hours of the day, the temple should be thrown open to Harijans and to other Hindus, who have no objection to the presence of Harijans, and during certain other hours it should be reserved for those who have

[1] Wife of Kishorelal

[2] Gandhiji was reclining on a cot in the shade of the famous mango tree. A few *Shastris* were sitting around him discussing and arguing.

[3] *Vide* p. 308.

[4] This paragraph is from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 4-1-1933.

scruples against the entry of Harijans. There should be no difficulty, whatsoever, in accepting this suggestion, seeing that in connection with the Krithikai Ekadasi festival at Guruvayur, Harijans are allowed to enter side by side with other Hindus and then the idol of the temple undergoes purification.

Asked if his suggestion was that the temple might undergo purification daily after the entry of the Harijans, Mr. Gandhi replied:

Personally, I am opposed to purification at all. But if that would satisfy the conscience of objectors, I would personally raise no objection to purification. If purification has any value, then there are so many possibilities of daily defilement from a variety of causes referred to in the various texts, that there should be a daily purification, whether Harijans are allowed to enter or not.

Asked if the compromise suggested by him did not still maintain a distinction between Harijans and high-castes, Mr. Gandhi replied that the Harijans' attitude should be this:

If there is a person who objects to my presence, I would like to respect his objection, so long as he (the objector) does not deprive me of the right that belongs to me. So long as I am permitted to have a legitimate share of the day for offering worship side by side with those who have no objection to my presence, I would be satisfied.

Mr. Gandhi proceeded to say that in a place where the majority of people favoured temple-entry by Harijans, then the number of caste Hindus who would want the temple exclusively for them during certain hours, would be so small as to be negligible.

Proceeding to another aspect of the temple-entry agitation, Mr. Gandhi emphatically discouraged direct action by non-Hindus for procuring entry for Harijans. He declared:

This is a deeply religious movement, and it will be thousand pities if out of misplaced sympathy or other motives non-Hindus were to interfere by way of direct action.

What prompted Mr. Gandhi to make this observation, was a letter received by him from Colombo, in which the correspondent stated that, with reference to the local temple-entry campaign, what had been misnamed satyagraha was offered by non-Hindus, consisting of a Buddhist, a Roman Catholic lady, a Christian and a few Muslims. They were prosecuted by the law at the instance of the temple trustees and convicted. The correspondent asked Mr. Gandhi whether interference by non-Hindus in order to secure temple-entry for Harijans could be justified. Mahatmaji declared:

I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying that this could not be justified under any circumstances. It would be a most dangerous interference if non-Hindus were to express their sympathy by way of direct action. Indeed, I go so far as to say that direct action can be offered [only] by those caste Hindus who are entitled to enter the temple in regard to which such action is taken, and who being entitled, believe in temple-entry.

Asked what he had to say about Viceregal sanction for Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, Mr. Gandhi said that he hoped that the Viceroy would give permission as early as possible.

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

460. INTERVIEW ON SUBBAROYAN'S BILL

January 2, 1933

Asked for his views on sanatanists' agitation based on the Queen's Proclamation, Gandhiji observed:

I do not know what meaning is attached to the word 'neutrality' by those who are seeking to oppose Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. I can say, with perfect confidence, that Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill is intended to undo the wrong done by the British courts' decision. I do not suggest that the wrong was done intentionally. It should again be remembered that Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill seeks to amend the Madras Religious Endowments Act which is itself of a religious character, another breach of neutrality according to the sanatanists' interpretation. Again if one were to examine the contents of the Bill, dispassionately, it will be found that it seeks to impose nothing on the Hindus, but it merely seeks to register the will of the Hindu public in connection with temples in which that public are interested—not of the whole of the Hindu public but only of those who are entitled to have a say in connection with a particular temple. I can see in this measure no interference whatsoever, with anybody's religion. The Bill seeks to protect both the opponents and advocates of temple-entry.

Gandhiji wanted the actual text of Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Aiyar's Guruvayur speech to deal with it.

When I drew his attention to the fact that I was prohibited by the jail warders from bringing into the jail a copy of the newspaper containing the speech, Gandhiji said that he would talk to the Superintendent and see that the Pressmen were allowed to bring in their reference papers in the future.

Asked whether he would abandon the fast if the Viceroy gave his sanction to Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, Gandhiji said that he would further postpone the fast till the next stage was reached. The Bill must be enacted and the Government's final assent given for it to become law. A referendum in which the Zamorin also would have to participate, would follow. The possibility of a fast would continue till the temple was thrown open, but at every step stated above, the possibility would be reduced. The fast would be finally abandoned only when the temple was thrown open.

Questioned what would be his attitude if the Viceroy refused his sanction to the Bill, Mahatma remarked:

Ah, if the Viceroy refused sanction, I would consider the position. Then, the fast is bound to come, but I should wait till the Government state their attitude. I do not want to go into the question at the present moment.

Referring to the proposal of a section of South Indians for building new temples where reformers and Harijans could go for common worship, leaving the old temples to the orthodox, Gandhiji said:

The question does not arise, until I am satisfied that those who are entitled to worship are in favour of that proposal. The orthodox view is that the sanctity of a temple would decrease if Harijans are admitted. People who are in favour of temple-entry are of the opinion that the sanctity of a temple will increase if all the Hindus are allowed inside the temple. Increase or decrease in sanctity is only a mental process. If the majority of the temple-goers are in favour of such a proposal, I shall give it consideration. But I am sure that the suggestion will not be acceptable to any of the reformers.

The Hindu, 3-1-1933

CWMG - LII

461. TELEGRAM TO DAMARAJU LAKSHMAMMA[1]

[On or before *January 3, 1933*][2]

Srimathi Lakshmamma received a wire from Mahatma Gandhi requesting her not to commence fasting and stating that he was writing in detail.

The Hindu, 4-1-1933

462. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS

January 3, 1933

I have had the privilege, as the public knows, of having a friendly discussion with Bhagwan Shastri Dharurkar of Pandharpur and others who accompanied him. These gentlemen came, as they made it clear to me, in their personal capacity, and not as representatives of any association. They came with a view to understanding my position regarding untouchability in general and the movement for temple-entry by Harijans in particular. No doubt they had also the intention of helping me to understand and even adopt the *sanatani* viewpoint, for which they were speaking.

I had a long discussion with them. In order to leave no stone unturned in my attempt to understand the viewpoint of *sanatani* pundits and in accordance with the arrangement made with Bhagwan Shastri Dharurkar, I had invited some friends, learned in the Shastras and who, I knew, generally supported my position, so that I may have both the schools of thought playing upon my mind.

I can say that I listened to their arguments and discourses with the greatest patience and with respectful attention. I was unable to find any error in the position which I have held for a

[1] The telegram was in reply to a communication from Shrimati Lakshmamma, Congress worker and member, District Board, Ellore, informing Gandhiji of her determination to commence fasting from the 2nd instant, in respect of the local Sri Janardhana Swami Temple in case Mahatma Gandhi would fast in connection with the temple-entry problem at Guruvayur, and requesting Gandhiji's permission to do so.

[2] The telegram was reported under the date-line: "Ellore, January 3".

period now nearing half-a-century. I know that time never runs in favour of an error, and as I regard myself as a humble seeker after truth and prone to error like any other mortal, I have always held myself ready to confess errors as soon as the conviction went home; but these discussions have left me more convinced than ever that untouchability, as it is practised today in Hinduism, has no warrant in the Hindu Shastras. Many have done me and themselves great injustice by not giving their full value to the expression "as it is understood and practised today". But rather than just state the effect produced on my mind by these prolonged discussions, I have secured from the pundits or *Shastris* who gave me general support, their interpretation of the Shastras about untouchability, and I have pleasure in giving below an authorized translation of the statement which is in Hindi. Acharya Anandshankar Dhruva and Dr. Bhagwandas are responsible for this translation.

The statement runs as follows:

> Three kinds of untouchables are mentioned in the Hindu Dharmashastras: (1) Persons classed as untouchables by birth, i.e., progeny of the union of a Shudra with a Brahmin woman. (2) Persons guilty of any of the five heinous sins or of certain practices condemned in Hinduism. (3) Persons whilst they are in a polluted state.
>
> There is nothing to show that any of the communities now classed as untouchables come under the first category. Therefore, the rules governing untouchability and ex-communication under the first head are inapplicable to them. Assuming that any of these communities can be brought under the first head, they can be free from their untouchability and have all the privileges enjoyed in common by the four varnas by clean living, initiation into the Shaiva or Vaishnava worship, and the like.
>
> The second kind of untouchability obviously cannot attach exclusively to any class or community as a whole. It may apply to individuals in any and every community. The untouchability of the untouchables so-called, is not due to their fallen state under the second head, nor can they be shown to be descendants of such fallen parents. Persons guilty of heinous sins, referred to under the second head, become fully purified by the performance of appropriate purificatory ceremonies. The progeny of such fallen persons as have not become thus purified cannot be classed as untouchables. Some *Smritikaras* who regard such progeny as untouchables, prescribe a very slight purificatory ceremonial for their restoration; and persons who are guilty of practices rendering them untouchable can also be free from untouchability by giving up such practices.
>
> The third kind of untouchability, due to one's being in a polluted state, obtains among all classes whether regarded as untouchables or not.

There is no warrant in the Shastras for considering tanners, Bhangis and others as permanent untouchables, merely by reason of their occupation. Their untouchability is due to the external uncleanness caused by the nature of their work. All untouchability under the third head is cured by a bath and a change of clean clothes at the due time.

Thus, it is necessary that the rights common to four varnas, e.g., of entry into temples, educational institutions, of use of public wells, ghats, tanks, rivers, etc., should equally accrue to the untouchables so called, and that it is wrong to deprive them of such common rights. This is probable from the texts, the fundamental principles and the spirit of the Dharmashastras.

Swami Kevalanand
Narayan Shastri Marathe
Laxman Shastri Joshi
Bhagwandas
Anandshankar Dhruva
Indiraraman Sastri
Keshav Laxman Daftari
P. H. Purandare

I do not need to introduce the signatories to the public, but I can say that they claim to represent sanatan dharma no less than those who call themselves sanatanists. Apart from these, I have received valuable opinions in general support from Mahamahopadhyaya Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Pundit Shreedhar Shastri Pathak, Krishna Thanasukh Misra and last but not least Sjt. C. V. Vaidya. All these I hope to share with the public as early as it is possible to have them printed simultaneously with this. I am issuing to the Press the original Hindi and authorized translations in Marathi and Gujarati, and I hope that the respective journals would only print the authorized text.

The opinion of these learned men, popularly construed, means that no class of persons today bears the brand of permanent untouchability. It is obvious that untouchability by birth cannot exist today in connection with a class. In connection with individuals, it is practically impossible of detection. There are undoubtedly men who must be guilty of the five heinous sins, but all castes are capable of committing those sins, and society today takes no notice of them. The condemned practice under the second head refers to eating of carrion or beef. There are undoubtedly some people among those classed as untouchables who are given to this practice, but they are bound to give it up as soon as caste Hindus make the real advance. At the present moment the very incentive to give up beef or carrion is lacking. The

temporary pollution under the third head carries no condemnation with it. It is a pollution which is inevitable for all in a certain state, and the pollution ceases immediately the state ceases.

If the signatories have correctly interpreted the Shastras, then we have been all these many years doing a grave injustice to Bhangis, tanners and others by classing them as permanent untouchables, although we recognize that their profession is as honourable as any and much more indispensable for the very existence of society than many others which do not carry the mark of untouchability with them.

M. K. GANDHI[1]

The Hindu, 4-1-1933

463. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR MARY,

I must dictate this letter. You will be entitled to treat us as hosts or hostesses when we agree to look upon you as a guest. But I must flatly decline to give you that treatment.

The experience you have related is not uncommon; hence we have the proverb that it takes two to make a quarrel. I think that your interference was quite timely and proper.

Love from us.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 5987. Also C.W. 3344. Courtesy: Miss F. Mary Barr

464. LETTER TO K. NAGESWAR RAO

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR NAGESWAR RAO,

I enclose a telegram received by me. If you know Sjt. Kasi Krishnamacharya, I would not adopt the suggestion of the sender of the telegram and drag him all the way to Poona, but if you will give his opinion on the same question put by me I should value it, and if you get the opinion please tell me also briefly who Kasi Krishnamacharya is.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19146

[1] From *The Hindustan Times*, 4-1-1933

CWMG LII

465. LETTER TO NAGARDAS K. BHAMBANIA[1]

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. To me the whole of your argument tends[2] to show that those who have the ideas of physical purity that you have should treat themselves as untouchables rather than treat any single human being as such, and this is the well-known practice followed among the Vaishnavas. Those who follow it do not call themselves untouchables, but they are called '*marjadees*'[3]. You know the meaning of the word.

And why so much stress upon external purity when the scriptures lay stress on inward purity? No doubt external purity is necessary as a help to the attainment of the inner, but that can be ensured by everyone for himself.

There is no question whatsoever of forcing sanatanists to do anything against their conviction. Private temples remain untouched by the movement. It is open to the owners to do what they liked with them. Public temples are the property of the public that is entitled to the use of these temples. Is there any force if the majority of visitors to a particular temple decide to open that temple to Harijans? The whole movement is to quicken Hindu conscience and then leave it to act according to its dictates. Can you see any flaw in this? I would like you to study the movement and its implications.

Lastly, I must tell you that I have not found a single authority in support of untouchability as it is practised today, if you will dispassionately study the question and give its full meaning to the words underlined.

NAGARDAS K. BHAMBANIA
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19141

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 22, 1932 (S.N. 18785).

[2] The source has "leads".

[3] *Maryadis*, those who observe *maryada*, i.e., strict rules in regard to pollution

466. LETTER TO T. A. V. NATHAN

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I have not however got a copy of *Justice* referred to in your letter. If you will send me the cutting, it will reach me in safety and I shall then be able to deal with it.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19142

467. LETTER TO M. BALAKRISHNA TIVARI

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Almost every intelligent Hindu knows that among our saints there are quite a number of Harijans, but we are such a curious mixture we have no scruple in condemning whole communities though we may worship individuals belonging to them. I have, therefore, refrained from laying stress upon the facts you have kindly mentioned.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. BALAKRISHNA TIVARI
RETD. MUNICIPAL ENGINEER, BANGALORE CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19143

CWMG - LII

468. LETTER TO RAMANANDA SANNYASI

January 3, 1933

DEAR RAMANANDAJI[1],

I have your letter. It is not possible for me to do much from here, but I am forwarding your letter to Ghanshyamdasji.

Yours sincerely,

RAMANANDA SANNYASI
NEW CENTRAL JAIL, MULTAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 19147

469. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

Here is a letter from Ramananda Sannyasi which speaks for itself. You will see if there is anything to do in this connection.

I enclose also a letter from Ganeshilal Mistry for your information and guidance. This is a letter which requires investigation. It is impossible for you to cope with all complaints personally, but there should be someone who would take the pains to see such writers when they are local people, and in every case find out what truth there is in their complaints and then give the writers whatever satisfaction is possible.

To save you the trouble, if you will put me on to someone to whom I should write directly I would do so, and then he will bring to your notice whatever is necessary.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

C.W. 7916. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 19169

[1] An Arya Samajist from Delhi who was in jail. He seems to have asked for financial help for his institution; *vide* the following item.

470. LETTER TO DHARMA VIR VEDALANKAR

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR DHARMA VIR,

I was glad to receive your letter and cuttings giving a description of the various activities that took place on the Shraddhanand Day.[1]

Yours sincerely,

PT. DHARMA VIR VEDALANKAR
SHRADDHANAND BAZAR, DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19148

471. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA,

I have your letter. I hope you got my letter[2] in Calicut. In it I enquired about your daughter and your wife. How are they both doing? I hope you are completely restored. Do come whenever you like, as long as it is untouchability you want to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19153

472. LETTER TO D. NARAYANA RAJU

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR NARAYANA RAJU,

I have your letter. I am quite sure that Lakshmamma should not fast in connection with the opening of the temple you mention. I have already wired to her.[3]

[1] For Gandhiji's message, *vide* p. 232.
[2] *Vide* p. 249.
[3] This sentence is in Gandhiji's hand. For the telegram, *vide* p. 347.

Whilst Guruvayur is pending, only propaganda should be carried on. Fasting is a method applicable only in rare cases.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. NARAYANA RAJU
ELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19152

473. LETTER TO M. MANICKAM

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and I am glad that you have drawn my attention to the fact of non-Hindus offering obstruction, miscalled satyagraha, in connection with a temple in Colombo. I considered it to be so important that I have dealt with it in a Press message[1] which, no doubt, you have seen. I do hope that there has been no repetition of interference by non-Hindus.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. MANICKAM
PRESIDENT, THE NEHRU SANGHAM
165 SEA STREET, COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 19151

474. LETTER TO G. VENKATARATNAM

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

The pain such as you refer to in your letter of 23rd ultimo is nerve's peculiar way and it would last to the end of time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. VENKATARATNAM
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, COIMBATORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19150

[1] *Vide* pp. 343-5.

475. LETTER TO S. K. DATTA

January 3, 1933

DEAR DR. DATTA,

I had your letter. The way your students can help is by doing regular, steady service to the Harijans as by conducting night schools, by organizing not expensive but indigenous sports for Harijan children in which the students would play side by side with the children, by penetrating Harijan homes and finding out their difficulties and solving them where they are able to do so. These are only some of the ways. They will no doubt discover many others.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19149

476. LETTER TO M. S. PARKHE

January 3, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and the sample envelopes.

I can say nothing about the embossed bust, because I am no judge of such things.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. S. PARKHE
THE BHARAT ENVELOPES CO., POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 19144

CWMG - LII

477. LETTER TO C. R. KRISHNASWAMI

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR KRISHNASWAMI,

I am so glad you have sent me Low's cartoon. I had read about it. I am sorry it came too late for Daddy[1] to see it. I know he would have enjoyed it.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. R. KRISHNASWAMI
C/O "THE HINDU", MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19154

478. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 3, 1933

MY DEAR C.R.,

It was stupid of me not to have discussed with you my proposal[2] to Pandit Panchanan Tarkaratna. Now I have given it to the Press; you will therefore see it earlier than you receive this. I would like to have your opinion on it.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19170

479. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

January 3, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I do not have now a single minute to spare. I feel we should now stop writing everyday. Dahyabhai is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 97

[1] C. Rajagopalachari
[2] *Vide* pp. 308 and 343-5.

480. APPEAL TO SANATANISTS

January 4, 1933

This is an appeal to you from a fellow sanatanist, whom you are trying to reject in spite of yourself. Hard swearing at me and the libellous charges some of you are indulging in, are proof to me of your distorted love. I feel like the wife whom her many husbands profess to reject because the poor woman cannot give equal satisfaction to all her lords and masters. But not being able to reject her, (they know she, the willing slave, has served them all well enough) they screw up all the wrath they think they have, and swear at her for all they are worth. The faithful wife, staunch in her loyalty, calmly allows the storm to pass over her, for she is utterly innocent of all the charges promiscuously hurled at her. After the storm has subsided, the wife finds herself a greater favourite than before of her husbands, who laugh at their own exacting nature, and realize that their patient companion had, after all, placed her all at their disposal. Thus will it be with me, I dare to prophesy.

There are some telling verses in a sanatan scripture. You, having brooded over the wrongs you fancy I have done to you, have put yourself in a state of rage. Those verses say: 'Rage generates hallucination, which produces forgetfulness. The lapse of memory clouds intelligence; and failing intelligence leads to destruction.'[1] In your rage, you do not even know what you are doing. You have not even cared to inquire what I am aiming at.

Let me put a few facts before you. The popular definition of sanatan dharma is 'that good conduct which people can reach'. It rules out bad conduct and bad habits, however popular they may be. Religion is something that binds. Bad habits loosen, and therefore can never be religion. Therefore, if after the issues are dispassionately put before the people, they choose a particular course which is not in itself an evil, is not that sanatan dharma? Is it not the way how the body of doctrine and conduct known as sanatan dharma has grown? Is it not a condition of its growth?

If I have taken you with me so far, then know that, in all that I am doing, there is nothing more and nothing less than that I am

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 63

trying to find out how far people will go along the road which I hold to be good and which some of the scholars, who have first-hand knowledge of divine books, tell me is also good, according to their reading of them. But you protest that their reading is bad. Very well. Let the two different readings be put before the people, and let them make their choice. If they accept my reading, will that not be sanatan dharma? You need not even then accept my reading. You may adhere to your own, but in that case you will not call that sanatan dharma. You think your reading is sanatan dharma, because you assume that a vast majority of the villagers will accept it, and you reject my claim to be a sanatanist because you think it will be unacceptable to the people if it was put to them. I have put forth no insolent claim. I have wandered amongst millions for a number of years, not as a politician, but as a man of religion. They have accepted me as such, and your own hot repudiation of me is itself a proof of your having hitherto believed me to be more a man of religion than of politics. Have you not noticed that the politician will have none of me, and has always regarded me as an intruder and unpractical visionary, whilst at religious meetings I have been instinctively welcomed? And that happened even so early as 1915, when I had the good fortune to be practically an unknown man.

If you will but calmly examine the situation, you will discover that whether at Guruvayur or anywhere else, I am doing nothing but examining my claim and even yours by implication. My reading of sanatan dharma has forced me to the conclusion that caste-men have erred in treating a large number of Hindus as 'untouchables' and prohibiting them, amongst other things, from entering temples. You hold that sanatan dharma obliges you to regard these very Hindus as 'untouchables' and, therefore, they are unfit, under any circumstances, to enter the temples on the same terms as yourself. I say, let temple-goers themselves make a choice of the two readings, and you throw yourself in a state of rage, because I advance such a simple proposition. That, surely, is neither law nor common sense, nor toleration.

I am sure you would not deny me the right you have allowed to non-Hindus, that is, of preaching their opinion so long as they do not adopt illegal, immoral or otherwise questionable methods. You call my fast a species of coercion. It ill-becomes a sanatanist to describe a simple fast as coercion, for are not the pages of religious history filled with instances of fasting, whenever dharma had been in danger? I will not insult your intelligence by citing notable illustrations in support of my statement. But even the fast is off for the time being.

You then raise a hue and cry over a simple Bill such as Dr. Subbaroyan's is, and shout that religion is in danger. But if you were to examine this Bill, it again seeks to do nothing more than ascertain the wish of the parties concerned and to give effect to that wish. If the British courts had not intervened at the instance of a sanatanist, if the mixed legislatures such as we now have, had not passed a measure of a religious character at the instance of Hindu legislators, this Bill would be unnecessary. So, you see, it simply seeks to remove the obstruction created under modern conditions, and not to introduce innovations in Hinduism. It is the British law, as it exists today, that makes it possible for a single individual to thwart the will of a whole host—maybe even nine-thousand-nine-hundred and ninety-nine. It may suit you today, but if you will give calm consideration to it you will come to the conclusion that it is a most dangerous thing both for you and for me. It is calculated to deaden religious life. Sanatan dharma, and for that matter, all dharma, must give fair play. You do not wish to play with loaded dice, as you would if this law was not altered.

I have suggested another test for the demonstration of the spirit of fair play, if there is any in you. You will not deny that there are at least a respectable number of Hindus, if not a majority, who believe that it is consistent with the Hindu religion to admit Harijans to public temples. I have therefore suggested a solution which is incapable of improvement from the fair-play point of view. It respects every prejudice and every scruple, and so far as Guruvayur is concerned—and my solution is only confined for the moment to Guruvayur—it follows an established precedent, with but a variation. Harijans have been admitted from time immemorial, without restriction along with other Hindus to that temple for full one day in the year. There is, therefore nothing irreligious or extraordinary in my suggestion, that they should be always allowed, but only for certain hours in the day. You may say there is purification after this mixing of the two on the Ekadasi day. Repugnant as the idea is to me, if purification satisfied the scruples of the objectors, let there be a daily purification by all means.

All the letters I have received from sanatanists have protested that behind the sanatanists' upholding of untouchability, there is no hatred. The writers proclaim that though Harijans are children of God, equal with all others, religion demands their separation on high moral grounds, but that it should be carried out with love and not in hatred, and therefore, they should have full

rights of citizenship. Let us examine this claim in the light of the existing facts.

(1) Have you ascertained who are untouchables and why? (2) Do you know why a subtle and in my opinion cruel social arrangement has made them landless? If one happens to possess land, he cannot make the same use of it that you can. (3) He cannot make use of the innumerable public utilities that you can; and you have provided no such separate utilities. Therefore, he might die of thirst, and you would not help him to a drink of water. (4) Careers that are open to you are tightly closed against him. (5) Even medical assistance and spiritual assistance are denied to him.

If these are the fruits of love, will you not think with me that hate must be far more preferable to love? I cannot think of anything more bitter than the fruits I have pictured above.

I tell you that there is nothing like this on the face of the earth, and what is worse, bearing the stamp of religion.

I have addressed this appeal to you, which proceeds out of my soul's agony. I ask you to share that agony and shame with me, and co-operate with me, for I have no other end to serve than to see sanatan dharma revivified and lived in its reality in the lives of millions who at present seem to me to deny it. I am glad you are awakened, but you must now work and, instead of engaging in a perfectly fruitless quarrel with me, go through the catalogue of evils that have crept into Hinduism and make a giant effort to remove them. I call your quarrel with me a fruitless effort, because I won't be a party to it. An English proverb has it, that it takes two to make a quarrel—happily I will not help you to make up the two.

The Hindu, 5-1-1933

481. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

January 4, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. In what I wrote[1] I had in mind only the mutual dharma of husband and wife. I certainly did not mean that you should stay somewhere away from the Ashram for a long time and that Narandas should never visit you. But don't you agree that he should go to see you only when the work in the

[1] *Vide* p. 302.

Ashram permits him? And, if you yourself go for a short stay in the Ashram every six months, would it be necessary then for him to visit you? I would certainly not think of being harsh on you in a matter like this. On the contrary, I would wish to meet your wishes as far as possible. Have no doubt at all that it has always been my effort to create conditions in the Ashram so that no woman in it should feel herself dependent.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 869. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

482. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I have already replied[1] regarding Mahavir. I hope you got the letter. About Sitala Sahay, I want you to do what you think best. I know very well that he is extremely careless about expenditure. If the understanding with him is that the expenses for all of them should not exceed Rs. 75, I am inclined to pay him that much.

It also seems to me that we have no choice but to pay him the expenditure incurred in travelling. But in future the sum of Rs. 75 should include all such expenses. However, I cannot form the correct view from here, and, therefore, after saying what I have done, I leave the final decision to you.

I believe I have already written to you and told you that Prema, Jamnadas, Sushila and Indu came and saw me. Prema must have returned there now. Kaka has not come and seen me yet. I understand about Damodar. Let him do as he likes. What are Vanamala and Mohan still suffering from?

BAPU

PS.

Read Liladhar's letter. Did Jivarambhai get for him the expenses for his daughters? If so, from when had he been doing so and what was the amount? If we are permitted to pay the same amount to Sharda Mandir, I think we should pay it. Write to me what you think about this and, if Liladhar happens to come to the Ashram, have a talk with him.

BAPU

[1] *Vide* p. 341.

[PPS.]

You will find with this letters for Jamna, Amina, Qureshi, Liladhar, Jaikor, Shanti, Anandi, Radha and Kusum.

[From Gujarati]

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

483. TELEGRAM TO SHAMJI MARWADI

January 5, 1933

SHAMJI MARWADI
VALPABHADI ROAD
BOMBAY

CAN SEE YOU EARLIEST ELEVENTH TWO O'CLOCK.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5209

484. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Thursday Morning, January 5, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Herewith is my copy of An Optimist's Calendar for you. The idea is not mine but Vallabhbhai's. The author, as you will see, has sent 12 copies. I asked Vallabhbhai Patel whether he thought it worth distribution and if yes, to suggest names. He gave some names to which the addition of your name came simultaneously through our lips.

Your longest letters are brief for me. You need never think of sparing me when you are writing to me. Indeed I want your long letters when you can give them to me without effort. I wish I could give you equally long letters. But I am not a good letter-writer. And just now I can't give you long letters even when I could write them, if I had the time. I must be content with giving you about 30 minutes near about the Thursday morning prayer time.

You do not need to think of the fast just now. Never imagine things good or bad until they stare you in the face.[1] Full surrender means full freedom from all care. A child never has care for anything. It knows instinctively that it is being cared for by its parents. How much more true should it be with us grown-up

[1] *Vide* also "Letter to Mirabehn", pp. 300-1.

people? There you have the test of faith or detachment of the *Gita*, if you like.

'Untouchables' was chosen because some Harijans in the South objected to the new name. They suspected some design behind it. Therefore the word is a choice of necessity.

Ba has gone and is on her way to the Ashram. Urmila Devi went yesterday. I may have a little less pressure now that the *Shastris* are gone. But I might have to listen to another debate on 12th instant.

My weight went up again to 103 yesterday. The saltless continues. I have no difficulty in so doing. Whether the body needs it or not is the only consideration. The elbow is no better. Of course bread and vegetables are still omitted.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6256. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9722

485. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your postcard of the 1st instant.[1] I sent you a reply[2] to your letter of the 14th ultimo. Fortunately, I have a copy of it. I send you a copy.

I duly received your letter of the 18th which I thought had crossed my reply, and as my reply, of which copy is going herewith, is exhaustive, there was no occasion for a further reply to your letter of the 18th ultimo. I hope you will receive this letter safely.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19172. Also C.W. 9564. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] The addressee had complained that he had received no reply to his letters dated December 14 and 18, 1932 (C.W. 9563).

[2] *Vide* pp. 219-21.

486. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

I am overdue in acknowledging your and other love letters, but the work before me has to take precedence over everything else.

I am glad you were able to see Dr. Ansari and other friends, and gladder still that you were able to have that long conversation with Dr. Ambedkar. Of course he has still got that over-sensitiveness and terrible suspicion, but there is to me nothing unnatural in it. As I used to say so often in London, he had every excuse for the bitterness with which only he could speak whenever he spoke about untouchability or of those touchable Hindus who had anything to do with it. He has not only witnessed the inhuman wrongs done to the social pariahs of Hinduism, but in spite of all his culture, all the honours that he has received, he has, when he is in India, still to suffer many insults to which untouchables are exposed. The wonder is that he is so tolerant and forbearing as he showed himself, for instance, at the time when the Yeravda Pact was being hammered into shape. It was perfectly open to him to withstand all pressure and remain defiant, but he allowed himself to be moved by friendly pressure. He will soften if the terms of the Yeravda Pact are carried out in full by the caste Hindus, but though things are shaping well on the whole, I am experiencing newer difficulties from day to day. They do not dismay me. I was prepared for them. I knew that that little fast was not enough penance for moving to right action the great mass of Hindu humanity. Many lives might have to be given before the last remnant of untouchability is gone. But no sacrifice will be too great to remove a wrong which lies like a dead weight, not only on Hindu society, but on all who surround it. I get now and then piteous letters from Christian Indians who, being born of untouchable parents, are isolated from the rest of their fellows. Such is the contagious nature of this dreadful disease.

With our love to you and Olive,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1418

487. LETTER TO PETER J. MASCREEN

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You will pardon me for telling you that my reading of Hinduism is wholly different from yours. The doctrine of transmigration does not entitle one man to claim superiority over another. Hinduism is not wholly different from Roman Catholicism, as you imagine. The fundamentals of all religions are the same.

Yours sincerely,

PETER J. MASCREEN, ESQ.
C/O J. MASCREEN, ESQ., VELLIYIL PARAMPIL, TANGACHERRY
QUILON

From a microfilm: S.N. 19176

488. LETTER TO BIRESWAR SEN

January 5, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

You have done well in writing to me. If the analogy you have taken was correct, what you say will be quite true, but there is no analogy between a public temple and a private house. Public temples are the common property of Hindus or sects of Hindus, and members of those sects have a perfect right to regulate admission. All I claim is just that and no more, the right of the temple-goers of the existing temples to decide whether Harijans shall enter.

You are wrong also in thinking that my fast was a suicide. A suicide is when a man does an act with the intention of ending his earthly existence. I never had any such intention. To my fast was attached a condition. That you may still call it wrong is quite possible; only the fast could not be condemned on the ground you have advanced.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BIRESWAR SEN
3 ROAD 36, ANISABAD, P.O. PATNA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19175

489. LETTER TO GANGA RAM

January 5, 1933

DEAR LALA GANGARAM,

I thank you for your letter of the 30th ultimo and a copy of the report you have kindly sent me. I shall try to find time to go through your report.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GANGA RAM, B.A.
ADVOCATE, SIALKOT CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19174

490. LETTER TO KURUR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD,

I thank you for your letter enclosing the considered opinion of the Government Advocate on "Usage".

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KURUR NILKANTAN NAMBUDIRIPAD
T. C. HOUSE, TRICHUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19173

491. LETTER TO BALDEODAS BAJORIA

January 5, 1933

DEAR BALDEODASJI,

I thank you for your letter of the 29th ultimo. I quite agree with you that the Shastras are inviolate, and that religion is higher than political swaraj.

I have already explained the meaning of my fast. It cannot coerce a single sanatani Hindu who has deep convictions opposed to mine; and why do you say that I hurt the feelings of the orthodox Hindus? In this connection I would like you to study

CWMG - LIII

carefully my appeal[1] to the sanatanists. If you will study carefully, you will discover that there can be no struggle between orthodox Hindus and the others. You should continue to strive with me till you are convinced or you have succeeded in convincing me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BALDEODAS BAJORIA
130 MECHUA BAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19171

492. LETTER TO AN ENGLISH GIRL[2]

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

I was very pleased to get your letter. You are quite right in addressing me as you have done. I enjoy the happiness of having thousands of daughters. You are a welcome addition to the ever-growing family; and since I, a puny mortal, cannot cope with such a large family, I entrust you all to the safe keeping of the All-powerful and Eternal Father, and so I never feel the burden of having the large family; on the contrary, only the joy of possessing the trust remains.

I see that though you are an invalid, you have a strong faith and a great heart. May your faith increase with the progress of years and may you ever find peace in the midst of pain and sorrow.

Yes, I knew when I was fasting I had the prayers of many pure souls like yourself, and that knowledge sustained me greatly.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat No. 13. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 123

[1] *Vide* pp. 358-61.

[2] The letter was presumably addressed to Nellie Ball; *vide* the following item and Vol. LIII, "Letter to Nellie Ball", 2-3-1933.

493. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

January 5, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

If I am to cope with my correspondence, side by side with untouchability work, I can only dictate letters for the most part, and even then be brief. It is a fortunate thing that I have been allowed the facility. The untouchability work was going beyond my capacity in spite of the assistance I received from Vallabhbhai and Mahadev. I wish I could do justice to your long love letter. I cannot send you anything like it. I see that you have Andrews settling down in Woodbrooke. You will, therefore, have him always by your side, a strong support to lean on whenever you are in need.

Yes, I have seen the beautiful poem of Shelley's that you have copied for me. I hope you are keeping quite well, and I pray that the New Year has opened for you with much greater inner joy and peace than you have ever possessed.

I was glad for the letter from the ailing sister. Here is my reply[1] to her. Though she has given me her address, as I cannot quite make out her name I send it through you.

Love from us both and kisses to the children to whom a separate postcard is going.

Mahadev sent a book for Tangai and Nannie for Christmas gift. I hope they got it.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 117. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 97-8

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

494. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

January 5, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

Your excuse for not writing to me does not impress me. When one is living outside, one gets so many experiences that one need not search for something to write about. Moreover, if you do wish to write to me, you would tell me frankly what difficulties you experienced in observing the Ashram rules when living outside and which rules could not be observed at all, etc., etc. If all inmates of the Ashram who go to live outside describe to me their experiences, think how much that would help me.

I hope you got my letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5340

495. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 5, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got both your letters. Please do not expect a long reply from me today. The right hand has got tired and the speed with the left hand is at least four times less than with the right. Moreover, I must now spare [both] hands and save time for *Harijan*. Though I cannot write a long letter to you, I expect a detailed letter from you. You are the only one who gives me news about all the women.

I hope you have been following the advice[1] I gave you regarding your throat.

If you learn to work peacefully and not to worry about it, you would not become weak. I know very well of course that this is more easily said than done. But I have observed that sometimes such advice is taken to heart and acted upon.

Watch Lakshmi.

How is Narmada?

[1] *Vide* p. 334.

How is Dhurandhar's health?
What is the news about Kisan?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10319

496. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

January 5, 1933

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letter as well as the brief description of Pritampur. The scheme seems to be fine. If it succeeds, it will be considered a great reform.

Some settlement must have been made about the Giri family. Can it be said that the trouble from the Chharas has diminished?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 243. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

497. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 5, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I must content myself with the fewest letters today. Tell all the people that I would have to write for *Harijan* and, therefore, they should not be surprised if I write fewer letters for some time. Anybody who has something to communicate may certainly write to me. In any case the women and the children must write. For them it is a kind of education too. Even if I do not write in reply, they should continue to write.

After leaving school, Rambhau's weight seems to have increased very much. That seems to have happened to Shanti and Jaikor after they left the Ashram. Try to discover the reason for this and, if you succeed, let me know it.

Two or three correspondents have complained in their letters that stray dogs loitering in the Ashram compound find nothing to eat and, therefore, try to eat shoes, etc. If this is true, it does not mean that we should give them *rotlas* to eat. You should send for a cart from the pinjrapole and the dogs should be removed in it, as used to be done in the past. Probably you know that we have such an understanding with the pinjrapole. You will even find in the office the correspondence which took place on this subject.

We should certainly think what we can do in cases like . . . 's[1]. If a young man who has been living in the Ashram wishes to marry, it seems to me that we cannot immediately throw him on the streets. We should be able to help them in some way. I have not thought what we can do, or whether we can do anything. The first thing to do is to consider whether we owe any duty to such persons. If we do, then we will think further and may discover some way of helping. You and other senior members may think about this and you may then let me know the view of you all.

BAPU

In all there are 18 letters, tied together.

[From Gujarati]

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

498. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

January 5, 1933

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. I am satisfied. I also have full confidence that you will do your best. By contribution I did not mean money. Even an unknown child who approaches you for money will get it. Don't think I am so simple-minded as to ask you for money. For that, I would simply sign a *hundi* on you. I want from you a much bigger contribution than that. You can make it and I believe that you will.

I would not use coercion even to save a cow from the hands of a butcher. I certainly don't wish to use it to secure freedom for Harijans to enter temples, nor to make the Harijans give up beef, meat, etc.

But the latter tell me: 'You force us to remove dead cattle and charge us for their flesh. We, therefore, eat it and through long habit we have come to relish it. So in the first place you should not charge us for the flesh, and secondly, should make some other arrangement for the removal of the dead cattle so that we may have no opportunity to remove their flesh.'

There is some cunning in this. They know that we cannot make any other arrangement for the removal of dead cattle

[1] The name has been omitted.

in the immediate future, and some of them wish to exploit the situation. They have a right to do so. This is what anyone would do.

I suggest this step to the States. The carcass of a dead cattle belongs, or should be considered as belonging, to the owner of the cattle. Since he does not arrange for the proper disposal of the carcass, it means that he renounces his right over it. It, therefore, becomes the property of the State, and the State should arrange for its disposal through Harijans by paying them suitably. The State should also use every part of the body for public good. If it does not do that, for the present it may utilize only the hide. It may fix a reasonable price for the hide, and the Chamar or the Harijan concerned should pay it, deducting from it the charge for his labour. Or, if separate cash payment is fixed for labour, he may have that and hand over the hide to the State. The State should instruct its officer to see that at the time of the skinning of the carcass, the flesh and the bones which cannot be sold or utilized in any way are buried deep at a spot fixed for the purpose. This will of course show the ignorance of the State. A prudent State can make profitable use of the flesh and the bones. If you wish to know how this can be done, I will explain that in another letter. Just now, I have only suggested the easiest and simplest way, one which can be immediately adopted, of making the Chamars give up the practice of eating beef and carrion. At present, besides the hide and the flesh, the other parts of the carcass are not utilized at all. They can be easily utilized. But since that is not relevant to my purpose in writing this letter, I have saved your time and mine by not entering into a discussion of it.

I hope you will be able to read my handwriting and will get my point. I am quite well.

Why do you feel that you have grown old? Why do you believe that the body has become old, even though you continue to work? You enforce laws on others, but yourself do not obey the laws of good health. Who should punish you for that?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5924. Also C.W. 3239. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

499. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

January 5, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I have seen the views expressed about the Giri family. It is a pity that we could not convert them to goodness. Do send me some time an account of your farming. I hope you are keeping well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2539

500. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

January 5, 1933

In my opinion, No. What my proposal does is to respect the prejudices of a class of temple-goers who still feel that they would be doing something wrong in associating with Harijans at the time of entering temples, and since this reform movement is not one of compulsion but conversion, my proposal is intended to respect the scruples even of one single conscientious objector. In a matter, essentially of religion, so far as it is possible one would avoid carrying out the will of the majority. By this compromise, such an objector can, during certain hours of the day, offer worship as he used to, before the reforms.

Underlying my proposal is undoubtedly the belief or assumption that at Guruvayur (because my compromise is for the present moment confined only to Guruvayur) a large majority of caste Hindus are in favour of admission of the Harijans to that temple. If, when the compromise is accepted and put into practice, it is found to be otherwise, then, I admit the distinction is still maintained. If on the other hand the majority remain with the Harijans, then it would be a mark of generous self-restraint on the part of the Harijans and the majority of temple-goers. If reformers are found to be in a minority, it would be a question

[1] The correspondent had asked Gandhiji whether the compromise regarding entry of Harijans into Guruvayur Temple (*vide* pp. 343-4) still retained untouchability to a certain extent.

for consideration as to whether the Harijans should take advantage of the compromise or not. After all it is the essence of compromise that it must be a half-way house between the two extreme positions without, of course, involving any surrender of principles by either party.

In this proposed compromise, the principle on behalf of the Harijans and the reformers is that the two should offer worship on terms of equality. The period during which the worship may be offered is not an essential part. The principle on the part of the objectors is that they cannot offer worship side by side with the Harijans without doing violence to their religious sense. This objection I promise to respect in its entirety, but only limit the period during which they can offer worship consistently with their objection.

The Bombay Chronicle, 6-1-1933

501. TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI[1]

[On or before *January 6, 1933*][2]

Mr. Gandhi has sent a wire inviting Mr. Patwari to proceed to Yeravda Jail, with a view to convincing Mr. Gandhi if he was erring.

The Hindu, 6-1-1933

502. LETTER TO JOHN MORRIS

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR FRIEND JOHN MORRIS,

I was much touched to receive your wonderful letter and the Christmas card, both of which reached me in due time. I have always treasured the memory of that early morning visit to your hospital and the handshake. It was a great sight to see you so cheerful and happy, although a permanent invalid.[3] May you retain that inward happiness till the end of your earthly days.

[1] The telegram was in reply to a letter from the addressee, ex-Dewan of the Morvi State, requesting Gandhiji to desist from activities likely to divide every Hindu family. Shri Patwari left for Poona in response to Gandhiji's telegram. *Vide* also Vol. LIII, "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 11-1-1933.

[2] The report was published under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, January 6".

[3] The addressee was blind.

Mira, you may know, is also in prison, but she is quite well and quite happy. She is doing a great deal of spinning and some very useful reading. I shall send your letter to her. I think that there will be no difficulty in her being allowed to receive it, and I know that she would be as pleased as I was to have it.

Devdas whom you saw is just now touring in India in connection with untouchability work.

From a copy: C.W. 6257. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9723

503. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND[1]

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR MADELEINE,

It was a great joy to receive your brief letter, especially as it recalled the precious days of communion with you all. It was like meeting members of one's family.

If the events at the time of the late fast[2] were a miracle, as they were, it was purely God's work. I was but a very humble instrument in His hands. At no stage did I feel that I was doing anything. I simply could not do it, but when I said that it was God working through me, it was literally true, as far as my knowledge went.

But I observe from your great and good brother's[3] telegram to Devdas that people on the Continent had not understood the contemplated second fast. I don't wonder at it. The whole conception seems to be so new, and yet it appears to me to be the logical outcome of a prayerful search after truth. There is no prayer without fasting, and fasting which is not an integral part of prayer is mere torture of the flesh doing no good to anyone. Such fasting is an intense spiritual effort, a spiritual striving. It is a penance and a process of self-purification. True fast generates a silent unseen force which may, if it is of requisite strength and purity, pervade all mankind. I have seen its unseen pervasive effect on a small scale but sufficiently large to know that it is a mighty force. It was in this instance an inevitable step in the prosecution of the campaign against untouchability. I would have been false to myself, to my companion Kelappan, and to the

[1] A copy of this letter was sent to Mirabehn.
[2] Gandhiji's fast of September 1932; *vide* Vol. LI.
[3] Romain Rolland

cause of the Harijans, if I had faltered. At the present moment, however, it stands indefinitely postponed. Even now, perhaps, I have not made myself clear. It is difficult to do so. But I have no hesitation in saying that time will prove the correctness of the step, and in any case for me it was a call from God which I could not resist. If a further explanation is necessary, please do not hesitate to write to me.

I have been trying to find out a suitable adjective for your brother. To write of him to you as 'Mons. Rolland' or as 'your brother' sounds too prosaic and distant. To describe him as simple 'brother' is too familiar and does not convey adequately the existing relationship. The two words that come to me are '*rishi*' or 'the sage'. They are almost synonymous terms but not identical in meaning. Subject therefore to his and your approval, I am going henceforth to describe him as 'the *Rishi*'. I hope that this letter will find him in full possession of his normal health. I am afraid one dare not hope for perfect health for him. He will not give it all that chance. It would mean concentration on physical health at the expense of concentration on his historical researches, and with him historical is also spiritual, or else he would not be a *rishi*. Please tell the *Rishi* that some months ago I had for the first time his volumes on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. The reading gave me great joy and enabled me more fully than before to get a measure of his love for India.

Mira and I exchange weekly letters. She is quite happy in her rest house. She is studying Hindi, reading the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and at the present moment she is reading Dr. Gour's work on Buddhism. She is keeping her health and making dietetic experiments. There is no restriction about her diet. She is therefore able to get what she requires. She gets also one or two papers and whatever non-political books she may need.

Mahadev Desai is with me. The two others you do not know personally. Love to you both from us both.

From a copy: C.W. 6258. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9724

504. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

January 6, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letters. I am quite sure that your work still lies there for some time at least, and when I feel otherwise there will be no hesitation in sending an S.O.S. If you could but get a month's quiet at Woodbrooke, there will be some rest for your nerves. I can well understand what the constant rush amid all the din and noise of railway traffic must mean to you. I hope you will have the needed time to finish your book on "The Sermon on the Mount".

I had your two cables telling me that you were working in connection with the sanction for Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill. Anyway till at least the fate is known, the fast stands postponed. I am hoping that you have ceased to worry about it. There can be no anxiety about anything that comes from God. Did I ever give you the rendering of a verse we have every day at the morning prayer? "Adversity is no adversity, nor is prosperity real prosperity. Real adversity consists in forgetting God's omnipresence, and real prosperity consists in its constant remembrance."[1] If then the fast comes from God, where is there the slightest cause for anxiety?

Yes, I have had wonderful letters often from Esther, and she was enthusiastic over the news that you were to settle at least for the time being at Woodbrooke.

I hope that improvement in your brother's condition has continued. I shall look forward to your next letter bringing me still better news of him.

Mira writes to me every week and has from me a weekly letter. I shall send your love to her when I write her next. I hope I shall not forget it as I do so often forget such things.

With love from us all,

From a photostat: G.N. 1306

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 390.

505. LETTER TO MRS. HUNTER[1]

January 6, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I thank you for your letter of the 8th December last, and for telling me that you had sent to the Anti-untouchability Committee a cheque for £42-0-3.[2]

Please convey my thanks to all the English and other friends. I have just heard from the Committee that they duly received your cheque. I hope you have had a proper receipt from them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1532

506. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 7, 1933

Of late several Congressmen have been to me and told me that there is much suppressed talk among them about my action in setting up an agitation against untouchability from within the prison walls and that they do not know whether to prosecute civil disobedience or to take an active part in the campaign against untouchability. I do not wonder at the question. All I have been able to tell these questioners is this:

'For me there is nothing inconsistent in my conduct. It would be foolish, if not sinful, for me if I did not use all the talents that my Master has given me, whenever I have the opportunity for their use. I have used all the talents I have for civil disobedience. I found that I had also talents for the service of Harijans which I could use, and I am using them. In doing so I have abated nothing from my existing dharma or obligation. I have added service of the untouchables to it. I had therefore no question before me of making a choice. With those who are outside prison walls, the case, I know, is different. Those who are civil resisters have to decide whether to continue civil disobe-

[1] Addressee's name is supplied from the G.N. Register.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", p. 298.

dience or to take up anti-untouchability work. This is a question I cannot decide for them. I am constitutionally unfit, having entered the prison gates, to guide the movement of civil disobedience in any shape or form. And even if I thought otherwise, I must not guide it as I have bound myself in honour not to take advantage of the considerable latitude given to me regarding untouchability by directly or indirectly and secretly or openly guiding the movement. Everyone therefore has to take his or her decision without reference to me.'

Having adopted this attitude, I have refused to guide even my wife and my son. My appeal for the removal of untouchability lies to every caste Hindu, be he a Congressman or other. For the resolution of Bombay arrived at during the Fast Week pledges the honour of every Hindu to remove untouchability, so far as he or she is personally concerned and to induce his or her neighbours to do likewise. The first part is a mere mental performance accompanied by personal conduct wherever corresponding action is called for. The second, that is, the propaganda part, requires everyone to make the choice between propaganda and his or her present work, where the former cannot be added to the latter.

Congressmen who are civil resisters are undoubtedly presented with a conundrum; but that would be only if they would make the vain effort of reading my mind. I think I have made it clear that I have no mind whatsoever for them. When I decided to conduct the untouchability campaign from within the prison, I had not civil resisters in my mind as such, but I had the whole of Hindu society. If that whole fails to respond, civil resisters alone cannot remove the age-long evil. But a civil resister may well feel a special call for doing untouchability work, or, he or she may think that there is no disciplined resistance left in him or her, or that the spirit of resistance is played out, or even that there is no such thing as civil resistance and that all resistance is necessarily uncivil or incivil.

It is obvious that I can offer no useful guidance in the consideration of these problems. These are all matters for those who are outside to judge. If many are filled with doubts, let them confer together and come to a decision as to the proper course to take. Those who have no doubts may be reminded of the celebrated Sanskrit verse[1] whose exact equivalent perhaps is to be found

[1] Presumably,

"यो ध्रुवाणि परित्यज्य अध्रुवं परिषेवते।
ध्रुवाणि तस्य नश्यन्ति अध्रुवं नष्टमेव च॥"

in the equally celebrated English proverb, "Much wants more and loses all".

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9694

507. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

January 7, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I feel the need of issuing the accompanying statement[1] to the Press. In my opinion it is well within the limits of the Government of India decision. But the Government may think otherwise. Before issuing the statement I would like to ascertain the view that they take of the matter. I shall be thankful for an early reply.

As I know that there is considerable confusion in the public mind, I am anxious to let them know clearly that they must not look to me for guidance in the choice between civil disobedience and untouchability work. I feel that I owe this much to them.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(8), Pt. I, p. 3

508. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

January 7, 1933

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS,

I cannot tell you what a joy it was to have you with me for so many days. It was all so unexpected and therefore a double pleasure.

I got the letter you left with Mahadev. I am struggling through the book, if only for your sake, but I have no notion when I shall be able to finish it. I feel like a thief when I steal

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

a single minute for any other work than the untouchability business, because there hardly is a day when I have no arrears with reference to it. Therefore if you do not have anything from me about the book for some time, you will now know the reason for my silence, and if I am ever able to give you my opinion of the book, it won't be for publication, for I may send out nothing apart from untouchability without the permission of the Government.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM, BENARES CANTONMENT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19184

509. LETTER TO S. SALIVATI

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR SALIVATI[1],

I have your letter[2]. The question of dividing the Hindu community, as you have seen, has already been dealt with by me. I have not yet had the time to read Mr. Iyer's address. As soon as I do, if I have anything to say, I will tell you. You should secure a proper legal opinion on the points discussed by you. Of course, I shall make no use of Sir Chimanlal's opinion.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SALIVATI
C/o THOS COOK & SON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19186

[1] Correspondent of *The Hindu*

[2] Dated January 3, 1933, and signed Salivatiswaram. It read: "I had two hours' discussion with Sir Chimanlal Setalvad this afternoon on the temple-entry question. When I met him on Friday last, he was in full agreement with Mr. T. R. Ramachandra Iyer. Today after going through justice Ramesam's judgment he is of the view that the Zamorin has no case. The cry that religion is in danger is absurd when three days' entry into the temple is permitted according to the usages and custom. His argument is that if three days' entry is allowed and constitutes no danger to religion, why not 30 days? The trustees can have purification ceremony everyday if they want" (S.N. 19157).

510. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I had your two letters. I have gone through your scheme. You should give the names of the Managing Board with their qualifications for bringing the scheme to a successful end. In the midst of tremendous pressure, I have just hurriedly glanced through it and noticed the omission. But there is something lacking about the whole thing. I have not been able sufficiently to concentrate my mind upon it to reduce to words what is lacking. A scheme has to be so framed as to carry conviction on the very first reading of it. This does not. Perhaps the business friends would immediately spot what it is that is worrying me.

As to the sanatanists' quotations from my writings, the less said the better. Many of them are distortions, some of them are half-quotations, and some are so contrary to what I have written as to amount to libel. But you or any friend who would answer these things must go to the pages of *Young India* and verify the quotations. I could not do so, because I have no will for it, as I know what those quotations are, and if I have the will, I have not the time. The quotation you have sent me has some resemblance to the original writing.

As regards the charges against you, I cannot understand your sensitiveness. Why do you worry if there is no truth whatsoever in those charges? You must trust to time to clear away all misunderstandings and to right every wrong conceivable. Time always runs against wrong and in favour of right.

I have secured now pure cow ghee, and I have already begun the trial of your remedy from yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO
C/O THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19188

511. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

January 7, 1933

I have preserved your letter of 26th December so as to remind me that I had to prepare the statement you wanted. But now that I have issued my appeal[1] to the sanatanists and the previous appeal[2], do you think it is still necessary to give the statement? If you do, I will have to address a letter to you which you will be free to publish, because apart from your letter, I have no correspondence raising the difficulty that you have, and I don't want to issue a statement which may not be needed by the general public. But you are not going to waive the statement in order to save my time and energy. If it is needed, the energy for it will be there.

NARGISBEN

From a microfilm: S.N. 19187

512. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 7, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I hope you got the copy of Dr. Roy's letter[3]. It was, by mistake, omitted from the letter[4] with which the copy had to go. When we meet I would love to give you satisfaction with reference to the position I took up in my letter[5] to Dr. Roy.

I think it will be better not to take up any special agitation about Kashi Vishwanath[6] just yet. The general effort for temple-entry by way of cultivating public opinion should certainly go on, but no special effort for any particular temple just yet.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19185

[1] *Vide* pp. 358-61.
[2] Presumably "Statement on Untouchability–XIII"; *vide* pp. 304-8.
[3] *Vide* Appendix V.
[4] *Vide* pp. 207-9.
[5] *Vide* pp. 201-2.
[6] Temple in Banaras

513. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 7, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You are as sensitive and obstinate in nursing resentment as you are quick to get angry. How long should a daughter nurse resentment against her father? Her love will melt away her pride. How long do you intend to nurse your resentment? Probably you repented immediately after writing the letter.[1] Do you know that by writing that note you have sprinkled salt on my wound, so to say? But probably I know you better than you do yourself. At first I felt extremely unhappy. But afterwards laughed. You are not as bad as you seem to be in your letter[2]. I immediately reassured myself that, as you had sulked for some time once before and afterwards, felt unhappy for that, so you would feel sorry this time, too, and apologize. If I was wrong in thinking so, well I should like you to apologize now. You may then write any kind of letters. I had rebuked you only for nursing hatred in your heart. However, so long as it is there, you can relieve yourself of it only before me. And if I don't show your shortcomings to you, who else will? So long as the poison of hatred is there in your heart, you must let me drink it. Probably you do not think that it is poison. Rarely does a person know his or her own nature. I want you to know yours and wake up.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10320

[1] Gandhiji's letter to the addressee, dated December 25, 1932, had offended her. She had got it on her return to Ahmedabad from her visit to Gandhiji and written back to say that she would never write to him again.

[2] Presumably the one to which Gandhiji had replied on December 25, 1932

514. A LETTER

January 7, 1933

There is also one more thing about all this unnecessary travelling. Even the inmates of the Ashram do not show sincere love of simplicity. This is not only your defect. Even some of the inmates who have been longer in the Ashram than you are not free from it. Nevertheless, I do wish to explain to those who will listen to me that it is our duty to live as the poorest among the poor do. We should not spend two pice where we can do with one and we should take whatever risks this may involve. We should, therefore, avoid travelling as far as possible and renounce as many facilities and conveniences as we can. We should practise such strict economy not only in money matters but also in our activities. We should be miserly even in our speech and thinking. Only then shall we be able to follow truth and ahimsa and observe *brahmacharya*. Try and overcome this deficiency in you. Do not answer me, nor think in your mind, that A, B and C in the Ashram spend more than you do. The path of dharma is for him who chooses to follow it.

And now for the question which you have asked. If we measure our children from our experience of the strength of our own passions, we shall never succeed in our aim. We did not have the benefit of the environment which, learning from our own experience, we have created for the children. We should have faith that it is bound to produce an effect on them. We need not worry if we see no such effect immediately. It may be that in making this experiment we shall sacrifice our own children. Still we should not lose faith. Our efforts will be rewarded with success only if we continue the experiment as long as we do not see any error in it. The path is like the flame of the sacrificial fire and, therefore, we should offer ourselves and our children as oblation in it with a smiling face. Unless we act thus in all spheres of our activities, we shall not get a vision of perfect truth, ahimsa or *brahmacharya*, or we shall arrive at the conclusion that one or both of those principles are wrong. There are a good many schools of thought which regard ahimsa as a wrong ideal, and we see before our very eyes how the numbers of those who look upon *brahmacharya* as a sin keep growing. If, despite that, we wish to demonstrate

that the ideal of *brahmacharya* is the right one and that those who oppose it are mistaken, we shall have to learn to sacrifice a boy like . . .[1] and a girl like . . .[2] We cannot sacrifice the children of others. We should give that privilege to our own children. But you say that our children, too, can be regarded to have passed the test only if they remain above the waves when they are thrown into the sea of life outside. I agree with you, and that is why we have made the Ashram an arm of that sea. If we do not sink in it, we can hope to be able to swim even in the great ocean of life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 22-3

515. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

January 7, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I sent you a telegram in reply to your letter. I also waited for you, but you did not come. Firmness is necessary in dealing with Prabhashankar. We shall be able to manage all the others provided the two brothers stick to the arrangement arrived at. Prabhashankar's demand seems to be quite new to me. I am sure that the demand can never be accepted. I have not the least doubt that the arrangements fully secured the interests of Ratilal or Champa.

Apart from that trouble, there is another which has come today and is more serious. Bhai Khimchand has practically served a notice. It seems that Chhaganlal had sent for him. He knows that I greatly distrust him. He now writes and says that he has decided to join in the discussions and that he disagrees with the proposed arrangement. I have written to him strongly and advised him not to interfere in this affair, but there is little chance that he will listen to me. In my letter to Chhaganlal I have urged upon him not to associate with Khimchand, and have also told him that he might see me again if he is dissatisfied in any way. I have asked him also to stick to the arrangement, and I am hopeful that he will be amenable. You or Ratubhai should try and see if you can persuade him. Also see Khimchand if possible. Show this letter to Ratubhai and Maganlal, as I am not writing to them separately.

[1] & [2] The names are omitted in the source.

Be firm in dealing with Khimchand also. If even then some difficulties arise, we shall face them. There will be more trouble if we lose the co-operation of both. Keep me informed. Ask Maganlal also to write to me. I shall drop postcards to him and to Ratubhai if I get time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
I got your card. Come on Tuesday. Khimchand seems to have come round. If he is sincere, we shall have one problem less.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9627

516. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

January 7, 1933

BHAI FULCHAND,

I hope you had received the letter which I wrote to you in reply to yours. I had sent a long reply[1] to Balwant Sinha, but he does not seem to have received it. I do not remember his questions. If he has still not received my letter, he may ask the questions[2] again. Haribhau must not undertake a fast. The entire question will be solved in a few days. Prithuraj had come and seen me. He told me that all of you were well. Chhaganlal Joshi is with me now.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9626. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] Balwant Sinha in his book *Bapuki Chhayamen*, p. 41, explains that he sent again a copy of his questions; for Gandhiji's answers, *vide* Vol. LIII, "Letter to Balwant Sinha", 5-2-1933.

517. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter and Prema's, and also those of the others. My reply[1] to Prema is enclosed. I hope that she has realized her foolishness.

What food do you eat now? What was the effect of *jowar* porridge and *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajri*? From where do you get the ghee?

Is there any relief in the harassment by the Chharas? Does anybody visit them?

BAPU

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

518. LETTER TO DHARMADEV

January 7, 1933

I like your letter immensely. You are quite right in saying that no one can find what my decisive opinion on varnashrama dharma is from all my articles published so far on the subject. The reason is that in each article I express the opinion I had reached at the time.

Now I have certainly arrived at a more definite opinion and possibly the picture seems clearer. I am writing thus vaguely because until I have put into writing my views up to date, things will not be clear to me. I intend to write an article[2] on varnashrama in connection with this agitation when I have some time.

[From Hindi]

Vishvajyoti, October 1959

[1] *Vide* p. 385.

[2] An article under the title "Confusing the Issue" appeared in *Harijan*, 4-3-1933; *vide* Vol. LIII.

519. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

January 7, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

A nice long letter from you has arrived after a long interval. Let me point out your fault which is not the one you regard as such. Your fault lies in being too greedy. "Bapu is working for the Harijans, so I must do that too." Keep away from what Bapu has taken up and stick to what you were already doing. That too was service and consumed all your time. "Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed."[1] You should be satisfied with whatever falls to your lot. Greed even for good works is to be eschewed. "Excess is to be avoided in every matter." You can give up Harijan service even now. You wish to work for your "Bapu", don't you? Bapu will be fully satisfied with khadi work alone. Your attempt to do both jobs will deprive you of both as the body will be unable to stand the strain. Khadi work involves sufficient Harijan service; be content with this. You have to be above attachment. Greed is another name for attachment, this is my reading. If you do not concur, forget it. "Do as you wish." As you always do good you can never come to grief. God is ever with you, He will never forsake you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1695

520. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 8, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

Please read my letter to Hemprabha very carefully. It probably applies to you just as well as to her. I know your passion for doing all that I am doing, but there must be a limit somewhere. If I am doing many things, the reason is that so many forces combine to enable me to handle them. Not only so, I

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

merely seem to be doing them. In reality, it is Truth as God working through me. In that case, you are in no way called upon to undertake all my activities unless there is a definite clear call, and if there is such a call, you will not have to force your way to the work. It will come to you; and the way will be clear in front of you. But all this is by way of caution. You will do exactly as you like.

Now, about the Mandali. I do not like the description of the members. Instead of saying that they hold my views on religion and politics in reverence, it would be much better to state exactly the things that they approve. A general endorsement for a large body of men and women has no value. If each were to be examined separately as to what they hold in reverence and what they will endeavour to put into practice, the answer would be different. The first sentence is all-sufficing that the members want to serve the Harijans and rouse a sense of self-respect in them. You may define the scope of service beyond rousing a sense of self-respect in them. You can say what they will exactly do, and if they are to confine their work to the service of Harijans, then it is better to say that, and nothing more. The field is vast enough to occupy several thousand workers all the hours of the day for a number of years.

Then, again, why form any Mandali at all? You say that after all it is a branch of the Pratishthan. If that be so, it is cumbrous to have a new name and a constitution. The less pretentiousness there is, the better for the work in hand.

With love,

BAPU

SJT. SATISBABU
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1623; also S.N. 19192

521. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDAS,

In reply to your letter of the 4th, I sent you a telegram yesterday. I have revived my suggestion that the English edition at least should be published in Poona, and it can be published, not simultaneously with the Hindi, but on Fridays, if the Hindi is published on Mondays. The English edition may then be issued under my supervision, and would take in as much as may be necessary from the Hindi edition. All the facts and figures, reports and the like will be taken from the Hindi, and there will be original things also in it. In that case, you need not send anybody from there, if there is no one available. I fancy that I shall be able to get a local man, or more, to do the work.

I discussed this thing with Sjt. Thakkar yesterday and he approves of the idea. I then suggested that he should discuss it with you, but he said it would cause delay and that, therefore, I should transmit my views to you by the post. If you heartily approve of the idea, you may pursue it further, and may even come down here, if you think it necessary to discuss it. For this purpose you need not delay the Hindi edition. The English may come a week or two later.

I enclose herewith a telegram and a letter received from Lala Shamlal. I enclose also a copy of my reply[1].

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

C.W. 7917. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* the following item.

522. LETTER TO SHAMLAL

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR LALA SHAMLAL,

I have your letter[1]. I have forwarded it to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla. He can render very little assistance on the technical side. I do not know what he can do on the financial side.

I am also writing to Sjt. Shankerlal Banker.

It should be possible to provide you with an expert, but you won't get the work that you want out of an expert sent from outside the Punjab; and there seems to me to be something incongruous for the Punjab, where hand-spinning and hand-weaving are most known, to have to go out in search of an expert in these matters, and he being unfamiliar would find it very difficult to locate the spots where weaving operations may be started. An outside expert will be able only to examine and test wheels, looms and their products, but from your letter I gather that you want an organizer. I do not know a better organizer than yourself. But it is high time that the Punjab produced technical experts.

All this notwithstanding, I am sending a copy of your letter and my reply to Sjt. Shankerlal Banker and I have no doubt that he will do whatever is possible.

I should have thought that Harijans were least affected by famines, not being themselves agriculturists.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA SHAMLAL
ADVOCATE
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 1282; also S.N. 19190

[1] Dated January 3, 1933, which read: "Hissar District in the Punjab has been suffering from a devastating famine. . . . Harijans are suffering most . . . approaching you in the interests of Harijans to kindly instruct the All-India Spinners' Association to provide an expert for advising the spinners in the various centres as well as to make arrangements for the disposal of the yarn and start weaving operations in new centres" (S.N. 19155)

523. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

January 8, 1933

DEAR DR. SHARMA,

Amtussalaam tells me you are likely to pass through Sabarmati in the near future. I would like you to stay for a few months in the Ashram and make your experiments and at the same time observe if the Ashram-life suits you and you, the Ashram. If you cannot do this, stay, if you can, for a few days for Amtul Salaam's treatment. She has great faith in you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 15

524. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 5th instant. I hope you have received my previous letter[1] enclosing a copy of the one that went previous to that.

Can you supply me with a list of all the *Agamas* in vogue in the South? Are they available in translations?

I am quite aware of the verse you have quoted, but you are begging the question by regarding the so-called untouchables as outside the four divisions. There is no such thing as a fifth division. The burden lies on those who object to the admission of the so-called untouchables to show that they are untouchables in accordance with the Shastras; and my objection about the definition of Shastras and their interpretation still stands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

C.W. 9567. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

[1] *Vide* p. 364.

525. LETTER TO N. NARAYAN MURTHI[1]

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR NARAYAN MURTHI[2],

I thank you for your letter. I am glad that the Sree Raghunath Swami Temple of Berhampore is now really open to Harijans.

I take it that you are carrying on an agitation amongst Harijans for self-reform and for conforming to the common requisites of temple-entry—avoidance of beef and carrion, the taking of daily ablutions and the wearing of clean clothes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. NARAYAN MURTHI
THE BHARATI MANDALI
BERHAMPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 19202

526. LETTER TO S. MAHALINGA IYER

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[3]. I refer you to the extract[4] I have published in the Press regarding the entry of *avarnas* on the Karthigai Ekadasi day.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. MAHALINGA IYER
TOWN HIGH SCHOOL ROAD, KUMBAKONAM

From a microfilm: S.N. 19201

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated December 23, 1932 (S.N. 18790).

[2] Managing Editor, the *Bharathi Patrika*, a Telugu daily

[3] Dated January 1, 1933, which read: "In connection with the compromise proposals . . . permitting the entry of *avarnas* into the Guruvayur Temple, it appears it has been reported to you that the *avarni* classes have been allowed entry into the temple as of right on the Karthigai Ekadasi Day. I beg to bring to your notice that the report is incorrect, in view of the statement of the hereditary Chief Priest of the temple, Narayanan Nambudiripad" (S.N. 19161).

[4] *Vide* "Letter to the Zamorin of Calicut", pp. 328-9.

CWMG-LII

527. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your postcard. I shall go through your essay as soon as I get the time and write to you again if there is anything to say.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. G. V. KETKAR
PLEADER, NASIK CITY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19198

528. LETTER TO P. V. SESHU AIYAR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1]. Whilst your proposals are good in themselves, the propaganda for temple-entry has to go on side by side with the work suggested by you.

I am glad you wrote[2] to Sjt. Kelappan.

It was a pleasure to see your daughter with you. Please give her my regards.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. V. SESHU AIYER
PERUVAMBA
PALGHAT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19159

[1] Dated January 3, 1933, in which the addressee had proposed that those who had favoured temple-entry, if they owned tanks and wells, should open them to the Harijans and referendum on equal treatment to Harijans in respect of use of tanks, wells, temples, etc., be taken in villages (S.N. 19158)

[2] On January 3, 1933

529. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are silent, but I know that means overwork. Here is a copy of Rao Bahadur Seshu Aiyar's letter. There is much in his suggestions which I like. I have simply sent him an acknowledgment[1] saying that temple-entry propaganda should go side by side with the working of his suggestions wherever such work is feasible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19197

530. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

January 8, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I send you herewith a copy of Rao Bahadur Seshu Aiyar's letter for your consideration and remarks if you have any to offer.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19195

531. LETTER TO PROMODE BIHARI MATHUR

January 8, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2]. The practice you mention is by no means common all over India, but the remedy is surely in the hands of the householders. If they have got rid of the false notions of untouchability, they would dismiss a careless sweeper and do sweeping themselves. He can interfere with a new man coming, but he

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Dated January 2, 1933 (S.N. 19135).

dare not prevent the householder himself from doing his own cleaning. The evil is of our own creation and therefore we can deal with it without any difficulty.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PROMODE BIHARI MATHUR
KANUNGOYAN STREET, ALIGARH (U.P.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 19194

532. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

January 8, 1933

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got both your letters. I certainly did not want you to spend so much of your time in replying. I had merely forwarded[1] to you the letter which I had received. But your letter has certainly thrown more light on the problem.

I have nothing to write about the Chharas. Inform me by and by whether the step you have taken proves sufficient.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1235

533. LETTER TO DUDABHAI M. DAFDA

January 8, 1933

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I think we ought to get Lakshmi[2] married now. She gets frequent fainting fits and I believe they suggest marriage. Have a talk with her about this and then write to me. How are you getting on? How many pupils attend the school? Write to me occasionally.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3245

[1] *Vide* p. 270.

[2] Addressee's daughter whom Gandhiji had adopted and brought up in the Ashram

534. LETTER TO PARMANANDA K. KAPADIA

January 8, 1933

The explanation about Guruvayur is contained in your own statement. It is literally true that the issue is an offshoot of the withdrawal of the Cabinet decision. Ever since I came to India, I have been impressing on people the importance of a pledge, but I see that it is not readily accepted even by persons like you. At the time of the withdrawal of the decision, a pledge was taken in the name of the people under the leadership of a great man like Malaviyaji. Can we now forget the pledge even for a moment and still hope to win swaraj? People should now act with a greater sense of urgency for the removal of untouchability than they thought it necessary to do for the withdrawal of the decision. It would not matter if they do not succeed immediately. But the tempo of this campaign should be faster than that of the movement for the withdrawal of the decision. Why do you believe that swaraj is something apart from the eradication of untouchability? Swaraj is not like a straight rod. It is rather like a banyan tree. The latter has innumerable branches each of which is as important for the tree as the original trunk. Feeding any of them means feeding the tree. Nobody can lay down a rule as to which of the branches should be fed when. Circumstances determine that.

Kelappan's mistake was a very small one. If, after having persuaded him to give up his fast, I had abandoned him, I am sure all of you would have left me in the end. Anybody who forsakes an humble co-worker at a difficult hour is a man of straw.

Your other questions can be convincingly answered, but they lie outside the limits of my present freedom. If I am alive, I will explain them some other time. My fasts never spring from despair or frustration. They have their source in my undying optimism and intense faith. Nor are they as cheap as you think. If the last fast had not been postponed, I would have violated dharma. But I cannot explain all this fully just now. The fact is that I am making my experiment in the quest of truth along a new line altogether. New ideas, therefore, occur to me at every step—they are new even to me—and are placed before the nation. How can all of them be understood by the people immediately?

And I also cannot explain them freely. But truth does not require many words to explain it—if in fact it requires any. It has the power of spreading by itself, like the fragrance of a flower. The difference between the two is that fragrance disappears as quickly as it spreads, whereas truth continues to spread indefinitely and with even greater speed. Since we cannot measure that speed, we make the mistake of believing that truth does not spread. You should, therefore, have patience and faith and never give way to despair.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 27-9

535. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 8, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. Maganlal[1] must have taught you sufficiently well how to make a letter interesting. Should I now teach it all over again? A person who desires to make his letters interesting should himself be interested in everything round him, human beings, other creatures, trees, earth and sky. He should also have an interest in writing the letter to the man or the woman to whom it is addressed. If you had such interest, you would be making new discoveries every day. You can describe your home, the street, the work which the persons whom you meet do, the members of your family, your thoughts, the letters which you receive, animals, birds and hundreds of things like that. Mirabehn writes to me every week, and no letter of hers is shorter than ten pages. And remember she is in jail. Do you understand now [how to write interesting letters]?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. BENARSI,

What is the correct name, 'lal' or 'das'? I see Jamnalalji from time to time. I will convey your message to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9151

[1] Maganlal Gandhi, addressee's father

536. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Don't be altogether childish.

Do not forget that you have two duties. One duty is to pour out your heart to me. But one cannot do that duty mechanically. If the spring in your heart has dried up, what can you do? The other duty is to give a report of your work. That certainly can be done mechanically. Do that duty at any rate.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10321

537. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

January 8, 1933

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. Though you usually write frankly, your postcard this time is not frank enough. You seem to believe that Manibhai is a bad man. If that is so, you should state it plainly. I wrote[1] to you and told you that I did not know even that Manilal had complained. Do you have personal knowledge of his having complained? If you have it, your first duty as a gentleman and as a relation was to write to him. I am willing to write to him if you give me some evidence of his misdeeds. Apart from that, I don't know what to say about your suggestion as to whom I should put up with. I do not think that I am so good a man that I should never put up with a person whom the people believe to be a bad man. I myself am a bad man, and still I live in my house. Would it be proper for me, then, if I try to sit in judgment over others? Moreover, how can a man, who daily wanders from place to place and eats and sleeps at other people's places, afford to be too particular about the place where he puts up. I, therefore, follow one rule, namely, to regard all strangers as my kith and kin. My own relations remain so in

[1] *Vide* pp. 301-2.

any case. I do not agree with the principle, if you have laid down any such for yourself, that one must not lodge a criminal complaint against one's relations, no matter what wicked things they do, but one may do so against strangers. However that may be, I ought to tell you, as I told Khimchand some months ago, that I have not the least trust in him. You may also know that Manilal is not the cause of my distrust. It is Khimchand's own letters one after another which have increased my distrust of him. You may see now how much worry and trouble you have created for me. And still you ask for forgiveness, but I don't think, you expect to receive it. But you are free to do whatever you like and so are safe.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5816. Also C.W. 3039. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

538. LETTER TO VIMALCHANDRA V. DESAI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NANU,

I was very glad to get your letter. Write such letters often. It would be better if you write with pen and ink.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5758. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

539. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

January 8, 1933

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letter and the leaflet. Your interpretation of the dream is all right. We have so many things which are real and true that we need little help from anything seen in a dream.

I am waiting for news of your marriage. Chhaganbhai is with us at present. Jamnalalji also is in this jail, though not with me. He is in excellent health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6543

CWMG - LUL

540. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your large packet.

After reading Prema's letter, I feel that we should get Lakshmi married immediately. I have written to Lakshmidas and told him that, if Marulia has changed his mind, he has a right to do so. I think it will also be good if Prema writes to him and tells him about the special circumstances of Lakshmi. If Marulia has changed his mind, we will think what to do.

Post the accompanying letter[1] to Dudabhai. And please send me his address.

Read the letter to Liladhar and then pass it on to him. Take him back if he agrees to behave well. I leave the matter entirely to your decision. I assume that, if Liladhar comes to live in the Ashram, you will entrust him with some work.

Ask the doctor why Kusum's injection turned septic. How long will she have to take the injections?

I had agreed with what you had written about Bhikhabhai and Balwant. I, therefore, did not say anything in reply. Thus the reason was not that I had any doubt in my mind.

There is still no letter regarding Amina's children.

I am expecting Pyare Ali's letter in a day or two.[2]

Please let the Muslim lady who has come from Ajmer stay there for the present. Write to Pyare Ali about her. Read out our rules to her. She may stay there as long as she is ready to observe them. Tell her that, meanwhile, we are inquiring about other places where she can stay. If there is an institution for Muslim women in Ahmedabad itself, you should try to get her admitted there. Know from her all details about her, whether or not she has been educated, where she was brought up, etc.

[1] *Vide* p. 398.

[2] The following was added at this point by Mahadev Desai before the letter was despatched: "Pyare Ali's reply was received today. He says that he cannot keep the children. Now discuss the matter with Qureshi. Bapu thinks that for the present the best thing would be that they should accompany Aminabehn daily to Sharda Mandir."

Such cases will turn up again and again. Even if, instead of becoming what we intend it to be, the Ashram becomes only a place of refuge, we shall not lose heart. I am not sure if, by rejecting such persons who throw themselves on us, we would not be committing violence. But in taking any decision in this matter, we should of course take into account our capacity, our rules, our aim, etc. After considering all these factors, do what you think best. There is no absolute dharma in this matter. If in the last resort we have to be guided by the principles of truth and non-violence in all that we do, we must sometimes relax the rules framed by ourselves. But the final decision will be entirely yours. Treat my opinions and sermons as so much weaving of words. You may use them only for coming to your own decisions.

Prabhudas can leave Almora. We should draw a lesson from this, that the place can be looked after even if nobody stays there. And in any case the boys are there. I am sure the expenditure has come down now. I am glad that, while he is in his present very unsettled state of mind, he lives at Wardha. And, moreover, he will be marrying shortly. Let him, therefore, remain at Wardha so long as the expenditure is not excessive.

I understand what you say about a well near the river bed. I know Malik's[1] goodness. Convey my *vandemataram* to him and thank him on my behalf. Soniramji[2] had written to me and promised to pay up to Rs. 5,000 towards the cost of a well. It is possible that I do not remember the figure correctly, but I have no doubt about the promise itself. Write to him, therefore, for the money required for the well. He may send the actual amount spent or the amount which he had promised.

Do what you think proper about Hariyomal. I think that we have no choice but to let him stay as often as he comes. What you say about him is quite right, of course. But how can we reject him if he is so importunate?

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you still receive the annual remittance for Mirabehn? If you do, let me know what the amount is.

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] City Engineer, Ahmedabad Municipality

[2] Business man from Rangoon, a khadi worker

541. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Send again, with anybody who may be coming here, a piece of leather for repairing the soles of the sandals. There is no hurry. I hope Prema has calmed down.

Teach that lady, M. Edith, everything, if she agrees to learn. Read my letter to her.

If you have heard anything regarding the Chharas, please let me know.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are in all 26 letters, tied together.

[From Gujarati]

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

542. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

January 8, 1933

CHI. VALJI,

I got your letter. I do not doubt that a referendum would result in your favour. Have I ever expressed such a doubt? My objection is not of that kind. I do not want to have my opinion[1] put before the people for their judgment. It is above their opinion. The real question is what you can give to the people. Your pen should produce something unique which would still be popular. This is not beyond your capacity. If, however, you are not convinced of this, why don't you print it? It can never be my wish that you must respect my view.

Has your health improved? Has the air of that place agreed with all of you? Give me a short account of your experience there.

I have asked Chhaganlal to go through your book.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7445. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] About *Ishucharita*; *vide* Vol. LI, pp. 258-60.

543. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

January 8, 1933

BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. One can say that there is a rush for admission. Try to acquire the art of learning even if you have no teacher. Increase your knowledge whenever you can learn it yourself. After thinking write to me what you can all study by yourselves and what each boy or girl wants to study.

BAPU

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

544. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

January 8, 1933

CHI. VIMAL[1],

Here is some coloured paper for you. I got your letter, it is good. Children like you do not need any rice. But you are used to it and if you cannot give it up you may certainly eat it. But eat only a little quantity.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 3423. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 6101

545. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 8, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. Very well, henceforth I shall never ask you to follow Narandas's advice. How fine it would be if you became well by going away somewhere! Stick to milk and fruit. You have no need to take *roti* and rice. Take plenty of rest. You do have warm clothes, I hope. I am writing[2] to the doctor. It would be to my liking even if he for your sake delays leaving.

[1] Son of Parashuram Mehrotra

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. Hiralal Sharma", p. 394.

Why don't you write anything about Kudsia these days? How is she keeping now? May God make you well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 270

546. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 8, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You are right. I do commit many mistakes. I get absolutely no time for reading. Letters to you and Zohra are the only [Urdu] lessons I have. What can I do? That I do at least this much is something. Must a sick person like you attend a wedding? Wouldn't the wedding have taken place if you had kept away? What sort of justice is that even sick people must perforce attend weddings? Anyway, I hope you are better now. What does '*tuk*' mean in that *bhajan*? Our respects to Father and Mother. There is no letter from Hamida yet.[1] Sohaila must be all right. Kamal Miyan must be flourishing. I acknowledge your kiss. I am treasuring them all. My kiss to Kamal and to you, too, if you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu and Gujarati: S.N. 9662

547. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 9, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

I had your letter. God be thanked that you are steadily improving under Dr. Bidhan's kind care. May you be completely restored.

We all often think and talk about you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 26

[1] In the source, up to this the letter is in Urdu; what follows is in Gujarati.

548. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

January 9, 1933

CHI. NIRMALA,

I got your letter. I had received the extract from Gomati's letter which you had sent to me. But I have not yet heard from Gomati herself. If she has not written to me, ask her to write. If you can write to Kishorelal immediately, tell him that I have written a postcard to him today. It is only about the use of fenugreek seeds and the name 'Sukruta'. I hope you received my previous letter[1]. It contained messages for Kishorelal and Gomati. You need not, out of compassion for me, refrain from writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1007. Courtesy: Nirmala Shroff

549. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

January 9, 1933

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have preserved your letter of the 23rd. Are you better now? What treatment is being given to you there? Does your diet include fruits?

Others who do not know me may believe, but how can you believe that I would be such a spendthrift as to risk my life without any reason? Even when you have a doubt, you should not let it grow in your mind without putting it before me. Won't you be my advocate and tell people this: 'Till we have discussed the matter with this old youngster, we should not form an unfavourable opinion about any of his steps?' Doesn't law also require this?

Sardar read your books with great interest. I will certainly read those two, and try to read the others.

[1] *Vide* pp. 342-3.

Regards from us to all co-workers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7524. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

550. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You will find with this a letter from Kanhaiyalal to Ghanshyamdasji. Do you know anything about it? If you do not, it was improper for an inmate of the Ashram to have applied for help to an outsider, particularly to a friend of the Ashram. Kanhaiyalal himself may not have been aware of any impropriety when writing the letter, but this incident makes it necessary to warn everybody. It is assumed that those who join the Ashram do so in a spirit of renunciation. Hence, while they live in the Ashram, they should not seek help from outside even for their work of service. When giving such a warning to the inmates of the Ashram, it is not necessary to mention Kanhaiyalal's name. I am writing to him too.

I have already written[1] to you suggesting that Jamna should try fenugreek seeds. A letter from Kishorelal just received gives a little more information. The discovery about the efficacy of these seeds is his own. He eats about 20-25 seeds in the morning and the same number in the evening. He roasts them till they become red. He says that they may even be eaten fried in ghee. There is a possibility that they may bring about constipation. If that happens, Jamna may reduce the quantity. If 20-25 seeds have no effect, she can increase the quantity up to 50-60 grains. Kishorelal had started with that number. The asthma was cured, but he reduced the quantity because he found that the seeds had caused constipation. Jamna should first try the seeds without frying them. If necessary, she may afterwards try fried seeds.

Mahadev tells me that this experiment is worth trying on Chimanlal and Babu also.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 335-6.

551. LETTER TO A SANATANI

January 9, 1933

Truth, exclusive devotion to non-violence and cow-protection are the chief points of Hinduism. One who neglects them is no more a Hindu. I have felt no need for the sacred thread and no one should be asked to wear it. One who has lost the qualities of a Brahmin no longer deserves the prerogative of a Brahmin. Why should such nominal Brahmins be fed? Only the common simple *mantras* are essential in the wedding ceremony. They have been given in *Navajivan*.[1] I have no faith in the custom of *shraddha* as it is observed these days.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 29-30

552. LETTER TO GIRDHAR SHASTRI

January 9, 1933

I have your letter. I do accept the Shastras as authoritative. But no one gives me a list of the works and my observation so far does not even suggest the possibility of such a list. That is why the *Gita* is my refuge. I try to be courteous in whatever I undertake. But I try harder to make courtesy consistent with truth. What more can I say?

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 30

553. LETTER TO NANASAHEB KHASGIWALE

January 9, 1933

I believe in the injunctions of the Shastras, as also in custom and the practice of respected men and women. But the inner voice springs from the cumulative effect of all these. It is the moving force behind the whole world. It is no exclusive virtue or defect

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXX, p. 88 and Vol. XLI, pp. 402-5.

of mine. My inner voice may certainly be imperfect, as everybody else's. That is why man has been regarded as the embodiment of errors.

If there truly exists an untouchable class in the human race I am striving to be born only into that and no other.

My whole inclination is towards a revival of the varnashrama dharma; I have no doubt about it.

To spend thought or anything else on an irrelevant matter is against my nature.

Devotion to Krishna is the keynote of my life; and sanatan dharma is my very life-breath. One day those who at present call themselves sanatanists will accept the truth of this avowal of mine.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 30

554. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 9, 1933[1]

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am told that the telegram I sent about you has reached you. I was expecting a letter from you to follow it but nothing has come. My letters of course do not reach you. From a letter from Krishna received only today I learn that you are having fits. I am very sorry. I shall enquire about your condition from the Superintendent too. You must be getting letters from Jayaprakash. He is always cheerful. Chhaganlal Joshi has joined me now and we are all doing well. My weight is 103 lb. and the diet consists of 2 lb. milk, *mosambis*, oranges, dates and papaya. And of course there is honey. I maintain good health on this. The pain in the elbow is there but that is an old story. There is no need at all to worry on that account.

I have to devote a great deal of time to Harijan work and the government have sent Chhaganlal Joshi to assist me in this work.

How is Kanta? Who else is with you? What is your diet these days?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3431

[1] The original has "1932", which is evidently a slip.

555. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

January 9, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is incomprehensible why my letters do not reach you. Neither of the two letters addressed to Calcutta and Lahore reached you. The address on both was exactly the one you sent. Let us see the fate of this letter. The news about the improvement in Dr. Saheb's health is immensely pleasing. May God make him perfectly healthy. The country is in great need of his services. Keep me posted with all the news even though Dr. Saheb is able to write. Your letters take the place of Urdu lessons for me. Raihana and Zohra are already giving me such lessons. We are all well. We are four now. The Government have sent Chhaganlal Joshi from the Ashram to assist me. I have to devote a lot of time for Harijan work these days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 26

556. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

Immediate *January 10, 1933*

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I had hoped to receive your answer by this time (11 a.m.) in reply to my inquiry about Appasaheb Patwardhan. I would like you please to answer my query today and allay, if you will, the growing anxiety.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (6), p. 323

557. LETTER TO R. V. PATWARDHAN

January 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1]. I think you have mixed argument with curses and you have addressed your argument to a state of things that does not exist. I would therefore ask you to adopt a dispassionate attitude and study this question as a student studies and works at problems. If you will do that, many of the eight points that you have raised will fall to pieces. For instance, when you have studied the question dispassionately and properly you will discover as to your first point that there is no question of 'molesting' a single Hindu temple; as to your second point that there is no legislation attempted in the matter of temple-entry, what is attempted is to remove an artificial barrier created by a foreign Court of Law; as to the third, that you should say with me those who seek equity or justice should come with clean hands.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19210

[1] Dated December 9, 1933 which read: "I solemnly warn you that you do not appear to be acting as a God-fearing Hindu; and although you may succeed in forcing the entry of the untouchables into our temples . . . all honest sanatanists will always regard your act as a sacrilegious deed becoming an atheist . . ." (S.N. 19206).

558. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA GUHA

January 10, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 2nd instant.[1] Upon hurried reading I can find nothing to suggest and you will excuse me for not giving more concentration to your letter. I have no spare time.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SARAT CHANDRA GUHA
KALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 19212

559. LETTER TO N. H. PURANDARE

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR PURANDARE,

I have your letter. I am sorry for the mistakes that still remain in your book[2]. As to the remuneration, I have accepted, without demur, the figure mentioned by Haribhau. I hope that the amount has been paid to you already. Five copies of any new edition for the translation should certainly be given to you. I hope you have five copies of the first edition. I don't like the spirit of the rest of your letter. There never can be any question of anyone making a personal profit. It is not practicable to charge only the cost price. To charge the cost price would be to ensure a loss, because many copies will have to be given free of charge. There would also be lying a dead stock. Some commission will have

[1] The addressee, Secretary, Removal of Untouchability Tour Party, Hindu Mission, Calcutta, in his letter (S.N. 19136) had given an account of the untouchability work being done by the Hindu Mission and had stated that untouchability removal oath was being administered "at the instance of the Hindu Mission through their own workers and preachers throughout Bengal and Assam". In the end he had sought Gandhiji's suggestions "for further work".

[2] Based on the addressee's lectures and published by the Maharashtra Prantik Mandal; the addressee in his letter dated January 7, 1933 (S.N. 19181) had complained about a number of mistakes in the book in spite of his having already pointed them out at the proof stage. The book was a refutation of the orthodox case in favour of untouchability.

to be paid to book-sellers. I could understand all that you have said in your letter if you were dealing with a commercial firm. Please draft and let me have the letter you want for five books and I shall get it signed by Sjt. A. V. Thakkar as Secretary of the Servants of Untouchables Society.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. H. PURANDARE
POONA 2

From a microfilm: S.N. 19209

560. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON[1]

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I have your letter. Of course permission to Harijans and others during the non-*pooja* hours is perfectly useless. The permission must be during *pooja* hours. As a matter of fact, where there is a will, there is a way. Each *pooja* time may be divided, half of which would be for the general public and the other half for the objectors. The period allotted to each will be regulated according to the numbers, or, as you suggest, some *pooja* periods may be allotted to the general public and some to the objectors: but of course it may be that in working out details my suggestion is impracticable. If it is found to be practicable, the objection as to keeping up untouchability can easily be met[2]. I have already partly dealt with it through an Associated Press message[3]. As to the freedom of Ekadasi, I have already quoted from the judgment you refer to in my letter to the Zamorin[4] which has been published already.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19213

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's dated January 5, 1933 (S.N. 19163).

[2] The source has "made out".

[3] *Vide* pp. 374-5.

[4] *Vide* pp. 328-9.

561. LETTER TO S. PONNAMMAL

January 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I was very much touched by your letter[1]. I am still unable to know why you should be getting only Rs. 8 per month. Is it possible for you to see Sjt. K. Madhavan Nair? I am writing to him and sending him a copy of your letter. He may even find you out instead of putting you to the trouble of going to him. If it is not a matter of much distance between Calicut and your place, the matter is simple. If it is a long distance to be covered, it may be difficult for you. I quite see that full use is not being made of your talents. Is your letter your own composition?

Yours sincerely,

S. PONNAMMAL
PATTERI HOUSE
CALICUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 19211

562. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

January 10, 1933

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I enclose herewith a copy of a letter from Mrs. Ponnammal and a copy of my letter to her. Do please try to see her, and if you feel that she is a deserving woman, she ought to be relieved of the burden that she has, and her very simple wants must be assured to her. She seems to me to be a worker of a rare type, but

[1] Dated January 3, 1933 in which the addressee, a widow teaching in Lady Chandavarkar Primary School, Calicut, at Rs. 8 per month, had explained that she found it impossible to carry on with only Rs. 8 per month. The letter had explained that after school hours she had been teaching poor people music, folk dances and reading and writing, etc., and had added: "I feel that if I am relieved of my school work and if there is help for my personal living expense which is very little, and house-rent, I might be able to show some really good work" (S.N. 19186).

from this distance I may be exaggerating her merits. You will please guide me.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19207

563. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

January 10, 1933

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

I have your letter.[1] I am sorry to learn that the improvement has not been continuous and that even the diagnosis may be incorrect. You will please tell me what Dr. Deshmukh said when he last saw you.

I wish you had not worried about untouchability. The first three points deserve consideration. About the 4th, you should wait and watch my statement[2]. I have no such fear as you have. Interdining and intermarriage would be most dangerous interpolations. They can never form part of a campaign against untouchability, but they will be part of a campaign against unnatural caste distinctions and caste conception. It is a reform which must stand altogether separately.

Nos. 7 to 13 are suggestions outside the scope of my consideration. Actual execution of the reform I cannot control from here. If you have energy for all these things, you should write to the secretary of the local organization, but I would warn you against putting any strain upon what little energy might still be left in you. You should conserve it for regaining your past health and not spend it up from day to day.

Yours sincerely,

LALA GIRDHARILAL
ESPLANADE ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19208

[1] Dated January 7, 1933. It contained the following four points: "(1) If all leaders and prominent men who are interesting themselves in the movement made it a point, when visiting places, to live or stay with Harijan people only, it will be a practical step and very effective in its results. . . . (2) Similarly when Harijan leaders and workers travel they should be made guests of high-caste Hindus and not allowed to stay with their own class as it is understood, and as is the general practice now. (3) This qualified separate admission to temples of Harijans at separate hours has the stamp of inferiority complex about it. The purification is another distinction difficult to gulp down. (4) Equal emphasis should be laid on interdining and intermarriages which automatically result in temple-entry . . ." (S.N. 19183).

[2] *Vide* Vol. LIII, "Confusing the Issue", 4-3-1933.

564. LETTER TO D. N. SHIKHARE[1]

January 10, 1933

DEAR MR. SHIKHARE,

I have your letter enclosing a summary of the discussion you had with me about temple-entry. I now enclose the corrected version.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. N. SHIKHARE
THE KESARI AND THE MAHRATTA OFFICE
POONA 2

From a microfilm: M.M.U./XXII

565. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

January 10, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

There is no need for pomegranates for the time being. Sardar has stopped eating them for some time. I will not fail to write to you and ask you to send them when they are needed.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 4827. Courtesy: Premlila Thakersey

566. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

January 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kanaiyalal and his wife came and saw me. Kailas did not come. I was glad that the former two came. I got the piece of leather. It is too thin for the soles, and certainly so for the heels.

[1] In his letter dated January 8, 1933 (M.M.U./XXII) the addressee had sought Gandhiji's permission to publish the interview with him on "last Thursday".

I didn't require any leather for repairing the upper side of the sandals. I got the slivers too. We have several copies of *Satyarthaprakash* in the Ashram. Send me one of them with anybody who may be coming here. I want the edition which contains 14 *samullasas*[1].

Since Pyare Ali cannot take charge of the children, let Amina take them with her to Sharda Mandir.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters on Amina, Champa and Manekbehn are enclosed.

[From Gujarati]

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

567. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 10, 1933

CHI. HARIBHAU,

Why have you written or dictated no letter to me? You seem to be taking a long time to recover after the operation. How are you now? What was the trouble? How is the nursing? What is the news about Rohit Mehta?

I often see Jamnalalji. He keeps good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6074. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

568. DIARY, 1933

JANUARY 1, 1933, SUNDAY

Letters—Lady Thackersey, Ambaram, Jhinabhai, Vidyadevi, Shyamnarayan Kapur, Ramdas, Jamnalalji, Haridas, Gokaldas, David. [About] untouchability—Vasukaka Joshi, Suryakant, Subbaroyan, the Zamorin, Ghanshyamdas, Chintamani, Hiralal Nanavati.[2]

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 19337

[1] Chapters

[2] The remaining pages of the exercise book are blank.

CWMG - LII

ADDENDA

1. LETTER TO THE SANATANISTS[1]

December 11, 1932

You may convert me if you can. But I cannot accept the decision of the Parishad in a religious matter as final.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 319

2. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

December 19, 1932

I am not going to judge my friends. I can only convey to them my own feeling and leave them to correct themselves where my different opinion may appeal to them. I am satisfied if by your action in Bombay you did no violence to your conscience. But I would like one promise from you. Even when you will not publicly oppose me, do warn me privately. The warning may produce no visible effect on me. But I am very receptive. Such warnings have always helped me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 360

3. LETTER TO FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN

January 2, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

We were all very happy to read your sweet but lisping Gujarati and had a hearty laugh over it. Though sometimes I feel like quarreling with Parsi men and women for their defective Gujarati, still I like their sweet Gujarati very much. And I would

[1] This letter was in reply to a joint letter from the addressees in which they had stated that they were willing to hold a Parishad of the pundits, but had asked Gandhiji whether he would accept their decision.

[2] For further discussion on the subject, *vide* Appendix XIX.

like to keep a whip ready for one who knows even a bit of Gujarati but writes to me in English. I hope both of you are all right. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

FEROZABEHN TALEYARKHAN
NAZIR HOUSE
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From Gujarati: C.W. 9777

CWMG - LII

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

DISCUSSION WITH "THE TIMES OF INDIA" REPRESENTATIVE[1]

November 21, 1932

REPRESENTATIVE: Have you decided to devote the rest of your life to eradication of untouchability?

GANDHIJI: I cannot say that that is my present intention or that there is a possibility of it. It is wholly true to say that my life is devoted to this most important reform of Hindu dharma. But then my life is devoted to so many other things. I cannot divide my life into water-tight compartments. My life is indivisible. The root of all my activities is the same. In every sphere of life, be it small or big, my aim is to promote truth and ahimsa. This morning I read an article appearing in *The Times of India*. I would like to say something about it. I wish to correct an error in your editorial. It is not correct to say that all the questions regarding giving social rights to Harijans are covered by temple-entry. Temple-entry is just one of the many questions. If today it has come to the fore it is not because of me. At my request Shri Kelappan has given up his fast. So I am under an obligation to help him. Therefore, naturally, I have to do all I can to attract public attention to Guruvayur and see that before the second of January, the famous temple is thrown open to Harijans. The fast will be only to get that temple opened and no other. The fast will not be of my choosing. Only if Shri Kelappan is obliged to fast, it becomes my duty to undertake a fast too. In the effort to have the temple opened to Harijans, there is no thought of coercing any section of society. According to the information I have—and I have no cause to doubt the truth of it—many caste Hindus are in favour of throwing open the temples to Harijans. If this is so, it cannot be said that there was coercion. It may be kept in mind that though this question was put before the public only recently, Shri Kelappan and his associates have been working for it for a long time. And if he has won the public over to his view, it has not happened in a few days. It is the result of many years of sustained work.

R. Is your duty towards Shri Kelappan so great that if he undertakes a fast you must stake your life?

[1] *Vide* p. 33.

G. If I lose self-respect, I would at once become useless for any kind of service. I do not consider it a great thing to risk my life to keep a pledge made in all awareness in a just cause.

R. Do you consider this of more importance than the work you are doing for the Harijan cause?

G. Once I have violated a pledge, my life would be of no use to Harijans. But if in keeping a vow I have to die, it will be in my view a precious thing not only for the Harijans, not only for Hinduism, but, I humbly submit, for the whole of India and the entire world.

R. Since you do not believe in image-worship, why are you taking so much trouble to have the right of image-worship given to Harijans?

G. I don't think I have ever said that I have no faith in image-worship. I don't remember that there is anything of this sort in my articles either. What I have repeatedly said is that I am both an iconoclast and an idolator. Is it not a very different thing from saying that I have no faith in image-worship? But if someone says that I hardly ever go to a temple, it will be quite true. I would not like to go into the reasons why I don't visit the temples. But I will say this: that my religion is so all-embracing that I go with the same devotion to a Hindu temple, a Muslim mosque, a Christian church or a Jewish synagogue. I have never gone to any of these places as an atheist or a critic, but always with full devotion.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 261-2

APPENDIX II

DISCUSSION WITH "FREE PRESS" REPRESENTATIVE[1]

December 3, 1932

1. From the point of view of the duty of the caste Hindus the question of Guruvayur is not a small one. It is wholly wrong to use the phrase 'uplift of Harijans'. According to me, the first duty of the caste Hindus towards the Harijans is to throw open all the temples to them which are open to others.

2. I would not place the responsibility for temple-entry on the Anti-Untouchability League. Before the League was born, the question of Guruvayur was before the people. The League should certainly do as much as it can about the matter. But if the temple is not thrown open within the time fixed for it, the Sangh would not deserve to be castigated more than the other institutions.

[1] *Vide* p. 112.

3. If it is proved that Guruvayur is a private temple, there can be no ground for the fast.

4. If the reformers are truthful and humble, they can bring about a change of heart in the sanatanists. They should bear in mind that before they became reformers they were sailing in the same boat with the sanatanists.

5. Reformers are trying their best to cultivate public opinion. And as a reformer myself, I think that public opinion has veered towards the reform to a considerable degree. I do not believe at all that most of the Hindus are under the influence of *dharmacharyas*. They listen to the Shankaracharya and other *acharyas* only to the extent it suits them. Suppose the Shankaracharya issues an injunction that nobody should drink liquor, do you think everyone will abide by it? If the *dharmacharyas* themselves observe restraint, then only can they make others do so.

6. I cannot wait to see myself fully restored before I undertake the fast. I believe that it will be at the command of God. When my body is weak, I am better able to stand fasting.

7. Millions of people—if they love me—will be distressed by my fast. They will raise such a powerful voice that it will become irresistible. There is a war between me and untouchability. If you want me to live, untouchability has to go. If you want untouchability to stay, I have to die.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 302-3

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE[1]

INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE,
BOMBAY PRESIDENCY,
POONA,
December 4, 1932

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I am in receipt of your letter of today for which many thanks. I shall convey its contents, tomorrow, personally to Government. There is one point, a very important point, to my mind, on which we were agreed, which you have not touched on in your letter, it is, that the present practice of employing so-called 'low-caste' prisoners is of very wide import, and that you realize it cannot at present be altered. I feel I shall have a stronger case, if I have your confirmation of this in writing. I am sorry to worry you on your day of silence, especially after the strain of interviewing the Deputation, but I am

[1] *Vide* p. 115.

sure you will appreciate that I desire to have all my points absolutely correct, when I place your case before Government tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. DOYLE

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108–Poll., p. 22, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX IV

DISCUSSION WITH POONA SANATANISTS[1]

December 7, 1932

GANDHIJI: Temple-entry is a purely religious question. I have never regarded it as a question of expediency. For me religion is practice. Every Hindu has the right to go to a temple. The rules regarding personal hygiene apply to all. The custom of admitting Hindus of one particular class into temples has been in vogue for many years. But which Hindus should be admitted into a temple and which not is not a religious question. About this only the temple-goers should be consulted. Dharmashastras should not be brought in. The few who are left out should not coerce others. They should build another temple for themselves. From what study I have made of my religion, I feel that for those who are not permitted in other temples the temple should be opened for a few hours. True religion is that which leads to spiritual progress and for which we are ready to sacrifice everything. The temple should be thrown open for 'touchables' for a few hours; but if the reformers are few it cannot be thrown open to untouchables. The question of minority and majority arose from my fast. In answer to those who doubted if the majority wanted temples to be opened to untouchables, a referendum was suggested. If you prove beyond doubt that temple-entry by untouchables is against the Shastras, I shall be helpless.

QUESTION: Do you promise to listen to the *Shastris* if they secure a 51 per cent majority?

G. I would give up the fast today if you prove it to be *adharma.*

Q. Would you consider this opportunity for a discussion with the *Shastris*?

G. Whether it is my good luck or bad luck, you people have come here because of my fast. I had resolved that it was our duty to throw open the temples. I decided this long ago. I met the *Shastris* at Vaikom. They showed me *Shankara Smriti* and translated it too. But there was nothing in it to support what the *Shastris* said. I shall, of course, listen to you, since you have come

[1] *Vide* p. 133.

to throw new light on the question; but, in the course of discussion I will not give up the resolve to fast. I read through many *granthas* and their translations and in the end decided that that which stands the test of ahimsa and truth is dharma. I did not go to the *Gita*, instead the *Gita* came to me. The *Gita* is for me an independent support. To save myself from all sorts of criticisms, I fell back on my faith, reason and *bhakti*. If what you say appeals to my reason, I shall say that I have lost on the rational plane. Then I shall depend on my heart. You will have to satisfy my heart.

Q. Will it not follow that what appeals to your heart is your dharma?

G. Whatever appeals to a man's heart is dharma to him. Dharma cannot be reached by the intellect. It can only be reached by the heart. That is why it is for fools too. The question of temple-entry is purely religious. To alter my views is very difficult indeed because behind my views is a past. An ordinary man cannot decide what is and what is not dharma as regards temple-entry. It would be a mistake on my part to advocate temple-entry, if I regard it as *adharma*. But after a prolonged study and experience I have come to believe that it is our religious duty to throw open the temples to Harijans. I do not want to force on others what I have decided for myself. But I tell you that if your heart does not rebel against the existing tradition, I will be forced to undertake a fast. If it rebels, there will be no need for me to undertake it. I have already decided for myself. People have to decide for themselves.

Q. How can we appeal to your heart?

G. It is the teacher's duty to convey the lesson to the student. How to do it, is the teacher's look out. If he does not know this, how can he be called a teacher? Where am I to look for the guru? The guru should find me. If I go in search of him, I may stumble. Man does not have to go in quest of God. If we have to go in quest of Him, is It God? God finds His servants and devotees.

Q. Please talk in Sanskrit.

G. I am an ignoramus. If I were a pundit like you, I would not have allowed you to come here or I would have locked you up. I would have said, 'Go away, my study of Shastras is different from yours.'

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 310-3

APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM DR. B. C. ROY[1]

36 WELLINGTON STREET,
CALCUTTA,
December 12, 1932

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Your letter reached me yesterday. I heard from Mr. Khaitan the details of the discussion he had with you regarding the Bengal Anti-Untouchability Board. You told him that you were going to write to me. After hearing Mr. Khaitan, I was prepared for a letter from you such as you have sent me. Before I proceed further, you will allow me to mention that the position of the Presidentship of the Bengal Board was not of my seeking and I now know that Mr. Birla had, after consultation with you and with your approval, selected me as President. When the call came, I agreed, in spite of my imperfections and my other pre-occupations. I do not forget also that the whole scheme originated with you and friends who met at Poona and, therefore, when these friends wanted me to do so, I accepted the responsibility. You asked me to be the President because you were then convinced that I could do the work. Now that you do not feel so sure and want me to withdraw, I gladly do so. I am writing to Mr. Birla today offering my resignation. It is no matter of self-abnegation for me, because I have never in my life occupied any place or position for a moment when those who have it in their gift desired that I should not continue to do so.

You have, in your letter, suggested that I should call all workers representing different groups and parties and let them choose whomsoever they like as President. May I point out to you that under the constitution of the League, the President of the Central Board nominates the Presidents of the Provincial Boards, who in their turn nominate the members of the Provincial Boards. I have no power to dissolve the Board already formed in Bengal. It is not, therefore, possible for me to follow your instructions even if I desired to, but I am referring the whole matter to Mr. Birla, the President of the All-India Board for him to take such action as he chooses.

You say in your letter: 'But I see that the idea has not found favour in Bengal.' I feel it my duty to inform you that in Bengal there are many parties and groups, besides those led by Syt. Satis Das Gupta and Dr.

[1] *Vide* pp. 139, 201, 207 and 384.

Suresh Banerji, who are interested in removal of untouchability and who are doing very valuable work now. We framed the Bengal Board very carefully and, as Syt. Debi Prasad Khaitan must have told you, the Board was representative of the various groups. Many of the district bodies already in existence have written to us signifying their desire to co-operate with the Board and in fact we have had no refusal except, as Syt. Khaitan told you, from Messrs Das Gupta and Banerji, though each had different reasons. As you, however, seem to think that in Bengal a Board cannot function effectively unless with the co-operation of Syt. Das Gupta and Dr. Banerji, which they have refused to give, there is no option left but to dissolve the Board.

As the work of the League has already begun in Bengal, it would be difficult for me and the members of my Board to explain the position unless I get your permission to send this letter and the first paragraph of your letter to the Press. I hope you have no objection.

Yours sincerely,
B. C. Roy

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 77-8

APPENDIX VI

LETTER FROM E. E. DOYLE TO R. M. MAXWELL[1]

Poona,
December 8, 1932

MY DEAR MAXWELL,

I had hardly put down the receiver after telephoning you, when I received a communication from Gandhi—further "mahseer wriggle"—I attach a copy of his letter, I shall send the original by Registered Post tomorrow, as the alterations are in his own handwriting, and it is much too important a document to chance going astray in the Post.

As soon as I received his letter I went down to Yeravda and found him interviewing a 'deputation'—however I got him apart and had a real talk—I told him straight that there was not a vestige of truth in the statement, as far as I was aware, that so-called high-caste prisoners had been doing conservancy work for several months in Ratnagiri Prison and that I had not issued any orders stopping this work. Also that when I saw him last he had appreciated Government's inability to give a reply "off-hand", and realized that if this question was to be *considered on an all-India basis* and *thoroughly* examined it must take time—and that I had reported this to Government. After a great deal of hedging and talk I got him to alter his letter as

[1] *Vide* p. 145.

shown. I cannot help feeling that he is funking his so-called "contemplated fast" on the 2nd January and is casting round for any excuse to get out of it.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. DOYLE

Home Department, Political, File No. 31/108-Poll., p. 30, 1932. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX VII

DISCUSSION WITH MACRAE[1]

December 12, 1932

GANDHIJI: I don't think there is anything special I can say at the moment. I think, for the present, we should leave the question of wells. If at all I can say something, it will be about the fast. You may ask me about that.

MACRAE: What have you to say about the allegation that through this you impose your opinion on others?

G. My answer to this question will also cover what you have said about the resolution concerning my fast. Shri Jamnadas Mehta has perfect right to make the criticism he has made. But I do not accept his allegations. I have never tried to impose my views on others. I have never imposed my views even on the closest co-workers. But it has so happened that, despite my having admitted that I have committed Himalayan blunders, my views on many things have been proved correct. For me the question of untouchability is forty years old. Ever since, I have been facing opposition on this score. It has come not only from outsiders but also from my family members—old and young. But the views I have been holding and putting into practice for the last 45 years have been commonly accepted. Today, if my sanatanist friends charge that I have been forcing my views on the public or on the sanatanists, there is not much substance in the charge. Looking at the history of mankind, we find that whenever an individual has held some good ideas, has insisted on them and put them into practice in his life, the whole society has accepted them. Now, to say that he has forced his thoughts on the people is absurd. So long as there is no physical force behind one, it cannot be said that one has forced one's views on others. It is true that my fast has evoked some anxiety. But I have no doubt in my mind that I am not at all to blame for it. I am carefully watching, with the eye of a scientist, the impact that my contemplated fast has had, and is having. What I see fills me with joy and hope. The fast has made people

[1] *Vide* p. 147.

think. The fast will not force anybody to do anything against his conscience, but those who are lethargic will give up their lethargy and will start working with zest, that is, all those who love me will actively start working. I do not in the least feel depressed by this development. Those who feel that I am destroying Hinduism write angry letters saying I should quickly undertake the fast and depart from the world. Such letters do not have any effect on me. I am talking about these letters only to show that those who are opposed to eradication of untouchability will not be affected in the least by the fast which I am thinking of undertaking and it should be so. But about the fast, I will have to say more later on. At the moment I can only say that nobody would be able to deflect Shri Kelappan or me from the resolve to fast which has been inspired by God. I appreciate the efforts of Shri Mehta who has already warned the public beforehand. What causes me pain and surprise is the fact that the Zamorin is bringing all sorts of allegations against those who are engaged in organizing voting. I consider him to be a gentleman. He knows that Shri Madhavan Nair, who is the Chairman of the Voting Committee is a respectable lawyer, well-known throughout Kerala. Rajaji is helping the Committee and supervising the work. They are people who will not tolerate any unfairness. It is the Zamorin's duty to point out if they have resorted to any objectionable means. This question is purely moral and religious. There can be no room for taking sides, for love and hate. If the sanatanists and reformers work together they will be able to bring out the truth. Let me once again assure you that as soon as I come to know that I am mistaken about the public opinion, I will immediately give up the idea of fasting. I wish to worship Truth only. I have no other aim than that.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 325-7

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH[1]

December 8, 1932

We have to thank you for your prompt reply to the 6th instant.

We note that you will be pleased to receive a visit from any sanatanist friends and that if they convince you of the error, you will gladly retrace your steps. Having regard to our letter to you of which this is a reply, we take it that you are prepared to retrace your steps if, from the discussion suggested by us, you are convinced of the error of your steps from the Shastraic point of view.

[1] *Vide* p. 168.

The object of our last letter was to know from you, whether you were willing to have an organized discussion on the lines suggested in our letter, in order to ascertain what is the truth so far as the Shastraic view on untouchability and restrictions on the temple-entry are concerned. From your letter, it appears that you are willing to have such a discussion. We never suggested that you should call such an assembly.

After you definitely declare your willingness to have the Shastraic point of view investigated in the manner suggested by us, the work of calling together the assembly may be done by Acharya Dhruva of Benares on your side and by us on behalf of the All-India Varnashram Swarajya Sangh. We take it that after the investigation of the Shastraic view, your attitude would be in accordance with such a view.

Your division of the *Shastris* into no-change *Shastris* and pro-change *Shastris* is not relevant to the present discussion, as our common object is to find out the truth as regards the statement that untouchability and restrictions on untouchables' temple-entry have no Shastraic basis.

As regards your assurance that no coercion is intended by you by your fast, please allow us to tell you the well-known maxim of law that a man is presumed to intend the consequences of his own acts.

The Hindu, 19-12-1932

APPENDIX IX

EXTRACT FROM T. CHINNIAH'S LETTER[1]

December 9, 1932

" . . . You say the Poona Pact is much better than the Award for it gives more seats. I wish to inform you that it is not the quantity that is important but it is the quality. The Award gives 18 seats by separate election, voting power in the general election, and seats if liked by the Depressed Classes and allowed by the caste people in the general electorate. The Pact gives only 30 seats in the general electorate. . . . In the words of Dr. Ambedkar according to the Premier's Award we will send to the Councils 30 diluted (in Madras). Secondly by the Award the so-called high class people would beg of the Depressed Classes to give them votes by which the pride of the high-caste people will be suppressed. . . .

You say the Poona Pact "provides against the election of any candidate who is not in the first place approved by the majority of Harijans". I know you are referring to the Primary Election and its panel is four. I hope you would realize dear Mahatmaji that there is difference in confidence which

[1] *Vide* p. 174.

each member in the panel enjoys among the Depressed Classes. Suppose in the Primary Election ten people contest. The first man secures 5,000 votes, the second 2,000 votes, the third 1,000, the fourth 900, the fifth 800, the sixth 700, . . . the eighth 600, the ninth 590, and the tenth 500. All these people enjoy the confidence of the Depressed Classes but there is difference in the confidence. . . . If the panel is six the first six would be approved by the Depressed Classes, and if the panel is eight, the first eight would be approved by the Depressed Class. But don't you see there is vast difference between each man? After the Primary Election the selected candidates would have to stand in the joint electorate (I know the mentality of the caste people), and the result is the last man in the panel would be elected by the caste Hindus. The caste people would elect a man who possesses the least confidence among the Depressed Classes so that he may be subservient to them.

On 9-3-31 [I] wrote you a letter requesting you [to] stay in a paracheri (i.e., the place where the Depressed Classes live) whenever you visited Madras so that you may learn at first hand the difficulties of my people but you took up your residence in the palatial buildings of the Brahmins at Mylapore. If you had listened to my words you would never have spoiled the Premier's award.

You say "I am certainly not in favour of special electorates for the merchants, landlords, and others. Then why don't you fast for their abolition; is it because that your fast won't have any effect over the merchants and the landlords?

Dear Mahatmaji, though the Poona Pact has been signed by the M.L.C.[s] yet the people of this Presidency are against it. They want at least the panel in the Primary Election should be two and not four. I request you to consent to the panel being two. . . ."

From a microfilm: S.N. 18673

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM RAMTARAN MUKHERJI[1]

December 6, 1932

I humbly beg to approach you as the greatest man of India, nay of the whole world, in view of the fact that you claim to be a sanatanist.

You know that Dadhichi gave up his bones for the benefit of the Devas, when they asked for them, but you are going to lay down your life without the asking. You know that Jesus was crucified under a decree of the then authority. You know that Socrates drank a cup of poison under certain decree of some sort of authority, but in your case, no such decree comes

[1] *Vide* p. 182.

your way to obey. Under the circumstances is it justifiable to lay down your valuable life without fulfilling the plainest duty of convincing the sanatanists that therefore they are in the wrong in not following your ideal?

Your ideal is lofty. But you cannot expect that the faith, conscience, and call from within of an ordinary row of sanatanists are similar to yours. Had it been so, all the sanatanists would have been transformed into so many Mahatma Gandhis. Therefore is it not just and fair and proper for the present conditions of mentality, to descend from the ideal, which is your own, to common, practical and realistic ground, with a view to enlighten and convince the sanatanists, with your sweet reasonableness? Please consider how Bhagwan Shankaracharya defeated the Bouddhas and drove them out of India by force of reason, etc. Please consider how Mahaprabhu Shri Chaitanya Deb succeeded in conquering the hearts of people by propagating the religion of love. But you have not yet launched any propaganda to convince the sanatanists that the old order of the sanatanists must be changed in a suitable manner, yielding place to new order of things and that the Shastras should not be thrown in the Ganges water, but according to the interpretation of Shastras the sanatanists must swallow the pill however bitter it may be. We admit that Bhagwan Shankaracharya had not had the occasion to refute the Christian and the Mohammedan religion. He refuted Jain, Bouddha, Sankhya, Vaisheshik, Bhagavat and other persuasions. But now we have come in contact with democratic civilizations of the West, which we cannot ignore. On the contrary, we must consider how far varnasrama religion should be modified, so as to meet the pressing demands of the modern times.

I, therefore, earnestly pray that you will kindly take up the propaganda of enlightening and convincing the sanatanists in right earnest and in your own way and till then you should do well to abandon the idea of self-immolation.

Yours sincerely,
RAMTARAN MUKHERJI VEDANTATIRTHA

PS.

I humbly beg to inform you as, although I am an orthodox Hindu, we have removed the ban of untouchability, if Harijans think fit to be pure in body and dresses.

Yours sincerely,
RAMTARAN MUKHERJI VEDANTATIRTHA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18660

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

CALICUT,
[*December 12, 1932*][2]

I do not quite like the change of name you have agreed to for the League. 'Servants of Untouchables Society' is good in itself, but it means a continued recognition of untouchables as such. 'Servants of India' or 'Servants of Bhils' or 'Servants of God' are all right because 'India' must be there, 'Bhils' is a race name and not a name implying inferiority, and 'God' is always there. But 'Servants of Untouchables' or 'Servants of Slaves' would not be right if we intend to abolish untouchability or slavery. Suppose the American abolitionists had a league called 'Servants of Helpers of Slaves'. It would not have expressed the object. Of course the Society may close down when the institution of slavery or of untouchability is abolished. But the argument is not right, for it is the abolition in the psychology of men that is wanted at once. You would have to say 'Servants of Untouchables so-called' which is cumbrous and in reality open to the same objection. I would have liked 'Untouchability Abolition League' or (Society) . . . As a matter of fact, I did not like 'Anti-Untouchability' as a phrase. It is so barbarous. 'Untouchability Abolition Society' would be further a literal rendering of the names already in use in Hindi, Gujarati and other Indian languages without any objection. It is really abolition of a slave status and the phrase 'Abolition' would be suggestive and emphatic, as 'prohibition' has come to stay in connection with drinks and drugs. *Service* to a group of men is not really the object and aim, if we think about it. It is really the doing away with the evil. There is a school of thought which would keep the segregation, and asks us to do all we can to make them live and eat more comfortably. This is not all we want to do.

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 81-2

[1] *Vide* p. 207.

[2] The source has "12-10-1932" which seems to be a misprint for '12-12-1932'.

APPENDIX XII

DISCUSSION WITH UNTOUCHABLES' DEPUTATION[1]

December 15, 1932

QUESTION: There is no mention of Dr. Ambedkar's letter in the report of the Anti-Untouchability League.

GANDHIJI: Your complaint should be that the issues raised in it were not considered. You let me know your complaint against me. I will tell you in what ways I am helping you.

Q. You said to Devrukhkar: 'Win these people through love.' But there should be love in him in the first place.

G. Then you reverse the thing, and you win him through love!

Q. No, no; he is as big as the Gaurishankar mountain. No doubt, we can fight him, but there is a limit to our violence too.

G. I firmly believe that factionalism should be avoided. I will try my level best to remove this tendency among caste Hindus.

Q. What about giving some social privileges to them?

G. This is going on in all the Provinces. People are being made to understand and there is no laxity about it. Go to Malabar and see what a great change has taken place.

Q. But what plan do you have for the betterment of this section of society?

G. It is precisely for this that I have raised the question of temple-entry. Sanatanists have got frightened because of it. They tell me, 'You do everything else, let them take water from the wells; but please don't touch the temples.' This is just the first step. When the work progresses, other problems also will be solved. There is a lot of propaganda work to be done as regards temple-entry. And this work is already going on on proper lines in Malabar.

Q. To remove the sufferings of the untouchables and the hardships inflicted on them by the touchables, please appoint a committee of lawyers to find a remedy.

G. We shall use the services of volunteer-lawyers.

Q. Volunteers will not be able to do much.

G. Even if they are like me?

Q. They [untouchables] should be admitted in the weaving department of the mills. Today there is untouchability in eating-houses and in the

[1] *Vide* p. 208.

matter of water-taps. It is there in the tea-stalls of Majoor Mahajan. Why don't you suggest to the Chamber of Commerce that they should take casual labourers from among the untouchables? Is there any change in your views regarding the four varnas?

G. I am afraid, no. I do believe in the four varnas. There should not be any restrictions regarding intermarriages and interdining. There is nothing in the Shastras that says that different varnas cannot intermarry. I have put this into practice in my life, but at present I do not want to propagate it. If I take up the programme of reforming the castes, my work regarding eradication of untouchability would suffer. All occupations should be hereditary. Millions of people are not going to become Prime Ministers and Viceroys. Moreover, so long as ashrama dharma does not revive, varna dharma too is not going to revive.

Q. To what extent can we consider you as our man?

G. Since before Ambedkar was born, I have been your man. You will find all the things that he advocates in my old articles. Nobody has opposed untouchability in such strong language as I.

Q. That is what the Editor of *Bhala* also claims?

G. Everyone who makes the claim honestly can do so. But, as Solon said, a man should be given a certificate only after his ashes cool down.[1] Who knows I may not prove to be the worst sanatanist!

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 340-2

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA[2]

December 21, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have your typed letter with its enclosures. Dr. Roy had already sent to me a copy of his letter to you, and now with your reply to the same I have got the full correspondence with me. I should not like to waste your time over this matter any more, yet I cannot resist my inclination to write as I feel. Your mistake was somewhat of a different nature from the one as understood by you. There is no question of my being placed in an awkward position. If you put me even in a more awkward position, you can do so with pleasure. But even now I do not agree with you that your mistake was con-

[1] The saying attributed to Solon is: "Call no man happy till he dies."
[2] *Vide* pp. 208 and 295.

fined to overrating your influence with Dr. Bidhan. In fairness to Dr. Roy, I must say that he could not have helped feeling hurt. To my mind, the mistake lay in the fact that Sureshbabu and Satisbabu being more closely associated with you, you should have helped Dr. Roy in securing the former's co-operation instead of asking the latter to resign simply because your nearest friends would not give their co-operation to Dr. Roy. I may admit that Sureshbabu and Satisbabu had good reason to withhold their co-operation, yet I think you should not have chosen Dr. Roy for sacrifice. This, in my opinion, was your mistake. And I felt surprised when I saw your first letter to Dr. Roy, as constitutionally you are almost incapable of making such mistakes. We are so much dazzled with your superhuman personality that we have almost lost self-confidence in ourselves. The result is that whenever I feel doubtful about your actions I console myself with an explanation that the fault may be with my own capacity to understand the implication of your decision. So it was in this case. I still feel that in your last reply to Dr. Roy you should not have rebuked him, if I may use the word, for misunderstanding your letter. I hope I am not wasting your time. I am writing all this for my personal satisfaction and you may write to me if you think it at all necessary to do so.

As regards the definition, as you know in such matters I worry little. But your latest definition seems to be the best of all those discussed previously. As regards the complaint of Dr. Ambedkar's friends that we did not give serious consideration to the Doctor's letter, I think it is made under some misapprehension. Like Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion, there were many other suggestions before us which required to be considered and embodied in the Blue Pamphlet. But we decided not to discuss the Blue Pamphlet at all in such a big meeting and therefore appointed a small committee of three to discuss and revise the Blue Pamphlet in the light not only of suggestions by Dr. Ambedkar but of many other criticisms which may be received from the Provincial Boards and other members. But I confess that our Secretariat is not so efficient as it ought to be. Poor old Thakkar is wandering from place to place and in the absence of a capable Secretary at the Head Office the work is, undoubtedly, suffering. Before we started this Society, Devidas had promised to help me, but he seems to be occupied with other work. In fact I made a grievance of it to him when I met him yesterday. But he has promised to get me a good man. As it is, I told him, the work must suffer. I myself can get a good man, but you know, my getting a good man means payment of so much money. I can get a man only on the market value. What is required in such societies is a man who wants to undergo self-sacrifice. I wonder, therefore, whether you could help me. If he can take charge of the work Devidas can do wonders, but unfortunately he is not coming.

We are issuing the Journal about the beginning of January and I am expecting a contribution from you. (I have got it just now.) Viyogi Hari

has been appointed to edit the Hindi Journal. I do not have a good man just now to look after the English Journal and so I am utilizing our office staff to do the work. But as you will realize all this requires the services of a good secretary and I must have one.

About the name of the Society, I am afraid it would look ridiculous to change it for the third time. Rajaji's letter although it impressed you so much did not make an impression on me. But probably it is due to the fact that I look upon all these things with some indifference.

I hope you are quite fit.

Please do not worry about my health. I am just all right. I have not tried the prunes. I propose to do so.

Yours affectionately,
GHANSHYAMDAS

In the Shadow of the Mahatma, pp. 82-4

APPENDIX XIV

DISCUSSION WITH NATARAJAN AND DEVDHAR[1]

December 18, 1932

NATARAJAN: What you tried to avoid in England is taking place here. There is a big gulf between the sanatanists and the reformers. It is necessary for you to come out to stop our society from disintegrating. I strongly feel that you should come out to conduct this movement. To use your own words, you have to stand surety to stop this fight. But I do not know how you can come out.

G. Nor do I. There should be no restrictions on those who want to do only this work. Those who are in jail can also go out saying that they will confine their work only to the eradication of untouchability. But whether or not they should do this I cannot say. I cannot even say that I would like their doing so. But it is not that anyone who gives up civil disobedience will cease to be my co-worker and will become less dear to me. Suppose I am released unconditionally, it is possible I may advise people to give up civil disobedience. But today I would not like to bind myself by any such condition.

N. Is it not possible to postpone civil disobedience for the time being?

G. We can think over it after I am unconditionally released.

N. I cannot ask you for an assurance of any sort. But when you say that you have devoted your life to this work, it means that you will leave all

[1] *Vide* p. 323.

CWMG - LII

other work and will concentrate only on this. You do not wish society to be divided. You want the caste Hindus to accept the Harijans as their own. The caste Hindus as well as the opposition both have faith in you.

G. We can certainly prevent division.

DEVDHAR: Bitterness can be removed if certain matters are cleared up.

G. I am not afraid that society will be divided. There may be some bitterness regarding Guruvayur, but I have kept that matter separate from all others.

D. If we go step by step, the sanatanists will join us.

G. They certainly will. That is why I have laid down so many restrictions with regard to other temples. But if there is laxity in securing the Viceroy's permission, I will have to undertake the fast.

N. But it will take two months to obtain that because the Bill would remain with him for two months.

D. Why don't you write to the Government that those who say that they will work only for the eradication of untouchability should be released? You must also make it public that those of your followers who devote themselves exclusively to this work will not, on that account, become less dear to you.

G. I cannot tell them to take up this work instead of going to jail. In that case, I myself should first come out by giving such an assurance. Only then I can tell others to do so.

D. If you really feel that this work requires the whole of your lifetime, you can come out without any sort of mental hesitation.

G. No. If I really felt the need for it, I would have written to the Government long ago. Today, it is my firm belief that if I go out in this way, I shall lose all the strength for work.

D. Is it because people consider you a political leader?

G. No, people see me as a whole, for what I am. They know that politics is only a part of my service to them. They have instinctively understood that my whole life is for the service of the people. This is a question of mental justification. The moment I go out, I shall start wondering what to do in this calamitous situation. It is possible I may think only of civil disobedience and nothing else. I am fully satisfied that I am able to do this work even from here.

D. Try to find some way so that you are able to have these other people released.

G. The way I have suggested should have an impact on the Government. The Government should itself understand that the whole nation is occupied with this work.

D. Will you not say that this work is equally important and that workers should plunge themselves into it?

G. Take for instance Jamnalalji. He should not go out on any such condition. If I tell him to do so, he may agree, but I cannot tell him to go out like this. In this movement there is no need of old workers who are in jail. A new class of workers has emerged and I am happy about it. If Jamnalalji himself feels like going out, he can do so with my blessings. But I will not tell him to do so. Many prisoners meet me every fortnight. I have told them that, if they feel like going out by giving an assurance that they will work only for the eradication of untouchability, I will not say that they had done something wrong.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 351-3

APPENDIX XV

LETTER FROM SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH[1]

December 19, 1932

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 16th instant delivered this morning, you will please not mix up any other discussion with any other *Shastris* whether from Pandharpur or from any other place with the discussion which we have agreed upon with you.

If you have fixed 23rd instant for discussion with Pandharpur *Shastris*, you will please appoint some other day for investigation settled between us and after reference to the pundits who are to attend on behalf of the All-India Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh, we shall confirm the said date, if convenient.

We have mentioned no terms regarding the discussion. What we said was that some *madhyasthas*[2] will have to be appointed and it will have to be settled what books shall be relied upon and the rules of interpretation will have to be settled.

It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that you will please mention the names of any two gentlemen of experience, position and dignity to sit as *madhyasthas* and the names of the pundits whom you or Acharya Dhruva intend to call to support your statements.

As soon as this is done, we shall mention the names of our pundits and the two *madhyasthas*.

The duty of the *madhyasthas* will not be the duty of the Chairman but the duty will be to see that the discussion is carried on in writing in an organized manner.

[1] *Vide* p. 239.

[2] Mediators

Our sole desire is that the discussion should be carried on in an organized manner as has been stated to you in the very beginning and not merely a fruitless discussion.

As has already been settled in the correspondence, the objects of the discussion would be to investigate and find out the truth whether untouchability is enjoined by Shastras and whether there are restrictions in Shastras on untouchables' temple-entry. We take it that if it is done and the pundits whom you call are unable to support the view hitherto propounded by them, you will retrace your steps.

Yours truly,
HIRALAL D. NANAVATI
SECRETARY, A.I.V.S. SANGH

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
C/O YERAVDA PRISON
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 18753

APPENDIX XVI

LETTER FROM G. D. BIRLA[1]

BIRLA HOUSE,
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
December 14, 1932

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have received today the resignation from Dr. Roy. He has also sent to me a copy of his letter to you which he wrote in this connection. I am accepting his resignation. The more I think of the matter the more I feel that our troubles are not ended.. . . . Dr. Roy is not a quarrelsome man, and I hope he may forget the whole incident. But I doubt if his followers will so easily forget it. Besides I feel the public would not sympathize with Satisbabu and Sureshbabu, as in my opinion by humiliating Dr. Roy they have put themselves absolutely in the wrong. Thus your action instead of soothing the situation may cause a greater gulf between the various parties in Bengal. Satisbabu and Sureshbabu both being closely related to you, probably it would have been better for them to yield rather than wish for Dr. Roy's resignation. This would have helped easing the situation. As it is, you have given Bengalis cause to feel that it was a non-Bengali who could make or unmake Presidents of public bodies. This would surely be resented. If I

[1] *Vide* p. 243.

were[1] Dr. B. C. Roy I would refuse to accept Presidentship under such circumstances. I, however, express these views just for your information and that of Satisbabu, if he is still there. Let me hope this will end the trouble.

We are coming out with the first issue of our weekly on the 1st of January. Please therefore send us your article in time.

Yours affectionately,

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 18704

APPENDIX XVII

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM C. F. ANDREWS[2]

November 10, 1932

The whole of my own religious upbringing has been such as to make any thought of suicide on my part impossible.

I am really troubled still . . . such a practice as this will certainly be used by fanatics to force an issue which may be reactionary instead of progressive. Human madness or even doting affection may become tyrannical in this way. How far my anxieties and fears are mixed with weak human affection I can hardly myself understand. I do know that I saw you finally giving your life itself for the Depressed Classes, in your last fast, and I was glad—I saw in it the 'greater love'. I can see you now preparing to do the same thing on January 1st, if the temple authorities do not give way.

. . . It seems to me that I would very gladly lay down my life to remove 'untouchability', between the white race fanatics who call themselves Christians and the other races. But you have evidently come to the point of forcing the issue, literally forcing it, and I have to think that out in terms of Christ.

I think He did force the issue, when He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. He saw then, I think, that only His own death could call the Jewish leaders to a halt. There is one strange saying of His, 'The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' Again I am not sure whether His act in cleansing the temple was not of the same character, i.e., forcing the issue. But the method of fasting, committing suicide, still instinctively repels me.

Charles Freer Andrews, p. 264

[1] The source has "would be".
[2] *Vide* p. 244.

APPENDIX XVIII

DISCUSSION WITH K. KELAPPAN[1]

December 29, 1932

KELAPPAN: When I asked you to share my burden, I said nothing about the fast.

GANDHIJI: Others gave what they could. What had I to give other than a fast? So you should have known that I would be sharing your burden only in some such way. There is nothing wrong in this. The more I think over it, the more I feel that the complications I have created were necessary. Hinduism is dying before my eyes. If I want to revive it, what else is there for me to do? You don't know what is going on inside me. You must wait and enquire and suffer. If I have to fast, you must put up with it. For the present the fast is postponed. What the future has in store, I do not know. Maybe, fasting will be unnecessary. Or I may feel that to undertake a fast for Guruvayur will be foolish and a waste of energy. You will benefit from the confusion I am causing you. The questions which Rajaji asked yesterday have set me thinking and maybe my statement will take a different shape. But you should let the matter rest here and set to work at once. Try to understand the inner meaning of the fast, of the eradication of untouchability and of temple-entry. I feel that if we can get rid of untouchability the right way, it will be the saving of Hinduism. Otherwise, there is going to be a fierce fight between caste Hindus and the so-called untouchables. The untouchables will fight with violent rage and hatred and in sheer desperation will try to obliterate Hinduism from the face of the earth. They are not going to deny Hinduism. They are also not going to embrace any other religion. But they will deny God. This strife will be more fierce than between Brahmins and non-Brahmins because they feel the pain more deeply. My fast may prevent such a strife, though I do not know. Or it may not have any effect. But I did not go in search of the fast. I lay in bed thinking about an ugly decision of the Government and this question of yours came up before me and I plunged into it. At that time, I did not even know that it would call for a fast. You did right in acquainting me with all the facts. Other friends also sent me telegrams, which too was proper. Everything that has happened has been for the good.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 382-3

[1] *Vide* pp. 303 and 304.

APPENDIX XIX

DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

BAPU: In a religious matter nobody should accept anyone else's opinion as binding. One must rely on one's own intuition.

MAHADEV: Then we should not join in calling the Parishad.

BAPU: We are not doing that. They are calling the Parishad on their own. I tell them that if they can convince me that I am wrong, I will admit my error.

MAHADEV: Then we should not concern ourselves with whether or not the Parishad comes to a unanimous decision. You should merely say you are keeping an open mind. That's enough.

Bapu further explained: Look at the man asking me why I do not challenge my opponents to a public discussion and defeat them, as Shankaracharya did. I tell him that that is beyond my strength. My strength is of a different character and I am using it. How can I change my idea of dharma in deference to other people's views?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 319

[1] *Vide* p. 421.

CWMG LUI

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CWMG - III

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CWMG - LIL

CHRONOLOGY

(*November 16, 1932 — January 10, 1933*)

November 16: Gandhiji issued seventh statement on untouchability.

In foreword to *Hamara Kalank*, exhorted Hindu public to realize implications of untouchability and their duty in the matter.

November 17: Issued eighth statement on untouchability.

November 18: In letters to E. E. Doyle, requested transfer of Jamnalal Bajaj; also permission to write to Manibehn Patel on progress of her brother's illness.

November 19: In letter to M. G. Bhandari, reassured Government about his desire to abide by the undertaking given in regard to facilities permitted to him for doing untouchability work.

In discussion with G. K. Devdhar, President, Maharashtra Divisional Board of All-India Anti-untouchability League, stressed need to educate public opinion on removal of untouchability.

November 21: In letter to Narandas Gandhi, referred to increase in pressure of work and said his elbows needed rest.

In interview to the Press said that all his activities in life sprang from a "passion for vindication of truth and non-violence".

November 22: In letter to E. E. Doyle, requested transfer of Jamnalal Bajaj to Yeravda Prison.

November 23: In letter to K. Kelappan, informed him that he would join him in his fast as a point of honour.

November 24: In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, requested permission to be granted to Swami Anand to stay with him to help clear arrears of correspondence which had accumulated owing to pain in his hand.

In letter to Haribhau Phatak, sent draft manifesto on removal of untouchability.

November 25: In interview to Khimji and J. K. Mehta, urged for a vigorous propaganda for removal of untouchability and temple-entry.

November 26: Issued ninth statement on untouchability.
Jamnalal Bajaj was taken to Yeravda Prison.
In interview to *The Times of India*, Gandhiji denied rumour about his fast for opening all temples in India to untouchables.

November 28: In letter to E. E. Doyle, asked Appasaheb Patwardhan to be permitted to do conservancy work in Ratnagiri Jail.
In letter to Keshav Gandhi said that he had completely stopped spinning for the time being because of pain in the elbow.

November 29: In appeal to public reminded all concerned that people could meet him "only in connection with *bonafide* untouchability work and no other".
In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, sought permission to meet Jamnalal Bajaj "frequently, of course, subject to restriction as to conversation".

November 30: In letter to E. E. Doyle, conveyed decision to do his own conservancy work from December 3, and to resort to complete fast if Appasaheb was not permitted to do conservancy work.

December 2: Interview to Depressed Classes leaders.

December 3: Received message allowing him to do conservancy work, but was informed that Government would not accept his intervention on behalf of Appasaheb Patwardhan.
Commenced fast; informed E. E. Doyle in letter that he would continue fast till relief was granted to Appasaheb Patwardhan.

December 4: Suspended his fast; made statement to Anti-untouchability Committee.
In letter to E. E. Doyle, informed him that fast was suspended in order to give Government time to decide.

December 5: In interview to the Press said that he was devoting all his time to untouchability work.
Was examined by jail doctor.

December 6: Issued statement on observing Anti-untouchability Day on December 18.
In telegram asked Appasaheb Patwardhan to suspend fast in order to give Government time to take decision.
Appasaheb Patwardhan agreed to suspend his fast in response to Gandhiji's appeal.

CWMG - LII

Interview to Free Press representative.

Before *December 7:* In interview to Sripad Shankar of Madras said that it was not possible to accept any conditions with regard to temple-entry.

December 7: Interview to students; interview to Associated Press of India.

December 8: In letter to E. E. Doyle, sought decision on Patwardhan's case in view of his contemplated fast from January 2, 1933.

In letter to P. N. Rajbhoj, told him that proposed fast would be postponed if Guruvayur referendum went against temple-entry.

December 9: Issued tenth statement on untouchability.

December 14: Issued eleventh statement on untouchability.
Interview to Arya Samaj Deputation.

December 15: Issued twelfth statement on untouchability.
Interview to Untouchables' Deputation.

December 16: Issued message for Anti-untouchability Day to be observed on December 18.

In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, asked for reply to his letter seeking permission to see Jamnalal Bajaj.

December 18: In letter to Kotwal, said that it was his "duty to fast with Kelappan" because it was he who had asked Kelappan to suspend fast.

December 21: In letter to K. Ramunni Menon, said: "My fast was intended to stir Hindus to action, and that, I am glad to say, is happening day after day, although the fast has yet to come."

December 22: In letter to Mirabehn said that he had eliminated bread and even vegetable and therefore also salt.

In letter to Kowtha Suryanarayana Row, said that he believed his fast to be spiritual "both in intention and end; intention is to purify Hinduism and end is to secure religious justice for those of the Hindus who have been hitherto denied that justice".

December 23: Had meeting with sanatanist reformers and *shastris.*

December 24: In letter to Radhakant Malaviya, said that he would not hesitate to postpone fast if referendum was improper.

December 28: Guruvayur referendum favoured temple-entry of untouchables.

December 29: In letter to Mirabehn, Gandhiji told her that he was continuing saltless diet "without any effect on the elbow". In interview to Associated Press of India announced decision to "postpone the contemplated fast indefinitely".

December 30: Issued thirteenth statement on untouchability.
In telegram to Private Secretary to Viceroy, sought sanction for introduction of Subbaroyan's Bill in Madras Legislative Assembly.
Issued statement on interview to Tarkaratna.

January 2: In interview to Associated Press of India observed that his suggestion to keep Guruvayur Temple open during certain hours to Harijans was made by way of compromise.
In interview to *The Hindu*, said that Subbaroyan's Bill was "intended to undo the wrong done by British courts".

January 3: Issued fourteenth statement on untouchability.

January 5: Interview to Associated Press of India on compromise proposal with regard to temple-entry at Guruvayur.

January 7: In statement to the Press, asked Congressmen to decide for themselves whether to work as civil resisters or social reformers.

CWMG LII

Anti-untouchability Day Programme, 128
Appeal to Public, 90
Appeal to Sanatanists, 358-61
Cable to C.F. Andrews, 199
Diary, 1932, 315-27, —1933, 419
Discussion with G.K. Devdhar, 23-4
Foreword to *Hamara Kalank*, 5
Interview : (to) Associated Press of India, 142-3, 303, 343-5, 374-5; (to) Depressed Classes Leaders, 107-8; (to) Deputation of Arya Samaj, Bombay, 197; (to) Free Press, 111-2; (to) Khimji and J. K. Mehta, 67-8; (to the) Press, 37, 125-7; (to) Shanker, Sripad, 137; (to) Students, 141; (on) Subbaroyan's Bill, 345-6; (to) *The Times of India*, 77-8; (to) Women, 48
(A) Letter, 8, 56-7, 62, 65, 91, 135, 150, 176, 235-6, 285, 286, 386-7
Letter to: Agrawal, Moolchand, 30, 174, 291; Agrawal, Dr. Raghuvir Singh, 16; Aiyar, N. Subrahmanya, 218-9; Aiyar, P.V. Seshu, 396; Alam, Dr. Mohammad, 73, 260, 339, 407; Alam, Begum Mohammad, 178, 412; Alexander, Horace G., 267, 365; Alexander, Olive, 54-5; Altekar, A.S., 157; (an) American Woman, 56; Amtussalaam, 31, 87, 124, 174, 292, 314, 338, 406-7; Anand Swarup, 76-7; Andrews, C.F., 158-9, 244-5, 247, 299, 378; Asar, Mathuradas P., 42, 121; Ashram Boys and Girls, 25, 87-8, 122, 170, 226, 335, 406; Ayyar, S. Neelakantha, 211-2; Bajaj, Jamnalal, 74, 140, 166-7, 203-4, 331-2; Bajaj, Janakidevi, 40; Bajaj, Kamalnayan, 177; Bajaj, Madalasa, 41; Bajaj, Umadevi, 80; Bajoria, Baldeodas, 367-8; Banerji, Kamal Kumar, 191; Barr, F. Mary, 95-7, 350; Bazaj, Rukminidevi, 75, 105-6, 205, 264, 334, —and Benarsilal, 29, 294, 400; (a) Bengali Boy, 192; (a) Bengali Youth, 91; Bhagwandas, 189-90, 381-2; Bhambhania, Nagardas K., 351; Bhandari, M.G., 20-1, 51, 280-1; Bhargava, L.N., 296; Bhave, Vinoba, 332; Bhikhibehn, 79; Birla, G.D., 23, 57, 207-9, 243, 295-6, 298, 331, 353, 384, 392; Biswas, R.L., 157-8; Captain, Nargis, 384; Chaman Kavi, 7; Chandiwala, Brijkrishna, 161-2, 298; Chinniah, T., 98, 174-5; Chintamani, C.Y., 329-30; Dafda, Dudabhai M., 398; Dafda, Lakshmi D., 82; Das Gupta, Hemprabha, 106, 337, 390; Das Gupta, Satis Chandra, 227, 282-3, 390-1; Dass, Sundar, 187; Datta, S.K., 216, 356; David, M.I., 243-4; Deonayakacharya and Nanavati, Hiralal D., 168; Desai, Bhulabhai J., 313-4; Desai, Dudhibehn V., 80; Desai, Valji G., 405; Desai, Vimalchandra V., 402; Dey, Purna Chandra, 279-80; Dharmadev, 389, —Fragment of, 196; Dhruva, Anandshankar B., 22-3; Divatia,

Narasinhrao B., 8; Diwanchand, 263; Doshi, Bechardas J., 104; Doyle, E.E., 14, 18-9, 38, 88-9, 94-5, 108-10, 115-6, 131, 145, 186; Duni Chand, 217; (an) English Girl, 368; (an) English Woman, 300; Gandhi, Devdas, Fragment of, 47; Gandhi, Jamnabehn, 26, 81, 222, 227, 288, 302, 361-2; Gandhi, Jamnadas and Khushalchand, 81; Gandhi, Keshav, 27, 32, 89, 333; Gandhi, Kusum, 75, 226-7; Gandhi, Manilal, 32-3, 116; Gandhi, Manmohandas P., 213; Gandhi, Manu, 120; Gandhi, Narandas, 34-6, 45-6, 84-6, 99-101, 105, 117-8, 121-2, 144, 160, 171, 178, 194-5, 214-5, 215, 229, 236, 255, 281, 290-1, 335, 341, 362-3, 371-2, 389, 403-4, 405, 409, 418-9; Gandhi, Purushottam, 82; Gandhi, Radha, 123; Gandhi, Ramdas, 129-30; Gandhi, Sushilabehn, 224; Ganga Ram, 367; General Secretary, A.I.V.S.S., 132-3, 212-3; Gharpure, J.R., 261-2; Girdhar Shastri, 410; Girdharilal, 417; Govind Raghav, 341; Guha, Nirod Ranjan, 232; Guha, Sarat Chandra, 414; (a) Gujarati Student, 134-5; Gupta, Shivprasad, 193; Harrison, Agatha, 58-9; Holland, W.E.S., 273; Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, 50-1, 90-1, 209, 381; Howard, Elizabeth F., 58; Hoyland, J. S., 54; Hunter, Mrs., 379; Iyengar, A. Rangaswami, 202; Iyer, R. Sankaranarayana, 238-9, 276-7; Iyer, S. Mahalinga, 395; Iyer, T.S. Kalyana Rama, 278, 284-5, 298-9, —Fragment of, 156; Jasani, Nanalal K., 103-4, 253-4, 387-8; Jhaveri, Gangabehn B., 171, 287; Joshi, G.M., 159, 240; Joshi, Ramabehn, 314-5, 370; Kanitkar, G.N., 110; Kantak, Premabehn, 28-9, 83-4, 118, 172, 223, 230, 289, 334, 370-1, 385, 401; Kapadia, Paramananda K., 399-400; Karnad, Sadashiv Rao, 163-4, 182, 249; Kelappan K., 42-5; Kelkar, Kashinath N., 31-2, 59; Kelkar, Dr. M.S., 160; Ketkar, G. V., 396; Khare, Narayan M., 99, 196, 288, 332, 371; Khare, Ramchandra N., 173; Khasgiwale, Nanasaheb, 410-1; Kothari, Kirchand, 225, 252-3; Kotwal, 228-9; Krishnachandra, 93-4, 238; Krishnaswami, C.R., 357; Kulkarni, Narayanrao, 279; Kunzru, H.N., 131-2; "Larks of St. Francis", 57; Lele, P. R., 146-7; Maher, Tulsi, 173, 402; Malaviya, Radhakant, 275; Manibehn, 192-3; Manickam, M., 355; Marwadi, Shamji, 104; Mascreen, Peter J., 366; Mashruwala, Nanabhai I., 169-70; Mashruwala, Nirmala B., 342-3, 408; Mathew, P.K., 260-1; Mathur, Promode Bihari, 397-8; Mathuradas Trikumji, 33, 269; Mavalankar, G.V., 204, 270, 293, 398; Mehrotra, Parashuram, 36, 225; Mehrotra, Vimal Kishore, 406; Mehta, Babalbhai, 123; Mehta, Bhagwanji A., 301-2, 401-2; Mehta, Champabehn R., 120, 333; Mehta, Jaisukhlal K., 251; Menon, C. Narayana, 136-7, 278-9; Menon, Esther, 60, 369; Menon, K. Ramunni, 61, 162-3, 250; Menon, U. Gopala, 133, 156, 163, 188, 246, 247-8, 262, 275, 313, 415; Michael, S.M., 5; Mirabehn, 12, 49, 102-3, 119, 143-4, 200-1, 257-8,

CWMG - LUL

300-1, 363-4; Mitter, Manindra Nath, 266; Mohan Lal, 267; Morris, John, 375-6; Mukandi Lal, 274-5; Mukherji, Ramtaran, 182; Munshi, K. M., 65-6, 149-50, 176-7, 214, 293-4, 408-9; Murthi, N. Narayan, 395; Naidu, Padmaja, 19; Nair, K. Madhavan, 72, 132, 397, 416-7; Nair, Krishnan, 237; Nair, Vakkayil Achuthan, 240; Nalavde, Sitaram K., 30, 297; Nambudiripad, Kurur Nilkantan, 367; Nanavati, H. D., 263; Naoroji, Khorshed, Fragment of, 269; Naradev Shastri, 291; Narasimhachar, G.V., 270; Natarajan K., 6; Nathan, T.A.V., 299, 352; Nayyar, Pyarelal, 225; Nehru, Jawaharlal, 311-2; Padma, 172; Pakvasa, Mangaldas M., 213; Pause, Bhau, 15, 39, 79, 119, 287; Parekh, M. S., 356; Parikh, Vanamala N., 256; Patel, Dahyabhai, 21, 39, 66-7, 78-9, 223, 246, 264; Patel, Mangala S., 303; Patel, Manibehn, 27, 40-1, 64-5, 74, 86, 98, 110-1, 136, 161, 357; Patel, Shanta S., 173, 290; Patel, Vidya R., 333; Pattani, Prabhashankar, 372-3; Patwardhan, G.H., 241-2; Patwardhan, R.V., 165, 242, 413; Patwardhan, S.P., 183; Peacock, Chas., 164; Phatak, Haribhau, 55-6, 210; Ponnammal, S., 416; Prabhavati, 31, 93, 411; Premi Jairamdas, 257; Purandare, N.H., 414-5; Qureshi, Amina G., 25; Rajagopalachari, C., 248-9, 357, 397; Rajagopalachari, Chittoor, 97; Rajagopalachari, S., 272; Rajan, Dr. T.S.S., 272; Rajbhoj, P.N., 147-8; Raju, D. Narayana, 354-5; Ramachandra, K., 312-3; Ramagopala Shastri, 239; Ramaswami, M.R., 297; Rana, Narmadabehn, 28, 229, 335; Rao, A. Kaleswar, 340; Rao, G. Ramachandra, 383; Rao, K. Nageswar, 181, 350; Rao, T.B. Keshava, 271; Rao, U. Subba, 134; Rau, M.M. Ananta, 51-2, 219-21, 364, 394; Reynolds, Reginald, 149; Rolland, Madeleine, 376-7; Row, K. Ramabhadra, 241; Row, Kowtha Suryanarayana, 259; Roy, Dr. B.C., 138-9, 201-2, 311; Roy, Manmatha, Fragment of, 87; Roy, Motilal, 187-8, 312; Saha, Govindlal, 67; Sahu, K. L., 283-4; Salivati, S., 382; Sanadhya, Totaram, 374; (a) Sanatani, 410; Sankey, Lord, Fragment of, 37-8; Sannyasi, Ramananda, 353; Saraswati, G.S.B., 340; Sastri, V.S. Srinivasa, 52; Satavlekar, S.D., 16; Secretary, All-India Shraddhanand Memorial Trust, 232; Secretary, Arya Samaj, Bombay, 235; Secretary, Vaidik Dharmavardhini Sabha, 273; Secretary to Rabindranath Tagore, 61-2; Sen, Bireswar, 366; Sen, S., 266; Shah, Fulchand B., 388; Shah, Gulab A., 26, 80, 120, 231; Shah, Hiralal A., 47-8; Shah, Sharda C., 231, 338; Shah, Sulochana A., 86, 123; Shamlal, 393; Sharma, Dr. Hiralal, 394; Sharma, Sohanlal, 238, 337; Shenai, P.P., 283; Sheth, Ratilal, 256; Shikhare, D.N., 418; Shyamlal, 296-7; (a) Sindhi Doctor, 92; Soman, Ramachandra J., 184; Standenath, Francisca, 60; Stokes, Samuel E., Fragment of, 61; Subbaroyan, P., 330;

Subramaniam, S.A.K., 146; Swaminathan, M., 300; Tagore, Rabindranath, 53; Talegaonkar, R.B., 233-4; Thackersey, Premlila, 418; Thadani, N.V., 262; Thangal, Madhusudanan, 339; Thornberg, 24; Tivari, M. Balakrishna, 352; Trivedi, Chhotubhai, 227; Tyabji, Abbas, 59, 268; Tyabji, Raihana, 107, 124, 292-3, 407; Tyagi, Chand, 336; Upadhyaya, Haribhau, 419; Urmila Devi, 175; Vaidya, C.V., 179-80; Varadachari, N.S., 222; Varadarajulu, B., 276; Vasantram Shastri, 92; Vedalankar, Dharma Vir, 354; Venkatakristnayya, N., 274; Venkatappayya, Konda, 249, 354; Venkataraman, R., 271; Venkataratnam, G., 355; Vijayavargiya, Gopikrishna, 237; West, Ada, 53; Yati, Pragnaneswar, 168-9, 251; (the) Zamorin of Calicut, 328-9

Message: (for) Anti-untouchability Day, 205-6; (to) Hari Kirtan Maha Sammelan, Meerut, 294

Questions for Shastri Parishad, 265

Replies to Ratlam Correspondents, 62-4

Statement: (on) Fast to Anti-untouchability Committee, 112-4; (on) Madhusudan Das, 18; (to) the Press, 308, 379-81; (on) Untouchability–VII, 1, —VIII, 9, —IX, 68-72, —X, 151-5, —XI, 185-6, —XII, 198-9, —XIII, 304-8, —in Hindu Shastras, 347-50

Telegram to: Alam, Dr. Mohammad, 339; Bajaj, Jamnalal, 5; Chandiwala, Brijkrishna, 114; Daftari, K.L., 162; Das, Madhusudan, 17-8; Gandhi, Narandas, 117, 138; Jagannath, 17; Kelappan, K., 129; Lakshmamma, Damaraju, 347; Malaviya, Govind, 17; Marwadi, Shamji, 363; Menon, U. Gopala, 99, 155-6; Mirabehn, 116; Munshi, K.M., 138; Nair, K. Madhavan, 108; Patel, Manibehn, 19; Patwardhan, S. P., 128-9; Patwari, Ranchhoddas, 375; Private Secretary to Viceroy, 309-10; Secretary, A.I.V.S.S., 239; Zamorin of Calicut, 265

CWMG - LII

ABHOY, 316
ACHARYA, 323
ACHARYA, M.K., 262; notice or manifesto by, 247, 248
ACTION, 51*fn*
Adam's Peak to Elephanta, 327
Adi-Andhras, 164*fn*
Adi-Dravida, 175
ADVERSITY; is forgetting God's omnipresence, 378
Agamas, 9, 52, 276*fn*, 284, 285, 394
AGASHE, 210, 322
AGGRAWAL, K., 318, 323
AGRAWAL, Moolchand, 30, 174, 291
AGRAWAL, Dr. Raghuvir Singh, 16, 315
AHIMSA, *see* NON-VIOLENCE
AHRIMAN, 130
AIYAR, Rao Bahadur P.V. Sheshu, 326, 396, 397
AIYAR, T.R. Ramachandra, 211, 345
AIYER, Subrahmanya, 218, 323
'AKHIL BHARAT HARIJAN SEVA SANGH', 57
ALAM, Dr. Sheikh Mohammad, 73, 107, 178, 202, 260, 311, 317, 339, 407; regarding illness of, 39, 412
ALAM, Begum Sheikh Mohammad, 73, 107, 178, 260, 317, 321, 412
ALEXANDER, Horace G., 54, 55, 267, 317, 325, 365
ALEXANDER, Olive, 54, 58*fn*, 365
ALI, Justice Amir, 13, 201
ALI, Pyare, 324, 403, 419
ALL-INDIA ADI-DRAVIDA MAHAJAN SABHA, 98*fn*
— ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD, *see* ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD
— — LEAGUE, *see* HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
— SHRADDHANAND MEMORIAL TRUST, 232
— SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, 393*fn*
— VARNASHRAMA SWARAJYA SANGH, 132-3, 212, 239, 323
ALTEKAR, A. S., 324; pamphlet by, 157
AMBARAM, 317, 419
AMBEDKAR, Dr. B. R., 126, 208, 296, 307, 365
AMERICA; and reform in India, 24
AMINA, 36, 118
AMIYO, 247
AMTUSSALAAM, 31, 87, 124, 174, 290, 292, 314, 394; regarding illness of, 338, 406
Anagh, 327
ANAND, Swami, 50
ANANDATIRTHA, 315, 321
ANANDI, 194, 363
ANANDSHANKAR, 293, 316
ANAND SWARUP, 76, 317
ANDHRA KALA PARISHAD, 316
ANDREWS, C.F., 58, 158, 199, 244, 247, 267, 299, 319, 321, 324, 326, 327, 369, 378
ANDREWS, Geo., 321
ANGADA, *see* REYNOLDS, Reginald
ANNA, 201
ANNAIYA, *see* CHINNIAH, T.
ANSARI, Z(J)ohra, 73, 107, 407, 412. *See* also ZOHRA
ANSARI, Dr. M.A., 159 267, 324, 365
ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD, 91, 134, 205, 206, 208, 210; for Bengal

CWMG - I, II

138, 139. *See* also HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
— CAMPAIGN, 4, 108*fn*
— COMMITTEE, 50, 112, 379
— DAY, 128, 205
— LEAGUE, *see* HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
— MOVEMENT, 137, 309
— PROPAGANDA, 111, 206
— SOCIETY, *see* HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
— WORK, *see* UNTOUCHABILITY WORK
Antyajas, *see* UNTOUCHABLES
ARISTARCHI, Effi, 317, 326
ARJUNA, 52*fn*
ARKATE, 321
ARYA, 319
— SAMAJ, 323, —Bombay, 235, 322; and eradication of untouchability, 197; deputationists of, 322
— SAMAJISTS, 239, 304
ARYAN INVASION, 260*fn*
Asanas, 82; assist digestion, 208
ASAR, Lakshmidas P., 103*fn*, 246*fn*
ASAR, Mathuradas P., 42, 121
ASAR, Prithuraj, 388
ASAR, Velabehn, 103, 246, 324
ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS, 25, 87, 122, 170, 226, 335, 406; education of, 25
Ashramvasi Pratye, 140
ASSOCIATED PRESS of INDIA, 142, 303, 343, 374, 415
ASTHMA; cured by use of fenugreek seeds, 342
Astronomy without a Telescope, 327
ATHEISM; and truth, 76
Atman, 26; description of, 177
ATTACHMENT; greed is another name for, 390
Autobiography, see *My Experiments with Truth*
AVADHESH PRASAD, 317
AVADHUT SWAMI, 206
Avarnas, *see* UNTOUCHABLES
AYYAR, S. Neelakantha, 211, 232
BABLA, *see* DESAI, Narayan
BABU, 83, 409
BABY, 311
BAJAJ, Jamnalal, 5, 18, 19, 38, 40, 41*fn*, 74, 90, 91, 140, 149, 166, 203, 209, 257, 258, 294, 315, 316, 318, 323, 324, 331, 342, 343, 400, 402, 419
BAJAJ, Janakidevi, 40, 80, 140, 204, 316, 323
BAJAJ, Kamalnayan, 40, 140, 166, 167, 177, 203, 204, 316, 321
BAJAJ, Madalasa, 41, 316
BAJAJ, Umadevi, 80
BAJORIA, Baldeodas, 367
BAKSHI, Jamnadas, 64
BAKSHI, Ramprasad, 320
BAL, *see* KALELKAR, Balkrishna
BALBHADRA, 171
BALL, Nellie, 368*fn*
BALMIK *Achhuts*, *see* UNTOUCHABLES
BALVANTSINHA, 321, 388
BALVIR, 336
BALWANT, 403
BANERJEE, Dr. Suresh, 139, 295
BANERJI, Kamalkumar, 322; advised to honour his pledge to a Shudra girl, 191
BANKER, Raghunath, 323
BANKER, Shankerlal, 318, 324, 325, 332, 393
BAPAT, SHASTRI, 323
BAPI NEEDU, M., 315, 318, 319
Bapuki Chhayamen, 388*fn*
BARR, F. Mary, 95, 318, 323, 324, 350
BASANTI DEVI, *see* DAS, Basanti Devi
BASAVAYYA, Thummala, 321
BAVAS, 99
BAWAZEER, Imam Saheb Abdul Kadir, 25*fn*; and his biography of the Prophet, 327
BAZAJ, Benarsilal, 29, 294, 319, 325, 334, 400

Bazaj, Rameshwar, 315
Bazaj, Rukminidevi, 29, 75, 105, 205, 264, 294, 316, 317, 322, 324, 334, 400
Belgaumwala, 321
Benares Hindu University, 133; and removal of untouchability, 136-7
Bengal Provincial Organization, 207
Bhagat, 317
Bhagavad Gita, 10, 41, 52*fn*, 92, 181, 257, 285, 286, 290, 342, 364, 410; an all-sufficing Shastra, 9; and image-worship, 96; main theme of, 51
Bhagwan Shastri, *see* dharurkar, Bhagwan Shastri
Bhagwandas, Dr., 155, 189, 318, 322, 324, 348, 349, 381
Bhagwati Devi, 325
Bhajanavali, 196, 288
Bhakti, *see* devotion
Bhaktibehn, *see* desai, Bhaktibehn,
Bhambhania, Nagardas K., 324, 351
Bhandari, Major M.G., 20, 51, 115, 269*fn*, 280
Bhangi Work, *see* conservancy work
Bhangis, *see* untouchables
Bhansali, 178
Bharat Dharma Office, 316
Bharathi Patrika, 395*fn*
Bhargava, L.N., 296, 316, 326
Bhargava, Srinath, 318
Bharucha, 316
Bhashyam, K., 211*fn*
Bhatnagar, 316, 325
Bhatt, 316
Bhatt, Atmaram, 318, 320
Bhatt, Mohanlal, 50, 315, 318, 319, 323 to 325
Bhatt, Nrisinhprasad Kalidas, 317, 320, 323
Bhattachari, Charu, 319
Bhave, Vinoba, 15*fn*, 80, 315, 316, 332, 342
Bhikhabhai, 403
Bhikhibehn, 79
Bhole, 318, 319, 325
Bhonsle, 319
Bible; and image-worship, 96
— Stories; written in Gypsy language, 216*fn*
Bidkar, Pandharinath, 321
Birla, G.D., 23, 57, 108, 127, 138, 140, 207, 243, 295, 296, 298, 315, 317, 319, 322 to 326, 331, 353, 384, 392, 393, 409, 419; his pamphlets, 327
— Group, 320
— Party, 319
Biswas, R.L., 157
Bleeding Wound, 176
Board, 227
Body; abstinence from harmful things benefits, 192
(*The*) *Bombay Chronicle*, 48
Bombay Government, 318
(*The*) *Book of the Cow*, 327
Brahmacharya, 65, 138, 150, 286*fn*, 318, 387
Brailsford, 326
British Courts; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 345, 360
— Law; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 360
Bruener, Mrs., 322
Buch, Puratan, 105, 160, 321
Buddha, 327
Buddhist, 344
Bunyan, John, 34*fn*
Burnes, Delisle, 327

Candle of the Vision, 327
Captain, Nargisbehn, 317 to 319,

CWMG III

325, 384
CARPENTER, Edward, 327
(*The*) *Case for India*, 326
CASTE HINDUS, *see* HINDUS
— SYSTEM; different from Varnashram, 218
CELIBACY; spices are inimical to physical, 101
CENSUS; specially regarding education of the children of Depressed Classes, 68
CENTRAL BOARD, *see* ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD
CHAITANYALALJI, 316
CHAKRAVARTY, Amiya, 317
CHAMAN KAVI, 7, 315
CHAMPA, 254, 419
CHAMPSI, Shivdas, 197*fn*, 322
CHANDAVARKAR, Lady, 416 *fn*
CHANDIWALA, Brijkrishna, 114, 118, 161, 298, 321, 325, 341
CHANDRAJI, Kanti, 319
CHANDRAM SHASTRI, 324
CHANDRAPRABHA, 320
CHANDRASHANKAR, *see* SHUKLA, Chandrashankar
CHANDULAL, Dr., 319
CHAPSEY, Shivdas, *see* CHAMPSI, Shivdas
CHATTERJI, 317
CHATTERJI, Priyanath, 316, 322
CHATTERJI, Vasant Kumar, 316, 325
CHATTERJI, Yogesh, 323
CHATURVEDI, Madan Mohan, 40
CHETTY, G., 322
CHETTY, Narayan, 321
CHETTY, Puttanna, 320
CHHAKKADDAS, 42
CHHARAS, 117, 118, 195, 196, 204, 214, 215, 255, 270, 281, 288, 291, 322, 335, 371, 389, 398, 405
CHHOTALALJI, 323
CHHOTELAL, 323
CHHOTUBHAI, 64, 318, 324
CHIDANANDADAS, 322
CHIMANLAL, *see* SHAH, Chimanlal N.
CHINNIAH, T., 98, 174, 318, 322
CHINTAMANI, C. Y., 176, 317, 323, 329, 419, 420
CHITALIA, Karsandas, 316
CHITRAV SHASTRI, 323 to 325
CHITRE, 318, 322
CHOKSI, 316
CHOUDHARANI, Sarala Devi, 317
CHOWDHARI, R., 321
CHRIST, Jesus, 56, 164*fn*
CHRIST SEVA SANGH, 46, 323
CHRISTIANITY, 24; and Hinduism, 366
CHRISTIANS, 87, 344; and anti-untouchability movement, 164; Catholic, 344; Indian, 365
CHUNILAL, 316
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, 379-80; and government, 158; and untouchability work, 381; resumption of, 112
— RESISTANCE, 380
— RESISTERS, 95, 158, 379, 380
COMMUNAL AWARD, 159, 244
CONGRESSMAN, 291, 379, 380
CONFERENCE OF NAMBOODIRI BRAHMINS OF KERALA; resolution passed by, 339
CONSCIENCE, *see* INNER VOICE
CONSERVANCY WORK, 108, 109, 115, 116, 126, 128, 142, 183; reformers undergoing imprisonment to undertake, 143
CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME; for helping untouchables, 153, 154
— WORK, 164
COURTS OF LAW; and custom, 218
COUSINS, Margaret, 48, 317, 321
COW-PROTECTION, 15, 287, 410
CROZIER, 326
CUSTOM; and courts of law, 218
DAFDA, Dudhabhai M., 107, 108, 319, 398, 403

DAFDA, Lakshmi D., 82, 84, 398, 403
DAFTARI, Keshav Laxman, 162, 319, 321, 324, 349
DAHIBEHN, *see* PATEL, Dahibehn Raojibhai (Nathabhai)
DAKORJI, 24
DAKORNATH TEMPLE, 233
Dalit Sevak, 296
DALMIA, 321
DAMODAR, 362
DAMODAR SUNDARDAS, 321
DAMODARDAS, 322, 324
DANDEKAR, Prof., 318
DANI, Lakshmidas, 324
DAS, Basanti Devi, 139
DAS, C.R., 44, 78
DAS GUPTA, Hemprabha, 106, 282, 283, 319, 337, 390
DAS GUPTA, Satis Chandra, 106, 138, 139, 227, 282, 295, 315 to 320, 323, 325, 390
DASTANE, V.V., 325
DATTA, Dr. S.K., 216, 323, 356
DATTA, Mrs., 216
DATTA, Vishnu, 323
DAVE, 324
DAVE, JUGATRAM, 50
DAVID, M.I., 324, 419; his scheme for higher education of selected Harijans, 243
DAVRE, 321 to 323, 326
DAYANAND SARASWATI, Maharshi, 197
DEATH; a deliverance and dissolution of the body, 55; should be embraced with a smile, 176-7
DELHI PACT, *see* GANDHI-IRWIN PACT
Democracy, 327
DEODHAR, *see* DEVDHAR, G.K.
DEONAYAKACHARYA, 168
DEORUKHKAR, 317
DEPRESSED CLASSES, 107, 108, 274*fn*; census regarding education of the children of, 68; of India Service Society, 147*fn*; representation of, in legislatures, 3*fn*
DESAI, Adar Ardesher, 316
DESAI, Amritlal, 321
DESAI, Bhaktibehn A., 316, 318, 321, 324
DESAI, Bhulabhai J., 313, 326
DESAI, Chandulal, 322
DESAI, Dr. D. M., 301
DESAI, Dhirubhai Bhulabhai, 213, 214, 314, 316, 322
DESAI, Dudhibehn V., 80
DESAI, Dr. Haribhai, 334
DESAI, Kantilal, 316
DESAI, Mahadev, 12, 17*fn*, 26, 37, 42, 46, 49, 50, 54, 55, 65, 85, 89, 93, 97, 102, 110*fn*, 125, 149, 216, 235, 245, 247*fn*, 255*fn*, 257, 262*fn*, 269*fn*, 280, 369, 377, 403*fn*, 409
DESAI, Manibhai, 321
DESAI, Narayan, 194
DESAI, Pragji Khandubhai, 32
DESAI, Ratilal, 103
DESAI, Valji Govindji, 80, 317, 318, 325, 405
DESAI, Vimalchandra V., 402
DESHBANDHU COLLECTIONS, 139
DESHMANE, 319
DESHMUKH, Dr., 73, 317, 417
DETACHMENT, 337, 364
DEVDHAR, G.K., 23, 24, 210, 316, 319, 323
DEVI PRASAD, 189
DEVOTION, 79, 169, 411; leads to non-attachment and true knowledge, 129; pure, is also service, 75
DEVRAJ, 322
DEY, Purna Chandra, 279, 325
DHARMA, 33, 130, 184, 195, 235, 253, 287, 291, 298, 302, 335, 379, 385, 399, 404; and untouchability, 63;

CWMG LTI

freedom to follow one's, 134; knowledge of, useless if not practised, 111; (the) only companion, 174; path of, 228
DHARMADEV, 196, 322, 389
DHARMANANDARAMA, 322
DHARSHI, 317
DHARURKAR, Bhagwan Shastri, 322, to 324, 347
DHAYGUDE, 321
DHIRU, *see* GANDHI, Dhiru
DHIRUBHAI BHULABHAI, *see* DESAI, Dhirubhai Bhulabhai
DHONDI, Rustom, 325
DHOOT, 324
DHRUVA, Acharya Anandshankar, 22, 133, 168, 189, 190*fn*, 212, 316, 318, 321, 322, 324, 325, 348, 349
DHURANDHAR, 118, 172, 320, 324, 334, 371
DIET, 31, 35, 36, 82, 119, 166, 171, 200-1, 229, 258, 332, 406, 411; and self-control, 83; for cure from constipation, 39; in jail, 34-5; saltless, 143, 301, 364. *See* also FOOD
DIETETIC DISCOVERY, 13
DIGHE, 324
DINKAR, 326
DIVAKAR, 321
DIVATIA, Narasinhrao B., 8, 320
DIVINITY, 96
DIWANCHAND, 263
DOCTOR, Jayakunvar, 103, 319, 323, 325
DODDAMATI, 315, 318
DOSHI, Bechardas J., 104, 319
DOYLE, E. E., 14, 18, 38, 88, 94, 108, 115, 131, 145, 166, 186, 315, 316, 318, 320, 412
DUNICHAND, Lala, 217, 323
DURANT, 326
DURGAPRASAD, 316
DUTY, 228, 390
DWIVEDI, Bhaishankar, 318
DWIVEDI, Manilal, 323

EDITH, M., 405
EDUCATION; for untouchables, 68; hard work also is a kind of, 28; in crafts and knowledge of letters, 226
EFF(I)Y, *see* ARISTARCHI, Effi
ELECTORATES; special, for merchants, landlords and others, 98
ELWIN, 326
ELWIN, Mrs., 317
ELWIN, Verrier, 102, 320
EMETTA, Sister, 317
Essence of Hinduism, 327*fn*
Exchange Banking, 327

FAITH, 237, 364; and reason, 114, 200, 228; in God and self, 257
FARCE, 150
FAST(S)/FASTING, 1, 6, 7, 11, 53, 54, 56*fn*, 60, 62, 63, 70, 77, 81, 82, 95, 108-10, 113, 118, 119, 122, 128, 134-5, 136, 148, 149, 170, 174-5, 185, 206, 216, 217, 219, 233, 241, 244, 245, 248, 259, 260*fn*, 269, 274, 275, 278, 286, 304, 306, 307, 310, 320, 329, 330, 346, 355, 359, 363, 365, 367, 376, 399; and penance and purification, 269, 283; and religion, 169, 182; and sanatanists, 242*fn*; and suicide, 366; as spiritual medicine, 143; broken and remains suspended, 112 to 116; by K. Kelappan, 5, 33, 234, 305; by Prophet Mahomed, 282; by S. P. Patwardhan, stands further suspended, 142; (a) cure for loose motions, 45; Mrs. Damaraju Lakshmamma dissuaded

from resorting to, 347; effects of, 129-30, 192; ethics of, 228; (the) highest form of prayer, 114; historic reasons for, 198; idea of, 169; "in obedience to the inner promptings", 168; in sanatanists' eyes, 359; intended to stir Hindus into action, 250; method of, 270, —origin of, 186; necessity of, 200; not absolute or unconditional, 170; not intended to convert orthodox Hindus, 64; not to be imitated, 111; on behalf of Hinduism, 71; partial, by S. P. Patwardhan, 129; (a) permanent feature of Gandhiji's life, 161; postponement of, 125, 147, 185, 229, 249, 313, 330, 331, 339, 343, 378, —and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 346; (a) prayerful search after truth, 376
— Week, 380
Federal Finance, 327
Flowers of St. Francis, 122
FOOD, 42, 100 to 102, 105, 183, 203, 215, 231, 338; and eating habits, 194; changes in, introduced by the Ashram, 87, 170. *See* also DIET
FOREIGN CLOTH, 120
Foreign Exchange, 327
Fors (Clavigera), 327
Fourth Seal, 326
FREE PRESS, 111, 319
FRIENDSHIP, 56
FRY, Cora, 321, 322

GADODIA, 317
GADRE, 315, 322
GAGANNARAYAN, 316
GALIARA, Vanita, 324
GANATRA, Nanalal, 322
GANDHI, Chhaganlal, 281, 320, 323
GANDHI, Devdas, 39, 41, 47, 140, 161, 216, 315 to 317, 319 to 321, 325, 326, 334, 376
GANDHI, Dhiru, 255
GANDHI, Jamnabehn, 26, 81, 105, 171, 222, 227, 229, 288, 291, 302, 315, 323, 325, 336, 361, 363, 409
GANDHI, Jamnadas, 81, 323 to 325, 334, 362
GANDHI, Kanti, 85, 138, 178, 326; regarding illness of, 46
GANDHI, Kanu, 26
GANDHI, Kashi, 302
GANDHI, Kasturba, 32, 103, 108*fn*, 136, 144, 149, 182, 188, 201, 246, 249, 258, 271, 320, 322, 324 to 326, 332, 334, 364
GANDHI, Keshav, 27, 32, 89, 101, 323, 333; regarding illness of, 117
GANDHI, Khushalchand, 81
GANDHI, Kusum, 13, 34, 45, 75, 81, 84, 87, 99, 105, 117, 160, 178, 215, 226, 317, 318, 321, 323, 341, 363, 403; regarding illness of, 121, 205
GANDHI, Maganlal, 27*fn*, 89, 400
GANDHI, Manilal, 32, 116, 143, 224, 301, 319, 320, 323, 325, 332, 342
GANDHI, Manmohandas P., 213, 323
GANDHI, Manu, 120
GANDHI, Mohandas Karamchand; advises S.P. Patwardhan to suspend fast, 129; "author of rigid rules", 83; his resolve for a thirty days' fast, 126; on K. Kelappan's fast, 33; tenders apology to Dr. B.C. Roy, 207
GANDHI, Narandas, 25, 26*fn*, 34, 45, 83, 84, 87, 99, 105, 117, 121, 131, 135, 138, 144, 149*fn*, 160,

171, 173, 178, 194, 204, 214, 215, 226, 236, 255, 281, 290, 292, 293, 316, 318, 320 to 326, 333, 335, 341, 361, 362, 371, 389, 403, 405, 406, 409, 418; regarding illness of, 229
GANDHI, Prabhudas, 67, 321, 404
GANDHI, Purushottam, 26, 82, 84, 222, 291, 302; regarding illness of, 288
GANDHI, Radha, 99, 123, 178, 290, 318, 323, 324, 341, 363; regarding illness of, 105, 117, 121, 205
GANDHI, Ramdas, 50, 129, 149, 281, 318, 320, 326, 419
GANDHI, Santok, 32, 322, 323
GANDHI, Shivbhakta, 321
GANDHI, Sushila, 143, 224, 325, 332, 342
GANDHI, Vrajlal, 34*fn*, 322
GANDHI-IRWIN PACT, 109
Gandhi Vichar Dohan, 315, 327
GANESAN, K., 316
Ganga; Veda number of, 327
GANGABEHN, 215, 281, 302
GANGADHARPRASAD, 318
GANGA RAM, 367
GAUR, Sir Harisingh, 318
GAUR GOPAL, 315
GAUTAM, Srikrishna, 316
GENERAL SECRETARY, AIVSS, *see* NANAVATI, Hiralal D.
(*St.*) *George's Guild*, 327
GHARPURE, J.R., 261
GHIA, Dr., 318
GHIA, G. Behn, 322
GHOSH, Aurobindo, 37
GHOSH, Nirmalchandra, 318
GHOSHAL, Binod, 323
GHUMATKAR, Kisan, 13, 49, 85, 118, 172, 371
GIDWANI, 323, 325
GIDWANI, Ganga, 315
GILDER, Dr., 176, 294
GILLETTE, Mary, 321, 324
GILLIGAN, 317
GIRDHAR SHASTRI, 410
GIRDHARI, 315, 316
GIRDHARILAL, 323, 417
GIRI, Vishwanan, 325
GIRI FAMILY, 371, 374
GITA PRESS, 318
Gitarahasya, 33
GOD, 7, 52, 62, 63, 79, 81, 92, 105 to 107, 111, 112, 114, 116, 144, 161, 190, 206, 211, 217, 244, 247, 264, 267, 269, 291, 299, 301, 306, 338, 368, 377 to 379, 390; acts through those who have acquired complete detachment, 10; and apparent plurality, 30; and dictates of reason, 71; and human beings, 230; and meditation, 75; and *prakriti*, 174; as truth, 391; faith in, 258, —acquired through service, 237, — self and, 257; is no respector of forms or words, 96; is one's true support, 93; is truth, 70, 76; men of, 282; no half-way house in the house of, 137; requires purest instruments to speak through, 6; the true Provider, 124; voice of, proved to be the prompting of the Devil, 245. *See* also INNER VOICE
GODAVARIBEHN, 322
GODSE, Ganpatrao, 317
GODSE, Shankarrao, 315
GOKALDAS, 419
GOKHALE, 317
GOKHALE, Avantikabai, 315, 316
GOKHALE, Baban, 316
GOLDBURG, 317
(*The*) *Golden Book of Tagore*, 327
GOMATI, *see* MASHRUWALA, Gomati K.

GOPALAKRISHNAMURTHI, 316
GOPALDAS, 324
GOPIKRISHNA, 323
GORDHANDAS, Kunwarji, 322
GOSEVA SANGH, 85
GOSIBEHN, 315
GOSWAMIS, 296
GOUR, Dr., 201; his work on Buddhism, 301, 377
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (1919), 179*fn*
— SERVANTS; and anti-untouchability movement, 141
GOVIND, 315
GOVIND RAGHAV, 341
GRAHAM, John W., 54, 55, 58
GUDEL, 316
GUHA, Nirod Ranjan, 232
GUHA, Sarat Chandra, 414
GUJARATIS, 241
GUNDURAO, 318
GUNVANTBEHN, 318
GUPTA, Deshbandhu, 326
GUPTA, Munshilal, 322
GUPTA, Shivprasad, 193, 322, 325
GURJAL, Fulchand, 316
GURUVAYUR CAUSE, *see* GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION
— REFERENDUM, 162, 165, 238*fn*, 278. *See* also GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-ENTRY, TEMPLE-GOERS, TEMPLES, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
— TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, 1*fn*, 24, 33, 43, 55, 61, 67 to 69, 72, 77, 108*fn*, 125 to 128, 137, 147, 148, 155*fn*, 163*fn*, 169, 185, 189, 197, 198, 233, 234, 240, 241, 263, 274*fn*, 270, 271, 278, 279, 304 to 307, 310, 328, 329, 342 to 344, 347*fn*, 355, 359, 399; and the analogy of four brothers, 134; and compromise, 374-5; and condition of fast by Gandhiji, 156*fn*; Harijans' entry was in vogue on Krithigai Ekadasi Day, 328, 344, 360, 395*fn*, 415; K. Kelappan and Gandhiji alone should fast for, 111. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-ENTRY, TEMPLE-GOERS, TEMPLES, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
GYPSIES; use of Indian words among, 216

HABIB, Mohamed Ali, 315
HAKIM, 316
Hamara Kalank, 5
HAMIDA, 268
HANSABEHN, 316
HANUMANPRASAD, 323
HARI KIRTAN MAHA SAMMELAN, Meerut, 294
HARIBHAI, *see* DESAI, Dr. Haribhai
HARIBHAU, *see* UPADHYAYA, Haribhau
HARIDAS, 419
Harijan, 370, 371
HARIJAN(S), *see* UNTOUCHABLES
— CHILDREN, 276; of Vadaj, 124
— SEVAK SANGH, 3, 12, 23*fn*, 55, 57*fn*, 67*fn*, 107, 108, 110, 127, 128, 132, 146, 151, 157, 158, 207, 275, 320, 340, 415. *See* also ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY BOARD
— WORK, *see* UNTOUCHABILITY WORK
HARILAL, Dr., 117
HARILALBHAI, 319
HARIYOMAL, 46, 404
HARRISON, Agatha, 58
HASMUKHRAI, 121
HATE; preferable to love, 361
HAYES, Will, 327
HEATH; and his Astronomy, 327

HENDRIKS, 317
HERSCHEL; reports of, and other committees, 327
HIMMATLAL, 316
HIMMAT SHANKAR SHASTRI, 324
HINDI; many words of, popular among Gypsies, 216*fn*
— CLASSES, 36
(*The*) *Hindu*, 20, 125, 155*fn*, 320
— *and Mahomedan Endowments*, 277 *fn*
— *Astronomy*, 327
HINDU(S), 2, 3, 9, 11, 55, 62 to 64, 68, 69, 71, 87, 103, 132, 137, 147*fn*, 151, 152, 154, 156*fn*, 175, 197*fn*, 199, 206, 233, 259 to 261, 265, 274*fn*, 276*fn*, 277, 284, 285, 307 to 309, 329, 343 to 345, 349, 352, 359, 360, 365, 380, 382, 417*fn*; and caste system, 218; and conservancy work, 142, —in jails, 145; and creation of untouchability, 97; and Gandhiji's fast, 250; and public temples, 366; and referendum with regard to Guruvayur temple-entry, 78, 155; and removal of untouchability, 158, 234, —a matter of penance and purification by caste, 72; and scavengers, 12; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 125*fn*; and untouchables, 12, 137, 211, 339, 374, — temple-entry by, 67, 77-8, 179*fn*, 189, 198, 328; cleaning of Harijan quarters by, 128; election of untouchable candidates by, 175; godfearing, 413*fn*; of Malabar, 24; sanatanist orthodox, 367, 368; should undergo purification for having done a violent wrong to untouchables, 126; untouchability and orthodox, 157
— BELIEF, 309
— CONSCIENCE, 351
— FAMILY; fear of division of, 375*fn*
— LAW; and Hindu public opinion, 179*fn*; work of Kashinath N. Kelkar on, 59
— LEGISLATORS, 180; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 360
— MISSION, 414*fn*
— PRACTICE; and Hindu public opinion, 179
— PUBLIC OPINION, 180; and Hindu Law, 179. *See* also PUBLIC OPINION
— SHASTRAS, *see* SHASTRAS
— SOCIETY, 206, 260*fn*, 261, 306, 365; and removal of untouchability, 380; untouchability has retarded evolution of, 159
— TEMPLES, *see* TEMPLES
— WORSHIPPERS, 148; and untouchables, 155
HINDUISM, 3, 24, 154, 185, 234, 248, 250, 259 to 261, 270, 276*fn*, 284, 285, 304, 305, 307, 365, 410; admits untouchables to public temples, 199; and analogy of parent trunk and its branches, 71-2; and beef-eating Harijans, 148, 233; and caste system, 218; and cow-protection, 15; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 367; and untouchability, 55, 157, 181, 221, 308, 348; and untouchables, 123; central call of, 306; evils that have crept into, 361; interference by mixed legislatures with, 180; interpretation of, 205, 206, — of written word arrested evolution of, 305-6; "is not anti-Mussalman, anti-Christian or anti-any-other-religion", 71; making it a living faith, 187-8; not wholly different from Roman Catholicism, 366; social reform absolutely necessary for, 37. *See* also SANATANA DHARMA

HIRALAL, 315
HIRALAL AMRITLAL, 316
HISSAR DISTRICT; famine in, 393*fn*
HIVALE, Shamrao, 102
HOARE, Sir Samuel, 326
HODGE, 326
HOLLAND, Canon, 325
HOLLAND, W. E. S., 273
HOME SECRETARY, Government of Bombay, 50, 90, 209, 381
HOWARD, Elizabeth F., 58
HOWARD, Miss, 54, 317
HOWARD, Mrs., 317
HOYLAND, John S., 54, 317
HUMAN ILLNESSES; mental worry and anxiety responsible for, 282
HUNTER, Mrs., 379
HUSBAND; mutual dharma of wife and, 361

IMAGE-WORSHIP, 30; not a sin but a condition of our being, 96
Imam Hussain, 326
INDAPURKAR, 326
INDIA SERVICE SOCIETY; Depressed Classes of, 147*fn*
Indian Bibles, 327
— *Currency*, 327
— *Law Reporter*, 13, 277*fn*
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 50, 91
Indian Social Reformer, 6*fn*
INDIRARAMAN SHASTRI, 326, 349
INDRA, Lord, 286
INDU, 83, 231, 325, 334, 336, 362
INNER VOICE, 43, 52, 63, 70, 71, 170, 185, 410, 411; and the voice of ego, 130; promptings of, 6, 10. *See* also GOD
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, 109
— — OF PRISONS, 18, 112, 113, 183
INTER-DINING, 153, 258; prohibition against, 180
INTERMARRIAGE; prohibition against, 180
IRWIN, Lord, 149*fn*
Ishucharita, 405*fn*
ISHWARDAS, 318
ISLAM, 13, 24, 47
ISWARAN, 316
IYENGAR, A. Rangaswami, 202, 322
IYER, 319, 327
IYER, Mahalinga S., 395
IYER, P.R. Ganapathi, 277*fn*
IYER, R. Sankaranarayana, 238, 276
IYER, S.N., 325
IYER, Shri Krishna, 324
IYER, T.R. Ramachandra, 382
IYER, T.S. Kalyana Rama, 156, 278, 284, 298, 325, 326

J. P., 318
JADHAV, 319
JAGANNATH, 17, 315, 318
JAGANNATHKUNWAR, 318
JAIKOR, 363, 371
JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, 345
JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM, 257
JAISHRI, 316
JAISUKHLAL, 317
JAMIA; and his Urdu plays, 327
JAMMUBHAIJI, 197*fn*
JAMNADAS DWARKADAS, 325
JANAKIMAIYA, *see* BAJAJ, Janakidevi
JANARDANA SWAMI TEMPLE, 347*fn*, 354
Janata, 322
JASANI, Nanalal K., 103, 253, 256, 319, 324, 326, 333, 387
JAYANTIPRASAD, 317
JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN, 93, 411
JEANS, 327
JEDHE, 317

CWMG - LII

(THE) JEER, Sri Ahobilamatam, *see* SHANKARACHARYA OF AHOBILAMATAM, Srirengam
JENKINS, 21, 316, 318
JETHA, Ratanshi, 323
JETHALAL, 320, 325; death of, in Sabarmati Jail, 178
JHAVERI, Gangabehn B., 171, 287
JHAVERI, Manilal Revashankar, 103
JHAVERI, Nanibehn, 85, 287
JHAVERI, Pannalal, 85*fn*
JHINABHAI, 419
JIJIMA, 176, 214, 294
JITEN, 317, 326
JIVANLAL, 315
JIVARAMBHAI, 362
JIVRAM SHASTRI, 326
Jodanikosh, 28
JONES, Major, 115
JOSEPH, 321
JOSEPH, of Chettur, 325
JOSEPH, of Madurai, 325
JOSHI, 85, 323, 326
JOSHI, Chhaganlal, 15, 28*fn*, 50, 105, 122, 144, 171, 200, 208, 214, 230, 312, 315, 316, 319, 342, 343, 388, 402, 405, 411, 412; Premabehn's complaints against, 289
JOSHI, D.V., 319
JOSHI, Devkaran, 317
JOSHI, G.M., 159, 240, 324
JOSHI, Jhinabhai, 326
JOSHI, Lakshman Shastri, 322 to 324, 326, 349
JOSHI, Ramabehn, 28, 230, 314, 370
JOSHI, Vasukaka, 321, 324, 325, 326, 419
Justice, 352

KAILAS, 418
KAJROLKAR, 320
KALAKANKAR, Raja of, 319, 320, 324
KALELKAR, Balkrishna, 103, 222, 246, 258, 320, 324, 334
KALELKAR, D.B., 103*fn*, 318, 342, 362
KALELKAR, Shanker, 50
KALIGUDU, 318
KAMAKOTI, 66
KAMAL MIYAN, 407
KAMALA, 290
KAMALABEHN, 325
KAMDAR, Hari-ichchha, 85, 322
KANAN, 326
KANAIYALAL, 409, 418
KANITKAR, G.N., 110, 316, 317, 319
KANNAMWAR, M.S., 319
KANTA, 411
KANTAK, Premabehn, 13*fn*, 28, 83, 118, 122, 144, 172, 195, 214, 223, 230, 255, 281, 289, 290, 323, 326, 334, 362, 370, 385, 389, 401, 403, 405; to undergo operation, 138
KANUGA, Dr., 98
KANUGA, Nandubehn, 317
KAPADIA, Parmananda K., 399
KAPUR, Shyamnarayan, 419
KARA, Manibehn, 316
KARAMCHAND, 21, 27, 64, 66, 74
KARIM, Bachu, 319
KARMA, 276*fn*; law of, 277
KARNAD, Sadashivrao, 163, 182, 249, 322
KARSANDAS, 326
KASHI VISHWANATH TEMPLE, 384; and Harijans, 22
KASI KRISHNAMACHARYA, 350
KASTUR, 316
KASTURBHAI LALBHAI, 323
KATELI, 203
KAUSALYA, 326
KAUSALYA RAM, 323
KAVI, Chaman, 316, 318
KEAY, 327
KELAPPAN, K., 1*fn*, 5, 42, 70, 78, 111, 129, 137, 186, 228, 229, 234, 248,

303 to 305, 307, 310, 317, 320, 325, 326, 376, 396, 399; Gandhiji's duty to support, 62; giving up of fast by, 33; postponement of fast by, 229
KELKAR, Kashinath N., 31, 59, 316, 317
KELKAR, Dr. M.S., 160
KELKAR, N.C., 320
KESHAVDUTT, Maharaj, 322
KESHAVJI, 270
KETKAR, G.V., 396
KEVALANAND, Swami, 251, 261, 262, 349
KHADAGBAHADURSING, 84
KHADI, 46
— BOARD, 202
— PRATISHTHAN, 391
— WORK, 390
KHAITAN, 139, 319
KHAITAN CHILDREN, 326
KHALADKAR, 321 to 323
Khalifa Ally, 326
KHANDWALA, 318
KHARAS; and his Astronomy, 327
KHARE, Lakshmibehn, 118
KHARE, Narayan M., 99, 118, 196, 288, 332, 371
KHARE, Parashuram, 325
KHARE, Ramachandra N., 173, 371
KHASGIWALE, Nanasaheb, 324, 410
KHEMCHAND, 318
Kheti, 327
KHIMCHAND, 301, 321, 387, 388, 402
KHIMJI, 67
KIKABHAI, 107, 108
Kimiyagar, 327
KINLEY, 327
KIRLOSKAR WHEEL, 282
KIRTIKAR, 327
KNOWLEDGE; true, means power of discrimination between the essential and the non-essential, 129
KOKJE SHASTRI, 323 to 325
KORAN; and image-worship, 96
KOTAK, Harjivan, 316, 319
KOTAK, Sharda, 319
KOTHARI, Gajraj, 325
KOTHARI, Kirchand, 225 323, 324; pamphlets of, 252
KOTWAL, 228, 323
KRISHNA, 222, 411
KRISHNA, Lord, 177, 335, 411
KRISHNACHANDRA, 93, 238
KRISHNARAM, 330
KRISHNARAO, 316
KRISHNASWAMI, C.R., 357
KRITHIGAI EKADASI DAY; Harijans' entry into Guruvayur Temple on, 328, 344, 360, 395*fn*, 415
KSHETRAPAL SINGH, 318
KUDSIA, 31, 292, 407
KULKARNI, 318, 322
KULKARNI, Rev., 326
KULKARNI, Narayan Rao, 279, 325
KUMAON SOCIAL CONFERENCE, 315
KUMARAPPA, J.C., 326*fn*
KUMTHAKAR, Lakshman, 315
KUNZRU, H.N., 131, 207, 275, 320, 324
KURTUKOTI, Dr., 210, 251
KUVADIA, Shyamji, 317

LACHCHHANRAI, 321
LAD, 318
LADHA MAHARAJ, 78
LAGU, Vinayaka, 322
LAHIRI, 316
LAJPATRAI, Mrs., 17
LAKSHMAMMA, Damaraju, 354; dissuaded from her proposed fast, 347
LAKSHMAN SHASTRI, *see* JOSHI, Lakshman Shastri
LAKSHMANACHARI, 322
LAKSHMI, 171, 172, 317, 323, 370
LAKSHMIBAI, Lady, 320, 321

CWMG - LII

LAKSHMIDAS, 325, 403
LAKSHMIDAS GORDHANDAS, 318
LAKSHMI DEVI, 325
LALLUBHAI KARAMCHAND, 318
LALLUBHAI SHAMALDAS, Sir, *see* MEHTA, Sir Lallubhai Shamaldas
LALWANI, 321
LALWANI, Kikibehn, 322, 325
"LARKS OF ST. FRANCIS", 57
LAVATE, Bhausaheb, 324
LAVJIBHAI, 107, 108
LAW OF TRUSTS, 306
LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS, 179*fn*
LEGISLATURE(S); mixed, and Hindu religion, 180; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 360
LELE, P. R., 146, 319, 321
LEONARD, 317
LESTER, Muriel, 325
LILADHAR, 144, 214, 320, 323, 362, 363, 403
LILAVATI, 256
LLOYD, Sir George, 109
LOCAIRE; and his astronomy, 327
LODHI, Tulsiram, 321
LOVE, 252; bitter fruits of, with regard to untouchability, 361
LOW, 357

MACDONALD, James Ramsay, 179, 326; scheme of, and Yeravda Pact, 98, 175
MACRAE, 316
MADALASA, *see* BAJAJ, Madalasa
MADAN, Dr., 27, 64; his book on fasting, 85, 105, 293, 327
MADHAVAN, 248
MADHAVJI, 326
MADHUMATI, 323
MADHUSUDANDAS, 17, 18, 315
MADRAS ADVOCATES; pamphlet issued by, 330
— HIGH COURT; judgement of, regarding Harijans' entry into temples, 328, 329
Madras Law Journal, 27, 277*fn*
MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, 125*fn*
— RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS ACT, 306; and breach of neutrality according to sanatanists' interpretation, 345
MAETERLINK, 327
MAGANBHAI, 85
Magic of Stars, 327
Mahabharata, 377
MAHADEV, 381
MAHADEV SHASTRI, 318, 322
MAHADEVAN, 323
MAHALAKSHMI, 281
MAHARASHTRA PRANTIK MANDAL, 414*fn*
Mahavir, 327
MAHAVIR, 117, 341, 362
MAHENDRA, 319
MAHER, Tulsi, 173, 402
MAHESH, 287
MAHOMED, Prophet, 282
MAHTO, Ramsinhasan, 23
MAITHILISHARAN, 327
MAITRA, Dr., 324
MAJMUDAR, Haridas, 317
MAJMUDAR, Parikshitlal, 317, 319, 325
MALABARIS, 241
MALAVIYA, Govind, 17
MALAVIYA, Madan Mohan, 17, 22, 45, 63, 96, 189, 190, 307*fn*, 399
MALAVIYA, Radhakant, 275, 321, 325
MALIK, 404
MALVI, Chhaganlal, 318
MAMAD, Rajabhai, 319
MANCHHARAM, Keshavlal, 315
MANDER, 327
MANGALA, 29, 173
MANIBEHN, 315, 316
MANIBHAI, 401

MANICKAM, M., 355
MANILAL, 401, 402
Mantra(s), 306, 410
MANTRI, Pratapsinh, 317
Manusmriti, 9, 197*fn*
MARATHE, Narayan Shastri, 326, 349
MARIA, 96, 97
MARTIN, Major, 115
MARULIA, 403
MARWADI, Shamji, 104, 319, 325, 363
Maryada, 351*fn*
Maryadis, 351
MASARYK, President, 216
MASCREEN, Peter J., 366
MASHRUWALA, Gomati K., 343, 408
MASHRUWALA, Kishorelal, 193, 336, 342, 343*fn*, 408, 409
MASHRUWALA, Nanabhai I., 169, 322
MASHRUWALA, Nirmala B., 342, 408
MATE, 168, 319
Mathadhipatis, 211
MATHEW, P.K., 260
MATHUR, Promode Bihari, 397
MATHURADAS, 46, 243, 316
MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI, 33, 269, 316, 325
MATHURADAS VISSANJI, 315, 317
MATHURAMOHAN DEV, 321
MAVALANKAR, G.V., 117, 195, 204, 214, 236, 255, 270, 281, 288, 291, 293, 322, 325, 335, 398
MAYASHANKAR, 103
MEDH, Surendra B., 131, 320
MEDHEKAR, 316
MEHROTRA, Parashuram, 36, 85, 103*fn*, 144, 225, 226, 236, 325, 406
MEHROTRA, Vimal Kishore, 406
MEHTA, Babalbhai, 123
MEHTA, Bhagwanji A., 301, 326, 401
MEHTA, C., 319
MEHTA, Champa R., 103, 120, 323, 333, 387
MEHTA, Chhaganlal, 103, 104, 253 to 256, 324, 325, 387
MEHTA, Hansa, 315
MEHTA, J.K., 67, 316, 321
MEHTA, Jaisukhlal K., 243, 251, 316, 318, 323, 324, 326
MEHTA, Labhshankar, 316
MEHTA, Sir Lallubhai Shamaldas, 316, 318 to 320
MEHTA, Lilavati, 103
MEHTA, Maganlal, 103*fn*, 104, 253, 254, 318, 324, 325, 387, 388
MEHTA, Major, 108, 319
MEHTA, Manekbai, 103, 253, 326, 419
MEHTA, Manilal P., 253
MEHTA, Manjula, 103
MEHTA, Dr. Pranjivan, 36*fn*, 51, 247, 317, 319, 333*fn*; his will, 253
MEHTA, Ratilal P., 36, 103, 121, 247, 253, 254, 387
MEHTA, Rohit, 419
MEHTA, Shardabehn S., 317
MEHTA, Vaikunth L., 319
MEHTA, Vallabhdas R., 197*fn*
MEHTA BROTHERS, 326
MEN; of God, 282
MENON, A. Krishna, 318
MENON, C. Narayana, 136, 278
MENON, Esther, 60, 317, 369, 378
MENON, K. Ramunni, 61, 162, 163, 250, 321, 324
MENON, Karunakara, 321
MENON, Narayana, 317, 318, 320, 325
MENON, Tangai, 369
MENON, U. Gopala, 44, 99, 133, 155, 156, 163, 188, 246 to 248, 262, 275, 313, 317, 319 to 322, 324, 325, 415
MENON, Mrs. U. Gopala, 246
META, Amulya Sen, 322
MEVADE, 320

CWMG - I'II

MICHAEL, S.M., 5, 315
Mind and Vision, 16
MINORITY, 134
MIRABEHN, 12, 35, 85, 102, 116, 119, 143, 200, 257, 300, 315, 317, 318, 320, 322, 324, 326, 363, 376 to 378, 400, 404
MISHRA, 322, 323
MISRA, Kanaiyalal, 321
MISRA, Krishna Thanasukh, 349
MISRA, Vishwanath, 322
MISTRY, Ganeshilal, 353
MITHUBEHN, 178
MITTER, Manindra Nath, 266, 325
MODI, Dr., 18, 38, 91, 166
MODI, Ishwarlal, 317
MOGUL, Faramji, 316
MOHANLAL, 267, 325
MOHOTA, Shivratan, 317
Money, 326
MORARJEE, Manibhai, 317
MORARKA, Vasantlal, 317
MORRIS, John, 375
MOTO, Roberto, 325
MUKANDI LAL, 274, 325
MUKHERJI, Ramtaran, 182, 322
MUNSHI, Lilavati, 150, 177
MUNSHI, K. M., 65, 138, 149, 176, 214, 293, 317, 320, 322, 323, 325, 408
MURTHI, Narayan N., 395
MUSLIM(S), 87, 314*fn*, 344
— WOMEN, 403
Mussolini, 327
My Experiments with Truth, 192*fn*
Mysterious Universe, 327

NADKARNI, 317, 322; and his pamphlet, 327
NAGINI, Nila, 316, 318, 320, 322, 325
NAIDU, Padmaja, 19, 292, 315, 316, 320, 322, 326
NAIDU, Sarojini, 320, 322
NAIDU, Vasudev, 316
NAIK, 322
NAIR, K. Madhavan, 72, 108, 132, 162, 186, 188, 275, 303, 304, 318, 319, 324 to 326, 397, 416
NAIR, Krishna, 118, 162, 237, 324, 325
NAIR, Vakkayil Achuthan, 240, 324
NALAVDE, Krishnaji, 317
NALAVDE, Sitaram K., 30, 297, 316
NALIN, 318
NAMBOODIRIPAD, Vasudevan, 318
NAMBUDIRIPAD, Kurur Nilkantan, 367
NANABHAI; and his biography of the Prophet, 327
NANALAL, 103, 319
NANASAHEB, 123, 319, 321
NANAVATI, Hiralal D., 132, 168, 212, 239, 263, 320, 322, 419
NANNIE, 369
NAOROJI, Khorshedbehn, 269, 324
NARADEV SHASTRI, 291, 317
NARASIMHACHAR, G.V., 270, 271, 315, 319, 321, 322, 325
NARASIMHAN, 318
NARASINHBHAI, 327
NARASINHDAS, Baba, 317
NARAYAN SHASTRI, *see* MARATHE, Narayan Shastri
NARAYANA RAJU, D., 354
NARAYANAPPA, 215, 281
NARKHI, Chimanlal, 317
NARMADA, 370
NATARAJAN, K., 6, 66, 161, 210, 315, 317, 321, 323
NATHAN, T.A.V., 299, 317, 322, 326, 352
NATHUBHAI, 318
NATIONAL SCHOOL, Rajkot, 254
Navajivan, 410
NAVIN, 245, 287
NAVINCHANDRA, 321
NAWLE, Dr., 317, 318, 320, 321, 325

NAYAK, Maganbhai, 322
NAYAK, Ramanath, 324
NAYANAR, 318
NAYYAR, Pyarelal, 118, 149, 216, 225, 315 to 319, 323, 325, 326, 334
NAYYAR, Taradevi, 118
NEEDU, *see* BAPI NEEDU, M.
NEELAMEGHACHARI, 324
NEHRU, Jawaharlal, 311, 326
NEHRU, Kamala, 202, 311, 324
NEHRU, Sarup Rani, 311, 316
NEHRU, Swarup, 324
NEWL, Earnest, 325
NEWMAN, Dorothy, 319
NIGHT SCHOOLS; for untouchables, 68
NILKANTH, Vidyagauri R., 317
NIRANTAR, 318
NIRENDRA, 324
Nirvan, 301
NO-CHANGERS; and sanatanists, 69, 70
NON-ATTACHMENT, 86, 129
NON-CO-OPERATION, 163*fn*
NON-HINDUS, 359; and temple-entry agitation in Colombo, 344, 345, 355
NON-POSSESSION, 235
NON-STEALING; vow of, 101
NON-VIOLENCE, 44, 52*fn*, 62, 252, 404, 410; and truth, 175, 386; in every walk of life, 37; in thought, word and deed, 113-4

OLSON, 325
Omkar, 76
(AN) OPTIMIST'S CALENDAR, 363
OTTAWA CONFERENCE AGREEMENT, 37*fn*
— TARIFF BILL, 37
OTURKAR, 321
OZA, Rameshwar, 323

PAI, Sushila, 83*fn*, 118, 172, 231, 326, 334, 362
PAKVASA, Mangaldas M., 213, 323
Panchavati, 327
PANDE, Badridutt, 321
PANDIT, C., 325
PANDIT, Vasumati, 281
PANDIT, Vijayalakshmi, *see* NEHRU, Sarup Rani
PANDYA, 146
PANIKKAR, 322
PANSE, Bhau, 15, 39, 45, 46, 79, 85, 88, 119, 122, 226, 325; regarding illness of, 105, 287
PANTULU, Justice Ramesam, 328
PARACHURE SHASTRI, 315, 325
PARAMARTH BABOO, 189
PARAMESHWAR, *see* GOD
PAREKH, Mulchand, 325
PAREKH, Prabhashankar, 36, 103, 254, 387
PAREKH, Vanmali, 324
PARIKH, Harilal, 325
PARIKH, Mohan, 362
PARIKH, Vanamala N., 256, 362
PARKHE, M.S., 356
PARMAR, Hirji, 318
PARVATI, 121
PASHANKAR, 322
PATDE, 317
PATEL, A., 325
PATEL, Babubhai, 323
PATEL, Dahibehn Raojibhai (Nathabhai), 171
PATEL, Dahyabhai, 14, 19, 39, 41, 64 to 66, 78, 161, 201, 246, 264, 316 to 318, 357; regarding illness of, 21, 27, 74, 86, 98, 136, 223
PATEL, Madhavlal, 326
PATEL, Mangala S., 290, 303
PATEL, Manibehn, 14, 19, 21, 27, 40, 64, 74, 86, 98, 110, 136, 161, 192, 316 to 318, 322, 357
PATEL, Pashabhai, 318, 326
PATEL, Pushpa, 290

CWMG - I, III

PATEL, Raojibhai, 85, 171
PATEL, Shanta S., 173, 290
PATEL, Vallabhbhai, 14, 17*fn*, 50, 64, 65, 74, 89, 93, 149, 245, 258, 363, 369, 408, 418
PATEL, Vidya R., 333
PATHAK, 325
PATHAK, Shridhar Shastri, 323, 324, 349
PATTANI, Anant, 320
PATTANI, Prabhashankar, 372
PATTANI, Lady Ramabai P., 320
PATWARDHAN, G.H., 241, 324
PATWARDHAN, R. V., 164, 242, 321, 324, 413
PATWARDHAN, S. P., 85, 108, 109, 112, 115, 116, 119, 128, 140, 159, 169, 183, 184, 186, 201, 228, 318 to 320, 342, 412; and conservancy work in jail, 94-5, 126-7, 145; and service of untouchables, 113, —is an article of faith with, 88; begins to take full rations, 142
PATWARI, Ranchhoddas, 375
PEACE, 252; cessation of mental imaginings an essential condition to inner, 301*fn*
PEACOCK, Chas., 164, 321
PENANCE, 169, 195, 199, 239, 247, 305, 306; fast as, 269, 365, 376; (a) process of purification and fast, 283
PETIT, Mithubehn, 322, 325
PHATAK, Haribhau, 55, 210, 315 to 319, 321 to 324, 326, 388
Pilgrim's Progress, 34*fn*
PILLAI, Setu Pandian, 317
PODDAR, Babasaheb, 323, 324
PODDAR, Hanumanprasad, 326
PODDAR, Sunderlal, 317
POLAK, Henry, 317
POLITICAL WORK; and government servants, 141
PONNAMMAL, S., 271, 325, 416
POOCHA SISTERS, 324
POONA COMMITTEE, 56*fn*
— PACT, *see* YERAVDA PACT
POWALKAR, 319
PRABHAKAR, 324
PRABHASHANKAR, *see* PAREKH, Prabhashankar
PRABHAVATI, 31, 93, 316, 318, 411
PRABHUDAS, *see* GANDHI, Prabhudas
PRAGJI, 116
Prakriti, 30; and Parameshwar, 174
PRAMATHABABU, 325
Pranayam, 208
PRANLAL AMBALAL, 332
PRATAPSINH, 324
PRAVARTAK SANGH, 266, 279, 308
Prayashchitta, 211
PRAYER, 52, 182, 338; and fasting, 114, 376; is addressed to the form as well as to the Formless, 30
PREMCHANDJI, 327
PREMI JAIRAMDAS, 257, 324
PREMIER, *see* MACDONALD, James Ramsay
PREMNATHJI, 190*fn*
PRICE, Rachel, 319
PRIMUS STOVE; use of, 101
PRITHURAJ, *see* ASAR, Prithuraj
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY, 309
PROHIBITION; against inter-dining and intermarriage, 180; to use public temples, 132
PROPERTY, Communal; entitled to protection if communal ownership is not in conflict with the common weal, 218
—, Private; lawfully acquired is entitled to protection, 218
(*The*) *Prophet's Message to the West*, 327
PROSPERITY; is remembering God's omnipresence, 378

PROVINCIAL BOARD, 300
PUBLIC OPINION; and temple-entry question, 181. *See* also HINDU PUBLIC OPINION
PULAYAS, 260, 261
PURANDARE, N.H., 55, 56, 318, 322, 323, 414
PURANDARE, P.H., 349
Purdah, 266
PURIFICATION, 135, 137, 143, 199, 285, 344, 417*fn*, 360; and fast, 269; ceremonial, 134; (a) process of penance and fast, 283; undergone by untouchables, 180
PURIFICATORY CEREMONIES, 348, 382; for temple-entry, 126
PURITY; external and internal, 351
Purusha, 30
PURUSHOTTAM, *see* GANDHI, Purushottam
PURUSHOTTAMDAS, 315
PURUSHOTTAMDAS HARKISANDAS, 322
PUSHPA, 173

QURESHI, 121, 363
QURESHI, Amina G., 25, 29, 363, 403, 419
QURESHI, Gulam Rasool, 25*fn*

R., 317
RAGHAVAN, 160, 321
RAGHAVENDRA, 320, 324
RAGHAVENDRA PRATAP, 317
RAHMAN, Habibur, 317
RAJA, 315, 326, 332
RAJAGOPALACHARI, C., 22, 97*fn*, 207, 248, 278, 303, 304, 323, 325, 330 to 332, 334, 357, 397
RAJAGOPALACHARI, Chittoor, 97, 155*fn*, 186, 275, 318
RAJAGOPALACHARI, S., 272, 325
RAJAH, Rao Bahadur M.C., 208, 322
RAJAN, Dr. T.S.S., 272, 325
RAJBHOJ, P.N., 147, 319, 321
RAJENDRA PRASAD; regarding illness of, 140
RAJESHWAR SHASTRI, 322
RAMA, Lord, 130, 149*fn*, 224
RAMACHANDRA, 315, 318 to 320, 323
RAMACHANDRA, K., 312
Ramacharcha, 327
Ramakrishna, 327
RAMAKRISHNA, 377
RAMANAMA, 27, 52, 76, 78, 123, 227; more powerful remedy than all diets and drugs put together, 223
RAMANATHAN; and his 'Speech on Khadi', 326-7
RAMANATHAN, Lady, 327
RAMANUJA, 329, 337
RAMANUJACHARI, 316, 318
Ramanujacharit, 337
RAMASWAMI, M.R., 297, 326
Ramayana, 78, 149*fn*, 327, 377
RAMBHAU, *see* KHARE, Ramachandra N.
RAMESAM, Justice; his judgement with regard to temple-entry, 382*fn*
"RAMGITA"; central idea of, 129
RAMGOPAL SHASTRI, 239, 324
RAMJI, 36, 46, 101, 121, 316, 319, 321, 335
RAMKUMAR, 317
RAMPRASAD, 324
RAMSINHASAN, 315
RAMTIRTHA, Brahmachari, 318
RAMZAN, 314*fn*
RANA, Narmadabehn, 28, 229, 335
RANCHHODBHAI, 342
RANE, 325
RANI SAHEBA, 16
RAO, A. Kaleswar, 340
RAO, G. Ramachandra, 181, 320, 322, 383
RAO, K. Nageswar, 181, 319, 322, 350
RAO, P. Kodanda, 315, 318

RAO, Sadashiv, 43, 348, 316, 324
RAO, Shanker, 197*fn*
RAO, Siva, 318, 325
RAO, Suryanarayana, 181
RAO, T.B. Keshava, 271, 325
RAO, U. Subba, 134, 320
RAO, Yugudur Ramachandra, 315
RASTOGI, 315
RATANBEHN, 316
RATHOD, Bhanji, 316
RATILAL, *see* MEHTA, Ratilal P.
RATILAL, Sheth, *see* SHETH Ratubhai
RATNAGIRI JAIL, 112, 145
RATUBHAI, 253, 254, 321, 326, 387, 388
RAU, M.M. Ananta, 51, 219, 323, 364, 394
RAVANA, 130, 149*fn*
REASON, 122, 244; and faith, 114, 200, 228; dictates of, and God, 71
Rebel India, 326
REFERENDUM, 67, 68, 99, 125, 147, 148, 163, 273, 275, 346, 405; and fast, 198, —postponement of, 185; and Guruvayur question, 197; K. Ramunni Menon's complaints against, 162-3; of caste Hindus, 78; of temple-goers, 43, 44, 61—and Hindus, 155; on equal treatment to Harijans in respect of use of tanks, wells, temples, etc., 396*fn*; on the result of, 304-5; Zamorin's charges against those engaged in, 186. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, TEMPLE-ENTRY, TEMPLE-GOERS, TEMPLES, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
— COMMITTEE, 186
REFORM(S), 1, 4, 32, 134, 148, 152, 155, 266, 268, 270, 272, 279, 298, 299, 305, 313, 374, 395, 417; and America's help, 24; and political objective, 37; and sanatan dharma, 2; authority for, 98; can be brought about with self-examination, 81; cannot be carried, 69; enforcement of, by legislation, 179*fn*; not possible without mutual toleration, 242; of temples, 154
REFORMER(S), 7, 44, 72, 78, 109, 151 to 153, 179*fn*, 186, 198, 233, 261, 274, 277*fn*, 297, 307, 346, 374; and Harijans, 3, 375; and sanatanists, 2, 126; caste Hindu, 148; constructive work for, 11; of Kerala, 69; undergoing imprisonment to render conservancy service, 143
RELIGION, 146, 169, 170, 182, 233, 261, 284, 306, 359, 374, 382; and convictions, 70; and self-control, 182; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 360; are same in fundamentals, 366; (an) ever-growing inward response to highest impulses, 61; every activity is governed by, 234; evil done in the name of, 62; higher than political swaraj, 367; is something that binds, 358; not to allow Harijans to enter temples is against, 110; true, and temple-goers, 48; untouchability practised under stamp of, 361
RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS ACT, 309
REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY TOUR PARTY, 414*fn*
RENUNCIATION; joyful, 282; not possible without complete freedom from desire, 34
REPENTANCE, 135
RESOLUTION; passed by the conference of Namboodiri Brahmins of Kerala, 399
REVASHANKAR, 317
REYNOLDS, Reginald, 149, 319

RIGHT; and wrong, 383
RISHIRAM, 317
ROLLAND, Madeleine, 375
ROLLAND, Romain, 327, 377
ROTHENSTEIN, 327
ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE; Third, 179*fn*
ROW, K. Ramabhadra, 241, 324
ROW, Kowtha Suryanarayana, 259, 315, 318, 319
ROY, Dr. B.C., 138, 139*fn*, 201, 202, 207, 208, 227, 260, 282, 295, 311, 319, 323, 326, 384, 407
ROY, Manmatha, 87
ROY, Motilal, 187, 266, 279, 308, 312, 318, 321, 322 to 324
Ruin of Egypt, 327
RUKMINIDEVI, *see* BAZAJ, Rukminidevi
RUSKIN, 327

SABARMATI JAIL; death of Jethalal in, 178
SACRIFICE(S), 34, 60, 153, 277
SAGATHIA, Lakhabhai, 319
SAHA, Govindlal, 67
SAHAI, Padma, 172, 320, 323
SAHAI, Sarojinidevi, 323
SAHAI, Sitla, 171, 303, 362
SAHU, K.L., 283, 325
SAKAT, 316
Saket, 327
SALIVATI, S., 316, 317, 382
SALMIN, Al Haj, 326
SALT SATYAGRAHA; in 1930, 149*fn*
SALUNKE, 323
SALVEMINI, 327
Samarpana, 327
Samskaras; and temple-entry, 97*fn*
SANADHYA, Totaram, 374
SANATAN DHARMA, 22, 220, 221, 349, 359, 361, 411; and Dr. Subbarayan's Bill, 360; fancied danger to, 198; and reform, 2; popular definition of, 358. *See* also HINDUISM
— — KARYALAYA, Madras, 51*fn*
— — SABHA, 61*fn*, 321
— HINDU SABHA, 250
SANATANISTS, 4, 78, 132, 181, 197*fn*, 221, 248, 252, 259, 263, 266, 277*fn*, 297, 310, 321, 343, 347, 349, 351, 360, 368, 383, 384, 411, 413*fn*, 420; and reform, 242; and reformers, 2, 126; and temple-entry, 189, 198, 199, 206; and untouchability, 69, 205, 206; and untouchables, 3, 23; constructive work for, 11; pro-change and no-change, 308; their attitude analogous to a wife rejected by her husband, 358
SANKEY, Lord, 20, 37, 38
Sanmatiprakaran, 104
SANNYASI, Devnandan, 316
SANNYASI, Ramananda, 353
SANTINIKETAN, 96
SARABHAI, Ambalal, 136, 319, 321
SARABHAI, Anasuyabehn, 318
SARABHAI, Saraladevi Ambalal, 48
SARASWATHI, G.S.B., 340
SARUP RANI, *see* NEHRU, SARUP RANI
SASTA SAHITYA MANDAL, 5
SASTRI, 317
SASTRI, V.S. Srinivasa, 52
SATAN, 130
SATAVLEKAR, S.D., 16, 315, 324
SATHE, 317, 321, 322
Sathina Sath Sutro (a pamphlet by Vasantram Shastri), 92
SATKODIBABU, 319
SATYAGNANATIRTHA SWAMI OF UTTARADIMATAM, *see* SHANKARACHARYA OF UTTARADIMATAM
SATYAGRAHA, 89; about temples, 147; on the issue of temple-entry, 137

CWMG - LIII

— ASHRAM; admission to, only for those willing to exercise self-control, 106
Satyakam, 327
SATYANANDA, 317
Satyarthaprakash, 235, 419; magnum opus of Rishi Dayanand, 197
SATYAVAN, *see* STANDENATH, Frederic
Savarnas, *see* HINDUS
SAVITRI, *see* STANDENATH, Francisca
SCAVENGERS, *see* UNTOUCHABLES
SCHOOL FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN, 84
SECRETARY, All-India Shraddhanand Memorial Trust, 232
SECRETARY, Arya Samaj, 323, — Bombay, 235
SECRETARY, Vaidik Dharmavardhini Sabha, 273
SECRETARY OF THE FRIENDS OF INDIA SOCIETY, 298
SECRETARY OF THE PROVINCIAL BOARD, 300
SELF-ABNEGATION; eradication of untouchability requires, 139
SELF-CONFIDENCE, 176
SELF-CONTROL, 170, 182; and dietetic experiments, 83
SELF-DENIAL, 153
SELF-PURIFICATION, 153, 239; mass movement for, 205; not possible without freedom from desire, 34; through fast, 376
SELF-RESPECT, 184
SELF-RESTRAINT, 34, 170, 257
SELF-SACRIFICE, 114
SEN, Bireswar, 366
SEN, S., 266, 325
SEN, S. C., 318
"THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT", 378
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY, 23*fn*
— OF THE PEOPLE SOCIETY, 17*fn*
— OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, *see* HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
SERVICE, 79, 89, 157, 161, 222, 390, 391; faith in God acquired through, 237; methods of, 111; pure devotion is also, 75
SETALVAD, Sir Chimanlal, 382
SEVA SADAN, 321
SHAH, Chhotalal, 103
SHAH, Chimanlal N., 409
SHAH, Fulchand B., 323, 388
SHAH, Gulab A., 26, 80, 120, 231
SHAH, Harakhchand M., 319
SHAH, Hiralal A., 47, 316
SHAH, K.T., 327
SHAH, Madhavlal, 255, 324
SHAH, Punjabhai H., 104
SHAH, Ramnik, 317
SHAH, Sharda C., 231, 338
SHAH, Sulochana A., 86, 123
SHAIVA WORSHIP, 348
SHAKRABHAI, 322
SHAMBHUSHANKAR, 320
SHAMJIBHAI, 322
SHAMLAL, Lala, 392, 393
SHANKAR, 315, 326
SHANKARACHARYA, 165, 182
SHANKARACHARYA OF AHOBILAMATAM, Srirengam, 221
SHANKARACHARYA OF KAMAKOTIPEETAM / KANCHI / KUMBHAKONAM, 221, 316
SHANKARACHARYA OF SARDAPEETAM, Sringeri, 221
SHANKARACHARYA OF UTTARADIMATAM, 221
SHANKARBHAI, 171
SHANKARLAL, 282, 315, 316
Shankha ane Kodi, 327
SHANTA, 172, 215, 316
SHANTI, 317, 363, 371
SHARDABEHN, 316
SHARDA MANDIR, 362, 403*fn*
Shareef Ladka, 327
SHARMA, Dr. Hiralal, 174, 338, 394

SHARMA, Krishnacharya, 316
SHARMA, Prabhubhai, 197*fn*
SHARMA, Sohanlal, 238, 323, 337
SHASTRAS, 12, 67, 76, 265, 276*fn*, 277, 284, 285, 306, 309, 312, 367, 394, 410; and fasts, 330; and question of Harijans' entry into temples, 110; and untouchability, 152, 205, 259, 347-50; and untouchables 2, 22, 23; meaning of, 9-10; sustain the first principles, 9
SHASTRI PARISHAD, 265
Shastris, 199, 265, 269, 280, 284, 312, 320, 321, 323, 325, 343*fn*, 348, 364; and Guruvayur temple-entry, 67, 197; and violation of Shastras, 110*fn*; anti-reform, 261-2; conference with, 162; discussion with, 212; meeting with, 239; no-change and pro-change, 132; of Malabar, 189; pro-reform, 261, 324, 326, —and sanatanist, 325; *Smriti* reform, 325
SHELLEY, 369
SHENAI, P.P., 283, 325
SHETH, Ratubhai, 103, 256
SHETH, Vrajlal, 324
SHETTY, Satyanarayana, 319
SHIKHARE, D.N., 418
Shikshakanche Kaivari, 317
SHINDE, V.R., 151; complaint of, 57
SHIRINBEHN, 315, 317 to 319, 325
SHIROMANY, P.N., 321
SHIVA, Lord, 78
SHIVDUTT SHASTRI, 320
Shraddha; and wedding ceremony, 410
SHRADDHANAND, Swami, 146, 232
—DAY, 354
SHRIDHAR SHASTRI, *see* PATHAK, Shridhar Shastri
SHRI KRISHNA, Lord, *see* KRISHNA, Lord
SHRIMANT MAHARAJ, 16
SHRIPATRAO, 201
SHROFF, Nanalal, 320
SHUDRA, 191
SHUKLA, Chandrashankar, 315, 319, 323
SHYAMLAL, 296
SIDDHANAND, Sadhak, 319
SIKKA, Moolji, 324
SILAS, 326
SILENCE, 79; and divine music, 192-3
SIMPLICITY, 35
SINCLAIR, Upton, 327
SINGH, Balwant, *see* BALVANTSINHA
SINHANARAYAN, 320
SINS; confession of, 192
Sirat-un-nabi, 327
SITA (DHAIRYABALA), 224
SITA, Goddess, 149*fn*, 224
SITARAM, 341
SIVACHIDAMBARAM, 321
Sixty Years of Economic Administration of India, 327*fn*
Sixty Years of Indian Finance, 327
Smritikaras, 348
Smritis, 9, 47, 179, 197*fn*; and untouchability, 157
SOCIAL REFORMS, 70
SOCIETY; opposition and agitation in, sign of healthy growth, 2
SOLANKI, Jivraj, 323
SOLE, R., 53
SOMAN, Ramachandra J., 171, 184, 322
SOMJI, 320
SONAVANE, Anant Jayawant, 316, 320, 321
SONAWALA, 325
SONIRAM, 320, 404
SOUL; abstinence from harmful things benefits, 192
SOUTH INDIANS, 346
Southern Cross, 327
SPIEGEL, Margarete, 236, 324

CWMG - LIII

SPINNING, 12, 89, 343, 376; by hand, 393; for *yajna*, 170; suspension of, 143; theoretical knowledge of, and expertise in, 286
SPINNING-WHEEL(S), 7, 12, 32, 173; and *takli*, 85, — the latter being superior to the former, in teaching us silence, 88
SREE RAGHUNATH SWAMI TEMPLE; and Harijans, 395
SRIPAD SHANKER, 137
STANDENATH, Francisca, 60
STANDENATH, Frederic, 60
STATE; and disposal of carcass of dead cattle, 373
— LEGISLATURES, 179*fn*
STOKES, Samuel E., 61, 327
STUDENT(S), 27; advice to, to serve untouchables in a right and positive way, 141, 356; and untouchables, 22; Hindu, 137
Studies in Vedanta, 327
SUBA, 324
SUBBAROYAN, Dr. P., 330, 419; his Bill, 125, 198, 249, 284, 313*fn*, 378, —and religion, 360, —seeks to amend Madras Religious Endowment Act, 345,—Viceregal sanction to, 303, 305, 309, 310, 330, 345, 346
SUBBAROYAN, Mrs. P., 330
Subodh Patrika, 196
SUBRAHMANYAN, 321, 323
SUBRAMANIAM, S.A.K., 146
SUBRAMANYAM, 321
SUDARISANAM, 318
SUFFERING; for a good cause, 8; physical, and tolerance, 184
SUICIDE; definition of, 366
SUKHABHAU, 321 to 324
SUMAN, Ramnath, 321
SUN-BATH, 337
SUNDAR DASS 187, 322
SUPERINTENDENT OF PRISON, 109
SURAJBEHN, 316
SURBALA (INDUMATI), 323
SURENDRA, 149, 281; Premabehn's complaints against, 289
SURESH, *see* BANERJEE, Dr. Suresh
SURRENDER; freedom from all care, 363
(*The*) *Survey of Matar Taluka*, 326
SURYAKANT, 419
SUSHILA, *see* GANDHI, Sushila, PAI, Sushila
SWADESHI EXHIBITION; in Kumbakonam, 222
Swadhyaya Samhita, 327
SWAMI, Raghunath, 324
SWAMINATHAN, M., 300, 317, 326
SWARAJ, 71, 219*fn*; religion higher than political, 367
— PARLIAMENT; and Harijans, 307
SWARUP, *see* NEHRU, Swarup

TAGORE, Dwijendranath, 197*fn*
TAGORE, Rabindranath, 53, 58, 61, 62, 107, 245, 317
TAHMANKAR, 319
TALEGAONKAR, R.B., 233, 318, 322 to 324
TALEYARKHAN, Ferozabehn, 420
TALWALKAR, Dr., 117, 121, 215; his suggestions on diet, 100, 101
TANDON, 324
TANGAI, *see* MENON, Tangai
Tantriks, 43
Tapashcharya, *see* PENANCE
TARA, 224, 281
TARAMATI MATHURADAS, 317, 319, 323
TARACHAND, 324
TARKABHUSHAN, Mahamahopadhyaya Pramathanath, 349
TARKARATNA, Panchanan, 187, 308, 324, 343, 357

TATAVA, Veniram, 325
TEACHER; real test of, 122
TEJUMAL, 318
TEMBEKAR, 321
TEMPLE(S), 77, 91, 126, 137, 169, 193, 198, 233, 251, 261, 277, 296 to 298, 346, 351, 374, 413; and referendum, 331; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 345; as dens of iniquities, 154; common property of Hindus, 366; crisis of faith in, 219*fn*; definition of, 218; Hinduism admits untouchables to public, 199; private, entitled to protection as private property is, 218; prohibition to use public, 132; reform of, 154; satyagraha about, 147; tottering reputation of, 155; untouchables' entry into, *see* GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, TEMPLE-ENTRY. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-GOERS, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
— ENTRY, 44, 70, 91, 154, 159, 162, 181, 186, 202, 206, 219, 235, 242*fn*, 248, 251, 259, 261, 265, 272, 276*fn*, 297, 298, 308, 312, 345, 347, 351, 382, 384, 396*fn*, 413, 417*fn*, 418; and admission of untouchables up to flagpost, 137; and Justice Ramesam's judgement, 382*fn*; and Madras High Court judgement, 328, 329; and orthodox Hindus, 179*fn*; and *samskaras*, 97*fn*; and Dr. Subbaroyan's Bill, 345; and untouchables, 22, 23, 55, 71, 110, 147, 148, 169, 179, 180, 185, 233, 238*fn*, 305, 307, 309, 345, 346, 349, 359, 372, 395, 417*fn*, —and temple-goers, 366; Conference with sanatanist *shastris* opposed to, 163*fn*; during *puja* hours, 415; limitations of agitation for, 198-9; no coercion about, 165; propaganda for, 397; their admission up to flagpost, 137, 211*fn*; to quicken Hindu conscience, 351. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-GOERS, TEMPLES, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
— GOERS, 61, 67 to 69, 155, 165, 185, 233, 304, 305, 331, 359, 374; and true religion, 48; and untouchables' entry into temples, 366; *bona-fide*, 278, 296, —referendum of, 156. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-ENTRY, VAISHNAVA TEMPLES
— WORSHIP, 156, 297, 304
THACKERSEY, Lady Premlila V., 315, 318, 319, 321, 418, 419
THADANI; and his poems, 327
THADANI, N.V., 262
THAKKAR, A.V., 12, 127, 136, 207, 208, 319 to 321, 392, 415
THAKORE, Chandrasinh, 319
THAKUR, 321, 322
THANGAL, Madhusudanan, 339
THEFT; eating more than one's need is, 34
THIRUKUTASUNDARAM, 320
THOMAS, 316
THORNBERG, 24, 316
TILAK, Balgangadhar, 33*fn*
TILAKAM, 336; his desire to work among Christian untouchables, 102
(*The*) *Times of India*, 68, 77, 136, 179*fn*, 201, 320, 322
TIVARI, Balakrishna M., 352
TOLERATION; no reform possible without, 242

TRICHUR MUNICIPALITY, 156*fn*
TRIPATHI, P., 325
TRIVEDI, Chhotubhai, 227, 323
TRIVEDI, J.P., 318
TRIVEDI, Vishnuprasad, 323
TRUST; for Ratilal Mehta, 254
TRUSTEES, 333
TRUTH, 52, 56, 62, 186, 235, 252, 257*fn*, 263, 277, 283, 348, 404; alone is God, 76; and ahimsa, 175, 386; and God, 70, 391; does not require many words to explain it, 400; experiment in quest of, 399; fast being a prayerful search after, 376; in every walk of life, 37; would make itself felt in its own time, 241
TULSIDAS, 76, 225
TYABJI, Abbas, 59, 107, 124, 268, 292, 317, 325, 407
TYABJI, Mrs. Abbas, 407
TYABJI, Hamida, 321
TYABJI, Raihana, 73, 107, 124, 292, 319, 320, 322, 325, 407, 412
TYAGI, Chand, 336

UMEDRAM, 236, 323
UNTOUCHABILITY, 1-4, 9-13, 22, 47, 48, 57*fn*, 68-72, 91, 110, 112, 116, 135, 141, 148, 151-5, 160, 180, 185-6, 188, 198, 199, 222, 251, 259, 265 to 267, 304-8, 311, 321, 351, 354, 365, 374, 376, 380, 382, 397, 414*fn*, 417; amongst untouchables, and abolition of, 234; and dharma, 63; and fast, 64; and Hinduism, 181; and humanitarian service, 88-9; and orthodox Hindus, 61, 157; and Vedas, 157; Andrews advised not to bother about, 247; (a) blot on Hinduism, 55; campaign against, 379, —and the prospective fast, 244; cannot be wholly a religious matter, 44; conference against, being held in Bengal, 187*fn*; contrary to divine fact of oneness of all life, 52, 220; curable after due cleansing, 190; (an) evil of caste Hindus' creation, 97; fast in connection with, 111; from point of view of Shastras, 197; has retarded evolution of Hindu society, 159; in Hindu Shastras, 347-50; in other religions, 221; meaning of, 132; Prof. Purandare's handwritten copy of his speeches on, 316; regarding visitors and correspondence on, 20; removal of, 5, 16, 23, 51*fn*, 67, 77-8, 128, 136, 158, 193, 202, 205, 206, 209, 272, 280, 312, 399, —and Christians, 164, —and S.P. Patwardhan's work in prison, 94-5, —by law, 108, —in Malabar, 24, —not to be mixed up with reforming caste system, 196, —requires self-abnegation, 139, —temple-entry essential for, 107; sanatanists upholding of, 360-1; super-imposition of, would make Hinduism a narrow creed, 71; worst in Malabar, 246
— BOARD OF ANDHRA DESH, 134
— REMOVAL OATH, 414*fn*
— WORK, 12, 33, 37, 50, 58, 60, 65, 66, 94, 96, 97, 127, 158, 264, 268, 311, 312, 336, 342, 343, 369, 376, 380, 382, 411, 412, 414*fn*; and civil disobedience, 381; in Garhwal, 274*fn*; problems of, 90, 91
UNTOUCHABLES, 1 *fn*, 16, 29, 34, 44, 46, 63, 88, 94, 112, 128, 132, 141, 145, 156*fn*, 187, 197, 198, 208, 216, 234, 238, 239, 241*fn*, 251 to 253, 259, 261, 262, 265, 266,

276*fn*, 277, 279, 283, 285, 291, 294, 296, 300, 304, 306, 307, 309, 310, 314, 318, 319, 329, 331, 335, 342, 343, 347, 350 to 352, 359, 364, 366, 377, 379, 390, 391, 394, 395; and cleanliness, 188; and disposal of carcass of dead cattle, 372-3; and famine in District Hissar, 393; and Guruvayur temple-entry, *see* GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION; and Hindus, 12, 137, 211, 339, 374; and Kashi Vishwanath Temple, 22; and Pandya's article, 146*fn*; and private temples, 193; and reformers, 375; and sanctity of a temple, 346; and Shastras/Vedas, 2, 22, 23, 180; and Shree Raghunath Swami Temple, 395; and Swami Shraddhanand, 232; and temple-entry, *see* TEMPLE-ENTRY; and Yeravda Pact, 98; are not so by their occupation, 349; Christian, 164, —Tilakam's desire to work among, 102; condition of, in India and outside, 47-8,—in Malabar, 24; conference with sanatanist *shastris* opposed to temple-entry by, 162; constructive work amongst, 313; cultivation of public opinion for welfare of, 225; election of, by Hindus, 175; facilities, careers, assistance and privileges denied to, 361; harassment of, 121; night schools for, 68, 273; no one should be treated as, 87; purification of, 180; putting up in dirty conditions, 11; scheme for higher education of selected, 243*fn*; service of, 169, —and Hinduism, 206, — by S.P. Patwardhan, 88, 113,—by students, 356; social pariahs of Hinduism, 365; their equality of status with caste Hindus, 137; their service to community, 92; three kinds of, in Hindu Dharma Shastras, 348; training of workers among, 65; uplifting of, 111, 151-5; use of Hindu burial-ground by, 146, —public institutions by, 3 —public tanks, wells and temples by, 396*fn*,

UPADHYAYA, Haribhau, 261, 316, 414, 419

UPADHYAYA, Martand, 315

UPASAK, 318, 320, 321

UPASAK, Dattaram, 325

UPTON, Miss, 317

URDU READER; second and third, 327; fourth, of the Lahore Anjuman, 327

URMILADEVI, 44, 48, 78, 103, 132, 144, 175, 188, 317, 320, 322, 326, 364

UZGARE, 325

VAID, Shivram, 325

VAIDIK DHARMAVARDHINI SABHA, 273, 325

Vaidik Vinaya, 327

Vaidiks, 43

VAIDYA, 324, 326

VAIDYA, C.V., 179, 210, 319, 322, 324, 349

VAISHNAVA (S), 351

— DHARMA, 92

— TEMPLES; open to all castes, 329. *See* also GURUVAYUR REFERENDUM, GURUVAYUR TEMPLE-ENTRY QUESTION, REFERENDUM, TEMPLE-ENTRY, TEMPLE-GOERS, TEMPLES

— WORSHIP, 348

VAKIL, Harilal, 325

VALI, 320

VALIA, 320

VARADACHARI, N.S., 222, 322, 323

CWMG - LIII

VARADARAJULU, B., 276, 325
VARNASHRAMADHARMA, 277, 389, 411; and inter-dining and inter-marriage, 180; different from caste system, 218
VASANTLAL SHANKARLAL, 325
VASANTRAM SHASTRI, 315, 318; pamphlet of, 92
VASHI, Bapubhai, 318
VAZE, 315, 324
VEDALANKAR, Dharma Vir, 354
VEDAS, 305, 306; and untouchability, 157, 197*fn*; and untouchables, 180
Vedman Adhyatma, 327
VEERBHADRA, 318
VENKATACHARI, 316
VENKATAKRISTNAYYA, N., 274, 325
VENKATAPPAYYA, Konda, 249, 324, 354
VENKATARAMAN, R., 271, 325
VENKATARAMANAIYA, 322
VENKATARATNAM, G., 355
VICEROY, 69, 162, 309, 313*fn*, 346
VIDYABEHN, 317
VIDYADEVI, 419
VIDYARTHI, 323
Vijay, 108
VIJAYKUMAR, 322
VIJAYALAKSHMI, *see* PANDIT, Vijayalakshmi
VIJAYASHANKERJI, 197*fn*
VIJAYAVARGIYA, Gopikrishna, 237
VILLAGER; Hindu, 154
VINAYAKA, P.A., 316, 317, 319
VIRARAGHAVAN, 318
VIRSUT, 326
VISHNUBUWA BRAHMACHARI, 326
VISHWANATHAN, K., 316
VITHAL, 320, 323
Vivekananda, 327
VIVEKANANDA, 377
VIYOGI HARI, 317, 324
VYAS, Manilal, 317
VYAS, Shankarlal, 322

WADIA, Prof., 322, 327
WAGHELA, Kikabhai, 319, 324, 325
WAGHJIBHAI MANGALBHAI, 324
WALCHAND HIRACHAND, 64
(*The*) *Way of the Cross*, 327
WEST, 317
WEST, Ada, 53, 317
WEST, Albert, 53
WEST, Hilda, 53
(*The*) *Wet Parade*, 327
What I Owe to Christ, 245, 327
WIFE; mutual dharma of husband and, 361
WILLY, Miss, 316
WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION, 48
WOODBROOKE SETTLEMENT, 369, 378
(*A*) *Word to Gandhi*, 326
WORSHIP, 137
WRONG; and right, 383

Yamaniyamas, 170
YASHWANT, 318
YATI, Pragnaneswar, 168, 251, 321 to 324
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON, 1*fn*, 14*fn*, 74,
— PACT, 3, 56*fn*, 176, 274*fn*, 307, 309, 365; and the Premier's decision, 98
YOGA, 51*fn*
Young India, 383

ZAKA ULLAH, Munshi, 327
(THE) ZAMORIN, 31, 43, 48, 55, 62, 69, 70, 72, 136, 147*fn*, 229, 242*fn*, 247, 262, 265, 304, 307, 328, 346, 382, 419; his charges against those engaged in referendum, 186
ZAULINGER, 315
ZOHRA, 316, 319, 323. *See* also ANSARI, Zohra

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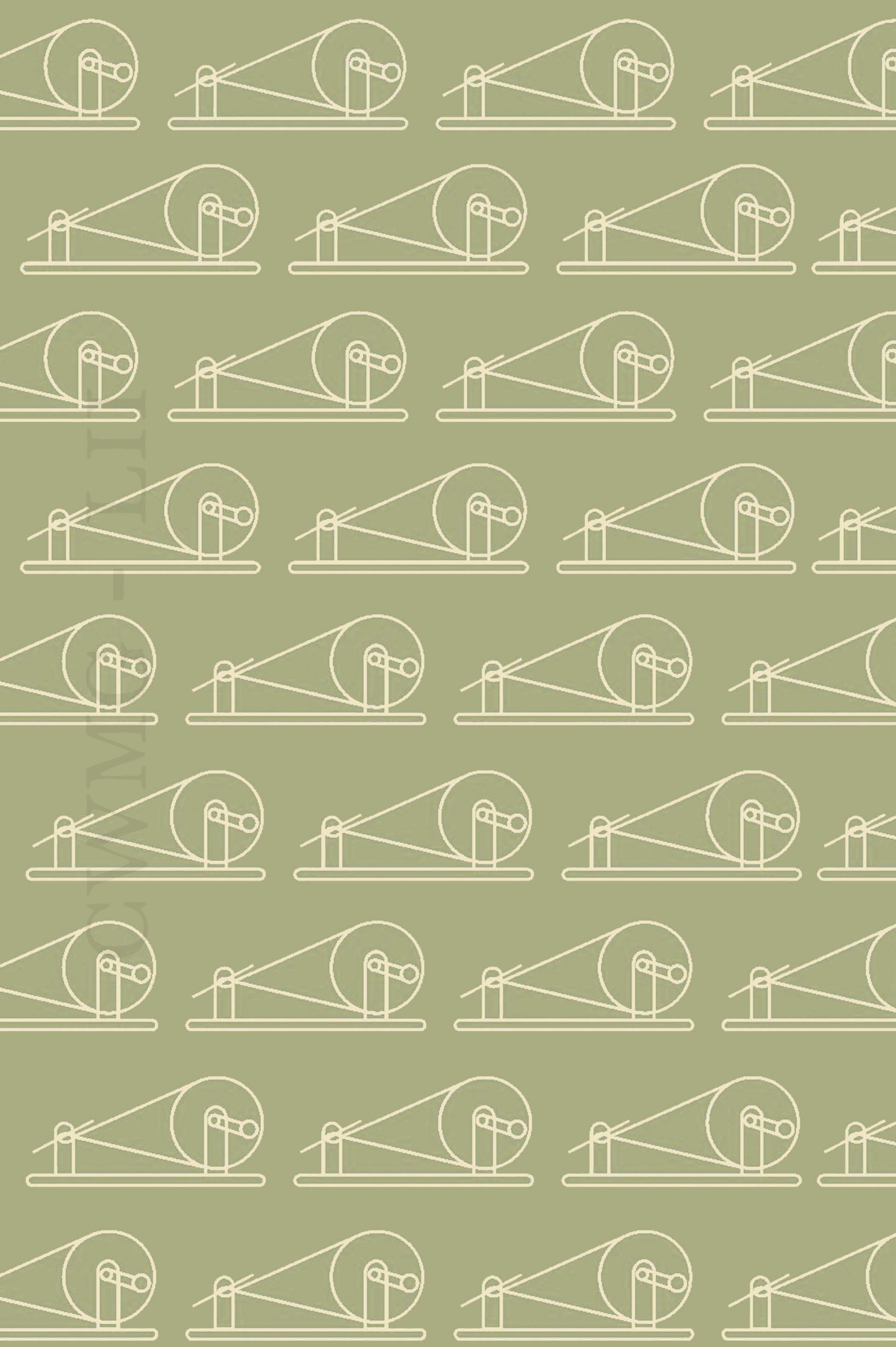
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