THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXV

(1946)

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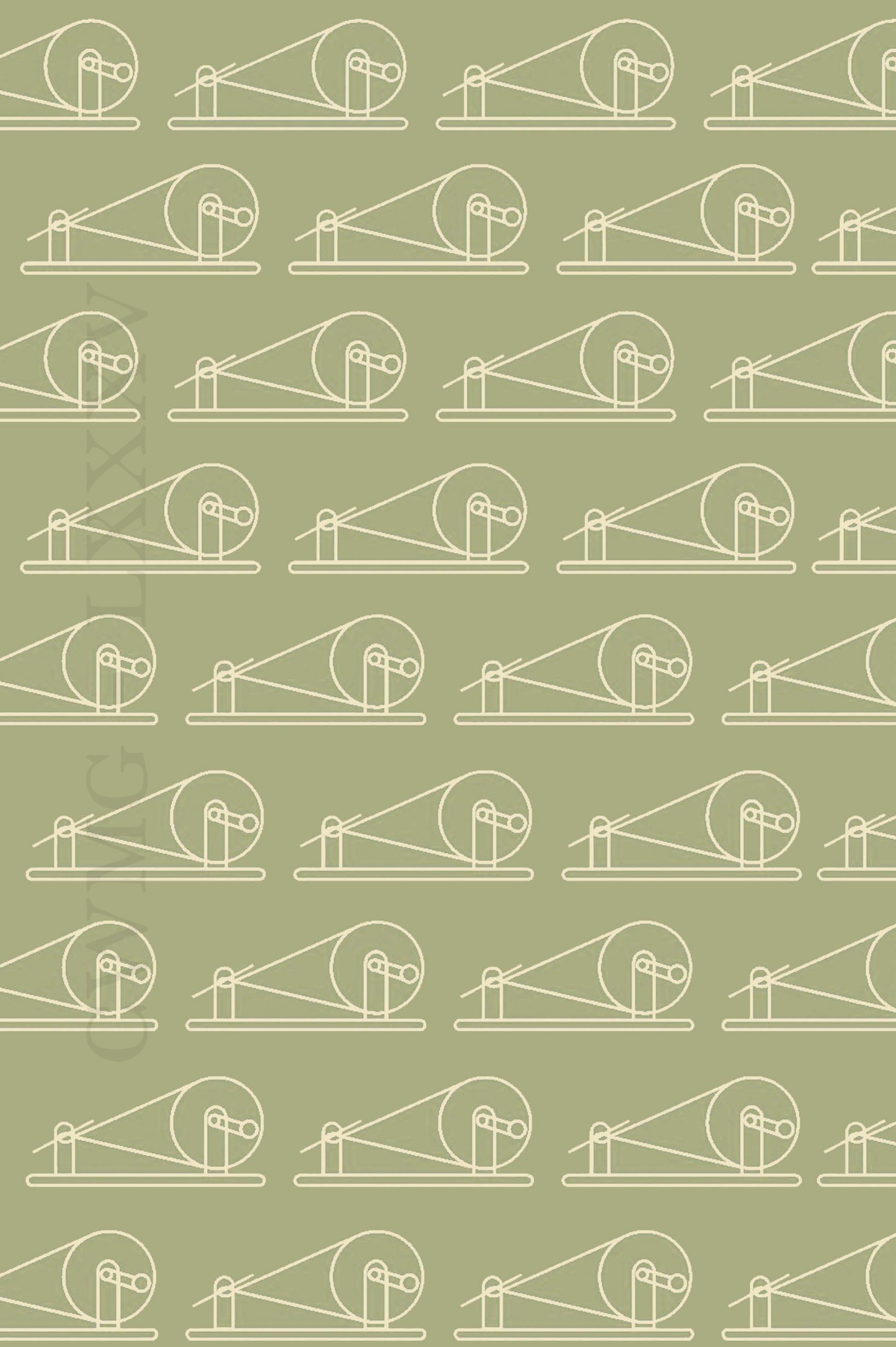
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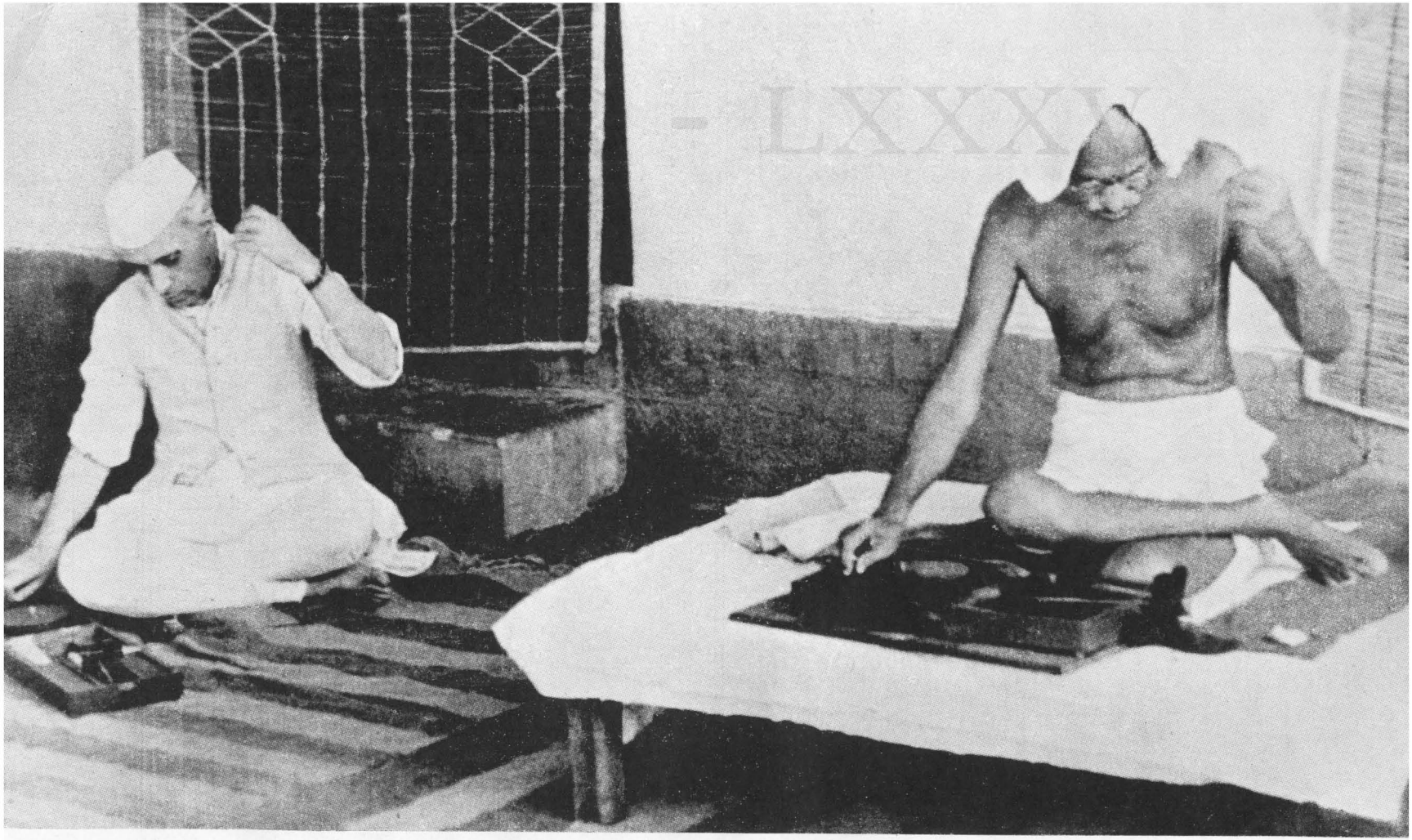


THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXV

(July 16, 1946 – October 20, 1946)

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WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU IN BHANGI COLONY, NEW DELHI

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

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THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (July 16–October 20, 1946) marks the prelude to the final transfer of power to India, and also provides (in the great Calcutta carnage) a bitter foretaste of the tragedy that was to accompany the triumph.

When the volume opens, the administration of the country is in the hands of a caretaker Government of officials that had on July 4 replaced the old Viceroy's Executive Council, thus preparing the way for an Interim Government composed chiefly of representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League as stipulated in the Cabinet Mission's proposals. Meanwhile the Viceroy and the leaders of political parties were engaged in nerve-racking negotiations to arrive at a compromise that would make the setting up of such a Government possible.

The Muslim League refused to recognize the right of the Congress to include a Muslim among its nominees for the Interim Government and in the last week of July finally withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's statement of May 16. Having thus disqualified itself from participation in the Interim Government, the League launched its programme of Direct Action to "achieve Pakistan . . . and to get rid of the present British slavery". As it turned out, the programme had little to do with ending "British slavery" and was no more than a concerted effort to incite communal riots on a massive scale all over the country. On August 16, declared by the League as Direct Action Day, Calcutta witnessed an outbreak of violence that left in its wake, according to official figures, five thousand dead and fifteen thousand wounded. Communal riots were indeed nothing new in India, but the organization behind these, like their dimension and intensity, staggered and stunned the country. The blame for this orgy of violence Gandhiji put squarely on the League's hate propaganda which he rightly described as "a hymn of obscenity". Wishing that the violence of Calcutta did not become a signal for its spread all over, Gandhiji concluded: "It depends on the leaders of the Muslim League of course, but the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Refraining is easy and simple, if there is the will" (pp. 186-7).

It was clear to Gandhiji, as to everyone else, that with the British authority struggling to quit India (p. 281), a stage had been reached when the Muslim League intended to make

increasing use of communal violence to gain its political ends. Even as civil war was approaching, Gandhiji advised people not "to look to British authority for protection. . . . My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the ozone of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid" (p. 282).

Gandhiji was firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand was "un-Islamic" and sinful and that those who wanted "to divide India into possibly warring groups were enemies alike of India and Islam" (p. 367).

With the situation getting out of hand, the need for a popular government had acquired added urgency and the Viceroy accordingly invited Jawaharlal Nehru to send him a list of names for the Interim Government. This the latter did and the Government was sworn in on September 2. Gandhiji, at his prayer meeting, called it "a memorable day in the history of India", but added that it was "no occasion for jubilation" as the ministers were only "putting on the crown of thorns". The Hindus could not join the Muslim Leaguers in observing the day as a day of mourning, but "they should avoid illuminations, feasting and other forms of rejoicing" (p. 243).

The Calcutta carnage had proved conclusively, if proof were needed, that British Power in India had been rendered totally ineffective and was no longer in a position even to discharge the function of maintaining law and order. The situation demanded that the British should not wait upon the order of their going but go. They were however anxious first to make sure that Muslim interests were protected, which meant conciliating Jinnah, who was in no mood to be conciliated. Thus it was that Wavell in his anxiety committed a *faux pas* which brought him a rebuke from the Secretary of State. In the week preceding the swearing in of the Interim Government he called Gandhiji and Nehru and, as it appeared, without sufficient authority, held out the threat that unless the Congress gave its acceptance of the clause concerning the Grouping of Provinces envisaged in the Cabinet Mission's statement, he would not convene the Constituent Assembly. In a sharp letter to the Viceroy Gandhiji told him that the Congress could not "be expected to bend itself and adopt what it considers a wrong course because of the brutal exhibition recently witnessed in Bengal. Such submission would itself lead to an encouragement and repetition of such tragedies" (p. 216).

Throughout September and October efforts to bring the Muslims League into the Interim Government continued. Gandhiji,

in his anxiety to secure the co-operation of Jinnah, even signed an agreement (p. 416) recognizing the League as "the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India", and the right of the Congress to "choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress", and stipulating that "all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case". All that the agreement achieved was a meeting between Nehru and Jinnah and an exchange of letters between the two. Jinnah even denied that the paragraph about the ministers working as a team formed part of the agreement (*Transfer of Power*, VIII, p. 673). The Viceroy however persisted in his endeavours and finally on October 13 Jinnah in a letter conveyed to the Viceroy the Muslim League's willingness to join the Interim Government. It was, in the words of Wavell, a case of objecting "to everything possible which was being accepted before accepting it" (*TOP*, VIII, p. 721).

Gandhiji's worst fears were soon proved right. Even while Jinnah was writing his letter of "acceptance" on October 13 rioting started in Noakhali. Governor Burrows reported on October 16 : "Large bands of Muslim hooligans are moving about terrorizing Hindus and committing acts of arson, loot, murder, kidnapping and forcibly converting Hindus. The gangs appear to be organized" (*TOP*, VIII, 743). Gandhiji was greatly distressed. He recalled and seriously considered a correspondent's suggestion that he should himself "go to some place of riot and show. . .the way of quelling riots in a non-violent manner by personal example" (pp. 54-5). He dwelt on this theme again and again in his prayer discourses (pp. 464-5, 480, 482, 491 and 503).

The country continued to reel throughout this period under the impact of shortages especially of food and clothing. In Mysore and Rayalaseema "mass deaths due to starvation" were feared (pp. 165-6). Travancore was reported to have food only for fifteen days (p. 280, pp. 349-50). Gandhiji deprecated any talk of importing food and asserted that India could grow enough food provided the Government was "capable of dealing sternly with all profiteering, black-marketing and, worst of all, laziness of mind and body" (p. 133). To N. G. Ranga he wrote. "If people have to starve I shall blame none but ourselves. If we can survive only by importing food we deserve to perish. . . . It is not big conferences that we want, what is required is understanding, hard work and purity" (p. 162).

For overcoming the shortage of cloth Gandhiji's recipe was the scheme he had earlier tried to persuade Governor Casey to take up. "The essence of that scheme was that, instead of supplying textiles to the people, they should be taught how to make cloth for themselves and provided the necessary means . . . " (p. 171). This implied discouraging the setting up of new textile mills, for mills and khadi could not go hand in hand. While khadi put crores worth of cloth into the hands of the poor, the crores accruing from the mills went into a few hands (pp. 378-9). The mills India should depend on existed in the villages in the shape of hands, spindles, wheels and looms (p. 280). Gandhiji commended the example of Madras, where the Government under T. Prakasam had adopted Gandhiji's scheme despite opposition from vested interests (pp. 295, 301, 378). It was folly and sinful laziness to depend on others for food and clothing. "If we can but be self-reliant in food and clothing we shall be at peace with the whole world" (p. 342). Gandhiji was convinced that in India, " . . . if all the able-bodied millions work with one mind and with zeal, they could compete on their own terms with any nation, however well-equipped it may be with modern machines". And if human hands could compete with machines, an unarmed individual or nation could also defend himself or itself "against a whole world in arms. . . . a nation or group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb" (p. 133).

Widespread strikes by factory workers, students and even the services were a cause of concern to Gandhiji. He opposed strikes for economic betterment being mixed up with ulterior political ends. Strikes should never "be led by goondaism" and workers should exercise self-restraint to permit the Congress to solve the political problem through the Constituent Assembly (p. 117).

Happenings in the States like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Mysore and in Goa also claimed Gandhiji's attention. When the Portuguese Governor-General defended censorship and argued that the State was bound to "look after the mental health" of people and could not leave it "a prey to unsettling ideas", Gandhiji declared, ". . . no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect" (pp. 109-10).

With freedom from British rule on the horizon, Gandhiji presented to the people the model of the polity that he wished to see ushered in its place. This polity he would call Ramarajya or Khudai Raj or the Kingdom of God on earth (p. 135). It would be a society "naturally based on truth and non-violence"

deriving its strength from the sovereign goodness of the common people. It would be structured on the pattern of "ever-widening, never-ascending circles" — unlike "a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom." It would be "an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages . . . " Independence, beginning at the bottom would mean "independence of the whole of India". There would be no room for machines that would displace human labour and concentrate power in a few hands (pp. 32-3). In so far as the machine exploited the millions, it had not added to man's stature. "We stand today in danger of forgetting the use of our hands. To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves" (pp. 96-7). Gandhiji's ideal polity was a means and a medium for the evolution of man as a moral and social being, a blending of man's perpetual aspiration for spiritual perfection with the modern ideals of justice and equality.

Nature cure was a way of life to ensure individual and social well-being through "triple purification of body, mind and soul" (p. 109). Faith in God (or Ramanama) was an essential pre-condition for such purification. "For, man is both matter and spirit, each acting on and affecting the other" (p. 175). Nature cure also enabled identification with the widest masses of people. Treating disease through use of earth, water, sun and air like maintaining social health and harmony through ahimsa or seeking spiritual growth through remembrance of God, was not only natural but available equally to all human beings, though it demanded more personal effort than buying some nostrum. The pursuit of excellence by the intellectual or spiritual athlete was wholly consistent with and indeed conducive to his pursuit of equality when the means chosen were clean, elemental and universally available. Taking the name of God might or might not be a remedy for disease, but it certainly made one less self-centred. You "are wholly selfish when you take penicillin in order to get well though you have the certain knowledge that the others cannot get it" (p. 176). Ahimsa itself would lose its value in Gandhiji's eyes if it were available only for the saint and the seer. If "ahimsa cannot be practised by millions, I have no use for it for myself. But if they did not want to, although they could, I would hold on to it, even if I were all alone" (p. 205). Enjoying the touch of Nature that makes the whole world kin, the good Vaishnava, like Yudhishthira, would walk the path of dharma all alone but would not enter heaven leaving a friend behind. Filled with

fear for the future of his country, Gandhiji was surrounded by darkness, but the darkness could not engulf him. He was not a "perfect devotee", he confessed, he was "no more than an aspirant" (p. 105). His aspiration was to take his people with him to the promised land. The Jesus tradition, according to him, enshrined "an eternal law—the law of vicarious and innocent suffering" (p. 481).

Questioned by an American journalist how to prevent the next war, his answer was: "By doing the right thing irrespective of what the world will do". Such heroic conduct alone could move others and silence cynics. When an individual had reduced himself to zero he became "irresistible" and his action became "all-pervasive in its effect" (pp. 369-70). Egoless service brought transparent purity and strength of mind. "A drop which has merged in the sea does not rot, but lends the sea its greatness. . . . You can see clearly through a glass window. If you coat the pane with mercury, you will see none but yourself" (p. 90). Integrity of conduct, the honest practice of what one professes, binds individual and society and raises political action to the level of spiritual sadhana. The Congress had no doubt accepted truth and non-violence as a policy, not a creed. "But whilst it lasts, policy is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory" (p. 352).

Self-reliance and single-minded performance of one's swadharma are the source as well as the result of happiness. As a practical idealist, Gandhiji taught this one lesson to friends and followers who looked to him for guidance whether in private or public life : "We should blame no one except ourselves. That is the only way to be happy in life and remain clean" (p. 201). "If you see only the faults in yourself and only the virtues in others, you will advance fast, be happy and never experience sorrow. We have no right to expect anything from anyone" (p. 300). Meekness, however is not weakness and non-violence is not cowardice. In fact, cowardice is "violence double distilled" (p. 11). And if oppression is sin, submission to violence is no less sin (p. 73). Non-violence is the noblest virtue because it is the highest manliness.

CWMG - LXXXV

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.

Where the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary.

In the source-line, the symbol S. N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G. N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Memorial Museum and Library, 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 - I XXXV

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CONTENTS

	PREFACE	v
	NOTE TO THE READER	xi
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xiii
1	LETTER TO PUNDALIK (16-7-1946)	1
2	LETTER TO DHIRENDRA MAZUMDAR (16-7-1946)	1
3	LETTER TO HOSHIARI (16-7-1946)	2
4	LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH (17-7-1946)	2
5	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (17-7-1946)	3
6	LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI (17-7-1946)	4
7	LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI (17-7-1946)	4
8	LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (17-7-1946)	5
9	LETTER TO DR. T. J. KEDAR (17-7-1946)	6
10	INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER (17-7-1946)	7
11	QUESTION BOX (18-7-1946)	12
12	A TRAGIC PHENOMENON (18-7-1946)	13
13	"THE REVOLUTIONARY CHARKHA" (18-7-1946)	14
14	TESTIMONIAL TO HERBERT FISCHER (18-7-1946)	15
15	LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN (18-7-1946)	16
16	INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER (18-7-1946)	16
17	"SCHEDULED CASTES" (19-7-1946)	18
18	LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL (19-7-1946)	22
19	LETTER TO R. K. RAMLINGA REDDY (20-7-1946)	23
20	TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH (20-7-1946)	23
21	LETTER TO KALYANIDEVI (20-7-1946)	28
22	LETTER TO RAMA SHETTY (20-7-1946)	29
23	LETTER TO RAJAGOPAL (20-7-1946)	29
24	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (20-7-1946)	30
25	EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES AT PRAYER MEETINGS (Before 21-7-1946)	30
26	INDEPENDENCE (21-7-1946)	32
27	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (21-7-1946)	35
28	LETTER TO RASIKLAL SHUKLA (21-7-1946)	36
29	LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT (21-7-1946)	37
30	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (21-7-1946)	37
31	BLOODSHED IN AHMEDABAD (22-7-1946)	40
32	A DHARMASHALA FOR PANCHGANI (22-7-1946)	42
33	LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN (22-7-1946)	43

CWMG - LXXXV

34	LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD (22-7-1946)	44
35	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (23-7-1946)	44
36	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (23-7-1946)	45
37	LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH (23-7-1946)	46
38	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (23-7-1946)	46
39	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (23-7-1946)	47
40	LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR (23-7-1946)	47
41	LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI (24-7-1946)	48
42	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (24-7-1946)	48
43	NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (24-7-1946)	49
44	STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (24-7-1946)	50
45	QUESTION BOX (25-7-1946)	51
46	HEAL THYSELF (25-7-1946)	54
47	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (25-7-1946)	56
48	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (25-7-1946)	56
49	LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI (25-7-1946)	57
50	LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE (25-7-1946)	57
51	LETTER TO DEVICHAND SHAH (25-7-1946)	58
52	ENTRY IN DIARY OF MUNNALAL SHAH (26-7-1946)	58
53	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (26-7-1946)	59
54	LETTER TO SITA GANDHI (26-7-1946)	60
55	LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK (26-7-1946)	61
56	LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH (26-7-1946)	62
57	LETTER TO H. P. MODY (26-7-1946)	62
58	LETTER TO MRIDE (26-7-1946)	63
59	LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR (26-7-1946)	64
60	LETTER TO V. K. KRISHNASARMA (26-7-1946)	65
61	CLOTH SHORTAGE (27-7-1946)	65
62	NINTH AUGUST (27-7-1946)	67
63	LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA (27-7-1946)	68
64	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (27-7-1946)	69
65	LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (27-7-1946)	70
66	LETTER TO B. G. KHER (27-7-1946)	71
67	LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA (27-7-1946)	71
68	LETTER TO SHYAMLAL (27-7-1946)	72
69	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (27-7-1946)	72
70	ANSWER TO QUESTION (On or before 28-7-1946)	73
71	QUESTION BOX (28-7-1946)	73
72	KHADI WORKERS (28-7-1946)	74
73	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (28-7-1946)	75
74	LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI (28-7-1946)	75
75	LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY (28-7-1946)	76
76	SPEECH AT MEETING OF DECCAN PRINCES (28-7-1946)	76

CWMG - LXXXV

77	FOREWORD (29-7-1946)	81
78	LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI (29-7-1946)	81
79	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (29-7-1946)	82
80	LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI (29-7-1946)	82
81	NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (29-7-1946)	83
82	LETTER TO GHARPURE (29-7-1946)	83
83	NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI (29-7-1946)	84
84	SPEECH AT EDUCATION MINISTERS' CONFERENCE (29-7-1946)	84
85	NOTES (30-7-1946)	88
86	NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI (30-7-1946)	89
87	LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU (30-7-1946)	89
88	LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI (30-7-1946)	90
89	LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY (30-7-1946)	90
90	LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI (30-7-1946)	91
91	LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA (30-7-1946)	91
92	SOUTH AFRICA (31-7-1946)	92
93	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (31-7-1946)	93
94	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (31-7-1946)	94
95	LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM (31-7-1946)	94
96	SPEECH AT INDUSTRIES MINISTERS' CONFERENCE (31-7-1946)	95
97	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (31-7-1946)	98
98	THE LIMIT OF INSANITATION (1-8-1946)	99
99	LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL (1-8-1946)	100
100	LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA (1-8-1946)	101
101	LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA (1-8-1946)	101
102	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (1-8-1946)	102
103	LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL (1-8-1946)	103
104	LETTER TO CHIMANLAL G. PAREKH (1-8-1946)	103
105	LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA (1-8-1946)	104
106	LETTER TO SURENDRA (1-8-1946)	104
107	LETTER TO D. D. JOSHI (1-8-1946)	105
108	LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA (1-8-1946)	106
109	LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR (1-8-1946)	107
110	DEDICATION OF HOSPITAL (1-8-1946)	108
111	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (1-8-1946)	108
112	LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF PORTUGUESE INDIA (2-8-1946)	109
113	LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY (2-8-1946)	111
114	LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS (2-8-1946)	112
115	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (2-8-1946)	112
116	LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI (2-8-1946)	113
117	LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA KHAITAN (2-8-1946)	113
118	TALK TO VILLAGERS (2-8-1946)	114

CWMG - I XXXV

119	STRIKES (3-8-1946)	116
120	THE MEANING OF NATURE CURE (3-8-1946)	118
121	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (3-8-1946)	120
122	LETTER TO NANUBHAI (3-8-1946)	120
123	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (3-8-1946)	121
124	LETTER TO QURESHI (3-8-1946)	121
125	DOCTORS CRITICIZED (4-8-1946)	122
126	LETTER TO F. MARY BARR (4-8-1946)	124
127	LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA (4-8-1946)	125
128	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (4-8-1946)	126
129	LETTER TO RAJA OF PHALTAN (5-8-1946)	126
130	A KHADI LOVER'S COMPLAINT (6-8-1946)	127
131	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (6-8-1946)	128
132	HORSE RACING (7-8-1946)	130
133	LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS (7-8-1946)	131
134	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (7-8-1946)	132
135	TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE (7-8-1946)	132
136	QUESTION BOX (8-8-1946)	132
137	RAMANAMA AGAIN (8-8-1946)	135
138	IS GOD A PERSON OR A PRINCIPLE? (8-8-1946)	136
139	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (8-8-1946)	137
140	LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (8-8-1946)	137
141	LETTER TO HIRALAL DESAI (8-8-1946)	138
142	LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL (8-8-1946)	138
143	LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE (8-8-1946)	139
144	COMPENSATION FOR MURDER (9-8-1946)	140
145	WHAT A CHILD CAN GIVE (9-8-1946)	141
146	LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (9-8-1946)	142
147	LETTER TO VINODINI (9-8-1946)	142
148	SPEECH AT SEKSARIA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE (9-8-1946)	143
149	HOW TO THINK OF GOD (10-8-1946)	145
150	LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA (10-8-1946)	145
151	LETTER TO ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI (10-8-1946)	146
152	TALK WITH A FRIEND (Before 11-8-1946)	146
153	A DISCUSSION (Before 11-8-1946)	148
154	LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL (11-8-1946)	149
155	LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI (11-8-1946)	150
156	TESTIMONIAL TO MUKUL CHANDRA DE (11-8-1946)	150
157	HIS GREATEST CHARACTERISTIC (12-8-1946)	151
158	NOTES (12-8-1946)	151
159	LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM (12-8-1946)	152
160	LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR (12-8-1946)	153
161	LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL (13-8-1946)	153

CWMG - LXXV

162	LETTER TO MADHUSOODAN C. PAREKH (13-8-1946)	154
163	LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH (13-8-1946)	155
164	LETTER TO MOHANLAL RUPANI (13-8-1946)	155
165	LETTER TO DR. S. R. U. SAVUR (13-8-1946)	156
166	LETTER TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN (13-8-1946)	156
167	LETTER TO RATANBEHN (14-8-1946)	157
168	LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB (14-8-1946)	157
169	LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA (15-8-1946)	158
170	LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU (15-8-1946)	159
171	LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE (15-8-1946)	159
172	LETTER TO HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE (15-8-1946)	160
173	LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL (15-8-1946)	160
174	LETTER TO BEGUM LATIF SYED (15-8-1946)	161
175	LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR (15-8-1946)	161
176	LETTER TO N. G. RANGA (15-8-1946)	162
177	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (15-8-1946)	163
178	PREACHING TO EMPTINESS (16-8-1946)	164
179	DO NOT FORGET HARIJANS (16-8-1946)	165
180	MASS MURDER (16-8-1946)	165
181	MOVE ON (16-8-1946)	166
182	LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT (16-8-1946)	166
183	LETTER TO GANGABEHN BHATT (16-8-1946)	167
184	LETTER TO MAGANLAL (16-8-1946)	167
185	LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI (16-8-1946)	168
186	LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA BAJAJ (16-8-1946)	169
187	MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA (16-8-1946)	169
188	DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND (Before 17-8-1946)	170
189	CONFUSION ABOUT RAMANAMA (17-8-1946)	175
190	TELEGRAM TO KUNJUKRISHNA MENON (17-8-1946)	176
191	TELEGRAM TO KAMTA PRASAD (17-8-1946)	176
192	TELEGRAM TO MADARNAHAK VIRAM (17-8-1946)	177
193	LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL (17-8-1946)	177
194	LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL (17-8-1946)	178
195	LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR (17-8-1946)	179
196	LETTER TO MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS (17-8-1946)	179
197	GOA (18-8-1946)	180
198	DISLOYALTY TO KHADI (18-8-1946)	181
199	LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR DESAI (18-8-1946)	182
200	LETTER TO SITA GANDHI (18-8-1946)	182
201	LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH (18-8-1946)	183
202	LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI (18-8-1946)	184
203	LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT (18-8-1946)	184
204	LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR (18-8-1946)	185

CWMG - LXXXV

205	SPEECH AT MEETING OF DOCTORS (18-8-1946)	185
206	WHAT CAN VIOLENCE DO? (19-8-1946)	186
207	LETTER TO MIRABEHN (19-8-1946)	187
208	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (19-8-1946)	188
209	LETTER TO PYARELAL (19-8-1946)	188
210	LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ (19-8-1946)	189
211	LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU (19-8-1946)	189
212	LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT (20-8-1946)	190
213	LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI (20-8-1946)	190
214	LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI (21-8-1946)	191
215	LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI (21-8-1946)	192
216	ADDRESS TO HINDUSTANI PRACHAR TRAINEES (21-8-1946)	192
217	LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU (22-8-1946)	193
218	LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA (22-8-1946)	193
219	LETTER TO V. T. KRISHNAMACHARI (22-8-1946)	194
220	ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI (23-8-1946)	194
221	WE ARE ALL INDIANS (23-8-1946)	195
222	TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA (23-8-1946)	196
223	TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (23-8-1946)	196
224	TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (23-8-1946)	197
225	TELEGRAM TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI (23-8-1946)	197
226	LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR (23-8-1946)	198
227	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (23-8-1946)	198
228	LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM (23-8-1946)	199
229	ADDRESS TO TRAINEES OF BASIC TEACHERS' CAMP (23-8-1946)	199
230	COCHIN (24-8-1946)	200
231	LETTER TO MADALASA (24-8-1946)	201
232	LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR (24-8-1946)	201
233	LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (24-8-1946)	202
234	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (24-8-1946)	202
235	HINDUSTANI *v.* URDU AND HINDI (25-8-1946)	203
236	ADVICE TO AN ASHRAM INMATE (25-8-1946)	205
237	ALTERNATIVE TO INDUSTRIALISM (25-8-1946)	205
238	ENGLISH NOTICES (25-8-1946)	207
239	HINDUSTANI PRACHAR EXAMINATIONS (25-8-1946)	207
240	LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA (25-8-1946)	208
241	LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL (25-8-1946)	208
242	LETTER TO DR. SHEIKH MUHAMMED ALAM (25-8-1946)	209
243	GOA (26-8-1946)	209
244	IF I WERE THE MINISTER (26-8-1946)	210
245	THE PLACE OF MEDICINE IN NAYEE TALIM (26-8-1946)	212
246	TELEGRAM TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN (26-8-1946)	213
247	TELEGRAM TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER (27-8-1946)	214

CWMG - LXXXV

248	TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA (28-8-1946)	214
249	LETTER TO LORD WAVELL (28-8-1946)	215
250	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (28-8-1946)	216
251	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (28-8-1946)	217
252	LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI (28-8-1946)	217
253	LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH (28-8-1946)	218
254	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (28-8-1946)	218
255	LETTER TO HOSHIARI (28-8-1946)	219
256	LETTER TO KAMALA SHARMA (28-8-1946)	219
257	LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA (28-8-1946)	220
258	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (28-8-1946)	220
259	SALES TAX (29-8-1946)	221
260	GOA (29-8-1946)	222
261	TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (29-8-1946)	224
262	TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA (29-8-1946)	224
263	LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI (29-8-1946)	224
264	LETTER TO G. B. PANT (29-8-1946)	225
265	TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM (30-8-1946)	225
266	LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (30-8-1946)	226
267	LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH (30-8-1946)	226
268	LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL (30-8-1946)	227
269	LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS (30-8-1946)	227
270	LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA (30-8-1946)	228
271	LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA (30-8-1946)	228
272	TELEGRAM TO MURIEL LESTER (31-8-1946)	229
273	LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA (31-8-1946)	229
274	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (31-8-1946)	230
275	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (31-8-1946)	230
276	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (31-8-1946)	231
277	TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA (1-9-1946)	232
278	TELEGRAM TO HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION (1-9-1946)	232
279	LETTER TO MADALASA (1-9-1946)	233
280	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (1-9-1946)	233
281	ANTIDOTE (2-9-1946)	234
282	FOR READERS (2-9-1946)	236
283	VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION : WHAT IT SHOULD BE LIKE (2-9-1946)	236
284	WHY GO ABROAD? (2-9-1946)	238
285	NOTES (2-9-1946)	239

CWMG - LXXXV

286	NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL, RAJENDRA PRASAD AND JAGJIVANRAM (2-9-1946)	240
287	LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL (2-9-1946)	240
288	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (2-9-1946)	241
289	LETTER TO DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR (2-9-1946)	241
290	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (2-9-1946)	242
291	LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI (2-9-1946)	242
292	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (2-9-1946)	243
293	SOUTH AFRICA (3-9-1946)	245
294	LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI (3-9-1946)	247
295	LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI (3-9-1946)	247
296	LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI (3-9-1946)	248
297	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (3-9-1946)	248
298	LETTER TO ATMARAM (3-9-1946)	249
299	LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT (3-9-1946)	250
300	LETTER TO SHRILAL BHATT (3-9-1946)	250
301	LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB (3-9-1946)	251
302	LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (3-9-1946)	252
303	LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR (3-9-1946)	252
304	LETTER TO LADORANI ZUTSHI (3-9-1946)	253
305	LETTER TO RAM NARESH TRIPATHI (3-9-1946)	253
306	LETTER TO A ZAMINDAR (3-9-1946)	254
307	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (3-9-1946)	255
308	NOTES (4-9-1946)	256
309	CABLE TO SUDHIR GHOSH (4-9-1946)	258
310	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (4-9-1946)	258
311	LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR (4-9-1946)	259
312	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (4-9-1946)	260
313	TELEGRAM TO J. P. BHANSALI (5-9-1946)	261
314	LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI (5-9-1946)	261
315	LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH (5-9-1946)	262
316	LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BHATT AND GANGA BHATT (5-9-1946)	262
317	LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT (5-9-1946)	263
318	HARIJANS AND WELLS (6-9-1946)	263
319	QUESTION BOX (6-9-1946)	264
320	CHARKHA JAYANTI AND HINDUSTANI (6-9-1946)	265
321	CONGRESS MINISTRIES AND AHIMSA (6-9-1946)	266
322	LETTER TO INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, LAURENCO MARQUIS (6-9-1946)	267
323	LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE (6-9-1946)	268
324	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (6-9-1946)	268
325	PROHIBITION (7-9-1946)	270

CWMG-LXXXV

326	HARIJAN WORK IN KISTNA DISTRICT (7-9-1946)	271
327	ABOUT HINDUSTANI (7-9-1946)	272
328	LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT MEHTA (7-9-1946)	273
329	LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT (7-9-1946)	274
330	LETTER TO KISANLAL C. TEJPAL (7-9-1946)	275
331	LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE (7-9-1946)	275
332	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (7-9-1946)	276
333	TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM (8-9-1946)	278
334	LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI (8-9-1946)	278
335	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (8-9-1946)	279
336	WHAT TO DO? (9-9-1946)	280
337	TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH (9-9-1946)	283
338	LETTER TO SIBNATH BANNERJI (9-9-1946)	283
339	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (9-9-1946)	284
340	LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI (9-9-1946)	284
341	LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH (9-9-1946)	285
342	LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK (9-9-1946)	285
343	LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT (9-9-1946)	286
344	LETTER TO MRS. HARILAL DESAI (9-9-1946)	286
345	LETTER TO JAGANNATH JANI (9-9-1946)	287
346	LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS (9-9-1946)	287
347	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (9-9-1946)	288
348	LETTER TO VITHALDAS KOTHARI (9-9-1946)	288
349	LETTER TO PRABHU (9-9-1946)	289
350	LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI (9-9-1946)	289
351	LETTER TO CHANDRANI (9-9-1946)	290
352	LETTER TO G. B. PANT (9-9-1946)	291
353	LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH (9-9-1946)	291
354	LETTER TO SANKARAN (9-9-1946)	292
355	LETTER TO SHIVAJI (9-9-1946)	292
356	MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING (9-9-1946)	293
357	TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA (10-9-1946)	294
358	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (10-9-1946)	294
359	LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU (10-9-1946)	295
360	LEPROSY AND CONTAMINATION (11-9-1946)	296
361	TIRED OF SATYAGRAHA? (11-9-1946)	297
362	TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, SRI NARAYANA DHARMA PARIPALANA (11-9-1946)	298
363	TELEGRAM TO GANESH TRIPATHI (11-9-1946)	299
364	TELEGRAM TO MEHR CHAND KHANNA (11-9-1946)	299
365	LETTER TO DR. R. G. COCHRANE (11-9-1946)	300
366	LETTER TO MADALASA (11-9-1946)	300

CWMG - LXXXV

367	LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR (11-9-1946)	301
368	LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR (11-9-1946)	301
369	LETTER TO LAKSHMI SHARMA (11-9-1946)	302
370	LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI (11-9-1946)	303
371	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (11-9-1946)	303
372	LETTER TO HARGOVIND GUPTA (11-9-1946)	304
373	UNCERTIFIED KHADI *v.* MILL CLOTH (12-9-1946)	304
374	LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI (12-9-1946)	306
375	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (12-9-1946)	307
376	LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI (12-9-1946)	308
377	LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR (12-9-1946)	308
378	LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS (12-9-1946)	309
379	LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY (12-9-1946)	309
380	LETTER TO OM PRAKASH MITTAL (12-9-1946)	310
381	LETTER TO RANDHIR SINGH (12-9-1946)	311
382	DISCONTINUE IT (13-9-1946)	311
383	GUJARAT —PROUD OR INSANE? (13-9-1946)	312
384	TELEGRAM TO K. S. DESHPANDE (13-9-1946)	313
385	TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DAULATRAM (13-9-1946)	314
386	LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL (13-9-1946)	314
387	LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI (13-9-1946)	315
388	LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA (13-9-1946)	316
389	LETTER TO ANANTRAM (13-9-1946)	317
390	LETTER TO K. S. DESHPANDE (13-9-1946)	317
391	COLLECTIVE PRAYER (14-9-1946)	318
392	NOTES (14-9-1946)	319
393	CHARKHA JAYANTI (14-9-1946)	320
394	AN APPEAL TO CORRESPONDENTS (15-9-1946)	322
395	VILLAGE UNIVERSITY (15-9-1946)	322
396	LETTER TO JOHN MATTHAI (15-9-1946)	323
397	LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI (15-9-1946)	324
398	LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI (15-9-1946)	324
399	LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKAR CHAUDHARY (15-9-1946)	325
400	LETTER TO DHARMANAND KOSAMBI (15-9-1946)	325
401	LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI (15-9-1946)	326
402	LETTER TO HUNNAR (15-9-1946)	326
403	LETTER TO SYED RAZA ALI (15-9-1946)	327
404	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (15-9-1946)	327
405	TALK WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY (Before 16-9-1946)	328
406	POOR OR SMALL COUNTRIES (16-9-1946)	329
407	CATTLE WEALTH (16-9-1946)	330
408	RAMA THE SON OF DASHARATHA (16-9-1946)	331
409	TRACTORS *v.* BULLOCKS (16-9-1946)	332

CWMG - LXXXV

410	LETTER TO RUKMINI ARUNDALE (16-9-1946)	333
411	LETTER TO JAMES HENRY COUSINS (16-9-1946)	333
412	LETTER TO S. A. WAIZ (16-9-1946)	334
413	LETTER TO MADALASA (16-9-1946)	334
414	LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ (16-9-1946)	335
415	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (16-9-1946)	335
416	TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA (17-9-1946)	336
417	TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI (17-9-1946)	336
418	LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH (17-9-1946)	336
419	LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA (17-9-1946)	337
420	LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI (17-9-1946)	337
421	LETTER TO GANGA A. HINGORANI (17-9-1946)	338
422	LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI (17-9-1946)	339
423	LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI (17-9-1946)	339
424	LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI (17-9-1946)	340
425	LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI (17-9-1946)	340
426	TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND (18-9-1946)	341
427	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (18-9-1946)	341
428	QUESTION BOX (19-9-1946)	342
429	LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ (19-9-1946)	343
430	CONGRESS MINISTERS, NOT SAHIB LOG (20-9-1946)	344
431	LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL (20-9-1946)	344
432	LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI (20-9-1946)	345
433	LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR (20-9-1946)	345
434	LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI (20-9-1946)	346
435	LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR (20-9-1946)	346
436	LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI (20-9-1946)	347
437	LETTER TO ANJANA CHOWDHARY (20-9-1946)	348
438	LETTER TO SANKARAN (20-9-1946)	348
439	LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA (20-9-1946)	349
440	FOOD SHORTAGE (21-9-1946)	349
441	DO NOT ELIMINATE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE (21-9-1946)	351
442	LETTER TO INDRAVADAN MEHTA (21-9-1946)	353
443	LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA (21-9-1946)	353
444	NOT SENTIMENT BUT REASON (22-9-1946)	354
445	ABOUT KHADI BHANDARS (22-9-1946)	354
446	ENTRY IN DIARY (22-9-1946)	355
447	ACKNOWLEDGMENT (22-9-1946)	355
448	KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR (22-9-1946)	356
449	LETTER TO MADALASA (22-9-1946)	356
450	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (22-9-1946)	356
451	LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA (22-9-1946)	357
452	LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH (22-9-1946)	357

453	LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH (23-9-1946)	358
454	THE LATE POET NANALAL (23-9-1946)	359
455	TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND (23-9-1946)	360
456	LETTER TO RENUKA RAY (23-9-1946)	360
457	LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI (23-9-1946)	361
458	LETTER TO CHANDRANI (23-9-1946)	362
459	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (23-9-1946)	362
460	ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS (On or after 23-9-1946)	363
461	TALK WITH AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST (Before 24-9-1946)	368
462	TALK WITH A FRIEND (Before 24-9-1946)	370
463	TALK WITH AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST (Before 24-9-1946)	370
464	ELEVEN-DAY CHARKHA CLASS (24-9-1946)	373
465	LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA (24-9-1946)	373
466	LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI (24-9-1946)	374
467	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (24-9-1946)	374
468	DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE (On or before 25-9-1946)	375
469	LETTER TO LORD WAVELL (25-9-1946)	376
470	LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD (25-9-1946)	376
471	LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA (25-9-1946)	377
472	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (25-9-1946)	378
473	TELEGRAM TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN (26-9-1946)	379
474	TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU (26-9-1946)	380
475	TELEGRAM TO BABA ANANDRAO DESHMUKH (26-9-1946)	380
476	LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI (26-9-1946)	380
477	LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN (26-9-1946)	381
478	LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU (26-9-1946)	381
479	LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA (26-9-1946)	382
480	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (26-9-1946)	382
481	DISCUSSION WITH LORD WAVELL (26-9-1946)	383
482	THE RIGHTS OF HARIJANS (27-9-1946)	384
483	LETTER TO LORD WAVELL (27-9-1946)	385
484	LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD (27-9-1946)	387
485	LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR (27-9-1946)	387
486	LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN (27-9-1946)	388
487	LETTER TO HUSSEINBHAI (27-9-1946)	388
488	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (27-9-1946)	389
489	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (27-9-1946)	389
490	A DEED OF MERCY (28-9-1946)	390
491	RIDING TWO HORSES (28-9-1946)	391
492	TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL (28-9-1946)	392
493	LETTER TO LORD WAVELL (28-9-1946)	392
494	LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI (28-9-1946)	393

CWMG-LXXXV

495	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (28-9-1946)	394
496	LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR (28-9-1946)	395
497	LETTER TO SHEELA (28-9-1946)	396
498	CRIMINAL WASTE (29-9-1946)	396
499	THOU TOO, BIHAR ! (29-9-1946)	396
500	NOTES (29-9-1946)	398
501	LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA (29-9-1946)	399
502	LETTER TO PHEROZE (29-9-1946)	399
503	HAND-SPINNING *v.* MILL-SPINNING (30-9-1946)	400
504	SCAVENGERS' LOT (30-9-1946)	401
505	HOW? (30-9-1946)	402
506	TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR (30-9-1946)	403
507	TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL (30-9-1946)	403
508	TELEGRAM TO ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA (30-9-1946)	403
509	LETTER TO NIRMALA (30-9-1946)	404
510	MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING (30-9-1946)	404
511	NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM (September 1946)	405
512	LETTER TO HANNAH (1-10-1946)	405
513	LETTER TO SAROJ NANAVATI (1-10-1946)	406
514	LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA (1-10-1946)	407
515	LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI (1-10-1946)	407
516	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (1-10-1946)	408
517	LETTER TO HOSHIARI (1-10-1946)	408
518	LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD (1-10-1946)	409
519	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (1-10-1946)	409
520	TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL (2-10-1946)	410
521	LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA (2-10-1946)	410
522	LETTER TO DR. FOSS WESTCOTT (2-10-1946)	411
523	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (2-10-1946)	411
524	LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU (2-10-1946)	412
525	LETTER TO PANDURANG PATWARDHAN (2-10-1946)	412
526	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (2-10-1946)	413
527	STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (3-10-1946)	414
528	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (3-10-1946)	414
529	TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA (4-10-1946)	415
530	AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS, THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL (4-10-1946)	416
531	LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI (4-10-1946)	417
532	LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA (4-10-1946)	417
533	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (4-10-1946)	418
534	STATEMENT TO THE PRESS (4-10-1946)	418
535	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (4-10-1946)	419

536	ROWDYISM RUN RIOT (5-10-1946)	420
537	QUESTION BOX (5-10-1946)	420
538	A GOOD WAY (6-10-1946)	422
539	WELLS THROWN OPEN (6-10-1946)	422
540	THE DANGER OF 'VANASPATI' (6-10-1946)	423
541	DOLA-PALKI (6-10-1946)	424
542	TELEGRAM TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI (6-10-1946)	424
543	UNCERTIFIED BUT GENUINE (7-10-1946)	425
544	TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA (7-10-1946)	426
545	LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY (7-10-1946)	426
546	LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA (7-10-1946)	427
547	LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR (7-10-1946)	428
548	LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH (7-10-1946)	428
549	LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH (7-10-1946)	429
550	LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN (7-10-1946)	431
551	LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK (7-10-1946)	431
552	LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN (7-10-1946)	432
553	LETTER TO MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS (7-10-1946)	432
554	LETTER TO PRAVINA DIWANJI (7-10-1946)	433
555	LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR (7-10-1946)	433
556	LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT (7-10-1946)	434
557	LETTER TO CHANDRANI (7-10-1946)	434
558	LETTER TO RAJ (7-10-1946)	435
559	MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING (7-10-1946)	435
560	LETTER TO SITA GANDHI (8-10-1946)	436
561	DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF A. I. S. A. (8-10-1946)	436
562	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (8-10-1946)	441
563	ENGLISH-HINDUSTANI DICTIONARY (10-10-1946)	442
564	TELEGRAM TO Y. M. DADOO (10-10-1946)	442
565	LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE (10-10-1946)	443
566	LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS (10-10-1946)	443
567	LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA (10-10-1946)	444
568	LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI (10-10-1946)	444
569	NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL (10-10-1946)	445
570	MESSAGE TO STUDENTS OF HARIJAN UDYOGSHALA (10-10-1946)	445
571	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (10-10-1946)	445
572	LETTER TO MANU GANDHI (11-10-1946)	446
573	LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN (11-10-1946)	447
574	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (11-10-1946)	447
575	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (11-10-1946)	448
576	HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI (12-10-1946)	448

CWMG - LXXV

577	REAL INDIA (12-10-1946)	450
578	QUESTION BOX (12-10-1946)	451
579	HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO? (12-10-1946)	453
580	NOTE TO J. C. KUMARAPPA (12-10-1946)	453
581	LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD (12-10-1946)	454
582	LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD (12-10-1946)	454
583	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (12-10-1946)	455
584	RURALIZING UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (13-10-1946)	456
585	DR. LOHIA AGAIN (13-10-1946)	456
586	ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS (14-10-1946)	457
587	MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING (14-10-1946)	458
588	DEADLY EMBRACE (15-10-1946)	459
589	DECENTRALIZATION (15-10-1946)	459
590	TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA (15-10-1946)	460
591	TELEGRAM TO SIDDHINATH SARMA (15-10-1946)	461
592	LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD (15-10-1946)	461
593	LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU (15-10-1946)	462
594	LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM (15-10-1946)	462
595	LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID (15-10-1946)	463
596	LETTER TO KANTILAL N. KAMDAR (15-10-1946)	463
597	A LETTER (15-10-1946)	464
598	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (15-10-1946)	464
599	TALK WITH ASSAM DEPUTATION (Before 16-10-1946)	466
600	TELEGRAM TO NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI (16-10-1946)	466
601	TELEGRAM TO JANARDAN PRASAD (16-10-1946)	466
602	TELEGRAM TO YASHMILAP (16-10-1946)	467
603	LETTER TO DR. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES (16-10-1946)	467
604	LETTER TO LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE (16-10-1946)	468
605	LETTER TO MADALASA (16-10-1946)	468
606	LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK (16-10-1946)	469
607	LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI (16-10-1946)	470
608	LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA (16-10-1946)	471
609	LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA (16-10-1946)	471
610	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (16-10-1946)	471
611	HAND-SPUN *v.* MILL CLOTH (17-10-1946)	472
612	TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA (17-10-1946)	474
613	TELEGRAM TO MEDH (17-10-1946)	474
614	LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR (17-10-1946)	474
615	LETTER TO T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR (17-10-1946)	475
616	LETTER TO LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU (17-10-1946)	475
617	LETTER TO PRABHAVATI (17-10-1946)	476
618	LETTER TO GANGA P. BHATT (17-10-1946)	476
619	LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI (17-10-1946)	477

CWMG - LXXXV

620	LETTER TO K. T. SHAH (17-10-1946)	478
621	LETTER TO SUNDARAM (17-10-1946)	478
622	LETTER TO DATAR (17-10-1946)	479
623	LETTER TO S. M. CHITRE (17-10-1946)	479
624	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (17-10-1946)	480
625	DISCUSSION WITH CO-WORKERS (On or before 18-10-1946)	481
626	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (On or before 18-10-1946)	482
627	NOTES (18-10-1946)	483
628	ELOQUENT FIGURES (18-10-1946)	484
629	NOTES (18-10-1946)	484
630	WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR HARIJANS ? (18-10-1946)	486
631	LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR (18-10-1946)	487
632	LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR (18-10-1946)	487
633	LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH (18-10-1946)	488
634	LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VIDYALANKAR (18-10-1946)	488
635	LETTER TO JANAKIRAM (18-10-1946)	489
636	LETTER TO PARWANI (18-10-1946)	489
637	LETTER TO RATNAMAYEE DEVI (18-10-1946)	490
638	CHARKHA MANDAL (18-10-1946)	490
639	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (18-10-1946)	491
640	THE COMING CONGRESS SESSION (19-10-1946)	492
641	I AM DEFEATED (19-10-1946)	492
642	TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM (19-10-1946)	493
643	LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM (19-10-1946)	493
644	LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (19-10-1946)	494
645	LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR (20-10-1946)	494
646	LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR (20-10-1946)	495
647	LETTER TO BAPUBHAI VASHI (20-10-1946)	496
648	LETTER TO BLIND STUDENTS (20-10-1946)	496
649	LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK (20-10-1946)	497
650	LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR (20-10-1946)	497
651	LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI (20-10-1946)	498
652	LETTER TO VACHHRAJ T. DOSHI (20-10-1946)	498
653	LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA (20-10-1946)	499
654	LETTER TO DHIRENDRA (20-10-1946)	499
655	LETTER TO ISHWARDAS NATWAR (20-10-1946)	500
656	LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR (20-10-1946)	500
657	LETTER TO KAILAS NATH KATJU (20-10-1946)	501
658	LETTER TO KALYAN CHOUDHARI (20-10-1946)	501
659	LETTER TO SANKARAN (20-10-1946)	502
660	LETTER TO SANKARAN (20-10-1946)	502
661	SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING (20-10-1946)	503
662	A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY	504

CWMG - LXXXV

APPENDICES

I EXTRACTS FROM LOUIS FISCHER'S REPORT OF INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI 513

II LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND NEHRU 515

III LETTER FROM SUDHIR GHOSH TO GANDHIJI 517

IV CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON KASHMIR 519

V LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI 521

SOURCES 523

CHRONOLOGY 525

INDEX OF TITLES 527

INDEX 532

ERRATA 550

CWMG - LXXXV

1. LETTER TO PUNDALIK

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

CHI. PUNDALIK,

I went through your report and letter. The work seems to be going on well. If it goes on like this, success will come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 5223

2. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA MAZUMDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

BHAI DHIREN,

I read *Krantikari Charkha* from cover to cover. I like it. None of the arguments irk me. You have correctly understood the place of the charkha. I want all lovers of the spinning-wheel to read your booklet and demonstrate its importance in the villages through their own work.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 14-5.

CWMG - LXXXV

3. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. Certainly I was a little annoyed. There was no reason for your coming to Delhi. If you found Gajraj in poor condition you alone were responsible for it. I had thought that you would be firm in your resolve but I find that you were not. I believed that you had given up your attachment to home but that too I did not find. Anyway, how does it matter? It is good that I now see you as you really are. It may be said, and rightly, that I have no reason to be unhappy about it. You may now realize the limit of your strength and do what you can. In that alone lies your well-being. Do not spoil Gajraj. Leave him alone but gradually, otherwise he will go completely out of hand.

I have your slivers.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. HOSHIARIBEHN
SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

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

4. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I did get your letter. The riots are a shameful affair from beginning to end.[1] I do get reports from all sources. It is a matter for concern that your sickness does not leave you. Sushila will soon be arriving there. See if she can do anything. My preference is for nature cure. I would consider extraction of teeth as part of the nature cure treatment. Jesus advised long ago that a limb which has become rotten should be cut off.[2]

[1] The reference is to the communal riots in Ahmedabad. *Vide* also pp. 40-1.

[2] *Matthew*, v, 29-30

CWMG - LXXXV

I know a great deal about V.[1] now. We shall discuss the problem when I am there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
ACHARYA, KHADI VIDYALAYA
A[KHIL] BHA[RATIYA] CHARKHA SANGH
SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9143

5. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have gone through the speech of the Maharaja of Kashmir.[2] I do not like it. All the same I am quite certain that Jawaharlal should do nothing in haste. He should not go when it suits the Maharaja. It is for us to consider when he should. The Working Committee must meet and discuss it. He should go when the Committee wants him to go. It may also be that the Kashmir affair will be used to sabotage the whole thing. I feel that we should not let such a possibility arise. I hope that whatever is done will be done after the Constituent Assembly meets. I would go so far as to say that the Maulana or you should go there first and find out what is feasible. It may also be necessary for the Maulana to issue a statement addressed to the people of Kashmir. If in spite of all that we do the whole thing collapses it cannot be helped. The situation requires very careful consideration. Munshi will tell you the rest.

Please also see the letter[3] I have written to Jawaharlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 308-9

[1] Vanamala, addressee's daughter

[2] The Maharaja in his announcement of July 15, 1946, had said that the Kashmir Government would resist any outside interference in their internal affairs fully realizing that such a course would lead to strife, disorder and bloodshed among the people of Kashmir.

[3] *Vide* pp. 5-6.

CWMG LXXXV

6. LETTER TO GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter giving me the details. It is most painful. It seems they haven't learnt any lesson from the death of Vasantrao and others.[1] Send me further details.

I hope both of you as well as the children are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

GHULAM RASOOL QURESHI
SABARMATI

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

7. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

CHI. SATYADEVI,

Jayantilal brought me your letter giving me the news of Krishnamaiya's passing away. Later, on inquiring I came across Mahavir's telegram. It had been received by Pyarelal two days ago and was lying with him. He assumed that I must have been informed and so kept it for filing. Thus I could get the news only last evening. I believe that Krishnamaiya has found relief in death. I know from the death of Kashi, wife of Jaisukhlal, that cancer is a painful disease. X-ray [*sic*], etc., is the right treatment for it. Your account also tells me that Mother passed away peacefully. We should all, therefore, be but happy about it. She has departed after seeing you all well settled. You should all now prove yourselves worthy of her name as well as your father's and also of the Ashram's

[1] Vasantrao Hegishte and Rajabali Lakhani, two local youths, were killed while trying to bring about peace during communal riots in Ahmedabad on July 7, 1946.

CWMG - LXXV

where you were brought up. Mahavir is properly settled, so is Durga. You are studying. Once you recover your health, you are intelligent enough to be able to take care of yourself. Dharmakumar cannot be said to be doing too well. Maitri however has grown quite mature. She is the eldest among you. I am sure you will all regard her as your mother and conduct yourselves accordingly. Krishnamaiya's advice is right, i. e., you should all take care of her and she will look after you all. Thus the whole family will be protected.

I am not writing separately either to Mahavir or to Dharmakumar. All of you brothers and sisters should read this. I had only one letter from Dharmakumar regarding your operation. Under pressure of work I could not spare any time before this.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SATYADEVI GIRI
VILLE PARLE

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

8. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have gone through what Munshi showed me,[1] though I did not have the time to examine it closely. He came today after 4 o'clock and will be going back tomorrow morning. I had a long talk with him about grouping. He will explain things to you. I have advised him to consult other lawyers as well. What he has prepared after seven days' labours may not be placed before the Committee just yet. Once it goes before the Committee, it will become public. I do not see the need of making it public so soon.

Your statement as published in the papers does not sound good.[2] If it is correctly reported, some explanation is needed.

[1] The reference is to the Rules of Procedure in the Constituent Assembly.

[2] The reference is presumably to Jawaharlal Nehru's Press Statement of July 10, 1946, in which he had said that the Congress would enter the Constituent Assembly "completely unfettered by agreements and free to meet all situations as they arise".

CWMG - LXXXV

It must be admitted that we have to work within the limits of the State Paper. It is clear in Maulana's letters. We have given it our own interpretation. But if the Federal Court gives a different interpretation, we shall have to be firm. I think it necessary to say this clearly. If we do not admit even this much, we will be doing nothing and Jinnah Saheb's accusation will prove true.

Fischer[1] and Jayaprakash have come here today. They too will return tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

In regard to Kashmir, Sardar has sent me the Maharaja's speech. It deserves careful study. I think a meeting of the Working Committee should be called to consider it. Let us not be hasty. Let us not endanger the whole thing just for this reason. I am of the view that Maulana Saheb and, if necessary, Sardar too, should go to Kashmir. After all, has not the Working Committee assumed the entire responsibility?

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 7697

9. LETTER TO DR. T. J. KEDAR

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

I have your letter of the 4th inst. No one dies or lives or is born without God's grace. Then why rejoice at birth or grieve over death? I have no interest in elections. If your name is proposed for the Constituent Assembly, how can you escape it?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KEDAR
NAGPUR, C. P.

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

[1] Louis Fischer

CWMG - LXXXV

10. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 17, 1946*][2]

LOUIS FISCHER: I would go into the Constituent Assembly and use it for a different purpose—as a battle-field—and declare it to be a sovereign body. What do you say to this?

GANDHIJI : It is no use declaring somebody else's creation a sovereign body. After all, it is a British creation. A body does not become a sovereign body by merely asserting it. To become sovereign, you have to behave in a sovereign way. Three tailors of Tooley Street in Johannesburg declared that they were a sovereign body. It ended in nothing. It was just a farce.

I do not consider the proposed Constituent Assembly to be non-revolutionary. I have said, and I mean it cent per cent, that the proposed Constituent Assembly is an effective substitute for civil disobedience of the constructive type. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the self-denial and spirit of sacrifice of our Socialist friends, I have never concealed the sharp difference between their method and mine. They frankly believe in violence and all that is in its bosom. I believe in non-violence through and through.

L. F. You are a socialist and so are they.

G. I am, they are not. I was a socialist before many of them were born. I carried conviction to a rabid socialist in Johannesburg, but that is neither here nor there. My claim will live when their socialism is dead.

L. F. What do you mean by your socialism?

G. My socialism means 'even unto this last'. I do not want to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. In their socialism, probably these have no place. Their one aim is material progress. For instance, America aims at having a

[1] & [2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "After Four Years". Louis Fischer met Gandhiji twice on the 17th and then again on the 18th. The report here reproduced covers the two interviews on the 17th. For the interview of the 18th, *vide* pp. 17-8. For extracts from Fischer's report of the interviews, *vide* Appendix I.

car for every citizen. I do not. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. I must be free to build a staircase to Sirius if I want to. That does not mean that I want to do any such thing. Under the other socialism, there is no individual freedom. You own nothing, not even your body.

L. F. Yes, but there are variations. My socialism in its modified form means that the State does not own everything. It does in Russia. There you certainly do not own your body even. You may be arrested at any time, though you may have committed no crime. They may send you wherever they like.

Does not, under your socialism, the State own your children and educate them in any way it likes?

G. All States do that. America does it.

L. F. Then America is not very different from Russia.

G. But socialism is dictatorship or else arm-chair philosophy. I call myself a communist also.

L. F. O, don't. It is terrible for you to call yourself a communist. I want what you want, what Jaiprakash and the socialists want: a free world. But the communists don't. They want a system which enslaves the body and the mind.

G. Would you say that of Marx?

L. F. The communists have corrupted the Marxist teaching to suit their purpose.

G. What about Lenin?

L. F. Lenin started it. Stalin has since completed it. When the communists come to you, they want to get into the Congress and control the Congress and use it for their own ends.

G. So do the socialists. My communism is not very different from socialism. It is a harmonious blending of the two. Communism, as I have understood it, is a natural corollary of socialism.

L. F. Yes, you are right. There was a time when the two could not be distinguished. But today socialists are very different from communists.

G. You mean to say, you do not want communism of Stalin's type.

L. F. But the Indian communists want communism of the Stalin type in India and want to use your name for that purpose.

CWMG - LXXXV

G. They won't succeed.

L. F. So you will not yourself go into the Constituent Assembly, but will support it?

G. Yes, but it is wrong to say we are going into the Constituent Assembly to seize power. Though it is not a sovereign body, it is as near it as possible.

L. F. Pandit Jawaharlal said that if the British tried to impose a treaty in terms of the State Paper of May 16, he will tear it up.[1]

G. Yes, an imposed treaty from outside.

L. F. And he said, Congress will not go into groupings.

G. Yes, I have said the same thing—unless the Federal Court or some other court gives a different decision.[2] As I see it, much can come out of the Constituent Assembly, if the British will play the game.

L. F. You say and I believe they will. But supposing they do not, won't you then offer your form of protest?

G. Not until the conditions are favourable. But it is wrong to speculate about the future, still more so to anticipate failure. If we take care of the present, the future will take care of itself.

They then passed on to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhiji startled his visitor by proffering the remark that the Hindu-Muslim question, in the final analysis, was an offshoot of the untouchability question.

When Hinduism is perfectly reformed and purged of the last trace of untouchability, there will be no communal problem left.

L. F. I have heard that though the Congress Harijans have won at the elections against non-Congress Harijans, they were able to do so only with the Hindu votes!

G. What was the joint election for, if not to enable the caste Hindus to make a selection from successful candidates at the primary elections? No failed candidate at the primary elections can offer himself as a candidate at the joint elections. Moreover, it is not correct to say, as has been claimed, that in the

[1] At a Press Conference in Bombay on July 10 Jawaharlal Nehru had said: ". . . If the British Government presumes to tell us that they are going to hold anything in India . . . because they do not agree either in regard to the minorities or in regard to the treaty we shall not accept that position. It will become a *casus belli* . . . we shall tear up any treaty they try to impose."

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 360-1.

majority of cases, the Congress Harijans won against the non-Congress candidates with the caste Hindus' votes. In Madras the non-Congress Harijans were defeated almost to a man in the primary elections, wherever they contested them. In the majority of cases the Congress Harijans were returned unopposed.

L. F. Some of them want separate electorates.

G. Yes. But we have resisted it. By separate electorates they put themselves outside the pale of Hinduism and perpetuate the bar sinister.

L. F. That is true. But, anyhow, they might say that Hindus have put them outside the pale.

G. But today the Hindus are penitent.

L. F. Are they adequately penitent?

G. I am sorry to say not yet. If they were, there would be no untouchability and no communal problem as I have already said.

L. F. Is there less social contact between the Hindus and Muslims?

G. No, rather the contrary. But politically there is a bar, thanks to Lord Minto.

L. F. Your young men are too Indo-centric.

G. That is only partly true. I won't say we have become international, but we have taken up forlorn causes, e. g., the cause of the exploited nations, because we are ourselves the chief exploited nation.

L. F. The growing anti-white feeling here is bad. In the Taj Mahal Hotel they have put up a notice "South Africans not admitted". I do not like it. Your non-violence should make you more generous.

G. That won't be non-violence. Today the white man rules in India. So, if the Taj Mahal has the gumption to put up that notice, it is a feather in its cap.

L. F. That is what any nationalist will say. You must say something better.

G. Then I will be a nationalist for once. They have no right to be here if they do not deal with Indians on terms of equality.

L. F. No right—yes. But you must give them more than their right. You must invite them.

CWMG - LXXV

G. Yes, when I am the Viceroy.

L. F. You mean the President of the Indian Republic.

G. No. I will be quite content to be the Viceroy, a constitutional Viceroy, for the time being. The first thing I will do will be to vacate the Viceregal Lodge and give it to the Harijans. I will then invite the South African white visitors to my hut and say to them: 'You have ground my people to powder. But we won't copy you. We will give you more than you deserve. We won't lynch you as you do in South Africa,' and thus shame them into doing the right.

L. F. There is so much anti-white feeling today.

G. Of course, I am opposed to that. It can do no good to anybody.

L. F. The world is so divided. And there might be another war and that may be between the coloured and the white races.

G. Europe seems to be heading for another war. It is not sufficiently exhausted.

L. F. Europe is terribly exhausted. But with the atom bomb human beings don't matter so much. A few scientists are enough. The next war will be carried on by pressing a few buttons. That is why colour war is so dangerous.

G. Anything is better than cowardice. It is violence double distilled.

And to illustrate his remark Gandhiji narrated the story of a Negro clergyman with a Herculean frame in South Africa saying 'pardon me brother', when insulted by a white man, and sneaking into a coloured man's compartment.

That is not non-violence. It is a travesty of Jesus' teaching. It would have been more manly to retaliate.

L. F. You are not afraid of what happens to you but what it may mean to others. It takes a great deal of irresponsibility to give vent to your feelings and slap the white man under the circumstances described by you. In India the situation is different. The white men are not so numerous here.

G. You are mistaken. Why, one Englishman is killed and a whole village is razed to the ground as a reprisal. What vindictiveness!

Harijan, 4-8-1946

11. QUESTION BOX

Q. I am a young businessman of 21 years and have 11 dependents. I believe in truth and non-violence but find I cannot strictly follow it in business. What should I do? Abandoning the business means suffering for my relations.

A. This begs the question. It is difficult but not impossible to conduct strictly honest business. The fact is that the honester a business the more successful it is. Hence the proverb coined by businessmen "Honesty is the best policy". What the correspondent lacks is application and an accurate knowledge of honest business methods. What is true is that honesty is incompatible with the amassing of a large fortune. "Verily, verily, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." Nor therefore should an honest businessman, however capable he may be, support idlers whether eleven or more or fewer. The eleven dependents cannot all be infants or incapables. Honesty makes no impossible demands upon the resources of a businessman. An honest man cannot have dishonest kinsmen. The questioner will find on introspection that there is nothing wrong with honest business but that there is something wrong with him. Let him find out what it is that is wrong with him.

Q. Are the time, place and manner of death predestined by the Almighty for each individual? If so, why worry even if we are ill?

A. I do not know whether time, place and the manner of death are predestined. All I do know is that 'not a blade of grass moves but by His will'. This too I know hazily. What is hazy today will be clear tomorrow or the day after by prayerful waiting. Let this however be quite clear. The Almighty is not a person like us. He or It is the greatest living Force or Law in the world. Accordingly He does not act by caprice, nor does that Law admit of any amendment or improvement. His will is fixed and changeless, everything else changes every second. Surely, it does not follow from the doctrine of predestination that we may not 'worry' in the care of ourselves even if we are ill. Indifference to illness is a crime greater than that of falling ill. There is no end to the effort to do better today than yesterday. We

have to 'worry' and find out why we are or have become ill. Health, not 'illth', is the law of nature. Let us investigate the law of nature and obey it, if we will not be ill or, if having fallen ill, will be restored.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

12. A TRAGIC PHENOMENON

My post contains so many letters from persons who want to be in the Constituent Assembly that it frightens me into the suspicion that, if these letters are an indication of the general feeling, the intelligentsia is more anxious about personal aggrandizement than about India's independence. And if I, though I have no connection with the applications of candidates for elections, receive so many letters, how many more must the members of the Working Committee be receiving? These correspondents should know that I take no interest in these elections, I do not attend meetings at which these applications are considered and that I often only know from newspapers who have been elected. It is on rare occasions that my advice is sought as to the choice to be made. But I write this more to draw attention to the disease of which these applications are a sign than to warn my correspondents against building any expectation of my intervention. It is wrong to think communally in such elections, it is wrong to think that anyone is good enough for the Constituent Assembly, it is altogether wrong to think that the election carries any honour with it, it is a post of service if one is fitted for the labours and, lastly, it is wrong to regard the post as one for making a few rupees while the Assembly lasts. The Constituent Assembly should have such members only who know something about constitutions all the world over, above all, about the constitution that India's genius demands. It is debasing to think that true service consists in getting a seat in the Assembly. True service lies outside. The field of service outside is limitless. In the fight for independence, the Assembly, like the one in course of formation, has a place. Nevertheless it is a very small place and that too if we use it wisely and well; certainly not, if there is a scramble for a seat in it. The scramble warrants the fear that it may become a hunting ground for place-seekers. I am free to confess that a Constituent Assembly is the logical outcome of parliamentary activity. The labour of the late Deshbandhu Chittaranjan

Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru opened my eyes to the fact that the parliamentary programme had a place in the national activity for independence. I strove hard against it. It is certainly inconsistent with pure non-co-operation. But pure non-co-operation never held the field. What came into being also waned. Had there been universal non-co-operation of the non-violent type in the Congress ranks, there would have been no parliamentary programme. Non-violent non-co-operation with evil means co-operation with all that is good. Therefore, non-violent non-co-operation with a foreign government necessarily means an indigenous government based on non-violence. Had there been such complete non-co-operation, there would be swaraj today based on non-violence. But this never happened. In the circumstances it would have been vain to struggle against what the nation had been familiar with and from which it could not be completely weaned. The parliamentary step having been taken, it would have been improper to boycott the present effort. But that does not, can never, mean that there should be indecent competition for filling the seats in it. Let us recognize the limitations.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

13. "*THE REVOLUTIONARY CHARKHA*"[1]

Shri Dhirendra Mazumdar has written a booklet under this title. Though it is only forty small pages it contains everything about the new scheme. It tells us how true swaraj and true revolution lie in the successful working of the scheme. But the true revolution will remain only on paper unless the scheme is proved in work. It is, therefore, necessary to show how it may be proved and to act accordingly. Today there is much restlessness in the towns because townsfolk are not able to get khadi at any price. This has happened before. At that time I was able to assure people that khadi would soon be available because then the question was only one of money. Now this is not so. Money alone cannot answer the purpose. True revolution is not brought about by money. It is a difficult task to change the habits of a lifetime, to overcome laziness, to create rather than destroy. It is easy to acquire ten thousand rupees by looting a train. It is difficult to earn that sum by the sweat of

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.

one's brow. It is a common enough occurrence for someone to earn a lac of rupees in a single day in the share market. But to accumulate a lac of rupees in one day through one's labour is an impossible task. A beggar has been known to become rich by winning a lottery but no beggar has amassed wealth in a single day through his labour. He can only get his wage in the market. This may be eight annas or even two annas. Producing khadi is one thing, producing mill-cloth another. Swaraj cannot come through the machine. But if two hundred million people with full understanding produce khadi with their own labour and wear it the face of India will be transformed. It will be another matter if out of the four hundred million people two hundred million cannot take the trouble to produce cloth for themselves. But I can never believe that.

PANCHGANI, July 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-7-1946

14. TESTIMONIAL TO HERBERT FISCHER

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 19[46][1]

I have known Mr. Herbert Fischer[2] and his wife for a long time. Mr. Fischer was for some time in the Village Industries section of my constructive activities. The Fischers belong to the Quaker Settlement at Itarsi. They are a simple godfearing family and lovers of humanity.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1]Although the source has 1940, this item has been placed among those of 1946. Moreover Gandhiji was in Panchgani on July 18, in 1946.

[2] He had come from the Fiji Islands. During the war he was declared an enemy and was arrested. Later he worked at Sevagram for Nayee Talim.

CWMG - LXXXV

15. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

PANCHGANI,
July 18, 19[46][1]

CHI. RAMACHANDRAN,

I got your letter from Poona the day before yesterday. Murti had met me. What will he do in the Constituent Assembly? Have my talks with him been of no avail? I have written on this subject in *Harijan*.[2] Read it. You will have to go to Ceylon soon and correctly appraise the situation. I have had a talk with Ashadevi. I hope Soundaram's work is going on well.

You should now try to write in Hindustani.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN
MADRAS

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

16. INTERVIEW TO LOUIS FISCHER

PANCHGANI,
[*July 18, 1946*][3]

L. F. If the Working Committee had reacted to your 'groping in the dark' or as you have called it your instinct about the long-term proposals, they would have rejected them?

G. Yes, but I did not let them.

L. F. You mean you did not insist?

G. More than that. I prevented them from following my instinct unless they also felt likewise. It is no use conjecturing what would have happened. The fact however remains that Dr. Rajendra Prasad asked me: 'Does your instinct go so far

[1] The source has 1947 but Gandhiji was in Panchgani on this date; besides, the source has this letter among those of the year 1946.
[2] *Vide* pp. 13-4.
[3] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 7.

CWMG - LXXXV

that you would prevent us from accepting the long-term proposals, whether we understand you or not?' I said, 'No. Follow your reason since my own reason does not support my instinct. My instinct rebels against my reason. I have placed my misgivings before you as I want to be faithful to you. I myself have not followed my instinct unless my reason backed it.'

L. F. But you have said that you follow your instinct when it speaks to you on occasions as, for instance, you did before certain fasts that you undertook.

G. Yes, but even in these cases, before the fast began, my reason was able to back my instinct. My reason failed my instinct on the long-term proposals.

L. F. Then, why did you inject your 'instinct' into the political situation?

G. Because I was loyal to my friends. I wanted to retain my faith in the *bona fides* of the Cabinet Mission. So I told the Cabinet Mission also about my misgivings. I said to myself, 'Supposing they meant ill, they would feel ashamed.'

L. F. You are strongly constitutionalist now. Is it for fear of the alternative—violence?

G. No. If India is destined to go through a blood-bath, it will do so. The thing I would fear is my own cowardice or dishonesty. I have neither. So I say, we must go in and work it out. If they are dishonest, they will be found out. The loss will not be ours but theirs.

L. F. I think you are afraid of the spirit of violence. It is widespread. I wonder whether it has not captured the mood of the youth and you are aware of it and you fear that mood.

G. It has not captured the imagination of the country. I admit that it has captured the imagination of a section of the youth.

L. F. It is a mood that has got to be combated.

G. Yes. I am doing it in my own way. It is my implicit faith that it is a survival which will kill itself in time. It cannot live. It is so contrary to the spirit of India. But what is the use of talking? I believe in an inscrutable Providence which presides over our destinies—call it God or by any other name you like. All I contend is that it is not the fear of violence that makes me advise the country to go to the Constituent Assembly.

It is repugnant in a non-violent attitude not to accept an honourable substitute for civil revolt.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

17. "SCHEDULED CASTES"

A copy of a printed leaflet was thrown into my car on 6th July as I was driving to the A. I. C. C. meeting in Bombay. It was again handed to me by Shri Rajbhoj on the 12th instant. It is addressed to the members of the A. I. C. C. I promised to deal with the questions in these pages. I do so now.

The questions are such as not to need an answer from the members. I should not wonder if no member had answered them. They betray gross ignorance of Congress history. It is hardly the province of men gathered together for a particular purpose to deal with extraneous matters. But it is the province of newspapers to dispel ignorance. It is doubly mine, being conductor of a weekly and a Harijan by choice.

Q. What is going to be the place of the untouchables in your swaraj? The Congress has talked a lot about protecting the minorities. Why has the Congress failed to produce its blue-print of plan for protecting the minorities? Is this silence not calculated to create want of confidence in the *bona fides* of the Congress?

A. The place of untouchables in the swaraj of my conception will be the same in every respect as that of the so-called caste Hindus. Such is also the position of the Congress. It has talked less and done more for minorities than any other cosmopolitan body known to me. There is no blue-print necessary when work speaks.

Q. Does the Congress regard the untouchables as a minority? Mr. Gandhi in an article in the *Harijan* in 1939 admitted that the only real minority in India were the untouchables. Why did Maulana Azad in his last letter[1] to the Viceroy say that the Congress was not prepared to recognize the untouchables as a minority?

A. The Congress should not regard the untouchables as a minority for the simple reason that they are not a minority in the sense in which Parsis, Jews, Christians and others can call themselves minorities. Harijans are a minority, if Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are minorities and Shudras are a majority. These are not minorities and majorities in the sense we are

[1] Of June 25, 1946

used to. We have fortunately not come to that pass. When we do, it will be good-bye to any kind of swaraj. The English may go today, they will some day, but if we become savages cutting one another's throats we will have the freedom that savages have.

The President of the Bombay Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation should have given the quotation referred to by him from the article in the *Harijan* of 1939. He has not taken the trouble of giving even the number and page of the *Harijan* in question. I have no recollection of ever having made the statement attributed to me. What the Maulana Saheb is reported to have said was undoubtedly right, irrespective of what I wrote in 1939 or did not write.

Q. What is the significance of the statement that the Congress does not regard the untouchables as a minority? Does it mean that the Congress will take away even those political safeguards which have been secured by the untouchables under the present Government of India Act?

A. The significance is that the untouchables are an integral part of Hindus. They are, therefore, better than minorities and worse if they claim to be and become a distinct community. A few educated untouchables may keep themselves as a class apart but the mass of them must sink or swim with the Hindus who, if they continue their misbehaviour towards Harijans—the so-called untouchables—must become extinct as a separate branch of the human family.

What 'political safeguards' the questioner has in view I do not know. If they refer to 'separate' electorates they must go even to the extent they exist today. They are a device of Satan named Imperialism. It was never meant for the protection of the untouchables. It was a prop of Imperialism. Every statutory separation has been in furtherance of the policy of 'divide and rule'. It is inherent in the life of Imperialism even if it were to be called by a sweeter name.

Q. Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that the candidates of the Scheduled Castes who have been elected to the Provincial Legislatures came to the bottom in the primary elections and the candidates put up by the Scheduled Castes Federation came to the top? Does the Congress admit or does it not admit that if in the final election the failed candidates were elected, it was entirely due to the Hindu votes? Can the Congress deny that candidates elected by Hindu votes cannot be regarded as the real representatives of the Scheduled Castes?

A. I have not the statistics to verify the statement. My impression is to the contrary except in some cases.

Who were the 'failed' candidates? They could not offer themselves for the joint vote. The first four in the primary elections are the successful candidates, i. e., eligible for the joint vote. Surely it is a thing to be proud of, if the last successful candidate in the primary list won because of the caste Hindu vote at the joint election.

The Congress must deny that the top man of the primary election who failed to secure enough or any caste Hindu votes was the real representative of the Scheduled Castes. Can Sjt. Gaekwad and others like him, so long as they are Hindus, be indifferent to the vote of their fellow Hindus, even though the latter are caste men? They must not cut the branch on which they are sitting. Separation must mean either change of religion or setting up a new religion—confusion added to confusion.

Q. At the time of the Poona Pact, Mr. Gandhi gave a pledge that the Hindus will not interfere in the election of the Scheduled Castes to the seats reserved for them. Why did the Congress violate the pledge and commit breach of faith?

A. I gave no such pledge as is imputed to me. The joint vote for the sake of which I fasted was interference, if it can be so called. If any other interference is meant, the questioner must explain and quote my writing in support of the contention.

Q. In the Simla Conference called by Lord Wavell in 1945, the Congress raised no objection to two representatives of the Scheduled Castes being included in the Executive Council. Why did the Congress reduce the representation of the Scheduled Castes this time to one? Does it not prove that the Congress cannot be trusted to keep its word and that as soon as the Congress obtains the right to decide, it will break all its promises and withdraw all the political safeguards secured by the Scheduled Castes?

A. I do not understand this charge at all. The Congress, so far as I know, has committed no breach of faith.

Q. It has been admitted by all the workers of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and also by Mr. Gandhi that the removal of untouchability has made no headway at all. On the contrary, the tyranny and oppression of the untouchables by the caste Hindus which has been going on for ages, has increased in its rigour and has taken manifold forms. It is necessary to ventilate these grievances on the floor of the legislatures if any redress is to be obtained. No sensible man will deny that this work of ventilating the grievances cannot be done except by the representatives of the Scheduled Castes who are returned through separate electorates. Why does the Congress alone oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates?

A. I have made no statement, and I do not know that the Harijan Sevak Sangh has, to the effect that the removal of untouchability has made 'no headway at all'. What all of us have admitted is that removal, so far as the caste Hindus are concerned, has made no satisfactory headway. That is not a new complaint. It is of long standing. Woe to the reformer who is easily satisfied with the progress of the reform, on which his mind is set. The reform is two-sided. So far as work among the Harijans is concerned, the Sangh has made fair strides. That in itself is no small contribution to the cause of removal of untouchability. The work among the touchables has gone on at a snail's pace. It is an uphill task. Yet I assert that it is making sure progress, though undoubtedly slow.

The charge that the tyranny and oppression by caste Hindus have "increased and have become intensified in rigour" is wholly wrong and cannot be sustained. What is true, and it is a healthy sign, is that there is a growing consciousness of the wrong among the Harijans, thanks largely to the efforts and the increase in the number of reformers and their impatience of the wrong. But they dare not be satisfied with the results so far achieved. They have to go much farther than they have done. I am sure that will never be through the legislatures or legislation, necessary as both are, though to a very limited extent. As I have said in a previous issue, it is the hoary custom and not law, that is responsible for the mischief. Custom is any day tougher than law. It can be removed only by enlightened public opinion.

Progress will be totally blocked by separation. It is a nightmare which must be given up, unless the goal of separation is extinction of Hindus including the so-called Scheduled Classes. They can only be misrepresented by separate electorates. How can others who are not interested in Scheduled Classes oppose separation?

Q. There is no connection between the religion of a community and its demand for separate electorates. Even communities professing one religion have claimed separate electorates. Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians profess one common religion. Yet all of them have separate electorates. Nobody has raised any objection to their separate electorates, not even the Congress. Why does the Congress oppose the demand of the Scheduled Castes for separate electorates on the ground of common religion which it does not rely upon in other cases?

A. This question can only arise in the minds of those who support separate electorates as good in themselves. Not so the Congress. The parallel of Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Indian

Christians is inapplicable and fatal. That separation is a glaring example of the mischief that separate electorates are, as also of Imperialism gone mad. Arrogance cannot go farther. Europeans have been separated as the ruling race, Anglo-Indians being a cross breed have been kept distinct from Indian Christians.

Q. There is no social separation between the Hindus and the Sikhs. In one family one member is a Sikh and the other a Hindu. The Hindus and the Sikhs intermarry and interdine. Yet the Sikhs have separate electorates to which the Congress has never raised any objection. The untouchables in the matter of social intercourse are far more separated from the Hindus than all the Sikhs and Muslims. If the Sikhs and Muslims can have separate electorates, why not the untouchables?

A. The Congress would do away today with these separate electorates if it had the power—not the power that the sword gives but that of persuasion. It is perfectly true that more is common between Hindus and Sikhs than between caste Hindus and untouchables. That is a blot upon caste Hindus and Hinduism. But the remedy is not to add evil to evil but to reform Hinduism, so that the demand for separation on the part of untouchables dies a natural death. Meantime Hindus cannot be expected to commit suicide which separation of Harijans from caste Hindus must mean.

PANCHGANI, July 19, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

18. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP : PANCHGANI,
July 19, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Gandhiji desires me to refer you to happenings in Goa,[1] a vivid description of which is given on page 6 of the *Bombay Chronicle* of 18-7-1946.

I enclose a copy of a wire[2] Gandhiji received yesterday from Joachim Dias. Goan friends have been to see him too and related their woes. He

[1] The Portuguese authorities had been resorting to oppressive measures to deal with the Goans' demand for civil liberties. There had been arrests and banishments and meetings had been forbidden.

[2] The telegram reported the arrest and detention of the Secretary of the Goa Congress.

CWMG - IXXV

wonders whether H. E. the Viceroy can do anything to stem the tide of what would appear to be lawlessness on the part of authority in Goa.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Encl: 1
G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 99-100

19. LETTER TO R. K. RAMLINGA REDDY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

CHI. RAMLINGA REDDY,

I have your postcard redirected from Poona. After all everyone has to lose his father someday or other. We too have to go. Why grieve over it? The thing to do is to emulate the good qualities of our fathers and forget their faults. Only then do we gain something. Go on doing your work with zeal and you will have perfect peace. I shall be reaching Sevagram in August. You may come then, if you want to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10416

20. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July 20, 1946*][2]

Q. The Communist Party has successfully organized sweepers' unions and helped them to secure their rights through *hartals*, etc. But the Harijan Sevak Sangh's activities are confined mostly to welfare work. It cannot therefore successfully compete with the Communists for popularity among the Harijans. Don't you think that in view of this, the Harijan Sevak Sangh ought to alter its policy and method of work?

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Harijan Sevak Sangh Under Fire"
[2] From *Gandhi—1915–1948*

CWMG - LXXXVI

A. We must be guided in our policy by our sense of right, not by the lure of winning cheap popularity. If the Harijan Sevak Sangh is convinced that it is working on the right lines, it will keep on to them, regardless of what others might or might not do. Thus we may organize unions or even induce *hartals*, not from political motives or for such purposes but for bettering the social or economic position of Harijans.

Q. The feeling is gaining ground among the Harijans that the Congress is showing more solicitude for Muslim demands than for the just rights of the Harijans. What have you to say to it?

A. The Congress being a political organization is likely to be more susceptible to political pressure, which the Muslims are in a far stronger position to exert than the Harijans. If it succumbs to that pressure, it will pay the price for it. The Harijan Sevak Sangh, however, being a non-political organization, should never put expediency before its primary duty towards the Harijans.

Q. In your recent correspondence with Shri Shyamlal you have said that caste ought to go root and branch if untouchability is to be completely eradicated. Then, why do you not make anti-untouchability work part of a wider crusade against the caste system itself ? If you dig out the root, the branches will wither by themselves.

A. It is one thing for me to hold certain views and quite another to make my views acceptable in their entirety to society at large. My mind, I hope, is ever growing, ever moving forward. All may not keep pace with it. I have therefore to exercise utmost patience and be satisfied with hastening slowly. As you must have seen from my preface to a recent Navajivan publication of my writings on *Varnavyavastha*,[1] I am wholly in agreement with you in principle. If I live up to 125 years, I do expect to convert the entire Hindu society to my view.

Q. Would you advise the so-called *savarna* Hindus to start, even under the present circumstances, an agitation in selected places for securing elementary civic and social rights for the Harijans? Would you for this purpose advise the Harijan Sevak Sangh to organize satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus if necessary?

A. I would not advise the Sangh as an organization to offer satyagraha against the *savarna* Hindus, but I would certainly not only advise but expect members of the Sangh in their individual capacity to organize such satyagraha in their respective

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXX, pp. 222-4.

places. I shall certainly support any such move on their part if it is undertaken in the proper spirit. It is their duty.

Q. Would you, in the absence of popular governments in the provinces, advise the Sangh to carry on a vigorous and energetic programme of temple-entry for Harijans?

A. I could. I understand it is being done even at present but at a rather slow pace. I would certainly like its tempo to be stepped up.

Q. Can the members of the Sangh refuse to interdine with the untouchables? Have your views on this question undergone any change?

A. At one time I did say that interdining was not an essential part of the campaign for the removal of untouchability. Personally, I was for it. Today I encourage it. In fact, today I even go further, as a perusal of my recent preface to which I have already referred would show.

Q. Should not the Harijan Sevak Sangh try to secure for the Harijans political power by demanding due representation for them on *gram panchayats*, municipalities and legislatures?

A. Certainly it ought to. No effort can be too great for it.

Q. Should not the Sangh give instructions in the essentials of Hindu religion in the Harijan hostels and in Harijan gatherings of adults?

A. It ought to be the primary duty of the Sangh to give to Harijan children and adults a grounding in the essentials of Hindu religion. If they were brought up in ignorance of these, they would not continue to remain in the Hindu fold, and the responsibility for it would rest on those who had failed to give them the necessary instruction.

Shri Sitaram Shastri of Vinaya Ashram, Guntur, asked whether the Sangh ought not to specially train a body of missionaries to carry on propaganda work among the *savarna* Hindus. He was prepared to start a training centre for that purpose in his Ashram if he were given adequate help.

Gandhiji however had grave doubts as to the practicability of the suggestion. In fact, the question had actually been raised by Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla several years ago and dropped after full discussion. He would be quite satisfied, if at least the members of the Sangh would fully come up to the ideal.

Q. Ought not we to set up a precedent for having Harijan representatives in the Sangh or at least one Harijan member in the Executive Committee of the Sangh?

In reply he referred to the history of the birth of the Harijan Sevak Sangh at the conclusion of the Poona Pact,[1] which resulted in the modification of the decision of the MacDonald Government on the question of the representation of the minorities. It was felt that if the rot was to be effectively stopped, Hinduism ought to be completely rid of the curse of untouchability. This called for a real change of heart and repentance for its past sins on the part of Hindu society. It was to that end that the Harijan Sevak Sangh was formed.

I am therefore opposed to both the propositions. I know that under the present arrangement some Harijans are included in the Board of the Sangh. But this was a concession to Thakkar Bapa's weakness. I have described the Harijan Sevak Sangh as an organization of penitent sinners. Its object is to call upon so-called *savarna* Hindus to do expiation for having harboured untouchability. The inclusion of a Harijan in the Sangh would be mere eye-wash and make-believe, as his would be a mere voice in the wilderness. Before long, he would himself heartily wish to be out of it. I say this from my personal experience of the way in which committees function. I know the Sangh cannot always keep up to the mark. It is of course open to the Sangh to alter its scope and give Harijans a majority in its Executive Committee or appoint a competent body of representative Harijans to act as a board of advisers and supervisors and keep the Sangh on the alert and on the right track.

Gandhiji was next asked to give his opinion on the recent work in the Gwalior State to enlist the services of the *Sadhu* community in the cause of Harijan uplift. Gandhiji replying said he had grave doubts as to the correctness or advisability of the step. It seemed to him to smack of politics. He would welcome the assistance of true *sadhus*, if it was available. But he confessed he looked in vain in the country for *sadhus* of his conception. Such *sadhus* as he saw disappointed him. There might be here and there honourable exceptions and their help would be welcome. But he was frankly sceptical of the possibility of utilizing *sadhus* as a body for their work. Even if they tried the experiment, he was afraid they would come to the parting of the ways before long.

Another friend asked whether a portion of the Kasturba Memorial Trust Fund ought not to be earmarked for Harijan sisters. Gandhiji's reply was that they could have the whole of it if they could show the capacity to utilize it. No special earmarking of a part was therefore necessary.

[1] Of 24th September, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI.

CWMG - LXXV

I am responsible for the policy of conducting Harijan uplift work through the agency of the *savarna* Hindus. They had to do expiation. All of them, I argued to myself, could help with money even if they could not, owing to lack of necessary qualifications, render direct service. For instance, they might not be able themselves to do teaching work, but they could engage a competent teacher to give education to Harijan children. That would be one way of doing expiation. They would be able to penetrate Harijan society and help in its progress.

He knew there were sceptical critics, who questioned whether this kind of work could lead to the eradication of untouchability. He himself was at one time among the doubters. But he had since realized his mistake. He owed a debt of gratitude in this respect to the late Shri Devdhar, at whose activity he had at one time looked askance and which he had even criticized. A year's experience, however, had cured him of his conceit and taught him humility. He realized that if he confined himself exclusively to doing propaganda among the *savarna* Hindus with a view to their conversion, he might have to wait till the Greek Kalends and in the meantime the actual uplift work among the Harijans would remain hopelessly bogged. His own experience had since convinced him that if they could only have sufficient workers with the requisite purity and devotion and spirit of sacrifice to work among Harijans, untouchability would become a thing of the past, even if the *savarna* Hindus were left severely alone. But that would mean that they must first become Harijans at heart and live and labour among the Harijans as Harijans.

But can the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh truthfully claim to have eradicated the last trace of untouchability from their own hearts? Are their professions altogether on a par with their practice?

A member asked as to what his criterion was in that respect.

Are you married?

THE MEMBER: I happen to be.

G. Then have you an unmarried daughter? If you have, get for her a Harijan bridegroom, not to satisfy her lust but in a purely religious spirit and I shall send you a wire of congratulations at my expense.

You will now realize why the Harijan *sevaks* are unable to move the hearts of the *savarna* Hindus. The reason is that they have not that fire of faith in their hearts, that impatient hunger for service which is the first essential for an effective appeal. Let but a handful of *savarna* Hindus go forth in that

true missionary spirit and they will leaven the entire Hindu mass. But not even a whole army of missionaries so called will produce any effect upon them.

It needed a Malaviyaji to make such a missionary. He (Gandhiji) could not convert his own sister. And if he could not, how could he blame others. That would show how hard and thorny was that path. It was however open to them, if they felt that they had the necessary qualification, to try the experiment for themselves in their locality.

The reason for this partial failure, Gandhiji proceeded to explain, was also that the approach of most of the members of the Harijan Sevak Sangh to their mission was not unmixed with political motives. If they really wanted to penetrate the hearts of *savarna* Hindus, they ought to be filled with a purely religious spirit. Mere dialectics was a poor weapon for this kind of work. As it was, they were too much weighed down by inertia, heedlessness and woodenness of mind.

The other method is more fierce and not altogether free from danger. It is the method of fasting.

He himself had before condemned fasting when it seemed to him to be wrong or morally unjustified. But to shirk a fast when there was a clear moral indication was a dereliction of duty. Such a fast had to be based on unadulterated truth and ahimsa.

In passing he hinted at the possibility of his having to go through one more fast in his life, possibly even more than one. He warned them however that he had no present thought of any. It was only a vague premonition.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

21. LETTER TO KALYANIDEVI[1]

PANCHGANI,
[*July*][2] *20, 1946*

DEAR SISTER,

I am grieved to learn of Doctor Saheb's death but grief is momentary. Doctor Saheb left us doing work of service till the end. Let us all imbibe his good qualities and by doing so bear

[1] Widow of Dr. T. S. S. Rajan of Trichy
[2] The source has October; *vide*, however, the following item.

CWMG - LXXXV

testimony to his immortality. Do not grieve for him but carry on his work even as Ramabai Ranade did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYANIDEVI
C/O DR. T. V. S. SASTRI OF TRICHINOPOLY

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

22. LETTER TO RAMA SHETTY

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

SIR,

I got your wire. You did well in sending the wire. I have written to Kalyanidevi.[1] I remember the Doctor very well. I had stayed at his house when I went to Trichy the first time.[2]

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMA SHETTY
PRESIDENT, TOWN CONGRESS
TRICHINOPOLY

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

23. LETTER TO RAJAGOPAL

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

CHI. RAJAGOPAL,

I got your letter. It is good that 128 people have taken the pledge to do spinning as *yajna*. It is certainly good that all of them will make their own slivers. This is as it should to be.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] On March 25, 1919; *vide* Vol. XV.

CWMG - LXXXV

24. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 20, 1946

The verse from the *gatha* sung today says : 'Let me remember Thee by making my heart pure by righteous thought, by performing good and wise deeds and by right speech.' Unless all these conditions are fulfilled, one cannot expect to come near God.

Then the poet says: 'We bow to Thee and thank Thee for all that Thou hast done for us. We will always remain Thy debtors.' What is this debt towards God and how can one repay it? The answer is, by discharging one's duty completely. And since no mortal can completely discharge his duty in life, he must for ever remain a debtor to God.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

25. EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES AT PRAYER MEETINGS[2]

PANCHGANI,
[Before *July 21, 1946*][3]

In the song that has been sung today, the devotee says: 'Keep my heart pure—guide me on the path of truth. Give me true happiness which springs from holding on to truth. Destroy the misery which results from relinquishing truth.' Believe me when I tell you after 60 years of personal experience that the only real misfortune is to abandon the path of truth. If you but realize this, your one prayer to God will always be to enable you to put up without flinching with any number of trials and hardships that may fall to your lot in the pursuit of truth. . . .

The verse from the *Zend Avesta* describes five kinds of physicians, but the fifth is the true physician, who depends on nothing but the name of God for healing. That is just what I have been saying in connection with nature cure. Ramanama is the sovereign remedy. It is an agreeable surprise to me to find an authority for it in the *gatha*. . . .

[1], [2] & [3] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 21-7-1946

CWMG - LXXV

In the song that has been sung, the poet says that God is hidden and yet present everywhere. . . . That is true. He knows our innermost thoughts better than we ourselves can do. One who depends on God will never be afraid of anybody, not even of the most despotic government on earth or its officers. For he will have as his protector the King of kings from whose eye nothing is hid. . . .

Just as a tree has many branches but one root, similarly the various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are the main branches but as for varieties of religion, they are as numerous as mankind. If you take the name of God in the prayer gathering and forget all about it on going out, it is not prayer but blasphemy. Religion has to be lived every moment of one's life.

The girls have sung, 'With folded hands, O Mazda! I beg of Thee to give me true knowledge and enable me to devote every moment of my life to the service of Thy creation.' It is a great prayer. The devotee begs of God to fill him or her with the thirst for service, so that service will become a pleasure and not a task. But what is the meaning of service? Is killing fellow human beings in war, for instance, also service? No. Therefore the devotee says, 'Whatever I do, whether in order to serve others or myself, let all my deeds be pure and noble. Let them fill me with Thy joy.' A man who lives up to this prayer would always be filled with His joy.

Referring to the riots in Ahmedabad he said that the Hindus and Muslims in Ahmedabad had not yet got over their insanity. Islam meant peace, Hindus claimed to follow the path of ahimsa. They both swore by God but in practice they followed Satan. The Muslim stabbed the innocent Hindu and the Hindu stabbed the innocent Muslim.

Of the three workers who were killed in Ahmedabad some days ago one was a Muslim[1]. It was a Muslim's dagger that killed him. He was in the company of Hindus. No one even knew that he was a Muslim. One of his companions Vasantrao was well known and commanded the respect of both Hindus and Muslims. While in jail one of his Muslim companions went on a fast. There was an overwhelming majority of Hindus amongst the satyagrahi prisoners. Vasantrao felt that he ought to give his moral support to the Muslim brother and went on a sympathetic fast. His senior companions in jail, tried to dissuade him. 'Are you wiser than all of us? You know the Muslim friend's

[1] Rajabali Lakhani; *vide* p. 4.

fast is not justified. It it was, we would all have fasted with him.' His reply was: 'I do not claim to be wise. I prefer to be a fool. I seek your blessings. If this Muslim friend dies in jail in the midst of all of us Hindus, with what face shall I return to my Muslim friends outside ? Therefore, I would far rather die with him, whatever the issue of his fast.' Neither died in the end, but Vasantrao proved by his action that he was a true Hindu and a true Muslim combined into one.

Gandhiji concluded by exhorting the audience to cultivate that mentality. He was sure that if they prayed to God to restore to sanity the Hindus and Muslims of Ahmedabad, their prayer would not go unheeded, but leap across space and melt the hearts of the deluded rioters in Ahmedabad.

Harijan, 28-7-1946

26. INDEPENDENCE

Q. You have said in your article in the *Harijan* of July 15, under the caption "The Real Danger",[1] that Congressmen in general certainly do not know the kind of independence they want. Would you kindly give them a broad but comprehensive picture of the Independent India of your own conception?

A. I do not know that I have not, from time to time, given my idea of Indian independence. Since, however, this question is part of a series, it is better to answer it even at the risk of repetition.

Independence of India should mean independence of the whole of India, including what is called India of the States and the other foreign powers, French and Portuguese, who are there, I presume, by British sufferance. Independence must mean that of the people of India, not of those who are today ruling over them. The rulers should depend on the will of those who are under their heels. Thus, they have to be servants of the people, ready to do their will.

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or *panchayat* having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without. Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 426-8.

unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

This society must naturally be based on truth and non-violence which, in my opinion, are not possible without a living belief in God, meaning a self-existent, all-knowing living Force which inheres every other force known to the world and which depends on none and which will live when all other forces may conceivably perish or cease to act. I am unable to account for my life without belief in this all-embracing living Light.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid's point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want, before we can have something approaching it. If there ever is to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.

In this picture every religion has its full and equal place. We are all leaves of a majestic tree whose trunk cannot be shaken off its roots which are deep down in the bowels of the earth. The mightiest wind cannot move it.

In this there is no room for machines that would displace human labour and that would concentrate power in a few hands. Labour has its unique place in a cultured human family. Every machine that helps every individual has a place. But I must

confess that I have never sat down to think out what that machine can be. I have thought of Singer's sewing machine. But even that is perfunctory. I do not need it to fill in my picture.

Q. Do you believe that the proposed Constituent Assembly could be used for the realization of your picture?

A. The Constituent Assembly has all the possibilities for the realization of my picture. Yet I cannot hope for much, not because the State Paper holds no such possibilities but because the document, being wholly of a voluntary nature, requires the common consent of the many parties to it. These have no common goal. Congressmen themselves are not of one mind even on the contents of Independence. I do not know how many swear by non-violence or the charkha or, believing in decentralization, regard the village as the nucleus. I know on the contrary that many would have India become a first-class military power and wish for India to have a strong centre and build the whole structure round it. In the medley of these conflicts I know that if India is to be leader in clean action based on clean thought, God will confound the wisdom of these big men and will provide the villages with the power to express themselves as they should.

Q. If the Constituent Assembly fizzles out because of the "danger from within", as you have remarked in the above-mentioned article, would you advise the Congress to accept the alternative of general country-wide strike and capture of power, either non-violently or with the use of necessary force? What is your alternative in that eventuality if the above is not approved by you?

A. I must not contemplate darkness before it stares me in the face. And in no case can I be party, irrespective of non-violence, to a universal strike and capture of power. Though, therefore, I do not know what I should do in the case of a breakdown, I know that the actuality will find me ready with an alternative. My sole reliance being on the living Power which we call God, He will put the alternative in my hands when the time has come, not a minute sooner.

PANCHGANI, July 21, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

CWMG-LXXXV

27. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is 4 a. m. and I am writing this by the light of a lantern. All others are asleep and will rise when the electricity comes on at five. So I have only this piece of paper to write on.

I received all your letters. It was a good thing that you met Bhimarao Ambedkar. He will not agree. Why 20 per cent? I see a snag in this. Do think about it. The deposit ought to be paid. One can understand the condition that in all elections a certain minimum number of Harijans should be elected.

I think that the Maharaja's letter about Kashmir is fairly good. I already informed you of the advice I have given and I enclose copies herewith.

I have said that I will see Bhimarao if he comes to Poona or Sevagram. The newspaper report is false.

A great many things seem to be slipping out of the hands of the Congress. The postmen[1] do not listen to it, nor does Ahmedabad[2], nor do Harijans, nor Muslims. This is a strange situation indeed.

Yesterday, Deo[3], the Raja of Aundh, Appa[4], etc., came. We had a long discussion. Bhai . . .[5] came with representatives of East Africa. He will meet you. I think something can be done in the matter.

Are you not well enough to go to Ahmedabad? You are ruining your own health. I wish you had come here.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 309-11

[1&2] The reference is to the Postal strike in Bombay and communal riots in Ahmedabad.

[3] Shankarrao Deo

[4] Appa Pant, son of the Raja of Aundh

[5] Omission as in the source

28. LETTER TO RASIKLAL SHUKLA

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

BHAI RASIKLAL,

I have your postcard. It is sarcastic. If you had ever stayed with me even for a few days, you would have realized that I am never . . . [1]. Those who are with me are cooped up as in dovecots.

Your postcard reached Panchgani on the 20th and was handed to me the same day. You were impatient. The matter for *Harijan* is not written where *Harijan* is printed. The matter is sent from the places where I may happen to be touring. Thus things take time. The fact is that the day on which I got your wire I spoke on the subject at the prayer meeting and sent an account for *Harijan*. It must have now been published. Write whatever else you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RASIKLAL SHUKLA
SARASWATI HIGH SCHOOL
SARANGPUR, AHMEDABAD

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

[1] Omission as in the source

CWMG - LXXXV

29. LETTER TO NRISIMHAPRASAD K. BHATT[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

CHI. NANABHAI,

I got your wire. Come along whenever you like. I hope you are well.

SJT. NANABHAI BHATT
C/O SARDAR PATEL
BOMBAY

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

30. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

PANCHGANI,
July 21, 1946

Gandhiji said that when he came to Panchgani under medical advice in 1944, after his release from detention, he found that there was no place where the poor and the destitute could put up, in order to take advantage of the beautiful climate. And what about the Harijans? He had received a long letter from one of them describing their woes.

"It is all right so long as his identity is unknown. But the moment it is discovered that he is a Harijan, he suddenly becomes a *pariah*. He is unwelcome everywhere. All doors are shut against him. The shopkeeper receives his money but sells him the rottenest stuff and cheats him into the bargain by giving him less than the full measure. Should the poor unfortunate object, he is insulted and told to be gone. The landlord won't have him and asks him to quit. Where is the poor man to go?" It was heart-rending. He felt he could not come and stay in Panchgani unless there was a place where the Harijans would be welcome like all others. It had therefore given him great pleasure that Panchgani was at last going to have such a place. Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad had purchased the 'Satish Kunj' property for Rs. 45,000 and had agreed to get it reconditioned and bear the running expenses of the institution for ten years. In the dharmashala which was going to be built, the poor of all communities including

[1] The letter bears the remark: "To be sent with Brijkrishna."
[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 30-7-1946

CWMG - LXXXV

the Harijans would be able to come and stay without any distinction of caste or religion. They would be provided free accommodation but would have to make their own arrangements as regards food, etc. A Trust had been formed to look after the dharmashala, consisting of Sheth Shantilal of Ahmedabad, Sheth Mohanlal, Shri Bachharaj, Dr. Dinshaw Mehta and Gandhiji. He would have liked the dharmashala, said Gandhiji, to be built out of funds provided by the inhabitants of Panchgani itself. But finance was not everything. Although they had not contributed the money, they should give their blessings and co-operation. The institution would fail unless the people took active and genuine interest in it. He suggested that sisters from well-to-do families should visit the sick or the convalescent who might come to the dharmashala for a change of climate, soothe them by singing beautiful hymns and render them whatever service they could or was necessary.

The sanitary conditions in Panchgani were awful. In a climate like theirs there should never be any epidemics. Yet they had the plague only the year before and had to vacate the bazaar which was indescribably dirty. There was water shortage in spite of a plentiful rainfall. Why could not the rain water be captured and utilized for water supply? In South Africa, where rainfall was scarce and there was a dearth of underground water supply, they had a reservoir in every house for storing rain water. It was the duty of all of them, most of all the Municipality and the Public Health Department to remedy these defects. The Prime Minister Shri Balasaheb Kher[1] was there and was prepared to render them whatever help was necessary. If he were the Health Officer or the Chairman of the Panchgani Municipality, said Gandhiji, he would make the place so clean and neat that anybody might be able to lie down and sleep on the hill side in the open without any compunction. Today that was not possible, because of the Municipal insanitation. People spat and made nuisance here, there and everywhere indiscriminately. He spoke from knowledge, he said. Before he came under the Mahatmaic handicap and was free to go into dharmashalas and other places of public utility without attracting crowds, he had occasion to study the conditions prevailing in those places. The insanitation, the filth and the stench of the public latrines and urinals of the railway stations and in the dharmashalas were simply awful. They could make Panchgani into a jewel among hill stations, if only they did their duty.

He then proceeded to make some concrete suggestions. The first and foremost of course was sanitation and night-soil disposal. Having become a Bhangi himself, he thought of it first. He had done a Bhangi's job right from South Africa. He knew how to do it without becoming filthy himself. The sight of a Bhangi carrying the night-soil basket on his head made him

[1] B. G. Kher, Patil and Tapase had come from Poona for the ceremony of dedication of "Satish Kunj".

sick. Scavenging was a fine art. Not only must the cleaning be perfect, but the manner of doing it and the instruments used, must be clean and not revolting to one's sanitary sense.

You have only to see the privy I use. It is spotlessly clean without a trace of smell. That is so because I clean it myself. The municipal Bhangi pours out the contents of the night-soil waggons over a cliff converting a beauty spot into a plague spot. If you become your own Bhangis, not only will you ensure perfect sanitation for yourself, but you will make your surroundings clean and relieve the Bhangis of the weight of oppression which today crushes them. Do not imagine that thereby you would deprive them of their living. Today we have reduced them to the level of the beast. They earn a few coppers but only at the expense of their human dignity. The same Bhangi serves in the municipality as well as in your bungalow, with the result that he can do justice to neither. Look at him as he eats his food, cowering under the shadow of the latrine wall, surrounded by filth. It is enough to break one's heart. It should not be difficult for you to find a more decent avocation for him to follow.

The Nawab Saheb of Wai who had seen him earlier in the day had told him that they knew what to do, but that the municipality was too poor and the necessary finances were lacking. He had asked the Nawab Saheb, said Gandhiji, to send him a small note setting forth their handicap. He hoped to be able to show him that what they wanted to do and what needed to be done, need not be held up for lack of funds. After all the various improvements which he had suggested would not require more than ten lakhs of rupees. He wanted to tell the rich folk who frequented Panchgani that it was up to them to provide that amount. In free and progressive countries, the gentry considered it their special privilege and duty to shoulder the burden of providing municipal amenities and improvements. It was only in India that people looked for every little thing to the Government. They must learn to shed that mendicant habit if they aspired to become a free and self-respecting nation.

Then they should do something to improve the drainage. For that, a suitable scheme would have to be prepared by an engineer. He hoped that the work would be taken up without delay.

Lastly, he hoped that something would be done immediately about the disposal of the night-soil. The present practice was a sin against man and God and its continuation even for a single day should be a matter of utter shame to them. He was sorry to tell them that Dr. Dinshaw had reported that even after nearly a fortnight, things were as bad as they were on their arrival in Panchgani.

He hoped that when he came to Panchgani next year, God willing, he would find things different. The gulf that separated the rich and the poor today was appalling. It had to be bridged. The rich must share all their amenities with the poor in the fullest measure. Their joining in the prayer gathering would have gone in vain if it did not help them to realize and do their duty. Such prayer would be vain repetition which could do no good to them, to him or to anybody.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

31. BLOODSHED IN AHMEDABAD[1]

Bloodshed has been going on in Ahmedabad for several days now. It is difficult to say who is at fault. The policy of the Government has been not to let anyone know who has stabbed whom. The Congress Government has adhered to this policy, so we should assume that there is some reason behind it. It could be in the manner of a thief's mother feigning grief over her son's doings, because in Ahmedabad everyone must know who is the aggressor or who is more to blame. My job is not to deliberate upon it; it is comparatively easier.

The best way is for one of the parties to desist. Then alone can true peace be established and the madness come to an end. In my childhood a cousin of mine and I took *bhang* and laughed and laughed at each other like two mad men. When morning came and we were sober, we were both ashamed of ourselves and could not face each other. That intoxication was comparatively harmless but this is frightful.

Is it not enough that three young men[2] have died in the attempt to stop the holocaust? I spoke about it at the prayer meeting at Poona.[3] Several friends have written to me about the martyrdom. If we had sense that sacrifice would have quenched the fire. That has not happened. However, that does not mean that the sacrifice was in vain. It only means that many more such sacrifices must be offered before the fire can be quelled. Or both sides must tire themselves out. Some must face police bullets, some go to jail and some hang before the flames are extinguished. This is the wrong way, because the fire thus put out has every possibility of erupting again. It will not reduce the poison,

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 28-7-1946.
[2] Two of them were Rajabali Lakhani and Vasantrao Hegishte.
[3] *Vide* LXXXIV, pp. 399-400.

only suppress it, which will then spread in the body politic and cause immense mischief.

Moreover, if the riots are suppressed with the help of the police and its elder brother the military, it will strengthen the grip of the foreigner and emasculate us still further. Poet Iqbal has said: "Religion does not teach us to bear enmity towards each other." Can there be greater cowardice than to fight amongst ourselves.

There are ways even of fighting. If we must fight, why should we seek the help of the police and the military? The Government too should clearly say that the military, whilst it is in India, will only be used for the work of sanitation, for cultivating unused land and the like. And the police similarly will be used for catching thieves and dacoits, but never to put down communal riots. Let the people of Ahmedabad be brave enough to say that they will not seek the help of the police and the military, and they will not flee in panic. Rioters are mostly *goondas*. Even the white-collared *goondas* murder by stealth. I am told that nearly all the stabbings have been in the back, none or very few in the chest or the face. Why should one be frightened of such people? One should either die at their hands in the hope that they will in the end give up their madness and *goondaism*, or if one does not have that much courage one should fight to defend oneself. The question may rightly be asked how can one fight against a person who strikes from behind. It may not be possible to prevent such a person from stabbing people in the back but if the onlookers are not in collusion with him and are brave enough, they can catch hold of the culprit and hand him over to the police or to the community to which he belongs, or bring him before the *panch*. Only, they may not become judges.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-7-1946

32. *A DHARMASHALA FOR PANCHGANI*

When I first visited Panchgani after my release from jail, at a prayer meeting I mentioned the absence, in a beautiful place like Panchgani, of facilities for the poor, especially Harijans. In the event, for a person like me it becomes difficult even to stay at Panchgani. As far as I was concerned there were many who would put me up but where could the Harijans go? My host would accommodate the Harijans accompanying me but what about the rest? How could we put up with such a pitiable state of affairs? I told this to the audience assembled at the prayer meeting.

This created some stir. However, the result came only after two years. Sheth Shantilal bought a house and handed it on to me for lodging the poor. Such poor include myself and others I recommend. Of course they include poor Harijans and poor persons belonging to other religions who have nowhere to stay. There won't be any arrangement for their meals. Even poor people do eat at home, so they will have to do their own cooking or make whatever other arrangement is possible. Besides, the poor will have to keep the place given to them clean, deposit their trash in the municipal cans and observe all the rules of sanitation. Free supply to them of water and electricity will be arranged. No one will be allowed to stay for ever. Those who are not suffering from infectious diseases, are not invalid, and do not require looking after will be given free accommodation for a certain specified period. They will not be provided with bedding, etc. This is not to be a home for the crippled. Idlers will have no place here. There are many places in Panchgani and the neighbouring hills for the middle-class people who observe caste distinctions. However, there is none for those who have broken away from the circle of castes or are outside that circle. Here accommodation will be provided to the poor and industrious.

This activity can be pursued only if some local public worker is available. Shri Bachharaj Tribhovandas Doshi is such a worker. It was through his encouragement, as also of Gadhada's Sheth Mohanlal Motichand and of his own grandfather Jeshangbhai, that Sheth Shantilal bought the above-mentioned house.

Bhai Bachharaj stays in Panchgani most of the time. He has a flair and also love for this kind of work, so he will keep an eye on it. Sheth Shantilal has undertaken to bear the cost of repairs for ten years. Five trustees have already been appointed. I am considering the names of the remaining two. Among the five trustees are the above-mentioned three gentlemen, Dr. Dinshaw and myself. At the moment the building is not fit for residence. It is in need of repairs and the water supply is incomplete. It may be ready for use only in October.

Thus a beginning has been made. Prime Minister Shri Kher along with two other Ministers, Shri Tapase and Shri Patil, were present when this was announced after the prayer meeting in the hall of the Parsi Girls School on Sunday.[1] We should pray and wish that the work which has begun so well may really prove beneficial to the poor.

PANCHGANI, July 22, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 28-7-1946

33. LETTER TO C. W. B. RANKIN

CAMP: PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Rajkumari of 13-7-'46 was received on the 18th instant. Having slept over it for four nights, I feel it to be my duty to say that it seems His Excellency is wrong to delay the release of Shri Haridas Mitra. It is inconsistent with the declared policy of the Government.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAJOR C. W. B. RANKIN

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 55

[1] *Vide* pp. 37-40.
[2] Haridas Mitra was released soon after.

CWMG - LXXXV

34. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

PANCHGANI,
July 22, 1946

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I have your letter. A short preface is enclosed herewith. You may send it if you like it.

I hope you are fully recovered by now.

I shall be in Poona on the 28th and expect to reach Sevagram by the 6th or the 7th August.

What happened to the Urdu book?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

35. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. A. SALAAM,

Your letter to Rajkumari was received after she had left. She will be passing through Wardha. Most probably she has written to you. If your health permits, you may observe the Ramzan. I suppose you know that the Ramzan is truly observed by him who kills his anger and behaves rationally. Mere fasting serves no purpose at all. I shall be arriving there on the 7th or even earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 523

CWMG - LXXV

36. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. . . .[1] also came and saw me. It will be better if you issue a statement on Goa. You may mention in it that people belonging to various parties have been coming to you for advice and that it is risky for them[2] to have so many parties. They must all speak with one voice; and they should not build their hopes on people from outside Goa. Too many statements are likely to make for confusion. It will therefore be better if everything is sent to the Bombay Congress Committee and then an official statement is issued by it. As I see it, the present struggle in Goa is only for civil liberty and it must succeed. Although the whole of India sympathizes with it the hardships will have to be borne by the Indians in Goa. Goa's freedom is bound to follow India's freedom. There is little perhaps the people of Goa need do for that today.

I understand about Bhimarao. Do see him. His speeches are in bad taste. It would be good if you answered the two points he has made. I do not have figures about the elections and caste Hindus; I am getting them.

I do not agree with you at all about your health. You must do something about it. It is a pity you have no confidence at all in Dinshaw, but there are many others. In any case you must not allow your health to get worse.

I understand about Ahmedabad. There is no question of your going there when the people themselves do not want it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 312

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Goans. The reference seems to be to A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee; *vide* 50-1.

37. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. Just now give Ramprasad what Jajuji has suggested. I hope to arrive there by the 7th. If necessary, I will think further about the matter. It is bad that Gordhandas[1] is having low fever. He should take rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10650

38. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

Herewith please find Dr. Hiralal Sharma's letter. I have an impression that I sent you some papers earlier. I do not have the whole file with me here. The statements are such that you should not take long to come to a decision. You may, if you want, send for Sharma, in which case you would have to invite Lakshminarayan Gadodia, too.

I hope you succeeded in Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosed one letter.

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

[1] Gordhandas Chokhawala, addressee's son-in-law

CWMG - LXXV

39. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am writing to Munshiji. We shall see what happens. I do not have much hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 360

40. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 23, 1946

CHI. INDU,

Why do you want to go to America? For a person like you, the field of service [here] is vast. Spending a year or more in America would be a waste of time for you. You haven't yet moved through the length and breadth of India. I shall understand it if you go abroad after settling down in a particular job. Then you can go to Afghanistan or Central Asia to gain experience. Asia is always there. I am positive that America or Europe is not for you. You will learn about these countries from Tendulkar.

I had absolutely no idea where you were, nor where Tendulkar was. I was therefore glad when he visited me today. I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

41. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

The papers report that you have undertaken a fast in protest against some mill and that too in the Congress House premises in defiance of the manager.[1] If this is true it does not seem right to me. A sacred means like fasting should be used in a sacred way. I can give my judgment on your fast only after I get your letter. The same applies to the use of the Congress House. I shall be here till the 28th. Then to Poona. Maybe by the time you get this letter everything will have been settled. If the fast is still continuing I hope you are not feeling too weak. Have you allowed yourself to take . . .[2] during the fast?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ABIDALI JAFARBHAI
BOMBAY

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

42. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I received your letter. Immediately I sat down to write to Abidali.[3] Nobody can forcibly lodge in the Congress House. And how can they resort to fasting?

I understand about Jawaharlal. For the moment everything is going to come off without a hitch. About the future we shall see.

[1] The addressee, a trade union leader of Bombay, had undertaken the fast from July 22 in protest against the dismissal of S. A. Bhimji, an assistant engineer of the India United Mills and a member of the Union. On Gandhiji's advice he gave up the fast on July 30.

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

Pyarelal tells me that there is a newspaper report about the meeting of the Working Committee in Wardha on the 8th.

You must have heard about Munshi's visit to Delhi. The situation is becoming more and more delicate.

There are other strikes on top of the postal strike. All this looks pretty significant. It is necessary that you and others should think about it very seriously. The Congress position may seem strong on the surface but it appears to have lost its hold on the people. Or it may be that the Congress itself is involved in these troubles if only from a distance. This must be clarified; otherwise the battle which we are on the point of winning will be lost.

I hope you are well. These days it has been raining here all the twenty-four hours.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 313-5

43. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 24, 1946

I have gone through everything carefully. You seem to forget that I had offered to give you work only after you had decided what you wished to do regarding Kanchan. This time you have come to some decision, but it is incomplete. I had also told you what you should do in the meanwhile and I had explained, too, that if you finally decided to stay with me you would be welcome. But you can live and work with me only if you abide by my advice. Personally, I would welcome your staying with me; but if you experience any difficulty in doing so, is it not for you yourself to overcome it? You may ask for my help in that. Your work for each hour should be defined. Don't you observe complete silence? Never enter into an argument with anybody. If other people speak untruth or behave indecorously, how are you concerned with that? We may feel ashamed if we ourselves do so. It is true I have collected a mixed crowd round me. But is that a new story? This answers all your questions. However, if any point is left out you may ask me. Do not reduce your exercise. Physical labour is necessary. Improve your proficiency in the languages. As soon

CWMG - LXXXV

as you have come to some decision I shall immediately be able to make arrangements for your work. In short you should know that I have given my word to Kanchan that as long as she is firm in her desire to live separately with you I will support her in her desire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10238. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

44. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

PANCHGANI,
July 24, 1946

Doctor A. G. Tendulkar, President, Goa Congress Committee is the last one from Goa who has come to me with the latest news from the place.[1] He tells me that there are several parties there, working not necessarily for its inhabitants but for power. Yet at bottom the fight is good. He has produced voluminous papers in support of the statement that confusion reigns supreme in the minds of Goans, correctly described as Gomantakas. This confusion is bad in that the inhabitants of these Portuguese possessions are novices in the art of real politics. Its separate existence, it is clear, can only depend on the goodwill of the mighty British Government and the impotence of its Indian residents. It is therefore most essential for the success of the movement that it should be conducted by the Gomantakas on the clearest possible issue, i. e., civil liberty. The larger question of swaraj should await its attainment by the whole of India unless of course the Portuguese Government wisely come to terms with the inhabitants of the settlement through friendly negotiations. It cannot be attained by any direct action of the citizens, whether violent or non-violent. In non-violent action success is assured where every inhabitant is a hero ready to lay down his or her life. It is less to be thought of in Goa than in the more numerous and better seasoned and awakened British India. Therefore the clearest possible issue of civil liberty must be kept steadily in view.

The second condition of success is that the fight must be through non-violent and therefore also entirely open means.

[1] Tendulkar saw Gandhiji in the afternoon of July 23; *vide* p. 47.

Thirdly, there should be no parties struggling for power and position. Where the goal and the means are common, different parties have no meaning.

On reading the literature I find two persons called loyalists who have already made lavish declarations saying that nothing is wrong in Goa and that a false agitation is being carried on by some mischievous persons. Let not the circle of these loyalists grow larger. The best way to avoid this growth is for all parties to become one.

PANCHGANI, July 24, 1946
Harijan, 28-7-1946

45. QUESTION BOX[1]

Q. I have been repeating Ramanama according to your advice and I am getting better. I must add that the medical treatment for tuberculosis is also being followed. You have said that eating little and eating the right food enables a man to be healthy and promotes longevity. I have observed the rule about eating sparely for the last twenty-five years. Why should I have fallen a prey to tuberculosis? Would you say I should attribute this ill-luck to some evil deed in this life or in the previous one?

You say a man can live up to 125 years. Then why should God have carried away Mahadevbhai, who was so useful to you? He observed the rule of eating moderately and having a balanced diet and he served yon as his God. Why did he fall a prey to high blood-pressure? Why did Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who is looked upon as an incarnation of God, fall a prey to cancer, as deadly a disease as tuberculosis? Why was he not able to fight it successfully?

A. I have been expounding the rules of maintaining health as I know them. Spare and balanced diet may not be the same for everybody. It can be best worked out by the individual for himself through proper reading and careful thought. But that does not mean that the individual cannot make mistakes or that his or her knowledge is complete. That is why life has been called a laboratory. One should learn from the experience of others and go forward and if he is not successful, he should not blame others or even himself. One should not be too ready to find fault with the rule, but if after careful thought, one comes to the conclusion that a certain rule is wrong, he should be able to tell the right one and declare it.

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946.

So far as your own case is concerned, there may be several causes leading to your illness. Who can say whether you have made the right use of the five 'powers' in your own case? So long as I believe in the laws of nature as I know them, I have to say that you must have erred somewhere. As for Mahadev and Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, to feel that even they must have erred somehow is fitter than to say that the laws are wrong. These rules are not my creation. They are the laws of nature according to experienced men. I believe them and try to live up to my belief. Man is after all an imperfect creature. How can he know the whole truth? That the doctors do not believe in them or, if they do, they do so in a different sense, does not impress me. What I have said does not and should not in any way detract from the greatness of the individuals mentioned.

Q. In *Harijanbandhu* of 14-4-'46, you have said, "God is the Law and the Law-giver." I do not understand it. Laws are made by man and they keep on changing with time. For instance, Draupadi had five husbands and yet she was considered a *sati*. A woman who does that today will be considered immoral.

A. Law here means the law of God. Man interprets that law according to his understanding. We can therefore say that with the gaining of more knowledge he finds the previous assumption wrong.[1] For instance, the rotation of the earth is a law of nature. We are convinced of its correctness today. Yet before Galileo, astronomers believed differently. As for Draupadi, the *Mahabharata* in my opinion is an allegory and not history. Draupadi means the soul wedded to the five senses.

Q. God cannot be realized through reason. He has to be understood through faith. Do you believe in rebirth or is it that the Hindu seers[2] propounded it in order to enable people to appreciate the significance of good and evil deeds and derive some satisfaction from the belief ?

A. God cannot be realized through the intellect. Intellect can lead one to a certain extent and no further. It is a matter of faith and experience derived from that faith. One might rely on the experience of one's betters[3] or else be satisfied with nothing less than personal experience. Full faith does not feel the want of experience. The distinction between good and evil is not meant to act as a consolation. Nor is faith in God meant for

[1] This is taken from the Gujarati version.
[2] The Gujarati original has "Hindu dharma".
[3] The Gujarati original has "predecessors".

that purpose. The seers have held that there is good and evil and there is rebirth. I think this theory of reincarnation is capable of being understood by the intellect.

Q. The Congress has been fighting the British Government non-violently. When Congressmen come into power, they shoot their own brothers who have gone astray and are causing trouble. Is it right? If the Congressmen in power have not the courage to lay down their lives while attempting to put down the riots non-violently, does it not show that with the exception of a few individuals like Ravishankar Maharaj and Sane Guruji, the non-violence of Congressmen in general is the non-violence of the weak?

A. The question of violence and non-violence raised by you is an old question. I have said a lot in this connection. If like many others, non-violence does not appeal to your heart, you should discard it. I shall not find fault with you for that, and, if others do, you should not care. The principle is this: "That which has been propounded by the *rishis*, practised by the sages and appeals to one's heart should be followed and put into practice." The question might arise as to what one is to do when the thing that appeals to one's heart is contrary to what has been propounded by the *rishis* and practised by the sages. The answer is, that in such a case the individual can follow his bent at his own risk. Many reforms and new discoveries have been made in this way. Our Shankaracharyas have supported the institution of untouchability but both our head and heart consider it a blot on Hinduism. We do not care if others consider our belief to be wrong.

Q. From 1920 you have described the British Government's officials as the arms of Ravana. Congress Governments use these arms. Again, the laws made by the British Government say that it is an offence to beat a prisoner arrested on suspicion or for an alleged offence, in order to extort a confession or to frighten him. During the 1942 revolution, many like me were severely beaten after arrest. Should not the Congress Governments hold an inquiry into the police excesses thus committed?

A. I have severely criticized the British Government and do so still. But that does not mean that all police officials under the British Government must necessarily be devil's disciples even when they come under Congress Governments. No one has questioned Congress Government's right to inquire into the police excesses in 1942 or even before. But such rights are not always exercised. We all know that there are times when wisdom lies in not exercising certain rights. The Congress has in general followed the policy of not inquiring into the kind of excesses

mentioned by you. You should know that often such offences are difficult to prove. I believe the right of inquiry has been exercised in cases where the offence was beyond doubt. But my advice is, let us not sit in judgment on the Congress ministries. The belief that Congress has acted wisely in accepting power should suffice.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

46. HEAL THYSELF[1]

A correspondent has written to me about the butchery that is going on in Ahmedabad. I give below the relevant portions from his letter.

> I wish to write to you about the means to be employed for putting down riots. About two months ago you wrote an article on Ahimsak Seva Dal—non-violent volunteer corps.[2] But looking to the situation in the country, the suggestion will not do. Just as you have taught us how to fight against the British Government non-violently, you should go to some place of riot and show us the way of quelling riots in a non-violent manner by personal example. Supposing you were in Ahmedabad today and went out to quell the riots, any number of volunteers will join you. Two of our Congress workers, Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali, went out in such a quest and fell a prey to the *goonda's* knife. They laid down their lives in the pursuit of an ideal and they deserve all praise. But no one else had the courage to follow in their footsteps. They have not the same self-confidence. If they had it, there would be no riots and, even if riots broke out, they would never assume the proportions and the form that the present day riots do. But the fact remains that such a state is merely an imaginary thing today.
>
> Your guidance and example can inspire many like me with courage and self-confidence. Once you have shown the way, the local workers will be able to follow it whenever occasion demands it. I feel that unless you set an example in action, your writings and utterances will not be of any use to the ordinary people, and even Congressmen, in organizing non-violent protection of society.

I like the suggestion mentioned above. People followed my advice and took to non-violent resistance against the British Government because they wanted to offer some sort of resistance.

[1] The Hindi original of this was also published in *Harijan Sevak*, 4-8-1946.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 66-7.

CWMG - LXXV

But their non-violence, I must confess, was born of their helplessness. Therefore, it was the weapon of the weak. That is why today we worship Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his Azad Hind Fauj. We forget that Netaji himself had told his soldiers that on going to India, they must follow the way of non-violence. This I have from the leaders of the I. N. A. But we have lost all sense of discrimination. To restore it, the I. N. A. men will have to live up to the ideal placed before them by Netaji. The work of those who believe in non-violence is very difficult in this atmosphere which is full of violence. But the path of true non-violence requires much more courage than violence. We have not been able to give proof of such non-violence. We might look upon the action of Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali as examples of the non-violence of the brave. But when communal feelings run high, we are unable to demonstrate any effect of the sacrifices mentioned above. For that, many like Shri Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi will have to lay down their lives. The fact that no one else in Ahmedabad has followed the example set by Shri Vasantrao and Shri Rajabali shows that we have not yet developed the spirit of sacrifice to the extent of laying down our lives in non-violent action. The correspondent has rightly said that under these circumstances, I should act myself whether others join me or not. It will be disgraceful on my part to sit at home and tell others to go and lay down their lives. Such a thing cannot be an indication of non-violence. I have never had the chance to test my non-violence in the face of communal riots. It might be argued that it was my cowardice which prevented me from seeking such a chance. Be that as it may, God willing, the chance will still come to me, and by throwing me in the fire, He will purify me and make the path of non-violence clear. No one should take it to mean that sacrifice of my life will arrest all violence. Several lives like mine will have to be given if the terrible violence that has spread all over, is to stop and non-violence is to reign supreme in its place. The poet[1] has sung:

"हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो नहीं कायरनुं काम जोने।"

"The path of Truth is for the brave, never for the coward." The path of Truth is the path of non-violence.

PANCHGANI, July 25, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

[1] The Hindi original has 'Pritam'.

47. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. MIRA,[1]

I got on 22nd yours of 10th. Such are the vagaries of the post while the strike lasts.

Your letter to Dr. Katju[2] is exhaustive. The scheme is ambitious. I only hope that you will not have to give in. Let it be as unpretentious as you like but it should be failure proof.

Your illness worries me. You should find out the cause of these frequent breakdowns and deal with it.

Your quotation from *Talisman*[3] is very apt.

It has been pouring night and day. Yet the weather in Panchgani is harmless if you take care.

I hope to go back to Poona on 28th. Shall stay till 31st there, then go to Uruli for three days and then to Sevagram, reaching on 6th or 7th August at the latest. R. Kumari has gone to Calcutta for three days.

BAPU

MIRABEHN
DEHRA DUN

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

48. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I found this blank space on your letter and so I am using it to reply to you.

It was as well you went to Delhi. If you wish, you may come here. Most probably I shall leave for Poona on the 28th. The last date is 29th.

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari script.

[2] Dr. Kailash Nath Katju

[3] This was published in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946, under the heading "True Non-violence".

CWMG - LXXXV

There are, of course, many difficulties in the way. We shall come into our own only when we have overcome them all.

I trust you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7698. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

49. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have the letters of you both. About your falling down and breaking the toe, what shall I call it, the grace of God or your carelessness! If you had come here we would surely have found some time to talk. What will happen in Poona I do not know. I shall reach there on the 28th or 29th.

Why should you cry when you have Gangi? Why should you not take it that in Gangi Vidya has returned to you? Now it is not a question of forgetting Vidya. Gangi is Vidya's image. She does as much work of service as Vidya did. She has married you at the instance of Vidya. What more do you want?

Surrender all your worries to God and become carefree.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

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

50. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. I shall write something about it in *Harijan Sevak*. Here I shall only say that your information is absolutely correct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8774

51. LETTER TO DEVICHAND SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 25, 1946

BHAI DEVICHAND,

I got your letter. You are right in saying that what I have written about the monkeys could prove dangerous. It is as well that people should know me as I am. True, a way should be found to deal with the nuisance of monkeys without killing them, but it would hinder all progress if we did nothing while we went on thinking.

SHRI DEVICHAND SHAH
KUSHAL ASHRAM
SARDARPURA

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

52. ENTRY IN DIARY OF MUNNALAL SHAH

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

		Comments
4-5	Five minutes for toilet . . .[1] Prayer 50 minutes. Lack complete concentration.	Liked the Bhajan
5-6	The light did not come on. Enjoyed reading with the kerosene lamp. Read Urdu.	. . . .[2]
6-7	Walk and exercise. During the walk, reflected over life.	Nanabhai was with me for part of the time.
7-8	Wrote a letter to Kanchan. Explained my folly and admitted that she was blameless.	If only such noble thoughts continue to occur to my mind.
8-9	Heated water. Did not strain it even though there was some dirt in it.	Was not this a sign of lethargy?

[1] A word is illegible here.
[2] A sentence here is illegible.

CWMG - LXXV

9-10	Shaved. It took seven minutes. After that read newspapers.	There were only Gujarati papers.
10-11	Did spinning. The yarn broke many times. The slivers were not good. Concentration also was poor.	
11-12	. . .	

This is only a specimen. Rule the pages in the note-book in this manner and try to write a diary thus.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10243. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

53. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Newspapers have published a telegram saying that you have arrived there. That is good. I received Sita's letter only yesterday. Sita and Sumi have both settled down in Benares. According to the present schedule, Sushila will be leaving in a few days. But when she came to Poona she told me that she would await your letter. These days again there is no letter from her. I shall go to Poona from here on the 28th. I shall stay there for two days and then in Uruli for three days. From there I shall go to Sevagram — that is my programme at present.

Things are going on as usual here. You get the news from here through cables so I do not write anything about it. Also I do not have the time. I shall be happy if you keep on writing to me regularly. You will know more from Medh's[1] letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5009

[1] Surendra Medh

CWMG - LXXXV

54. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I had occasion to see your handwriting after many days. I was glad all the same for the opportunity. There is a slight deterioration in the handwriting. You should improve it gradually. Your language also is not grammatically correct. You have eaten up the vowel marks. Don't do it hereafter. If you do not revise what you have written it cannot be considered to have been written. People who formed such a habit have been saved from a great many difficulties. If your pen cannot express what you think, will not the reader misconstrue the meaning? There are so many instances of this having happened.

The news that Manilal had reached Durban appeared in the newspapers. It was two or three days ago. You need not worry about anyone. Be engrossed in your study. Master your mother tongue by studying it at home. You will certainly master Hindustani. Learn thoroughly carding, sliver-making, spinning and doubling the yarn. And spin with the same thoroughness. Do not cultivate the mind at the expense of the body. One can make real progress only if all the three things develop simultaneously.

Both sisters should read both my letters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4985

CWMG - LXXXV

55. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I understand your unhappiness. I am no less unhappy that I shall not be able to come to Saswad during this visit.[1] But you and I should understand Dr. Gilder's point of view. He is a straightforward man. He says what he feels to be the truth and acts accordingly. I have no fear of the plague. But as a public man I cannot act as I like in regard to public affairs. Both of us are under the same discipline. If I disregard his order or wishes, his authority over others also would be weakened. How can I make myself responsible for that? Deo has understood this point. You also should understand it. If I get leave to go to Saswad even later, before I leave Poona, I will come. I am reaching Poona on the 28th. I shall have a talk with Dr. Gilder and if it is in any way possible I will come. Otherwise you can show this letter to the other people. That also will be a good lesson.

Sucheta did not leave[2] on my suggestion. You may think that she has acted wisely, but I do not believe so. But does it matter in any way what you and I believe? She must do what she herself thinks right. I shall have to look for another woman worker now. I have had a talk with Sushila, but she will discuss the matter with you. She might consult her other friends, too, as also some sympathizers, and decide after that. I hope you also will help.

Come along to Wardha with me. I shall be glad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10448. Also C. W. 6887. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

[1] Gandhiji was to go to Saswad on July 13, but as there had been cases of plague in a neighbouring village, Dr. Gilder advised him not to go.

[2] Sucheta Kripalani had resigned from the Kasturba Memorial Trust to contest election to the U. P. Assembly.

56. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got Vanu's postcard yesterday. I gather from it that you are held up there because of your dental trouble and because you want to have your rheumatism treated. I have written a letter to you at the Sevagram address. It will reach you after a bit of wandering. I shall reach Poona on the 28th. I take it that Vanu will meet me there on the 30th. I have forwarded to Sevagram a letter in original, so that she may not see it. It will be very good if you can improve your health fully after having all your teeth extracted.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARAHARI PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9144

57. LETTER TO H. P. MODY

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI HORMUSJI MODY,

I got your prompt reply. I thank you for the same and for offering higher interest.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

HORMUSJI MODY
BOMBAY HOUSE,
FORT, BOMBAY

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

[1] *Vide* p. 72.

CWMG - LXXXV

58. LETTER TO MRIDE

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

CHI. MRIDE,

I got your long letter of 3-7-1946 on the 25th. The wire has not come. You have given a lot of news in your letter. In the context of a movement of such magnitude it is futile if not difficult to guess who are noble and who are not. Water from many sources flows into the Ganga and yet the Ganga is pure as ever. A major movement is like the stream of the Ganga and is always pure. Under the circumstances our dharma is to stay as pure as the Gangotri. Then all will be well. If she did not remain pure for all time the Ganga would cease to be what she is and turn into a filthy river. We see such things happening in our midst.

Manilal will tell you the rest. The papers here carry a Reuter's cable saying that he has reached there. I am certainly very glad that he went there. Without doubt that was his dharma.

I had told Sorab that no help whatever should be sent from here. That is my advice now. I am arranging for a lot of other help and you will continue to receive it. It should be a rule with all struggles to depend solely on local support. You will remember that for my part I had tried to avoid help coming from India. But it did come. Some came from England, too, which I put to good use. One might say that in those times it was even necessary to some extent. My experience, however, is that whenever aid arrived from outside we grew lax. Now I see no need to send even a cowrie from here.

AIR-MAIL
SOUTH AFRICA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

59. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BAPA,

Thinking that you would be in Delhi I sent you an airmail letter there yesterday. I got your letter of 14-7-1946 last night. (A copy of the letter is enclosed.)[1]

If you want to save your eyes you must keep them closed for the major part of the day. You should dictate. You do have someone to take you around. You can preserve your eyesight to some extent if you deliberately go about like a blind person. Resting the eyes may be the greatest exercise for them. I say this from personal experience. I have not yet achieved complete success in that, I still do some writing. My hands can do the work of writing and since my eyes can read I do a little reading too. Still, for most of the time, I work with my eyes closed. I expect you have now started travelling second class, and I think we can afford second class fare for whoever accompanies you. You may do your touring among the Adivasis as you please subject to this condition. I have no worry on account of the [Kasturba] Trust and the Harijan [Sevak Sangh] since you will continue to look after them.

I am certainly glad that Janakibehn has joined the [Servants of India] Society. It will please me if you dictate your letters to me rather than write them yourself. Make it an excuse to try the experiment of working with eyes closed. If you find any difficulty in keeping your eyes closed, since you are not used to this, you should bandage your eyes after the manner of Gandhari so that they will remain closed without any effort on your part.[2]

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

[1] Not available

[2] The rest of the letter has been omitted in the source.

CWMG - LXXXV

60. LETTER TO V. K. KRISHNASARMA

PANCHGANI,
July 26, 1946

BHAI KRISHNASARMA,

I got your letter. Though in your view it contains deep knowledge, I can find none in it. I have read the book by Thomas a Kempis[1]. It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

V. K. KRISHNASARMA
7009 KALASEGUDA
SECUNDERABAD

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

61. CLOTH SHORTAGE

Shri Manu Subedar who takes interest in khadi and other village industries, sent me the following note some time ago. But I delayed publication in order that I might make some more effective use of it than giving it in *Harijan*. I could not think of any. Hence this publication for the use, not only of all provincial governments but also of private individuals or organizations, in however limited a field it may be.

Here is Shri Subedar's scheme:

> One bale of cotton should be given to every village collectively. The people of the village could spin this yarn. The yarn will be used either for doubling or as weft and cloth could be made.
>
> One bale would yield approximately 2,400 yards of cloth (or 1,800 according to count).
>
> If charkhas and *taklis* are wanted, they should be supplied by the State. (Manufacture should be organized in jails.)
>
> The cloth, when ready, should be made available to the people of the villages on a per head ration basis.

[1] German ecclesiastic and writer. The book referred to was presumably *Imitation of Christ*.

CWMG LXXXV

If and when it is important to collect grain in those villages where there is supposed to be a grain surplus in the hands of the farmers, the cloth should be substituted only for grain. In other cases, the people of the village should collect enough to pay for the value of the bale of cotton. In other words, for the price of cotton (which is in the first instance advanced by Government) they would get cloth.

While cloth shortage would be eased, cotton surplus would also be taken away and it will help the grower of cotton.

As the village *Panch* would have to take over the cotton bale and deal with the whole thing, the beginning would be made of :

(i) village industry,
(ii) joint and collective effort,
(iii) participation and labour contribution by the small and the big ones, and
(iv) elimination of the middleman.

If the experiment were made in the first instance with twenty thousand villages of the Bombay Presidency, or even two thousand of them, the results would be seen in the course of the next six weeks.

Government will have to lock up funds for the cotton at the rate of Rs. 225 per bale. Much of this money will return either in the form of grain or in the form of cash. But it will have incidentally marked the beginning of something which the villages can do for themselves.

Assistance may have to be given where looms are not available, or where the yarn produced is not capable of being used both as warp and as weft. But these are details in organization which could be attended to by someone at the headquarters of every district.

On return of price of bale by a village, a fresh bale should be sent to them by Government as an advance.

I may add that this is a variation upon the one suggested by me. In my opinion, the original is probably better, but I attach greater value to Shri Subedar's note because he has worked out the figures, suggested a beginning with a bale of cotton and more specially because he as an economist has thought out his scheme independently of me. It will be easy enough to find flaws in every human scheme. Our business is to remove flaws if we know how or to make a beginning in spite of the flaws which we know but cannot mend. No reform is possible if we wait for perfection.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

CWMG - LXXV

62. *NINTH AUGUST*

Ninth August, like 6th April, 13th April and 26th January, is a red letter day in the battle of India's freedom. They are days for universal hartal in terms of satyagraha, i. e., truth and non-violence. But today, considered in terms of satyagraha, hartals are generally taboo and more specially so on the coming 9th of August. They would be fitting if hartals are designed to signalize violence.

Two powerful voices have spoken: one of the President of the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the other of the President of the Socialist Group, Shri Jaiprakash Narayan. It is delicate for me to give my opinion when these two ardent lovers of their country speak in opposition. But as a satyagrahi I must overcome the delicacy.

Jaiprakash Narayan is a Congressman. It is an open secret that he was offered a seat on the Working Committee by Panditji, naturally under the belief that, whatever views he entertained, he was too honest to be disloyal to the Congress in action. If, now, in spite of knowing the Congress President's views to the contrary, he adheres to his own opinion given to the contrary, it would appear to be an act of disloyalty to the Congress. If, therefore, he has not withdrawn from the false position, I hope, recognizing the aptness of my remarks, he will see the wisdom of retracing his steps.

The Working Committee, rightly or wrongly, has taken a step. It has been endorsed by the A. I. C. C.[1] It is up to every Congressman to support the Congress going to the Constituent Assembly, by creating the atmosphere suitable for work in that Assembly. This I say even to those who distrust good faith in everything the British do. They may warn the Congress of the dangers they sense. This they were allowed by the President to have the fullest latitude to do at the recent A. I. C. C. meeting. Anything in excess of that opposition is surely harmful for the country. I would consider as such the hartal on the 9th August.

[1] The resolution signifying acceptance by the Congress of the proposal regarding the Constituent Assembly contained in the Cabinet Mission's announcement of May 16, was passed by the Working Committee on June 26 and ratified by the A. I. C. C. on July 6.

The Congress cannot have the cake and eat it too. It must be left free, it must be helped, to develop freedom through the Constituent Assembly. It will not be a waste of effort to honestly work the Assembly for the purpose. The Congress must not kill the hen before it has laid.

Then mark the atmosphere in the country. There is senseless disorder as in Ahmedabad and elsewhere. There is a parody of satyagraha in the show staged by Dr. Ambedkar. In satyagraha the cause has to be just and clear as well as the means. The cause is certainly vague, even if the means are non-violent. I doubt the wisdom of the sympathetic paralysis of all business in Bombay and elsewhere, assuming the postal strike to be good on merits. Many would seem to have left off all thinking. They seem to take up any nostrum without caring to examine its merits. To call for hartal in this atmosphere is to invite disorder. No disorder is conducive to the growth of independence. Considered from every point of view, I hope that 9th August next will see no hartal in India, but a peaceful and dignified, orderly celebration of the day as advised by the President of the Congress.

PANCHGANI, July 27, 1946

[PS.] Before the despatch of this to *Harijan* I saw to my joy the withdrawal by Shri Jaiprakash of his proposal for hartal on 9th August. I am glad that the spirit of discipline has dictated this withdrawal. I might have cancelled the foregoing but for the important incidental observations in it.

Harijan, 4-8-1946

63. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

DEAR UMA,

I have the History of the Poles and your two letters. R. Kumari is in Calcutta. She will be back at the end of the month. I did write.[1] There is an acknowledgment and a promise of inquiry and of writing again. As soon as I have a definite answer I shall let you know. Keep cool and patient.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1211. Also C. W. 5102. Courtesy : Wanda Dynowska

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, p. 428.

CWMG - LXXXV

64. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Sudhir[1] cannot refuse to go now. If Jinnah Saheb's man is also going, let him go. I think in the letter I wrote him I must have said that the Cabinet would welcome it if he also sent someone. Be it as it may, if there is time it would be as well if Sudhir meets you and me before he leaves. It is certainly necessary to think carefully over all that is happening, but it is no use worrying about it. I have not yet received Sudhir's letter; if I had, I would have sent it on to you at once.

I have already written a letter to Abidali which he must have received the night before last or yesterday morning.[2] I feel that if Abidali does not leave the Congress House, Congress officials should start satyagraha against him. That is, they can give him notice and then vacate and lock up all the rooms in the Congress House until he leaves. If such satyagraha is not possible, they should give him notice of trespass and ask him to leave.

I will leave Poona on the 5th or the 6th. I wish to go to Wardha. I have purposely decided to entrain at Kalyan. In that case there is no need to go to Bombay. I do not like living under police guard and putting my host and all others to inconvenience. I had told the overseer[3] all this. I had told Lilavati, too, and most probably Patil also. Nor would I like staying anywhere else. You agree with all this, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANI,

You have stopped writing to me.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 316-7

[1] Sudhir Ghosh, Gandhiji's emissary for carrying on negotiations with the British Labour Government for transfer of power during 1945-47

[2] *Vide* p. 48.

[3] Gandhiji has used the English word here.

65. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 27, 1946

I believe that Kanchan will not be happy till you set up a house with her. It will be different if she herself gives it up later. Where you should stay is for you to decide. If you two willingly observe physical *brahmacharya*, i. e., do not touch each other for the satisfaction of physical craving and sleep in separate beds, I will have no objection to your staying in the Ashram. Do not Shakaribehn, Kashi and Gomati live thus? If Kanchan wants only that, the matter is quite simple. I unhesitatingly agree to your working in the office, irrespective of whether or not Kanu is there. I have some work also for you. Both of you will have to be ceaselessly vigilant and strive to banish thoughts of passion from your minds; otherwise you will both burn up. You will be listless all the time, be unhappy and make others unhappy. If you are going to burn with passion inside, you may as well live in a separate house away from the Ashram, gratify the desire for sex pleasure and, after you have tired of it, see what you can do. Show this letter to Kanchan. You may show it to others also. Even if you live away from the Ashram and pursue sexual enjoyment, I will still give you work.

I must not be pressed to decide about it just now. I must watch and you also will have to consider how you can find time for work, and how much, from your pleasure-seeking. You will feel as if you had been but recently married. I know the plight of newly-married couples.

I have never thought even in my dreams that you would knowingly tell a lie. But when you get excited while speaking, you behave like a man out of his senses and your face and words seem like those of a mad man. In a sense all of us are mad. But at such moments you seem to be the maddest of us all. You will not be cured of this madness unless you decide to speak as little as possible. I think the cause of this madness in you is self-suppression. For all I know it may be something else.

I understand about Uruli. I will know more if Kanchan explains it to me.

Show me the exercise book in which you write Urdu. You should not get up at night at two o'clock and write. It would

be better to write a little whenever you get the time during the day.

It will save space if for writing the time you use the space to the left of the red line. The exercise-book should be kept as tidy as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10244. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

66. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI BALASAHEB,

I am of the view that the Governor's invitation should be accepted. At present we are not offering non-co-operation. I expect to reach Poona by tomorrow evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BALASAHEB KHER
POONA

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

67. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Durgabai[1] cannot remain an agent of the Kasturba Committee if she gets into the Constituent Assembly. Can you suggest the names of a few deserving women out of whom we can choose someone in her place? Ashabehn[2] suggests the name of Bharatibehn Ranga[3]. What do you say to it?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. PATTABHI
ANDHRA

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

[1] Wife of C. D. Deshmukh
[2] Ashadevi Aryanayakum
[3] Wife of Prof. N. G. Ranga

CWMG - LXXXV

68. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

PANCHGANI,
July 27, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. In no case can we have [as agent] anyone who gets into the Constituent Assembly. Any kind of compromise here would, in my view, be harmful to the Kasturba work. We truly abide by a rule we have ourselves made only when we stick to it even in times of difficulty. Personally, I like the name of Smt. Bharati Ranga but I have written to Dr. Pattabhi and asked him to send me other names also if he has any in mind.

A letter has arrived on behalf of Sir Homi Modi to the effect that interest will be paid at the rate of three per cent.[1] I shall give the letter to you when I reach there. I do not consider it safe these days to send things by post. A report of the work of the Kasturba Trust has also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHYAMLAL
WARDHA

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

69. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

PANCHGANI,
[*July 27, 1946*][2]

In his farewell message at the prayer meeting yesterday Mahatma Gandhi told the people that God willing he would again visit Panchgani next year. But the uncleanliness of Panchgani had hurt him. The people should not sit tight on the plea that there was dearth of sweepers in Panchgani, added Gandhiji.

The paucity of water here was another factor which Gandhiji brought to their notice. He hoped to see proper arrangements made about water when he came next year.

[1] *Vide* p. 62.
[2] The news item carries the date July 28.

CWMG - LXXV

Gandhiji said that he was pained to see the wide gap that prevailed in Panchgani between the rich and the poor. The poor could not afford expensive stay in the sanatorium and, therefore, he had opened a free sanatorium for poor patients. He wanted the public to co-operate and make his scheme of serving the poor a success.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

70. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

PANCHGANI,
[On or before *July 28, 1946*][2]

Q. The English people have for years oppressed the coloured people in India, Ceylon and South Africa. Would their conduct not make an impression on their civilization? Can any one nation attain progress or preserve its existence through oppression?

A. An oppressor must perish in the end. But I wonder if that term can be strictly applied to the English people. Surely, they are not the worst. I have simply stated the divine law with regard to the oppressor. It is attested to by all religions. Irrespective of whether the conquest and exploitation by the English of other nations can be called oppression in the technical sense, their power cannot last for ever. Oppression is sin but submission to oppression is no less sin. History teaches us that neither the power of the oppressor nor the suffering of the oppressed can last for ever. Both must come to an end.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-7-1946

71. QUESTION BOX

Q. Whilst the food policy was in the hands of the Advisors to the Provincial Governors, there was no effective method of checking them. Things under the responsible Provincial Governments are different. Should it not be a matter of conscience with Congress ministers to get their rations from common rationing depots and take not a grain more from any other source? This will immediately have a far-reaching effect. Today all controlling centres for food grains or cloth have become public dens

[1] The question was asked by the U. P. I. representative attached to Gandhiji's camp.

[2] The report carrying the item is dated July 28.

for thieving and corruption. Equipped with the moral force that the ministers will gain by acting as suggested, they will be able to fight out the evil with success.

A. This question is a consolidation of many letters of complaints. I wholly agree with the suggestion made in the question. I fancy that the suggested practice is already being observed, not only by the ministers but all other Government servants. I do not know of any other source save the black market for getting supplies of foodstuffs. Of course, no exhortation can take the place of persons in authority setting a good example. If they took their rations from the same stock as is given to the public, the keepers of stores will soon find that it would not pay to dole out rotten stuff to the public. The practice of the ministers and other high-placed men in England taking their things in common with the public is, I am told, the usual thing, as it should be.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

72. *KHADI WORKERS*[1]

I have two questions about Khadi workers before me. One of these is in connection with village workers. It is their duty to spend their time mainly in spinning and making others spin. The new conception of khadi work includes all the processes from the cultivation of cotton to the preparation of cloth. A worker who does all these intelligently and can mend the spinning-wheel or the spindle, will never have any difficulty in earning his livelihood and teaching others to do so. Along with it, and without letting khadi work suffer, the worker might treat simple ailments and attend to the sanitation of the village. Education has to be imparted through a craft. Therefore I do not consider it apart from khadi work. Those who come for education must wear khadi and get education through khadi.

The second question is how long should a khadi worker work as a paid worker. In my view he should be self-supporting from the beginning. If that is not possible, he should fix a time limit for himself. Five years is the utmost limit in my opinion. A worker who is to become self-supporting at the end of five years, should reduce his allowance progressively from year to year. He cannot expect to become self-supporting all of a

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 4-8-1946.

CWMG - LXXV

sudden at the end of five years. It is an art which requires careful thought and management. He who really teaches others should certainly become self-supporting himself.

PANCHGANI, July 28, 1946
Harijan, 4-8-1946

73. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 28, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter from Kumi. See if you can give her some work in Rashtriya Shala. She is certainly hard-working and intelligent. Give her the enclosed letter[1]. Have a frank talk with her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8634. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

74. LETTER TO VIJAYA M. PANCHOLI

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1946

CHI. VIJAYA,

Nanabhai gave me your letter. I was very pleased to read it. Nanabhai gave me all the news from there. Your good lies in resisting the temptation of running to me. Only when we realize that physical meeting has no value can we be absorbed in our work.

I am surprised that you are not able to understand a very simple thing. I could not have thought this of you. If poison is freely available to a person, if someone stops him from taking it and if by and by that person comes to love nectar, how does it mean coercion? The village people gave up khadi because they were tempted by mill-cloth. If there is an opportunity to end that temptation but one does not utilize it, then that person would be a fool. How does it mean forcing khadi on the village people? If mill-cloth is not available and if people do not make their own cloth, then they have the right to shiver in the cold and remain naked—nobody can deprive them of that. One can say that a thing is forced on others when

[1] This is not available.

CWMG - LXXXV

they are punished for not accepting a particular thing or are compelled to wear anything against their will.

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7151. Also C. W. 4643. Courtesy : Vijaya M. Pancholi

75. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

PANCHGANI,
July 28, 1946

BHAI MOTIBABU,

Your letter of 7th June came to hand only yesterday. I cannot blame anyone for this. I have been very busy and constantly on the move; hence those attending to my correspondence were unable to inform me. Thanks for clearing your debt to the Charkha Sangh. It gives me much pleasure to see that you have such khadi-lovers in the Pravartak Sangh. I hope to write another letter after reaching Wardha. I hope your eye is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILALBABU
PRAVARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

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

76. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DECCAN PRINCES[1]

POONA,
July 28, 1946

Gandhiji said that it was a great pleasure to him to be able to meet the Deccan Princes. He had read the papers and the note prepared for his edification by the Raja Saheb of Phaltan. He did not wish to speak on the

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Deccan Chiefs in Conference". The meeting was held in the Servants of India Society's Library Hall. Among those present were the Rajas of Aundh, Phaltan, Bhor, Miraj (Senior), Jamkhandi and Kurundwad (Senior), Appasaheb Pant and Satawalekar from Aundh, Kore, Sathe and Thomre from Sangli, the Dewan of Bhor and representatives from Budhgaon and Ramdurg. N. C. Kelkar and Shankerrao Deo were also present on the occasion by special invitation.

papers. It was a good thing that the Princes were seriously thinking in terms of the whole of India, rather than of themselves and of the protection they had all these years thought they were getting from the Paramountcy of the British Power. Only a few years ago the Princes felt that they could not be safe except under the Paramountcy of the British Crown. It seemed to have dawned on most of them that that was not the correct attitude. This was but natural, for they were after all sons of the soil. He had said openly on another occasion that the people of the States were slaves of slaves which the Princes were. They exercised their authority within their own principalities, so long as they were in the good books of the British Government. They were made or unmade at the pleasure of the British Crown. The Princes who had eyes opened to that vital fact were desirous of India's independence equally with the people of India. If then they felt that need, they did not want a union of the States but each State had first to form a union with its own people. Their people were the real power on whom they were to depend for their status. It became trusteeship if they became servants of their own people. If they took that attitude, they needed no terms with the Congress or with any other organization. The immediate need was an understanding with their own people.

He made bold to take up that attitude, though his might be a lonely voice. In his opinion, the Princes, as servants and trustees of their people, were worthy of their hire. It would then (but not before) be time to consider whether they and their people wanted a union among themselves. Such a union would be of a wholly different type from what they had conceived.

The speaker had a serious suspicion that the present proposal[1] was a creation of the British Rulers, meaning the Political Agents. No blame need be imputed to them if they advised such a union. They were brought up in no better tradition. They thought that when the British power was not in India, the Princes would fight amongst themselves. That fear was wholly unjustifiable. They honestly believed that before they retired, as they must within perhaps a few months, owing to force of circumstances, they should enable the Princes to consolidate their power by organizing them into a union.

It was his belief that if India was not merely to be independent of British control, but was to enjoy real freedom, which their country, by virtue of its ancient culture and tradition, was entitled to, it should grow from the bottom upwards, not be imposed from above. Otherwise, it would be a question of change of masters only. Instead of the English, there might be the Allied Powers or whosoever could impose himself on them. He did not look forward to that time. He looked forward to a time when India would come into her own because of her intrinsic merit. To that consummation the Princes could make a most handsome contribution.

[1] For a Deccan States' Union

If the Deccan Princes played their part and set a solid example, they would follow. For that purpose, the speaker repeated, they did not need the suggested union. If, on the other hand, at the back of their minds they had the idea that they would give the so-called responsible Government to the people to the ear and break it to the heart, then the proposed union would be a kind of military combination, after the manner of the European Powers. It would be used against the people despite their protestations. That Power would be useless against a first-class military Power. They would be the first to lay down their arms before a venturesome aggressor. The British had taken good care not to give them training that might enable them to resist a Power like themselves by force of arms.

What applied to the States applied to the whole of India. She would have to serve a long period of tutelage at the feet of the Western nations before she could become a first-class military power. A quarter of a century's effort that the Congress had spent in teaching the country non-violence would in that event have been utterly wasted. That was not a prospect to which he could look forward with equanimity.

He had suggested to the Raja Saheb of Aundh that the Princes should, with necessary changes, copy the constitution of Aundh, if they wanted to take their due share in building up of a free India. That constitution was designed for the people. He, the speaker, would have liked it to go much further in such matters as the amount and control of the privy purse, etc. But all that had to come naturally. It could not be imposed. The working of that constitution, he added, had made considerable progress—though not all the progress—which the Raja Saheb of Aundh, his Prime Minister or he, would have liked.

After Gandhiji had finished, a discussion followed and questions were asked. "Unless we unite, not a single State would have a survival value," remarked one of them and asked for Gandhiji's opinion on that point.

GANDHIJI: I am prepared to join issue on it though mine is perhaps a solitary voice. Every village has a survival value. Why should not your villages and hence you, the Princes, if you will be part of the people? Aundh, one of the smallest among you, has a greater survival value than many of you. It depends upon you. So far as the people are concerned, they are one with the rest of India already.

In an article[1] that I have written for the *Harijan*, you will see my picture of Independence. In that picture, the unit is the village community. The superstructure of Independence is not to be built on the village unit so that the top weighs down on and crushes the forty crores of people who constitute the

[1] *Vide* pp. 32-4.

base.[1] The power will vest in the unit itself, which will be economically and politically as autonomous as possible. Today power is perched on Mt. Everest. From there orders are issued and the people have to obey. The almighty British Government comes to the people once or twice in the year when the patel and the talati come to collect revenue.

I have conceived round the village as the centre a series of ever-widening circles, not one on top of the other, but all on the same plane, so that there is none higher or lower than the other. Maine[2] has said that India was a congerie of village republics. The towns were then subservient to the villages. They were emporia for the surplus village products and beautiful manufactures. That is the skeleton of my picture to serve as a pattern for Independent India. There are many faults in the ancient village system. Unless they are eradicated, there will not only be no hope for the untouchables in a free India but for India in the comity of nations.

"But we shall ask our people to draw up their own constitution. The plan of union that we have drawn up is only intended as a blue-print for their consideration," explained another.

G. With the best intention in the world you will not be able to do that. You are brought up in a different tradition. Therefore, I suggest you should see Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru about it, if you will really let the people judge. He is the proper person to deal with this question as the President of the States' People's Conference. You should not be afraid to go to the States' People's Conference with your suggestions. Let the Conference decide finally. Their present policy is sound and not hostile to you, considered as servants and trustees of your people.

Q. We are anxious to serve our mother country. But we are so small that we cannot serve unless we merge into a union.

G. Not in my picture of Independent India. A village unit as conceived by me is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-sufficiency. Do not, therefore, think that unless you have a big union you will not be able to give a good account of yourself.

[1] The rest of this paragraph as also the following one has been taken from *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946.

[2] Sir Henry James Sumner Maine (1822-88), author of *Village Communities in the East and West*

If Princes are all of one mind and the interest of the people is first and themselves last, theirs will be more solid union than the one now proposed.

Q. What would you say if the States organized themselves on the basis of village republics first and then formed them into a union?

A. That would be excellent, but then you will speak a different language and proceed to work in an altogether different way.

Q. But that may take a long time and, unless it is done by people outside first, our people will not take to it.

A. I have said that the States can make the finest contribution to the building of India's future Independence, if they set the right example in their own territories. They as individual States being compact, homogenous units can well afford to make experiments in government. As it is, the Princes have taken the lead only in copying the bad points of the British system. They allow themselves to be led by the nose by their Ministers, whose administrative talent consists only in extorting money from their dumb, helpless subjects. By their tradition and training they are unfitted to do the job you have let them do. Therefore, my advice to you is: 'Make Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru your Chief Minister, if you are in earnest. Let him present you with an outline. He will naturally consult the people.'

Q. We want to organize ourselves into a union so that our people may have *swaraj* first without waiting for the labours of the Constituent Assembly to be finished, which may take time.

A. That is the wrong way of going about the thing. If you are solicitous of the welfare of the people and want them to come into their own, give them the fullest liberty straight away. By the time you have done that, the Constituent Assembly will have finished its work. The constitution which it will frame will not be for British India merely, but for the whole of India. That constitution will necessarily provide for a States' union or unions, if it is desirable. You should assist them instead of anticipating them by forming your own union. Begin with the individual and you will not then go wrong.

N. C. KELKAR: Are you opposed to the union, because it is suspect in your eyes?

G. I began with that. But I do not oppose it on the ground of my suspicion. I suspect not you—A, B or C, but the

circumstances. You do not know the danger and mischief you are running into. Hence my advice to you to hasten slowly.

Q. If you stretch your argument, would it not apply equally to the district and taluq organizations in the provinces? Why do not you ask for their dissolution?

G. I am not asking you to dissolve anything that already exists—not that I am enamoured of the machinery of administration set up in British India. History tells us, it was devised mainly to facilitate revenue collection. You will follow it only at your cost. My point just now is: Do not do anything in the shape of unions. Leave that work to be done by the Constituent Assembly. As a Sanskrit poet says, अनारम्भो हि कर्माणां प्रथमं बुद्धिलक्षणम् (not to rush into new enterprises is the first mark of wisdom).

Harijan, 4-8-1946, and *The Hindu*, 1-8-1946

77. FOREWORD[1]

I have gone through this summary. The beauty of it is that though it is a summary, I did not find anything missing in it.

POONA, July 29, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Prempanth, Book 1,

78. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

POONA,
July 29, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

So you have completed 40 years. You must hope to live up to 125. Keep your body fit in any case.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. AMRITLAL NANAVATI
KAKAWADI
OPP. MAHILASHRAM
WARDHA C. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10811

[1] To *Prempanth*, a series of booklets containing extracts from Gandhiji's writings

CWMG - LXXXV

79. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 29, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. Deo also had a talk with me and will do so again. I met the Princes.[1] A full summary of the talks is being prepared. I shall send you a copy when it is ready.

There is a long letter from Abidali. I am replying to it today, suggesting that he should give up the fast, leave the Congress House and, if he so desires, refer the dispute to arbitrators.[2] Let us see what happens. The postal strike seems to have become worse. You must issue a statement saying that they do not listen to the Congress.

Do at least something for your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 318

80. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

POONA,
July 29, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I got your letter last night and went through the whole of it, including your notice. In my opinion the notice is wrong, so also is the fast. And you certainly cannot undertake a fast in the Congress House premises. How can a Union be concerned with a senior official? If any injustice has been done to him, he should go to court. He can ask for arbitration.

[1] Of the Indian states of Maharashtra; *vide* pp. 76-81.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

CWMG - LXXXV

Fasts and strikes will not help things. The whole matter can be referred to an arbitrator. Anything beyond this would, I am afraid, amount to coercion.

No one, however important, may occupy a portion of the Congress House without permission. My advice is that, if at all, you should take the matter to an arbitrator. But, first of all, give up the fast and leave the Congress House. See me whenever you like. I hope you are all right. Send me a wire saying that you have given up the fast and moved out of the Congress House.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

81. NOTE TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH[1]

July 29, 1946

None of these three remedies will do you any good. I would advise you to remain in bed even if you cannot go to sleep and go on repeating Ramanama. You will then be able to do every job at the time appointed for it. See the nightly practice that I have started.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10245. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

82. LETTER TO GHARPURE

POONA,
July 29, 1946

I arrived here only yesterday. Today early in the morning after the prayer, I devoted one hour to reading the book you have sent. Although I did not have much time, I could not put down the book after starting it. It is a very fascinating and instructive work. I thank you. I am returning the book. Your effort is commendable, no doubt about it. What help can I give you? Your work alone will take you to your goal.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI GHARPURE, CURATOR
INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

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

[1] Gandhiji scribbled this in the addressee's diary.

83. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

POONA,
[*July 29, 1946*][1]

I shall go to Uruli on the 1st. I shall return from there for the death anniversary of Tilak Maharaj. Again Uruli on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. Wardha on the 5th. These two days I am busy with the ministers. Such being the situation, how can I find time for a talk? I can meet you alone but the question is of finding the time. How much time do you want? I must have some idea. Come tomorrow at one o'clock; I shall try.

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

84. SPEECH AT EDUCATION MINISTERS' CONFERENCE[2]

POONA,
July 29, 1946

He knew clearly enough, said Gandhiji, what was to be done but he did not quite know how it could be done. So far they had their course mapped out for them, but now they had to sail on uncharted waters. He knew their difficulties. It was not easy for those who had been brought up in the old tradition to break away from it at a stroke. If he were in the Ministerial chair, he would issue broad instructions that hereafter all educational activity of the Government should be on basic education lines. Adult education drives had been launched in several provinces. If he had his way, he would conduct them also through a basic craft. In his opinion, cotton spinning and the allied processes were crafts *par excellence* for this purpose. But he would leave the choice of the craft to the people concerned in each case in the certain belief that in the end that craft alone which had the necessary intrinsic merit would survive. It should be the job of the inspectors and other officers of the Education Department to go among the people and teachers of schools and by persuasion and argument, edu-

[1] As noted by the addressee

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's report "Congress Ministries and Basic Education". The Conference had been convened by B. G. Kher to discuss the programme of basic education. Ministers from all the Congress-governed provinces except two attended.

cate them in the value and utility of the Government's new educational policy. That was their primary job, not to lord it over them. If they had no faith in it or if they were unwilling loyally to work out the new policy, he would give them the choice to resign. But he did not think that it would be necessary, if the Ministers knew their job and put their shoulder to the wheel. Merely issuing orders would not do the trick.

What he had said about adult education applied equally to university education. It must be organically related to the Indian scene. It must therefore be an extension and continuation of the basic education course. That was the central point. If they did not see eye to eye with him on that point, he was afraid they would have little use for his advice. If, on the other hand, they agreed with him that the present university education did not fit them for independence but only enslaved them, they would be as impatient as he was to completely overhaul and scrap that system and remodel it on new lines consonant with the national requirement.

Today the youth educated in our universities either ran after Government jobs or fell into devious ways and sought outlet for their frustration by fomenting unrest. They were not even ashamed to beg or sponge upon others. Such was their sad plight. The aim of university education should be to turn out true servants of the people, who would live and die for the country's freedom. He was therefore of the opinion that university education should be co-ordinated and brought into line with basic education, by taking in teachers from the Talimi Sangh.

The Ministers had accepted office as people's representatives. Their writ would not run beyond the four walls of the Council Hall unless they could carry the people with them. What was taking place in Bombay and Ahmedabad today, was an ominous symptom, if it portended that the Congress had lost its hold over the people. Nayee Talim was as yet a tender sapling but it held out big promise. Its growth could not be forced by ministerial ukases, if popular support was lacking. If, therefore, they could not command popular support, his advice to them would be to tender their resignations. They should not be afraid of anarchy. Theirs was only to do their duty according to their lights and leave the rest to God. People would learn the lesson of true independence even out of that experience.

Q. Can basic education be conducted minus the self-support basis?

A. You can certainly try. But if you ask my advice, I will tell you that in that event, you had better forget basic education altogether. Self-sufficiency is not an *a priori* condition but to me it is the acid test. This does not mean that basic education will be self-supporting from the very start. But taking the entire period of seven years, covered by the basic education plan, income and expenditure must balance. Otherwise, it would

mean that even at the end of their training, the basic education students will not be fitted for life. That is the negation of basic education. Nayee Talim without the self-support basis would, therefore, be like a lifeless body.

Q. We have accepted the principle of giving education through a basic craft. But the Mussalmans are somehow opposed to the spinning-wheel. Your emphasis on spinning is perhaps all right in cotton tracts. But do you not agree that it is unsuited to areas where the cotton crop is not grown? May not some other craft be substituted for it in such places—agriculture for instance?

A. This is a very old question. Any basic craft to serve as a medium for education must answer the test of universality. As early as 1908 I came to the conclusion that to make India free and to enable her to stand on her own legs, the spinning-wheel had to hum in every home. If England can become an exporter of textiles to India and to the whole world, although she does not grow a pod of cotton, I cannot understand why we cannot introduce cotton spinning in our homes, merely because cotton would have to be obtained from a neighbouring province or district. As a matter of fact, there is no part of India where cotton was not at one time grown. Localization of cotton cultivation in 'cotton tracts' is only a recent and anomalous development, forced upon India by cotton manufacturing interests at the expense of the poor tax-payer and cotton spinner of India. Even today tree cotton grows everywhere in India. Such arguments as yours speak ill of our capacity for taking initiative, for our enterprise and resourcefulness. It would kill all manufactures if transportation of raw materials from another place were to be regarded as an insuperable handicap.

Moreover, to enable a person to clothe himself through his own effort, when the alternative is to go naked, is in itself an education. An intelligent pursuit of the various processes related to cotton spinning has, besides, a very high instructional value. In fact, it covers the whole education of man as perhaps no other craft does. We may not today be able to dispel the doubts of the Mussalmans, as they are rooted in a delusion and delusion is a very real thing to its victim, while he is under its spell. But if our own faith is clear and firm, and we can demonstrate the success of our method, the Mussalmans will themselves come to us and ask to be taught the secret of our success. They do not seem to have realized that the charkha has done more for the poorest Mussalman masses than even the

Muslim League or any other Muslim organization. The bulk of the weavers in Bengal are Muslims. Nor should it be forgotten that Dacca owed its world-wide fame for its *shabnams*[1] to the deftness and skill of Muslim women spinners and Muslim weavers.

The same applied to Maharashtra. The best cure for the delusion is to concentrate on the performance of one's own duty. Truth alone will endure, all the rest will be swept away before the tide of time. I must, therefore, continue to bear testimony to Truth even if I am forsaken by all. Mine may today be a voice in the wilderness, but it will be heard when all other voices are silenced if it is the voice of Truth.

AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: To produce efficient teachers for Nayee Talim would take time. What should be done to improve education in the schools in the meantime?

G. If you realize that the present system of education cannot bring India Independence but only serves to deepen her slavery, you will refuse to encourage it, irrespective of whether any other takes its place or not. You will do whatever you can, within the four corners of the principles of Nayee Talim and be satisfied with that.

If people did not want the ministers on those terms, it would be better for the ministers to resign. They could not possibly be party to serving poison because they could not provide or because the people did not relish life-giving food.

Q. You say that for Nayee Talim we do not need money but men. But to train men we again need institutions and therefore money. How can we get out of this vicious circle?

A. The remedy lies in your own hands. Begin with yourself. There is a good English proverb: 'Charity begins at home.' But if you yourself will sit in an easy chair like a sahib and expect others of the lesser breed to get ready for the job, you will get nowhere. That is not my way. It has been my practice ever since my childhood, to begin with myself and my immediate environment in howsoever humble a way. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the British people. A mere handful of them came to and settled in India in the first instance and carved out an empire for themselves which is even more formidable in its cultural than in its political aspect, so much so that, today we are so infatuated with English that we hug it, just as a slave hugs its fetters, even at the cost of the

[1] A variety of muslin; literally, 'dew'

mother tongue. Think of the faith, single-minded devotion, sacrifice and perseverance, which must have been at the back of it. It only shows that where there is a will, there is a way. Let us be up and doing with the firm resolve not to give up, come what may, and all the difficulties will melt away.

Q. What is the place of English in this programme? Should it be made compulsory or taught only as an optional, second language?

A. I must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast, in spite of its shortcomings. It alone can give me the life-giving milk. I love the English tongue in its own place, but I am its inveterate opponent if it usurps a place which does not belong to it. English is today admittedly the world language. I would therefore accord it a place as a second, optional language, not in the school but in the university course. That can only be for the select few—not for the millions. Today when we have not the means to introduce even free compulsory primary education, how can we make provision for teaching English? Russia has achieved all her scientific progress without English. It is our mental slavery that makes us feel that we cannot do without English. I can never subscribe to that defeatist creed.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

85. NOTES

DECENTRALIZATION

Appasaheb Pant of Aundh State writes:[1]

> The British have forged an adequate instrument in the "Services" to help them maintain themselves in this country. . . .
>
> We shall have to discard all this old machinery and through our own experience, create a new one that will aid us in the formation of an equitable and democratic way of life.
>
> For this purpose, one feels that the decentralization of administrative power is the first step. . . . The test of the Congress, in office with this centralized power in hand, lies in devising ways and means to create decentralization which will enable ordinary human beings to manage their affairs themselves and in that process become more human, creative and therefore happy.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

CWMG - IXXXV

Appasaheb writes from experience, having had much to do with the administration of Aundh.

POONA, July 30, 1946
Harijan, 11-8-1946

86. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1946

You have not lost me. Gangi is a good girl. I am only hoping that you will not look upon her with lustful eyes and all will be well. The real peace has to come from within. Do not think of Vidya, the figure of flesh and blood, but of her permanent self. Steady your nerves and Gangi will be a tower of strength to you.

BAPU

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

87. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

POONA,
July 30, 1946

DEAR SINGER (SAROJINI NAIDU),

I have seen your note to Sushila. You have the opportunity of getting thoroughly well if you will be well. Rest and be thankful.

You know all I am trying to do here; expecting to reach Sevagram on or before 7th August.

Love to you and the family.

SPINNER

PS.

R. K.[1] has shown me your letter. Be careful for nothing.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Rajkumari Amrit Kaur

88. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

POONA,
July 30, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

The sun may change its course but Bhansali's word will not change. You have but to live your life as the sentinel of Sevagram. Never mind if the body drops there. You are the pole-star and you have to remain that. You are not rotting in Sevagram. The very thought is dangerous. It indicates a tendency to swerve. A drop which has merged in the sea does not rot but lends the sea its greatness. In the same way you endow with importance the sea that is Sevagram. If you forget this fact all will be lost. How if all the drops regarded themselves as rotting? Yes, there is one point. Only he who becomes a cipher can lend greatness. You can see clearly through a glass window. If you coat the pane with mercury you will see none but yourself. May you never take on such a coating.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHANSALIBHAI
SEVAGRAM

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

89. LETTER TO GOVIND REDDY

POONA,
July 30, 1946

CHI. GOVIND REDDY,

I have your letter. I have not known you enough. Consult Krishnachandraji and others and do whatever is considered proper. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th or 7th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 10666

CWMG - LXXXV

90. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your letter. It makes me very happy. Now, get well at Jassawala's and come to me whenever you like. I can take a lot of work from you.

I am not writing about the other matters just now.

It is 9.15 p. m.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

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

91. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

POONA,
July 30, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

Your Hindi letter is very good. If you go on like this, you will write Hindi better than English. Your pleading is unnecessary for your sincerity is beyond doubt. Now forget all about it. Immerse yourself in khadi work and become of steadfast mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

92. *SOUTH AFRICA*

The following news from South Africa will be of interest to the readers.

Rev. Michael Scott who has thrown in his lot with Indians in their struggle there, has written a note under the caption "Not by Might". It is already published in the dailies. It should make a special appeal to all Europeans. He adds in a personal note:

> The spirit which enshrined you and your movement here will not be extinguished by the powerful and cunning forces which are now arrayed against it.

An English sister writes from Durban:

> I went along to the camp almost the first day just to give the campers a word of encouragement and was quite impressed by their cheerfulness and general attitude—it was the "real thing" like some of the Indian movements I have seen. Then I went to the court one day too and it seemed as though those on trial (apparently) were really the judges and the officials and the Government were in the dock. If you have seen the statements by some of the leaders, you will see they give the same impression.
>
> Rev. Michael Scott is a very good man. He is only about 40 years old and wears "shirts" as do many high Anglicans and is addressed as "Father Scott". He reminds me somewhat of C. F. Andrews.
>
> I am glad to know that Manilal is coming back. He will be a help to the leaders here, though, as a matter of fact, the struggle on the Indian side has been on a very high level up to the present. It is that that has drawn a group of Europeans to support the struggle but the number is not very large yet.

As I have said before, the battle will certainly go to our countrymen if they remain truly non-violent. Non-violence knows no defeat.

Another friend writes:

> You have heard of Mrs. Naidoo's[1] passing. She met with an accident about three months before her death. During all that time the family could not get my phone number due to some error on the part

[1] Wife of Thambi Naidoo

CWMG - LXXXV

of the exchange. Mrs. Naidoo wanted to see me but they could not contact me till the day after her death. I loved her. She was a sweet soul, a real friend and had a genius for home-making. There was always a beautiful atmosphere in the Naidoo home and one could drop in at any time, no matter how busy she was and always feel a welcome guest. And what a heroine she was! Think of the anxiety she must have gone through all the time the children were in India. I do hope that there will be a joint memorial to her and Thambi.

Incidentally I must mention that Mrs. Naidoo's husband was one of the first satyagrahis during the days of our struggle there in my time.

POONA, July 31, 1946
Harijan, 11-8-1946

93. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You are not looking after your health—it is not good. Abidali writes to say that he has broken his fast and has left the Congress House. He has written a sweet letter.

I have to go and see the Governor today. I understand it is to be purely a courtesy call.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 318-9

CWMG - LXXXV

94. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

When you met me yesterday, I completely forgot about Sharma's case.[1] I have already sent you something regarding the case. Those people have not given me anything more than that. Can you do anything on the basis of what I have sent you? I am asking you this because I have had a telegram from Sharma.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7699. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

95. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

POONA,
July 31, 1946

BHAI PRAKASAM,

I have found your letter (of July) among my papers. I am sorry that we could not meet. It is good that the Harijans were let off.

I am aware of the constructive work you are doing in the Madras Presidency. I shall be very happy if it shows some results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI T. PRAKASAM

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

[1] Hiralal Sharma's dispute with Gadodia. *Vide* p. 46.

CWMG - LXXXV

96. SPEECH AT INDUSTRIES MINISTERS' CONFERENCE[1]

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Gandhiji explained his approach to Village Industries in the course of a thirty minute address. The conception underlying both the Nayee Talim and the Village Industries programme, including khaddar, was rooted in the same thing, viz., concern for the dignity and status of the village unit as against the big cities and of the individual against the machine. The concern was further augmented by the fact that India lives not in a handful of her big cities but in her 700,000 villages. The problem was of reestablishment of justice between the town and the village. As it was, the balance was heavily tipped in favour of the former to the disadvantage of the latter.

Ours has been described as the machine age, because the machine dominates our economy. Now, what is a machine?—one may ask. In a sense, man is the most wonderful machine in creation. It can neither be duplicated nor copied.

He had, however, used the word not in its wider sense but in the sense of an appliance that tended to displace human or animal labour instead of supplementing it or merely increasing its efficiency. That was the first differentiating characteristic of the machine. The second characteristic was that there was no limit to its growth or evolution. That could not be said of human labour. There was a limit beyond which its capacity or mechanical efficiency could not go. Out of this circumstance arose the third characteristic of the machine. It seems to be possessed of a will or genius of its own. It was antagonistic to man's labour. Thus it tended more to displace man, one machine doing the work of a hundred, if not a thousand, who went to swell the army of the unemployed and the underemployed, not because it was desirable but because that was its law. In America it had perhaps reached the extreme limit. He had been opposed to it, said Gandhiji, not from today, but even before 1908 when he was in South Africa surrounded by machines. Their onward march had not only not impressed him but had repelled him.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Congress Ministries and Rural Uplift". The Conference was convened by Vaikunthlal Mehta, Finance and Village Industries Minister of Bombay, and was attended by Bhimsen Sachar from the Punjab, Nityanand Kanungo from Orissa, R. K. Barlinga from C. P. and Ansari from Bihar.

It then dawned on me that to suppress and exploit the millions, the machine was the device *par excellence*; it had no place in man's economy if, as social units, all men were to be equal.

It is my belief that the machine has not added to man's stature and it won't serve the world but disrupt it, unless it is put in its proper place. Then, I read Ruskin's *Unto This Last* during a train journey to Durban[1] and it gripped me immediately. I saw clearly that if mankind was to progress and to realize the ideal of equality and brotherhood, it must adopt and act on the principle of *Unto This Last*; it must take along with it even the dumb, the halt and the lame. Did not Yudhishthira—the Prince of Righteousness, refuse to enter heaven without his faithful dog?

In the machine age these had no place. Under it the fittest alone survived to the exclusion and at the cost of the weak.

That is not my picture of Independence in which there is room even for the weakest. That requires that we must utilize all available human labour before we entertain the idea of employing mechanical power.

It was with that background that he was instrumental in founding the Talimi Sangh and the A. I. V. I. A. The object was to strengthen the Congress which claimed to be essentially the people's organization. The Congress had created these autonomous institutions. The Congress Ministries could requisition the services of these organizations always and without any compunction. They existed and laboured for the villagers who were the backbone of the Congress. But the Ministries were under no obligation. If they had no faith in what these organizations stood for, they should plainly say so through the Working Committee. To play with a thing when they had no heart in it would be worse than useless. They should take it up only if they believed with him that it alone held the key to the economic and political salvation of the country. They should not deceive themselves or others.

The base and foundation of village industries is agriculture. Years ago I read a poem in which the peasant is described as the father of the world. If God is the Provider, the cultivator is His hand. What are we going to do to discharge the debt we owe to him? So long we have only lived on the sweat of his brow. We should have begun with the soil but we could not do so. The fault is partly mine.

[1] In June, 1904

There were people, remarked Gandhiji, who said that no basic reform in agriculture was possible without political power. They dreamt in terms of industrialization of agriculture by large-scale application of steam and electricity. He warned them that trading in soil fertility for the sake of quick returns would prove to be a disastrous, short-sighted policy. It would result in virtual depletion of the soil. Good earth called for the sweat of one's brow to yield the bread of life.

People might criticize that approach as being slow and unprogressive. It did not hold out promise of dramatic results. Nevertheless, it held the key to the prosperity of both the soil and the inhabitants living on it. Healthy, nourishing food was the alpha and omega of rural economy.

The bulk of a peasant's family budget goes to feed him and his family. All other things come afterwards. Let the tiller of the soil be well fed. Let him have a sufficiency of fresh, pure milk and ghee and oil, fish, eggs, and meat if he is a non-vegetarian. What would fine clothes, for instance, avail him if he is ill-nourished and underfed?

The question of drinking-water supply and other things would come next. A consideration of these questions would naturally involve such issues as the place of plough cattle in the economy of agriculture as against the tractor plough and power irrigation, etc., and thus, bit by bit, the whole picture of rural economy would emerge before them. In this picture cities would take their natural place and not appear as unnatural, congested spots or boils on the body politic as they were today.

We stand today in danger of forgetting the use of our hands. To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves. To think that your occupation of the Ministerial chair will be vindicated if you serve the cities only, would be to forget that India really resides in her 700,000 village units. What would it profit a man if he gained the world but lost his soul in the bargain?

Q. You have called cities boils or abscesses on the body politic. What should be done with these boils?

A. If you ask a doctor he will tell you what to do with a boil. It has to be cured either by lancing or by the application of plasters and poultices. Edward Carpenter called civilization a malady which needed a cure. The growth of big cities is only a symptom of that malady. Being a nature-curist, I am naturally in favour of nature's way of cure by a general purification of the system. If the hearts of the city-dwellers

remain rooted in the villages, if they become truly village-minded, all other things will automatically follow and the boil will quickly heal.

Q. What practical steps can be taken to protect our village crafts from the invasion of foreign and Indian manufactured goods under the present circumstances?

A. I can only speak in broad terms. If you have felt in your heart that you have taken office as custodians and representatives of the interests of the masses, everything that you do, your legislation, your executive orders, the instructions that you issue, will breathe concern for the villager. To protect his interests, you do not need the Viceroy's sanction. Supposing you want to protect the hand-spinner and hand-weaver against the competition of mills and solve the problem of cloth shortage for the masses, you will put aside red tape and send for the mill-owners and tell them that, unless they want you to go out of office, they must make their production policy conform to the requirement of the masses, whose custodian and representative you are. You will tell them not to send mill cloth to certain areas, which are put under hand production or produce a certain range of yarns and textiles which comes within the hand-loom weaver's domain. If you are in earnest, your word will go home and they will willingly give their co-operation as they did recently, when they provided the required textiles for export to Indonesia, in return for Indonesian surplus rice for the relief of the Indian famine. But there must be that inner conviction first, everything else will then be all right.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

97. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

POONA,
July 31, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi told the audience in brief how the last three days since his return to Poona from Panchgani had been occupied. First, there was a meeting with the Chiefs of the Deccan States. The Rajas wanted his advice as a friend as to what their duty was. He had told them that they must now shed their autocracy and be guided by the people's will. Up till now the princes had been ruled by the British and they, in turn, had ruled their people. Now that power was coming into the hands of the Indian people, it should come into the hands of States' people too, for they were

not different. The Rulers had recognized that they could not exist if they were at perpetual variance with their subjects. A true union with their people was the only way for them to live and serve.

Ministers from various provinces had come here to discuss with the workers of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the All-India Village Industries Association as to how best they could forward these two great schemes, which had been brought into being and had so far been sponsored by the Congress. Gandhiji feared the audience were probably ignorant about Nayee Talim. This was not as it should be. After all the Congress Ministers were the elected representatives of the people and, therefore, their servants. They could not force anything down the throats of the people. It was up to the people to study and understand what Nayee Talim was. It was up to them to be orderly and disciplined and eager to learn. Only then could the Ministers take them along with them. Nayee Talim was a grand thing. It would help them and their children to become good citizens. The same applied to khadi and all the other village industries.

Both these schemes were for village India which was the real India. Really speaking, it was the farmers who fed them and ought, therefore, to be their masters, but things had been the other way round, and townspeople had been sucking the villagers' blood. It was now time that they became the servants of the villagers. If they realized this, the work of the Congress Ministers would progress and India would become prosperous.

Gandhiji hoped, as this was his last meeting with them this year, that their daily association with him in prayer had been of benefit to them and they would continue the practice in their homes.

The Hindu, 2-8-1946

98. THE LIMIT OF INSANITATION[1]

Panchgani is a fine hill resort. The air itself is like medicine. Rajas and Maharajas do not frequent it like they do Mussoorie and yet there has been no place where the poor could stay.[2] Now at last if there is going to be a small haven for them, it would only be a tardy reparation. But if the present insanitary conditions continue, Panchgani will cease to exist as a health resort. I believe the same is true of Mahabaleshwar too. I am of opinion that such conditions are due to our own fault, rather than to that of Government. I have heard doctors say that everyone knows how to observe personal cleanliness

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.
[2] *Vide* also pp. 42-3.

up to a point, but our people do not seem to know the A B C of hygiene and sanitation. The truth of this has to be admitted with sorrow. The following is a vivid account[1] of Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's observations regarding the lack of proper sanitary arrangements in Panchgani. I give it in the fervent hope that this disgraceful state of affairs will be remedied without undue delay.

POONA, August 1, 1946
Harijan, 18-8-1946

99. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing on behalf of Gandhiji to thank you much for yours of the 22nd July.[2]

I am sending a copy of it to the Polish friend at whose instance Gandhiji wrote to you.[3]

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 89

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] The addressee had said: "The present repatriation scheme refers only to those who came to India as refugees under arrangements made by His Majesty's Government and are maintained here at H. M. G.'s expense; it does not cover Poles who came to India on their own initiative and have found employment here."

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, p. 428.

CWMG - LXXXV

100. LETTER TO WANDA DYNOWSKA

POONA,
August 1, 1946

MY DEAR UMADEVI,

The enclosed[1] is a reply to Gandhiji's letter to the Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy.

In Gandhiji's opinion the reply is good and should set your mind at rest. No exception can be taken to what they are doing.

I hope you are well. I was away for six days and returned day before yesterday.

Yours with love,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat : G. N. 1208

101. LETTER TO GORDHANDAS CHOKHAWALA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. GORDHANDAS,

I have only today received your postcard of the 29th. I have come alone from Poona to Uruli for four days. I hope to leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th.

I was happy to learn that you were better now. You have yet much service to render. Do not tax your body. I will not at all be displeased if you do only as much as you can. I see that Sharda and Anand are well. I was glad to read even a few lines by Sharda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 10086. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

102. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have not been able to answer your letter fully. The main problem is about Ambedkar. I see a risk in coming to any sort of understanding with him, for he has told me in so many words that for him there is no distinction between truth and untruth or between violence and non-violence. He follows one single principle, viz., to adopt any means which will serve his purpose. One has to be very careful indeed when dealing with a man who would become a Christian, Muslim or Sikh and then be reconverted according to his convenience. There is much more I could write in the same strain. To my mind it is all a snare. It is a "catch"[1]. Besides, it is not necessary for him at present to insist on 20 p. c. If India becomes independent in the real sense—the provinces to some extent are—and if the caste Hindus are true to themselves, all will be well. But if the number of fair-minded persons is small and if power passes into the hands of fanatics, there is bound to be injustice, no matter what agreements you make today. You may come to any understanding you like today—but who are the people who beat up Harijans, murder them, prevent them from using public wells, drive them out of schools and refuse them entry into their homes? They are Congressmen. Aren't they? It is very necessary to have a clear picture of this. I therefore feel that at present we should not insist on an agreement such as you suggest. However, we should stress the capacity of the Congress to do justice. Mine may be a voice in the wilderness. Even so I prefer it that way. Therefore, if we negotiate with Ambedkar out of fear of the League we are likely to lose on both the fronts.

I will definitely leave here on the 5th and reach Wardha on the 6th. I have already written to you and informed you that I have deliberately decided not to go to Bombay and I adhere to that decision. But if you want it to be modified, do

[1] Gandhiji had used the English word here.

tell me by all means—that means I shall have to remain in a railway compartment for a few hours more. You may see me there if necessary but in any case not at the cost of your health. There is nothing we cannot deal with through correspondence. In any case do come to Wardha on the 8th. You may come even a day earlier if you like.

If postmen are using high-handed methods, I think it will be perfectly proper to raise our voice against it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 319-20

103. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*August 1, 1946*][1]

CHI. MANI,

There is not enough time to write to you. You did well in reminding me about Chamanbhai. Send the accompanying letter to him.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 321

104. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL G. PAREKH

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI CHIMANLAL,

Only yesterday Manibehn gave me the news that you were laid up. We can only live as God wills. It is well if He keeps us and equally well if he takes us away. Only the good we do will go with us.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI CHIMANLAL SHETH

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

[1] This letter was written at the bottom of the preceding letter.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

CWMG - LXXXV

105. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Herewith a letter from Ramanlal. I pass it on to you so that you can send him a reply; and maybe also give him peace. In this way I save my time. If you think it right show Ramanlal's letter to Krishnachandra also. I like some of the arguments Ramanlal has advanced. But are the facts what he assumes them to be? You are in the best position to know this.

I have come to Uruli only today. I shall stay here for four days, leave on the 5th and expect to reach Wardha on the 6th. But let us see how it comes about. What God wills will be. This last statement is especially apposite, seeing the anarchy that is beginning to show itself.

I am not personally replying to Ramanlal, for a reply from you is as good as one from me. Let him take it that way.

M. K. GANDHI

SEVAGRAM

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

106. LETTER TO SURENDRA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. SURENDRA,

I got your postcard of the 26th on the 31st at Poona. Today I have come to Uruli, which is 18 miles from Poona. I came by car. The journey took half an hour. I don't remember your having written to me two months ago telling me about your faith in me. I have come here alone, leaving my companions at Poona, as this place cannot offer the necessary accommodation. Besides, I did not want to make a crowd. I can therefore . . .[1] only when we meet. I hope to leave here on

[1] The source is not clear here.

CWMG - LXXXV

the 5th so as to reach Wardha on the 6th. Let us see what God wills.

It is all to the good if you have spent 11 years in Boriavi. Even if you had to spend a lifetime there, what would it matter? I would not mind as long as you could give an honest account of every single moment of it.

I stayed in Panchgani for 14 days. I enjoyed it. There was almost incessant rain. That there can be misfortune but no darkness for a devotee even if he seeks it, is fully true for a perfect devotee, not for an aspirant. I cannot count myself among the perfect devotees, I regard myself as no more than an aspirant. All I can say is that darkness cannot engulf me. I have no time to further analyse this.

BORIAVI
DIST. KAIRA

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

107. LETTER TO D. D. JOSHI[1]

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI JOSHI,

I have gone through your letter. This is the answer to your question.[2] This thing is meant for villagers, for the villages. Therefore there is no place here for a microscope or an x-ray plant. Nor is there any place in nature cure for quinine, emetin, penicillin and such other drugs. Village sanitation, domestic cleanliness, personal hygiene and health care have the first place and also full scope, the underlying idea being that this done there can be no disease. And in case disease has occurred, Ramanama is the basic remedy besides observance of the laws of nature. As long as the practitioner has not personally experienced the efficacy of Ramanama, the latter treatment cannot be applied universally. Hence, the treatment in

[1] The text of the Gujarati letter was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946, and a translation of it appeared under the heading "Question Box", in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946.

[2] The question was whether in nature cure x-ray and other devices could be used for diagnosis and certain medicines, with known efficacy could be used in treatment

the form of Ramanama cannot all of a sudden become universal. However, the endeavour is to cure disease with the help of whatever energy we can churn out of the five elements, viz., earth, water, ether, fire and air. And this is where, I think, nature cure ends. Hence the experiment that is being now conducted at Uruli Kanchan is one of instructing the villagers in the art of health care and curing those who are sick with the help of the five elements. This includes the use of herbs locally available in Uruli, whenever the need is felt. It also covers restrictions as to diet.

M. K. GANDHI

D. D. JOSHI
BOMBAY

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

108. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

URULI KANCHAN, *via* POONA,
August 1, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter of the 16th reached me yesterday the 31st. I understood from it that the rooms on Chimanlal's side are not to be given for Nayee Talim. Please remember that I have given the word and I think you all have agreed to it. So they should be given whatever they want. In doing so we may have to vacate some Ashram space. But even if we have to do that I see no objection to it. What has happened has happened. I am not finding fault with you people. I am explaining my position. Ashadevi met me in the morning today. But your letter was not before me then, or I would have talked to her. Aryanayakumji also met me yesterday. I shall try to reach there on the 6th. Then we shall talk it over.

I understand about *Gitai*[1]. I like it.

Here we recite *Gitai* morning and evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 4561

[1] Vinoba Bhave's rendering of the *Gita* in Marathi verse.

CWMG - LXXV

109. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

POONA,
August 1, 1946

BHAI DIWAKAR,

I could read your letter of 17th July from beginning to end only today. I have serious doubts about the resolution concerning yarn. I don't think it is right to pass on the yarn to the weavers and oblige them to weave it before it has been doubled. The weavers will ungrudgingly accept all the yarn you have if you give it to them after doubling and twisting it. Only then can you tell the weavers not to take mill-yarn as long as such hand-spun yarn is available. I have written about it in *Harijan*.[1]

Do you have an estimate how many people act on the resolutions that have been passed and how they do it? If not, you should try to find out.

Your Resolution No. 22 calls upon the Government to examine the implements and the raw material of . . .[2], which I find rather impracticable. This job is for those who know the work. It is the constructive workers who can do this job. The Government can be asked to provide funds. I feel the same way about Resolutions 17, 18 and 21.

I have an impression that I have written to you regarding [Resolution] No. 27. I am of the opinion that Manohar Diwan cannot take up anti-leprosy work outside Wardha. He does not have enough workers. What you must do is to produce in Karnataka workers like Manohar Diwan. You can send them to Wardha to be trained, on the condition that all their expenses are met by you.

One more word of advice in general. Resolution No. 29 could have been put in nine or ten lines. It could have been more fully explained in a speech. I assume all these Resolutions were in Kannada and, when we think in our mother tongue or in the national language we do not do so in an orderly way. And then we do not attempt to bring precision and brevity to them. When we speak or write in English out

[1] *Vide* pp. 65-6.
[2] Omission as in the source

of very shame we are more careful. This shows that our love of our mother tongue is not real, or say, not deep enough. It is the duty of every Indian to overcome this failing. I have observed that true love of the mother tongue embraces the national language too.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RANGANATH DIWAKAR
HUBLI

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

110. DEDICATION OF HOSPITAL

POONA,
August 1, 1946

This hospital[1] is for Indian patients of all castes, all provinces and all faiths. And since there is no hospital for Harijans and the proprietor of this hospital is a Harijan, all those patients who happen to be Harijans will be given first preference. And the first bed in the hospital will be occupied by a Harijan and that will mark its inauguration. Furthermore, in this hospital the poor patients will have precedence over the rich patients.

Sd. MANIBEHN NANAVATI

May God help us keep the pledge.

M. K. GANDHI

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

111. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

URULI,
August 1, 1946

The 25th anniversary of the late Lokamanya's demise[3] which fell on the day Gandhiji reached Uruli, evoked poignant memories. Speaking after the evening prayer, he recalled how he had gone to attend the Lokamanya's funeral on receiving the sad news over the telephone. The mammoth funeral procession was composed of Mussalmans and Parsis no less than Hindus. He

[1] Uruli Kanchan nature-cure clinic
[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 5-8-1946
[3] Tilak died on August 1, 1920. *Vide* Vol. XVIII, pp. 109-11, 120-3.

himself had got caught in the crush and narrowly escaped injury. Those were the days when the atmosphere was not poisoned by communal bitterness.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since then, but the memory of Lokamanya remains enshrined in the hearts and affection of his countrymen as ever before. The lapse of time has only added to his popularity. He is still with us, though he is physically no more. He has given us the *mantra* that Swaraj is our birthright. That birthright belongs equally to all. Like the Infinite it is inexhaustible. To divide it is not to take it away.

May be that some questionable things are today being done in the late Lokamanya's name. That is the way of the world. Even divinity is not proof against abuse. The evil, however, remains with the evil-doer. It does not detract from the lustre of divinity.

India was today on the eve of attaining her birthright, Gandhiji went on to say. In his opinion, nature cure was an essential ingredient in the building of swaraj of his conception. The attaining of true swaraj presupposed the triple purification of body, mind and soul.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

112. LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF PORTUGUESE INDIA

August 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was kind of you to write to me in reply to what I had written in *Harijan*[1] about Goa affairs.[2] I suppose you know that I have visited Mozambique, Delagoa and Inhambane. I did not notice there any Government for philanthropic purposes. Indeed, I was astonished to see the distinction that the Government made between Indians and the Portuguese and

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 373-4.

[2] In his letter of July 18 the addressee had *inter alia* observed: "If to authority is committed the preservation of the people's physical health against pestilence and the use of narcotics and toxics, with the same reason it must look after the mental health not leaving it a prey to unsettling ideas. I don't believe that there is lesser liberty in the existence of a benevolent censorship trying to educate without party spirit than in other forms of State intervention."

between the Africans and themselves. Nor does the history of the Portuguese Settlement in India prove the claim set forth by you. Indeed, what I see and know of the condition of things in Goa is hardly edifying. That the Indians in Goa have been speechless is proof not of the innocence or the philanthropic nature of the Portuguese Government but of the rule of terror. You will forgive me for not subscribing to your statement that there is full liberty in Goa and that the agitation is confined only to a few malcontents.

Every account, received by me personally and seen in the papers here in this part of India, confirms the contrary view. I suppose the report of the sentence by your Court Martial of eight years on Dr. Braganza[1] and his contemplated exile to a far off Portuguese Settlement is by itself a striking corroboration of the fact that civil liberty is a rare article in Goa. Why should a law-abiding citizen like Dr. Braganza be considered so dangerous as to be singled out for exile?

Though the politics of Dr. Lohia probably differ from mine, he has commanded my admiration for his having gone to Goa and put his finger on its black spot. Inhabitants of Goa can afford to wait for Independence, until much greater India has regained it. But no person or group can thus remain without civil liberty without losing self-respect. He has lighted a torch which the inhabitants of Goa cannot, except at their peril, allow to be extinguished. Both you and the inhabitants of Goa should feel thankful to the Doctor for lighting that torch. Therefore, your description of him as "stranger" would excite laughter if it was not so tragic. Surely the truth is that the Portuguese coming from Portugal are strangers, whether they come as philanthropists or as Governors exploiting the so-called weaker races of the earth.

You have talked of the abolition of caste distinctions. What I see has happened is that not only no caste distinction has been abolished but at least one more caste, far more terrible than the system "caste", has been added by the Portuguese rulers.

I, therefore, hope that you will revise your views on philanthropy, civil liberty and caste distinctions, withdraw all the African police, declare yourself whole-heartedly for civil liberty and if possible, even let the inhabitants of Goa frame their own government, and invite from Greater India more experienced

[1] Dr. Tristo Braganza Cunha, who had started a Congress Committee in Goa

Indians to assist the inhabitants and even you in framing such Government.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]
Since your letter was sent to the Press, I am publishing this in *Harijan*.

M. K. G.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

113. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G. I. P. RAILWAY

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

GENERAL MANAGER
G.I. P. RLY.

DEAR SIR,

A friend[1] in Cochin has sent me a cheque for Rs. 100/8/- to be presented to driver Mr. Pereira who was driving the third class special that brought me on 9th ultimo[2] to Poona from New Delhi, and by his skill avoided what might have proved a serious accident. I enclose the cheque herewith and request you to send it to Mr. Pereira if your rules permit the presentation of such gifts to your employees.

I am here till 4th instant after which date, letter may be addressed to me Sevagram, *via* Wardha, C. P.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C. W. 10529

[1] Ranchhoddas; *vide* the following item.
[2] This should be June 30; *vide* Vol. LXXXIV, p. 425.

CWMG LXXXV

114. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI RANCHHODDAS,

I have your letter and cheque for Rs. 100-8-0. I have passed on the cheque to the driver through the General Manager.[1]

Indeed, who can touch him whom God protects ?

BAPU

COCHIN (MALABAR)

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

115. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Radhakrishna[2] has written a letter about the strike. He has made the charge that the strikers stabbed a worker and beat up several others. I have written to Abidali. I enclose a copy of the letter.[3] If the violence continues, then the mill-owner should close down his mill and take steps to prevent incendiarism and damage to property by miscreants.

I have been thinking of writing about the League. Sometimes I feel that I should wait for the meeting of the Working Committee on the 8th and sometimes that I should write. Let me see what I finally do.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 6th.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 322

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Radhakrishna Khaitan, owner of the Mill in which Abidali had organized a strike

[3] *Vide* the following item.

CWMG - LXXV

116. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

URULI KANCHAN,
August 2, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I hope you are well. Khaitan saw me on the 31st. I advised him that if he had anything to say it should be placed before an arbitrator and if Bhimji or the strikers or Abidali had any complaints to make, they should also be referred to the arbitrator. This is the only civilized procedure.

A strike or any other kind of satyagraha can be undertaken only when all normal avenues for securing justice are closed and autocratic ways have taken the place of justice.

Today I got a letter from Khaitan in which he says that the night before last, that is, on 31-7-1946, the strikers beat up a head clerk and yesterday in the morning again inflicted injuries on a number of persons. They have not resumed work yet.

If it is true it is not good. The strikers being under your direction it is your duty to see that they do not indulge in any such excesses. If there is anything you want to say I would suggest your saying it to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

[From Hindi]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 322-3

117. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA KHAITAN

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 2, 1946

BHAI RADHAKRISHNAJI,

I have your letter. I have written to Abidali[1] and your own messenger is taking the letter. I have written that no excesses should be committed on either side and if both parties are willing to refer the matter to arbitration, the strike should be called off. Let us see what happens. If there is something you

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LXXXV

wish to say you may write to me again. Sardar is still there. Consult him and do as he says.

BAPU

BOMBAY

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

118. TALK TO VILLAGERS[1]

URULI,
[*August 2, 1946*][2]

There were three ways, Gandhiji told the villagers of Uruli, of dealing with the case.[3] The first was the stereotyped orthodox way of reporting to the police. Very often it only provided the police a further opportunity for corruption and brought no relief to the victim. The second way, which was followed by the general run of the village people, was to passively acquiesce in it. This was reprehensible as it was rooted in cowardice. Crime would flourish, while cowardice remained. What was more, by such acquiescence we ourselves became party to the crime. The third way, which Gandhiji commended, was that of pure satyagraha. It required that we should regard even thieves and criminals as our brothers and sisters, and crime as a disease of which the latter were the victims and needed to be cured. Instead of bearing ill-will towards a thief or a criminal and trying to get him punished they should try to get under his skin, understand the cause that had led him into crime and try to remedy it. They should, for instance, teach him a vocation and provide him with the means to make an honest living and thereby transform his life. They should realize that a thief or a criminal was not a different being from themselves. Indeed, if they turned the searchlight inward and closely looked into their own souls, they would find that the difference between them was only one of degree. The rich, moneyed man, who made his riches by exploitation or other questionable means, was no less guilty of robbery than the thief who picked a pocket or broke into a house and committed theft. Only the former took refuge behind the facade of respectability and escaped the penalty of law. Strictly speaking, remarked Gandhiji, all amassing or hoarding of wealth above and beyond one's legitimate requirements was theft. There would be no occasion for thefts and

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 5-8-1946

[2] Pyarelal places this on the day following the 25th death anniversary of Tilak, which was on August 1.

[3] A villager had been brought to Gandhiji with injuries inflicted upon him by thieves.

CWMG-LXXXV

therefore, no thieves if there was a wise regulation of riches and absolute social justice prevailed. In the swaraj of his conception, there would be no thieves and no criminals, or else it would be swaraj only in name. The criminal was only an indication of the social malady and since nature cure, as he envisaged it, included the triple cure of body, mind and soul, they must not be satisfied with merely banishing physical illness from Uruli; their work must include the healing of the mind and soul too, so that there would be perfect social peace in their midst.

If they followed the nature cure way of dealing with the criminals, which, as he had already explained, was the way of satyagraha, they could not sit still in the face of crime. Only a perfect being could afford to lose himself within himself and withdraw completely from the cares and responsibilities of the world. But who could claim that perfection?

On the high seas a sudden calm is always regarded by experienced pilots and mariners with concern. Absolute calm is not the law of the ocean. It is the same with the ocean of life. More often than not, it portends rough weather. A satyagrahi would therefore neither retaliate nor submit to the criminal, but seek to cure him by curing himself. He will not try to ride two horses at a time, viz., to pretend to follow the law of satyagraha while, at the same time, seeking police aid. He must forswear the latter in order to follow the former. If the criminal himself chooses to hand himself over to the police, it would be a different matter. You cannot expect to touch his heart and win his confidence if at the same time you are prepared to go to the police and inform against him. That would be gross betrayal of trust. A reformer cannot afford to be an informer.

And by way of illustration he mentioned several instances of how he had refused to give information to the police about persons who had been guilty of violence and had come and confessed to him. No police officer could compel a satyagrahi to give evidence against a person who had confessed to him. A satyagrahi would never be guilty of a betrayal of trust. He wanted the people of Uruli to adopt the method of satyagraha for dealing with crime and criminals. They should contact the criminals in their homes, win their confidence and trust by loving and selfless service, wean them from evil and unclean habits and help to rehabilitate them by teaching them honest ways of living.

Harijan, 11-8-1946

119. STRIKES

The statement in the daily press that I had approved of the postal strike[1] is not true. One day a postman asked to be allowed to just say 'Vande Mataram' to me. Kanu Gandhi brought him to me. The visitor, however, asked for my blessings for the postmen's strike which had just then commenced. I said to him that if the strike was justified and if they conducted themselves absolutely peacefully, they must succeed.[2] This was no approval of the particular strike. Apart, however, from what I said and apart from the merits of the postmen's strike, I feel that as an expert in successful strikes of an absolutely peaceful nature, I owe it to the conductor of this strike as to those of all others and to the public to state the conditions of successful strikes.

Obviously there should be no strike which is not justifiable on merits. No unjust strike should succeed. All public sympathy must be withheld from such strikes.

The public has no means of judging the merits of a strike, unless it is backed by impartial persons enjoying public confidence. Interested men cannot judge the merits of their own case. Hence, there must be an arbitration accepted by the parties or a judicial adjudication. As a rule, the matter does not come before the public when there is accepted arbitration or adjudication. Cases have, however, happened when haughty employers have ignored awards or misguided employees, conscious of their power to assert themselves, have done likewise and have decided upon forcible extortion.

Strikes for economic betterment should never have a political end as an ulterior motive. Such a mixture never advances the political end and generally brings trouble upon strikers, even when they do not dislocate public life, as in the case of public utility services such as the postal strike. The Government may suffer some inconvenience but will not come to a standstill. Rich persons will put up expensive postal services but the vast mass of the poor people will be deprived during such a strike of a convenience of primary importance to which they

[1] This commenced in Bombay on 11th July and ended on 2nd August, 1946.

[2] The Press had reported Gandhiji as having said: "If you conduct your strike in a peaceful manner success will surely be yours."

have become used for generations. Such strikes can only take place when every other legitimate means has been adopted and failed.

In the present case we have National Provincial Governments. Postmen should consult these Governments before resorting to the extreme step. So far as I am aware, Shri Balasaheb Kher,[1] Shri Mangaldas Pakvasa[2] and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have intervened. If their advice has been rejected by the men, they have taken a serious and dangerous step. If all these powerful unions disregard their own Governments and the Working Committee members, they disown the Congress. They have a right to do so if the Congress sells their interest.

Sympathetic strikes must be taboo until it is conclusively proved that the affected men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal and until the Congress has been proved to have betrayed or neglected their interest or until the Congress has called for sympathetic strikes in order to secure justice from obdurate and unsympathetic authorities.

One hears of strikes all over the country to paralyse the Government. This paralysis is an extreme political step, open only to a body like the Congress, not even to unions, however powerful they may be. If the Congress is the people's arm *par excellence* for the purpose of winning Independence, paralysing action should be retained solely in the hands of the Congress.

At the present moment, the Congress is engaged in making a success of the proposed Constituent Assembly. There are interminable difficulties in the way. Paralysing strikes must seriously hamper Congress action.

It follows from the foregoing that political strikes must be treated on their own merits and must never be mixed with or related to economic strikes. Political strikes have a definite place in non-violent action. They are never taken up haphazard. They must be open, never led by goondaism. They are calculated never to lead to violence.

Therefore, my humble suggestion to all strikers is to make a frank declaration of submission to arbitration or adjudication, to seek the guidance of the Congress and abide by its advice and for all sympathetic strikes to stop whilst the Congress is engaged in making the contemplated Constituent Assembly a success and while Provincial National Governments are functioning.

URULI KANCHAN, August 3, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

[1] & [2] Premier of Bombay and President of B.L.C. respectively

120. THE MEANING OF NATURE CURE[1]

Many people wish to come to Uruli Kanchan to learn nature cure. I dissuade them. The institution that is working at Uruli Kanchan on behalf of the Trust is for the villagers. Its three trustees are Dr. Dinshaw Mehta, Shri Jehangir Patel and myself. Though Dr. Dinshaw Mehta has a lot of experience of nature cure, he has gained this experience in towns. When he was conducting his nature cure home in Poona, though he took in poor patients, he gave them the same treatment as he gave his rich patients. As I conceive nature cure for the villagers, it should confine itself to such remedies as are available in the villages and should do without the aid of electricity and ice. This would be the limit of this treatment.

Such work can only be for a person like me who has become a villager and whose heart is in the villages even though he be living in a city. So the trustees have entrusted this work to me. I have begun the work but I have no trained personnel. It is another thing that I take help from Dr. Mehta whenever I need it. I have found a good helper in Dr. Bhagawat whose heart is wholly in the villages and who himself lives very simply. Even though he is an allopath, he believes only in nature cure, does not despise manual work and never tires of working. The others are all new to the work though filled with the spirit of service. I too am new to the work. Shri Datar has given his house for our use. He charges no rent, and so the work can go on. But the house has not room enough for new students to be admitted. I myself cannot permanently stay in Uruli Kanchan. If God wills it I hope in future to spend six months in the neighbourhood of Poona and six months in Sevagram. Those who wish to learn nature cure should therefore understand that in the present circumstances it is quite impossible for anyone to be put up here.

Now a few words as to my conception of nature cure. I have written a little bit about it from time to time in previous issues. But since the idea is growing, I may as well explain the limits of nature cure as carried on in Uruli Kanchan.

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 11-8-1946.

Diseases, whether in village or in town, are of three kinds: physical, mental and spiritual. And what is true of the individual is true of society.

The majority of the inhabitants of Uruli Kanchan are business folk. One part is inhabited by Mangs, another by Mahars, and yet another by Kanchans. The name of the village is derived from this last group. There are some Garudis living here too, who are classified as criminal tribes under the law. The Mangs earn their living by making ropes, etc. They were doing well during the war but are now having a lean time and living in penury. The problem that faces the nature cure physicians is how to deal with this malady of the Mangs, which is by no means slight. It is the duty of the businessmen to cure them of this disease. No medicines from any dispensary are going to avail in this case and yet it is as fell a disease as cholera. Some of the tenements of the Mangs are fit only to be burnt. But burning will not provide new dwellings for them. How would they protect themselves from rain and cold? Where would they put their belongings? All these are questions to which the nature cure physician cannot shut his eyes. What is to be done about the Garudis? They do not commit crimes for the love of it. It is a habit ingrained in them for generations and so they are described as criminal.

It is for the residents of Uruli Kanchan to wean them from this habit. The nature-cure physician cannot neglect this work. Several such questions face the nature cure worker. Nature cure work thus becomes purely work for swaraj and its field also becomes very wide. God willing, it can succeed, provided we, the workers and residents of Uruli Kanchan, follow truth and persevere.

URULI KANCHAN, August 3, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 11-8-1946

121. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

URULI,
August 3, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. If you see no risk in it, what is there for me to say? Do by all means settle with Bhimarao. I have nothing further to say in the matter.

I note what you say about your coming here. I shall await you on the 7th. Forward Rameshwardas's letter to him.

So Chimanlal has passed away. I hear there is again trouble from the postmen.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 323

122. LETTER TO NANUBHAI

August 3, 1946

BHAI NANUBHAI,

I have your letter. Also the books. Thanks. I had the article sent by you read out to me. I also had a gist prepared and went through it. I don't find in it anything that can be published in *Harijan*.

It contains criticism of the Council or the Ministers. Then there is something concerning what happened during the Ahmedabad riots. It says the people are not getting enough foodgrains and clothing and that there can be no true happiness in the absence of noble qualities.

I see no advantage in printing anything from this. Criticism will always be there and it hardly needs proclaiming that there can be no happiness without noble qualities. It needs to be acted upon—by you and me and everybody.

BAPU

ADVOCATE
BOMBAY HIGH COURT

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

123. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 3, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter just now. I am sending to you Manilal's letter which I got yesterday. Please pass it on to Sita. I am glad that Manilal wired asking you to stay on. At this time of struggle, what else could you do but go to jail? I should like your going to jail, but I would not send you to South Africa just for that. But then this is my personal view. What really matters is what you think and what Manilal thinks.

I intend to entrain for Wardha on Monday and expect to reach there on Tuesday morning by the Mail. Whether this comes about is in God's hands.

I shall not dictate any more. You can travel in my compartment; I am sure there will be room for you. You did well in putting Arun and Ila to school. I have no time to write to them today.

Blessings from
BAPU

AKOLA

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

124. LETTER TO QURESHI

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 3, 1946

BHAI QURESHI,

Bapuji is here these days. He will leave Poona for Sevagram on 5-8-46 by the morning train at 10.40. At Kalyan Station, his bogey will be attached to the Nagpur Mail.

I have to request you to send, if possible, a tin of cow's ghee with someone to the Nagpur Mail leaving Bombay at about 4.30 p. m. on 5-8-46. The gentleman can return after delivering the tin at Kalyan Station to one of us in Bapu's compartment.

CWMG - LXXXV

Please excuse us for the trouble. I am writing this at Bapu's instance.

Pranams from yours respectfully,
MUNNALAL

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

125. DOCTORS CRITICIZED

1. Whether it is not a matter of common experience that the diagnosis by doctors is a very uncertain quantity and varies from time to time in the same case and often from doctor to doctor, and many cases remain undiagnosed until they recover or die?

2. Assuming that the diagnosis is correct, what useful purpose does it serve if it cannot be followed by remedial measures which lead to a cure, even on paper. Medical books do not speak with a certain voice on this point. If nature cure alone is to be followed, why is a diagnosis needed at all, considering that it recognizes the unity of disease and not hundreds of diseases which the doctors believe in?

3. Do the doctors make any use of their knowledge of the body in prescribing medical treatment as distinguished from surgical treatment? If not, why should the doctors get credit for having once upon a time read physiology and anatomy which are soon forgotten for want of use in actual practice? Are not the *vaids* entitled to equal credit or discredit for studying the physiology and pathology of *tridosha*[1] and not making but a nominal use of it in actual practice?

4. Are not the defects attributed to the *vaids* really due to the omission of its duty by the State to provide institutions for research, etc.? How can the system be blamed for the fault of the individual or the Government? Even the doctors in private practice carry out no research and very few of them even read about researches carried on abroad.

5. Does not the constant examination of Mahatmaji's body by the doctors give them an undue and undeserved prominence in the public eye and so tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine which also have an equal if not greater claim on Mahatmaji's attention?

[1] This attributes the case of disease to the imbalance of the three humours, namely, *Vata* or wind, *Pitta* or bile and *Kaf* or phlegm.

CWMG - LXXV

These are Shri Brijlal Nehru's questions to which I reply as follows:

1. What the question implies is very true. Nevertheless doctors flourish. This phenomenon should make us all think.

2. My experience is that a correct diagnosis is followed by a remedial measure answering the diagnosis. It will be wrong to blame medical books because they mention several alternative measures. The complicated human system does not lend itself to one certain remedy. It would be untrue to say that nature cure does not demand any diagnosis. As it believes in unity of disease and unity of cure, diagnosis adopted in nature cure is much simpler. Unity of disease and unity of cure is a good generalization. No nature cure man blindly applies earth poultices in all cases.

3. It is highly unfair to say that in their practice doctors make no use of their knowledge of physiology and anatomy. No comparison can be set up between doctors and *vaids* for they employ wholly dissimilar methods of diagnosis. I am utterly ignorant of the value of the *tridosha* theory.

4. I am unable to subscribe to the condemnation of the State for not providing institutions for research. I have always blamed the *vaids'* apathy in the matter of real research. The top ones are busy making money. The others are too ignorant to do so or are easily satisfied with what they find in the orthodox Ayurvedic books. I am sorry for this view. I come to it, in spite of my great regard for the Ayurvedic system and the Yunani which are suited to the soil.

5. I do not think that constant examination by medical friends of my body gives them undue or any prominence. They do not stand in need of any. They were all flourishing before I appeared on the scene. Nor does it tend to put into the background the other systems of medicine. I have friends among *vaids* and *hakims*. But they do not need elaborate or frequent diagnosis. I submit my body to the diagnosis which is unfortunately advertised but I do not submit it to the treatment by drugs. The treatment is principally confined to the use of the five agencies of nature, diet changes and massage.

My love of nature cure and of indigenous systems does not blind me to the advance that Western medicine has made in spite of the fact that I have stigmatized it as black magic. I have used the harsh term and I do not withdraw it, because of the fact that it has countenanced vivisection and all the awfulness it means and because it will stop at no practice,

however bad it may be, if it prolongs the life of the body and because it ignores the immortal soul which resides in the body. I cling to nature cure in spite of its great limitations and in spite of the lazy pretensions of nature-curists. Above all, in nature cure, everybody can be his or her own doctor, not so in the various systems of medicine.

URULI KANCHAN, August 4, 1946

Harijan, 11-8-1946

126. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

POONA,
August 4, 1946

DEAR MARY,

Bapu got your letter duly and was glad to have it. He hopes you will continue to give him such news as is worth giving from time to time. We follow it all in the papers with very deep interest. You can imagine how Bapu's heart is with them all there. He is wonderfully well considering the heavy burden he carries. We are off to Sevagram tomorrow. I do not think we have been more than a month in any one place since last October ! Dr. Sushila is engaged to be married to Kaka Kalelkar's younger son. Kanu and his wife are setting up house as soon as we return to Sevagram. It will be nice to get there again after so long. My love to you and Bapu sends his too.

Yours,
AMRIT

[PS.]

Mira is in her Ashram in the U. P.

From a photostat : G. N. 8086. Also C. W. 3416. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

CWMG-LXXXV

127. LETTER TO DINSHAW MEHTA

URULI KANCHAN, DIST. POONA,
August 4, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

My idea of developing nature cure in Uruli Kanchan and the villages of India is fast expanding. It means teaching the hygiene of the body, mind and soul of the individual and society. Thus the workers in Uruli Kanchan have, besides cleaning the streets of the village, and attending to their bodily ailments through the judicious use of earth, sun, ether, light and water, to attend to the pauperism of the criminal tribes called the Garudis—described in law as one of the criminal tribes of India[1] —and the rapacity of Pathans in exacting interest, [which] are all social diseases demanding treatment by a real nature cure man. That, ordinarily, these things are not regarded as diseases in the nature cure books does not worry me. I, and if you like, we, as trustees for nature cure in the villages and cities of India cannot be satisfied with less. And, therefore, we cannot be content if we periodically reduce obesity and deal with other ailments, knowing that the same patients will suffer from the same diseases and return annually for treatment. The workers in Uruli Kanchan have been doing some such work as I have described above, but not methodically. Now they must not be satisfied unless they become efficient workers and train similar workers who will be able to replace them. For this work, we do not need a long course. Our aim should not be to replace surgeons or physicians of modern type or *hakims*. Our work is conceived in a different key. It requires original training. We have to produce original books. It needs concentration of work in Uruli Kanchan. Before a visible picture, considered in this light emerges, and you are able to assimilate it, we may not be able to do much in Sinhagad.

Mahatma, Vol. VII, p. 192

[1] *Vide* also pp. 118-9.

CWMG - LXXXV

128. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

August 4, 1946

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

You have given me a second purse for which I thank you. Still there is some deficit. I have been told that it will be made up in two or three months.

I consider the money you have given the very minimum. The great work which is to be done here calls for your full co-operation. That work is the developing of the body, mind and soul of Uruli. For this, the co-operation of every caste, of the old and young, of children and women is needed. Only when we forget caste differences will our threefold afflictions subside. If Uruli Kanchan accomplishes this work, we have some hope for the seven lakh villages of India.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2742. Courtesy : Manibhai Patel

129. LETTER TO RAJA OF PHALTAN

POONA,
August 5, 1946

RAJASAHEB,

I have your letter. I thank you for it. I have not read the papers enclosed with it. I understand your point. Personally I am not involved in the Princes' problem. That is why I advised you not to go by what I say. The right thing for you is to act as Panditji suggests. Today he is the voice of the people of the States and of the whole of India.

Had Tatya Saheb not suggested my publishing what I wrote to you, I would never have considered publishing it. There is nothing special in what I have told you. Should my

[1] The written speech was read out at the meeting.

CWMG - LXXV

words be misunderstood, I shall try to remove the misunderstanding. Excuse me for not dealing with the matter further.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Marathi in *Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 17

130. A KHADI LOVER'S COMPLAINT[1]

A Gujarati khadi lover living in South India writes as follows:

> In the Khadi Bhandar here, it is hard to get cotton, spindles, charkhas and their accessories. I have up till now been carrying on with my own cotton. The slivers from cotton bought here were not at all good. I discovered it was of poor quality after I had bought it. I found hand-carding (*tunai*) of it difficult and could not get anyone here to teach me either.
>
> I have just given my full quota of self-spun and self-carded yarn for 1946 to be woven into cloth. At first one could procure coupons for self-spun yarn and buy a certain amount of khadi with it. The yarn given in is to be woven into saris and dhotis. How are we to buy cloth for our other requirements of underwear, sheets, towels, etc.? I went to the Bhandar recently and they demanded the same number of hanks as the amount of rupees the cloth was worth. In addition I was told I had to be a member of the Bhandar. I spend 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily in carding and spinning. If I can spare any more time, I devote it also to this work. But, in spite of all my labour, I shall never be able to produce enough yarn for my requirements. What am I to do? The fact that I am unacquainted with the language is another difficulty. It would be easier if all the rules regarding khadi were written up in Hindustani. Moreover, it seems impossible to get anything done without outside influence. Is one to call it one's misfortune or part of our nature? One needs some backing even to buy a spindle, to say nothing about a charkha. If the Charkha Sangh people themselves do not realize what difficulties one has to face in the matter of buying even small requirements, to whom can one turn for help?
>
> I spoke about this to a well-known Gujarati friend here. He got enraged. 'Gandhiji has constituted himself Viceroy. Why then should he listen to anyone? He does whatever comes into his head. Let him do so. We shall get khadi from wherever we can and what is more, we

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.

CWMG - XXXV

shall encourage uncertified khadi. As for Pyarelalji, he only puts up to Gandhiji what he chooses and throws the rest into the waste-paper basket.'

The above angry criticism about my post does not need any comment, beyond saying that every worth-while letter is put up before me and that, if I were to be acquainted with or read every letter that comes, the whole of my time would be spent on the post and I would be rendered useless for my real work. But what has been said about khadi demands consideration. That Sales Bhandars may disappear under the new scheme only means that they should be converted into schools for teaching all the processes of khadi. Therefore, cotton, charkhas, spindles and all other accessories of spinning, carding and ginning should certainly be available there. Above all, the khadi worker should be polite and obliging at all times. If he is not, it will mean the end of khadi and it will be a tragedy if khadi workers themselves were to be the cause of its death.

The criticism in the letter under reference can only be applicable to one or two Bhandars. This note is, therefore, only meant for those to whom it does apply. All such should early set their house in order.

Khadi-wearers who spin regularly and give in their self-spun yarn for being woven into cloth should be, as they are, entitled to purchase against cash the amount of khadi which, according to the A. I. S. A. rules, their above-mentioned yarn permits them to buy.

SEVAGRAM, August 6, 1946
Harijan, 18-8-1946

131. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
[*August 6, 1946*][2]

If I ask you how many of you spin, I am afraid very few hands will go up.[3] You have just heard the Ashram inmates giving an account of the day's spinning at the end of the prayer. The

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 11-8-1946

[2] Pyarelal says Gandhiji made the speech on the day he arrived in Wardha. This was on August 6.

[3] Gandhiji was addressing visitors who had come to Sevagram for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee to be held at Wardha.

reason is that spinning has become a part and parcel of the Ashram prayer. The conception of spinning as sacrifice has been linked with the idea of God, the reason being that we believe that in the charkha and what it stands for, lies the only hope of salvation of the poor.

He had come to realize that it was difficult to earn one's livelihood through the charkha, but the villagers could easily spin for their own clothes. Because they had not realized the self-help principle in the matter of clothing, they showed a deplorable lack of it in other things too. It stultified even agriculture, so that they suffered destitution in the midst of plenty.

We have plenty of fertile land where we can grow fruits, vegetables and other food-stuffs. But we do not make full use of our opportunity. Instead of eating fresh, whole foods, we eat them denatured. We grow cereals and eat them after converting them practically into dust. God has given us everything we need and He has endowed us with intellect and the use of two hands. We could raise our food, grow cotton and prepare our own clothes, rear cattle and supply milk to our children. Yet we go hungry and naked. Our children are ill-fed and under-nourished. Could there be anything more tragic?

He compared the cities with the villages. The villages could subsist by themselves in regard to all the necessaries of life. Not so the cities. They could neither grow their own food, nor produce cotton for cloth, nor keep cattle without the help and co-operation of the villages. And yet he knew of no village in India which was today self-sufficient. Sevagram should have been such a village. But it was still far from it. Our villagers were lazy and lethargic and killed time by gambling, etc. If they tried to leave the wheel and concentrate on land exclusively, he warned them, they would soon find that it was not practicable. On the contrary, resuscitation of the wheel would help to revitalize agriculture by making them shed their inertia and apathy.

Referring to the unthinking admiration of the visitors who had literally laid siege to his hut the whole day, he described how it had driven him to desperation almost. He was sick of it. It could do no good either to him or to them. True admiration consisted in carrying out the wishes of the person one admired, not merely staring at him and thus wasting his time and one's own.[1]

Unless there is an atmospheric calamity or some drastic action by Government, my programme is to stay for six months

[1] What follows is *Bombay Chronicle* version of the speech reported under August 6.

here from August to January and later six months in Uruli Kanchan, Panchgani, Poona and near about.

Referring to the discontinuance in regular spinning by the Ashramites in the Mahadevbhai Desai Cottage, Mahatma Gandhi said:

When once begun it should have continued even in the absence of Durgabehn Desai. I have decided to spend 30 to 45 minutes daily in spinning in Mahadev's cottage.

He made a feeling reference to Mr. Mahadev Desai's association with him in the Aga Khan Palace in 1942.

Mahatma Gandhi made a passing reference to the Constituent Assembly which he said might take some time.

Harijan, 18-8-1946, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-8-1946

132. HORSE RACING[1]

I have written before regarding the ruination of men and money through horse racing but a very strongly-worded letter from a friend who says that gambling on the race course is not a lesser evil than the drink habit, constrains me to write again on this subject. The writer further says:

> Special trains are run for the races and are full of people who wear Gandhi caps, call themselves Congressmen and go there only to waste their money. Where does this money come from? We now have popular Ministries, but they too are silent and put up with the evil.

Although, in my opinion, gambling at races is not as great an evil as drinking of alcohol, one ought not really to draw comparisons. Less bad does not make gambling a good thing. I do not know all the intricacies of horse racing. All I can say is that if it is within the competence of the present Government to put an end to the evil, it should certainly do so.

SEVAGRAM, August 7, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 18-8-1946.

CWMG - LXXV

133. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA (C. P.),
August 7, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I have before me your two kind letters. Of course both will be treated as private and confidential, though you have marked one as personal and the other, received only two days ago, as private and confidential.

I see from Reuter's telegrams that your health has again given way and you have been obliged to take long rest. I am sorry and hope you are listening to your medical advisers and not wearing yourself out. I have come to know you and of you more through your good wife than through anyone else.

I understand all you say about your and your colleagues' attitude.[1] I have always justified it from your own standpoint. Therefore, so long as that trust continues, you will find me defending you. The testing time is coming. I shall watch what you will do in view of the latest Muslim League decision.[2]

With regards to you both and all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS
LONDON

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 216

[1] The addressee in his letter of July 20 had said that he and his colleagues of the Cabinet Mission were aware that Gandhiji had a "feeling" that the practical steps they had put forward did not embody the "spirit of their desires" and proceeded to explain that their "procedure was not based upon an ideal but on a practical solution of the problem". He was convinced that the best practical solution for the Interim Government was a coalition.

[2] On July 29 the Council of the All-India Muslim League had passed two resolutions, one rejecting the Cabinet Mission proposals and the other deciding to resort to direct action for the achievement of Pakistan.

134. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I arrived here yesterday. Sushila, Ila and Su's two friends joined me at Akola. I read your letter. We had a long talk. I approved of your idea and therefore I stated categorically that it was Sushila's duty to stay here and look after the children till you sent for her. Her own desire is to help you and join in the struggle, but her duty is to do as you wish. I assume that whenever you feel that Sushila should return there, you will unhesitatingly write or cable. Sushila is returning to Akola today. She will stay for a day at Mahila Ashram. The rest Sushila will write, or Kishorelal at any rate. He keeps indifferent health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4987

135. TRIBUTE TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 7, 1946

Gurudev's life was a continuous poem of service. He served Hindustan to the last breath of his life.

The Hitavada, 9-8-1946

136. QUESTION BOX

THE CENTRAL POINT MISSED

The following questions have been given by a British military officer who read with great interest the article in the *Harijan* of July 28, 1946 on 'Independence'[2]. The officer is a military engineer, widely travelled in America and Europe, and has seen with his own eyes the horrors of the war in Germany.

[1] The occasion was the death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.
[2] *Vide* pp. 32-4.

Q. 1. In this ideal State (there is no doubt that it is ideal) how can one be sure that outside aggression can be avoided? If the State has no modern army with modern weapons which are the product of the machine age, an invading army with modern weapons could overrun the country and subject the inhabitants to slavery.

A. The questioner, who claims to have read and reread my article carefully and says he has liked it and is a military man, has evidently missed the central point of my article, viz., that however small a nation or even a group may be, it is able, even as the individual, provided that it has one mind as also the will and the grit, to defend its honour and self-respect against a whole world in arms. Therein consists the matchless strength and beauty of the unarmed. That is non-violent defence which neither knows nor accepts defeat at any stage. Therefore, a nation or a group which has made non-violence its final policy, cannot be subjected to slavery even by the atom bomb.

Why in Want of Food?

Q. 2. India at the present time cannot grow enough food for its population. To buy food from abroad, India must sell other goods to pay for it, and in order to sell such goods, India must produce at competitive prices which, in my opinion, cannot be done without modern machines. How can this be done, unless the machine replaces manual labour?

A. The statement in the first sentence of the question is wholly wrong. I hold, in spite of opinions expressed to the contrary, that India is able at the present moment to grow enough food. I have previously stated the condition for growing enough food, viz., that the Government at the head should be National and a Government that knows its business and is capable of dealing sternly with all profiteering, black-marketing and, worst of all, laziness of mind and body.

The second part of the question really falls to the ground if my answer to the first is correct. But for the sake of dismissing the plea on behalf of modern machines as against human labour of which there is plenty in a land like India, I would say that if all the able-bodied millions work with one mind and with zeal, they could compete on their own terms with any nation, however well-equipped it may be with modern machines. The questioner should not forget that modern machines have up till now gone side by side with the exploitation of the machineless nations, dubbed weak. I use the participle 'dubbed' because they will refuse to be weak immediately they realize the fact

that they are even at the present moment stronger than the nations equipped with the most modern weapons and machinery.

SWARAJ THROUGH SPINNING

A Congressman writes:

> Q. You will perhaps agree that in spite of considerable publicity, spinning and weaving have not yet found favour with the public to the extent to which they should have done. I think if every Congress Committee—at least those of the big cities — starts a sort of coaching-class for the public for this purpose, it can do immense good. Many people — particularly the poor — do not take to spinning because they do not know spinning and weaving, what type of wheels are more convenient to use and give greater output, how these are properly operated, how best they should dispose of or utilize the yarn thus produced, etc. If once or twice a week, some such classes are undertaken after proper publicity and people are instructed in this technique by practical demonstrations, things should improve much. At least the experiment is worth a trial by the Congress. Even if regular classes are not held but a group or groups of experts of this technique undertake a tour and give demonstrations and instruction to the public for some days in each city, it can serve the purpose to a considerable extent.

Questions like the above often come to me from Congressmen. Since this is exhaustive, I reproduce it as it is. The signature is undecipherable. Therefore, I am unable to say to which province the questioner belongs. Surely it would have been appropriate if the writer had been good enough to frame his letter in Hindustani. The vast mass of Congressmen who are not on the Congress register but who are more Congressmen than the registered ones, do not know English and those who do, care less for spinning than for being on the Congress register for reasons they know and which I need not specify. There is, however, a great deal in what the writer says. If all Congress offices became institutions for teaching the art of spinning from the anterior and posterior processes right up to the manufacture of khadi, I am quite clear that the face of the villages would be changed and swaraj would be ushered in through the effort of the masses. I have shown in these columns how it will be ushered in. These lines are written to emphasize the point made by the correspondent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946
Harijan, 18-8-1946

CWMG - LXXV

137. RAMANAMA AGAIN

A friend sends me a letter received by him for an answer. The letter is long. I have only copied here the relevant part:

> India is in his blood but why should he cause resentment among his countrymen who are not of his religious faith by holding daily prayer meetings and chanting Ramanama (meaning the name of Rama, the Hindu God)? He should realize that India is full of manifold faiths and most of the conservatives are apt to mistake him (and this is one of the pleas of the Muslim League) if he openly goes on talking in the name of the Hindu gods. One of his pet terms is the establishment of *Rama-Rajya* (the rule of Rama). What would a devout Muslim feel about this?

I must repeat for the thousandth time that Ramanama is one of the many names for God. The same prayer meetings have recitations from the Koran and the Zend Avesta. Devout Muslims, for the very reason that they are devout, have never objected to the chant of Ramanama. Ramanama is not an idle chant. It is conceived as a mode of addressing the all-pervasive God known to me, as to millions of Hindus, by the familiar name of Ramanama. 'Nama' at the end of Rama is the most significant part. It means the 'nama' without the Rama of history. Be that as it may, why should an open profession by me of my faith offend anybody, much less the Muslim League? No one is obliged to join these meetings and having joined is not obliged to take part in the chant. All that the visitors are expected to do is not to mar the harmony of the meeting and to tolerate the proceedings even when they are not in sympathy with any part.

As to the use of the phrase '*Rama-Rajya*', why should it offend after my having defined its meaning many times? It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier Province or address predominantly Muslim audiences I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai Raj, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as the Kingdom of God on earth. Any other mode would, for me, be self-suppression and hypocrisy.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

138. IS GOD A PERSON OR A PRINCIPLE?[1]

A friend from Baroda, who writes in English, says:

> You ask us to pray to God to give light to the whites in South Africa and strength and courage to the Indians there to remain steadfast to the end. A prayer of this nature can only be addressed to a person. If God is an all-pervading and all-powerful force, what is the point of praying to Him? He goes on with His work whatever happens.

I have written on this topic before. However, if one keeps on saying the same thing again and again in different words some new words or phrases used are likely to help someone or other to understand the matter better. In my view, whether called Rama, Rahman, Ormuzd, God or Krishna, He is that Supreme Power that man is ever trying to find a name for. Man, though imperfect, strives after perfection and in so doing is caught up in the tides of thought. Then like a baby learning to toddle, he now stumbles, now stands up. Thus if we say that a reasoning man is only a few months' old child, we shall not in the least be exaggerating, judging by the immensity of cosmic time; we shall be stating a simple truth. Man can express himself only by means of language. But there can be no such medium as language for the Power that is God. Man however can describe this Infinite Power only with his imperfect means. If one has grasped this there is nothing left further to ask. Then it would be right to pray to Him in the language of man, for one can comprehend Him somewhat by fitting Him into one's own mould. One ought always to remember, while dwelling on Him, that one is but a drop, the tiniest of creatures of the ocean that is God. One may experience Him by being in Him, but one can never describe Him. As Madame Blavatsky puts it, man, in praying, worships the Great Power residing within. Only he who knows this may pray. He who does not, need not pray. God will not be offended by it, but I can say from experience that that man will be the loser by not praying. So it is immaterial if some worship God as a Person and some

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "Is God a Person or Force?"

CWMG - LXXXV

others as a Great Power. Both are right, each in his own way. Nobody knows what is intrinsically right and nobody is likely ever to know. The ideal, to be an ideal, must forever remain out of reach. All the other forces are static, while God is the Life Force, immanent and at the same time transcendent.

SEVAGRAM, August 8, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

139. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. This is my order and my advice: You will stir from that place only after finishing your work there. Take it as completed only after Profulla Babu and Bhagirathji say so. Thereafter you should go to Badshahkhan. In whatever situation you are it is better to stay there till I come. I will not take you to Bengal if you come here in the meantime.

I shall see about the money. Pyarelal is in Bombay at present. He may come in a day or two.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 524

140. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have read your letter and copies of the correspondence with . . . .[1] I shall know more when I have further information. If you can take care of your health I shall consider it as part of the service rendered by you. But you being the Sardar, who may tell you to do anything?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

[1] Omission as in the source

141. LETTER TO HIRALAL DESAI

[*August 8, 1946*][1]

BHAI HIRALAL,

I have your letter and I have gone through it. I am doing all that I can. It is a difficult task, but many painful problems can be solved through courteous dealing. I have with me the report from Aryanayakum and Ram. It is full of information.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

HIRALAL DESAI
CEYLON

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

142. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 8, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

You could not catch hold of Munnalal but I had also spoken to you about another man called Ramprasad[2]. He is not physically as sturdy as Munnalal, but is just as hard-working. He is conversant with book-keeping. He has been trained under Bapa whom he has served well. He is married and has a child. If you decide to have him, he will for the time being come alone. He certainly needs Rs. 150 but I think he should be paid Rs. 200 if possible. There will be no question of raising this amount. If he does not need the whole amount he is honest enough to return the surplus. His child however is delicate. He himself is of course delicate, and so is his wife. Hence I suggest Rs. 200, so that in the event of a contingency arising he should not be without resources. I want to see to it that he is not obliged to economize on his food. I think your association ought to provide him residential accommodation.

[1] The source has this letter among those dated August 8, 1946.
[2] Ramprasad Vyas

If he were to fend for himself and pay the current market rent he would hardly be free to move around. And as your work progresses he might have to run around a bit. Ramprasad's knowledge of English is rudimentary. Of course he understands it. He may also write it but will make mistakes. Gujarati, however, he knows well. He understands Marathi. He has an elementary knowledge of indigenous medicine. His wife is a nice lady full of the spirit of service. And she has become one with Ramprasad. In her own life she does not harbour any prejudice. She is simple. I rarely have English-knowing women around me. This one knows absolutely no English. She can read and write Gujarati. Please let me have an early reply to this if possible.

Remember that Ramanama is the unfailing remedy for eradicating malaria. Having become a trustee of a nature-cure institution you have got to appreciate this thing. And Ramanama is the same as Ahurmazda.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

143. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA C. P.,
August 8, 1946

BROTHER MUNJE,

I have both your letters. My views on bigamy are opposite to yours. What can I do?

About Ahmedabad I have said what I wanted to.

Your
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi : C. W. 9764. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

144. COMPENSATION FOR MURDER[1]

I have been asked whether the brother or other relatives of the late Rajabali should demand compensation from the Government for his murder. The deceased himself would not have considered such a death a loss. He would have held that such a murder, if allowed to go unavenged, would ultimately put an end to further murders and was therefore beneficial. To demand even the smallest compensation for the death of such a man is bound to wash away to some extent the good that it might do. How can the spirit of the deceased tolerate this? I find much substance in this argument. Murder cannot be avenged by accepting compensation for it. The proper way to avenge murder is not to answer murder with murder. Those who hold this view will not demand money for murder or commit murder in retaliation. Avenging murder with murder will only lead to an increase in murders. We can see it clearly today. It may satisfy the individual but I am certain that it can never bring peace to society or advance it.

The question can certainly arise what an individual can do in a society where murder for murder is the rule. The answer would lie not in precept but in setting an example. And only those have a right to set an example who have the right to avenge, namely, the relatives of Rajabali. In the end the decision has to be theirs. I have only pointed out the way of ahimsa as I have understood it.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946.

CWMG - LXXXV

145. WHAT A CHILD CAN GIVE[1]

In Madras there is a little girl of five years called Aruna.[2] Last January when I was in Madras she watched me spin and was seized with the desire to do so herself. The atmosphere in which she is being reared has a spinning bias, but her cultured parents have been averse to forcing anything on her. They were content with what they were able to make her do by suggestion and example. When Aruna evinced enthusiasm for spinning they were very pleased to give her encouragement. The result was that in a single day Aruna had prepared a sliver and brought it to me. Then when she saw me spin that sliver her joy knew no bounds. I explained to her the defects of the sliver and her parents helped her to remove them. Since then she has been making slivers and spinning quite well. Thus this five-year-old girl learnt two things at the same time: to clean and card cotton and make slivers and also to give to others the produce of her labour. When children take money from their parents to give it to others all the merit goes to the parents. A child truly gives when it gives what it has earned with its own labour, be it slivers or some other thing.

SEVAGRAM, August 9, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 18-8-1946

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 18-8-1946, under the title "What a Child Can Teach Us".

[2] *Vide* p. 142.

146. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

SEVAGRAM, *via* WARDHA, C.P.,
August 9, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I am acknowledging your letter to Bapuji on his behalf. He hopes it will not be necessary for Shri Shriramulu to fast again.

I hope Shrimati Parvati will have an interesting and successful time in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat : G. N. 3231

147. LETTER TO VINODINI

SEVAGRAM,
August 9, 1946

CHI. VINODINI,

I preserved your article *Arunani Puni* till today. My first reading of it was cursory but interesting at it is, I do not consider it fit for publication. I see a mother's love in every single line, yet I would not call it literature. I cannot claim to know much about literature. Besides, your article is, however unconsciously, laden with praise for me; no one is likely to gain from the publication of such an article. I therefore refrained from publishing it but preserved it because I had a mind to draw a lesson from it—how much a child can accomplish if it is led along the right way. You will find it in *Harijan*.[1] You might not have a copy and I can understand that as a mother you would value it, hence I am returning the article.

Blessings from
BAPU

VINODINIBEHN
MADRAS

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

[1] *Vide* p. 141.

148. SPEECH AT SEKSARIA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE[1]

WARDHA,
August 9, 1946

Giving a severe castigation to the unruly crowd that had indulged in window smashing and would have smashed in the roof too if they could, in the afternoon, Gandhiji remarked that it augured ill for the independence to come.[2] The Working Committee which was holding its meeting in their city was considering how to win Independence for the people of India in the shortest time. It was not labouring for a change of masters. If the masses wanted to enjoy independence, they had first to learn the secret of observing voluntary discipline. Otherwise discipline would have to be imposed upon them by the powers that be. That would not be independence but its negation. Every people got the Government they deserved. If they indulged in hooliganism, so would the Government and its officials in the name of law and order. The result would not be freedom or independence but a balancing of anarchies, each trying to keep the other in check. Voluntary discipline was the first requisite of corporate freedom. If the people were well-behaved the Government officials would become their true servants. Otherwise they would ride on their necks, not without a semblance of justification. During the Boer War he had seen thousands of soldiers perform a noiseless march through a dense, tropical jungle in the middle of the night, in pitch darkness for not even a match-stick was to be struck to light a cigarette, lest it should betray their movements to the enemy. The whole troop formation moved like one man in perfect silence and harmony. The need for discipline for a nation on its march towards independence was infinitely greater. Without it, *Ramarajya* which meant the kingdom of God on earth would remain an empty dream.

The Principal and the Management of the Seksaria College had taken a big step in deciding to make the mother tongue the medium of instruction in their college. But the reform would be still-born if they were lazy or if the public did not co-operate.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the inauguration of the change from English to Marathi as the medium of instruction. Those attending included Ravi Shanker Shukla, Premier of C. P., and the Vice-Chancellor of the Nagpur University.

[2] According to the source nearly ten thousand people had come to Wardha from outside and the crowd was so unmanageable and indisciplined that the time and venue of the function had to be shifted and it was held in the open instead of in the College hall.

A fear had been expressed, observed Gandhiji, that the propagation of *Rashtrabhasha* or the national tongue would prove inimical to the provincial languages. That fear was rooted in ignorance. The present step of the Seksaria College was a living refutation of that suspicion. Provincial tongues provided the sure foundation on which the edifice of the national tongue should rest. The two were intended to complement, not supplant each other.

He deprecated the suggestion that it would need a lot of research and preparation to enable them to impart technical education through the medium of the mother tongue. Those who argued like that were unaware of the rich treasure of expressions and idioms that were buried in the dialects of our villages. In Gandhiji's opinion there was no need to go to Sanskrit or Persian in search for many expressions. He had been in Champaran and he had found that the village folk there could fully express themselves with ease and without the help of a single foreign expression or idiom. As an illustration of their resourcefulness, he mentioned the word *hava gadi* which they had coined to denote a motor car. He challenged university scholars to coin a more poetic expression than that for a motor car.

One of the speakers had remarked that the reform would mean a saving of at least three years to the alumni of the College. But Gandhiji was of opinion that the saving in time and labour would be even greater.

Moreover, what they learnt through the mother tongue, they would easily be able to communicate to their mothers and sisters at home and thereby bring the latter into line with themselves. Woman had been described as man's better half. Today there was a hiatus between the thought world of men and women respectively in India, thanks to the intrusion of the foreign medium. Our womenfolk were backward and ignorant with the result that India was today like a patient with paralysis of the better side. India could not realize her full stature unless that handicap was removed.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

CWMG - LXXV

149. HOW TO THINK OF GOD

A correspondent writes:

> You say that the rule should be that during prayers, everyone should sit with closed eyes and think of nothing but God. The question arises as to how and in what form we have to think of God?

True meditation consists in closing the eyes and ears of the mind to all else except the object of one's devotion. Hence the closing of eyes during prayers is an aid to such concentration. Man's conception of God is naturally limited. Each one has, therefore, to think of Him as best appeals to him, provided that the conception is pure and uplifting.

SEVAGRAM, August 10, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

150. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEVAGRAM,
August 10, 1946

BHAI PAKVASA,

I am sending you the draft of the Trust Deed of the Panchgani property and all the details of the auction sale carried through the High Court. The rest you will be able to obtain from the High Court itself. And whatever you cannot get now, you will be able to get from there when it is available. If, however, I can supply anything, please let me know. The Trust Deed must be in Gujarati or Marathi or Hindustani and if it is in Hindustani, it should be in Nagari and Urdu scripts. But not in English. We have adopted this as our policy. Afterwards you will have to show to Mavalankar the final draft which emerges. Shantilal insists that this should be done.

I hope you are keeping good health. Observe the rules.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 4785. Courtesy : Mangaldas Pakvasa

151. LETTER TO ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 10, 1946

BHAI ADVAIT KUMAR GOSWAMI,

Gandhiji has received both your letters. He does not send any messages. It is good that Raja Mahendra Pratap is coming back. You will all be pleased.

About South Africa Gandhiji feels that none of us should go there. They won't allow the party to land at all.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 805

152. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *August 11, 1946*][2]

FRIEND: You have called mine a negative attitude. But I am quite clear in my own mind. I do not mind the Congress High Command carrying on negotiations with the Cabinet Mission. But suppose the negotiations fail. What then? The British Government is prepared with its plan of action in that case. But we are not. It is my belief that we shall have to go through another struggle before freedom can be won. I find that you have a revolutionary mentality. I do not like *himsa* any more than you do. It is bad. My goal is the same as yours. Show a sure non-violent way of achieving our goal of Independence within a definite period and I shall most willingly follow you. In a way I do believe in ahimsa. A repetition of the 1933-37 pattern of struggle won't do. The leaders are put behind the bars at the very commencement of the struggle and then all contact between them and the masses ceases. It is not fair that we should sit in jails in comparative comfort and safety and expect the people to face the fire. The leaders should bear the brunt. Let there be, say, a hundred people with your name on the top followed by those of other front-rank Congress leaders to start a chain fast unto death, after giving due notice to the Government, and I am sure before the list is exhausted India will be free.

[1] & [2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" dated 11-8-1946

The interviewer added that he himself would in that event, be prepared to abandon his own programme and join the fast. His complaint was that no top-ranking Congressman with the exception of Jairamdas Doulatram had yet received a bullet, although perhaps hundreds had died in recent years of bullets and lathi charges at the hands of the police and the military.

G. If and when the call comes to fast unto death, I will do so irrespective of others joining or not. Fasting unto death is the last and the most potent weapon in the armoury of satyagraha. It is a sacred thing. But it must be accepted with all its implications. It is not the fast itself but what it implies that matters. Have not even hypocrites been known to make a pretence of fasting? Such fasts are a plague and a nuisance. They do not count. If I fast and you send a hundred or even ten men who would undertake it with a pure heart, I shall be happy. But such a fast should not be undertaken inside the prison.

F. What I mean is that mere jail-going is not enough. People should remain outside and face repression. Nine young boys faced the bullets and died before the Secretariat at Patna. Think how it would have electrified the masses if it had been Rajendra Babu instead of these poor boys.

G. I agree with you there. I have said before that merely filling the prisons is not enough. It is only the jail-going of the pure in heart that can bring swaraj. In fact in 1922, my instructions were that no one was to follow me in jail and that all should spin and carry out in full the constructive programme. The eighteen-fold constructive programme, if carried out in its entirety will, in my opinion, render civil disobedience unnecessary. The people of Bardoli in 1922 solemnly promised to carry out the constructive programme, to banish untouchability and liquor from their midst and to make khadi universal to the exclusion of mill cloth, imported or Indian. They have failed to fulfil their pledge up till now.

F. You say jail-going does not end the fight. We wanted to agitate for the abolition of the classification of political prisoners by the upper class prisoners voluntarily reducing themselves to 'C' class by refusing to accept privileged treatment. But some said that it was against your ideology. You wanted people to remain in the class in which they were placed.

G. That is hardly correct. In fact I do not want even the distinction between the political and non-political prisoners. I stand for fair and humane treatment of all prisoners. But mine

has been a lonely voice. Even when power was in our hands, we failed to abolish classification. I am the originator of jail-going as part of satyagraha. My jail-going was born out of ahimsa and ahimsa and privilege go ill together. I have fought the Government from inside the jail. As it is, today all sorts of people go to jail. Inside the jail, they behave anyhow, even apologize and come out. Jail-going has become a farce.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

153. A DISCUSSION[1]

[Before *August 11, 1946*][2]

QUESTION : What should be done about the strikes?[3]

ANSWER: Does it mean that the Congress has lost its hold on the people?

Q. No, but the Congress has not spoken with one voice and that has created confusion in the public mind.

A. If the strike is unjustified on merits, it should be unequivocally denounced.

Q. By whom?

A. By the Congress, of course.

Q. What do you mean by the Congress? The Working Committee might have. It has not.

A. By Congress, I mean the 400 millions of India speaking through the Working Committee.

A militant suffragette who happened to be present here joined in: "But the Working Committee no longer speaks with one voice, thanks to your choice which you have imposed upon the country. You have stifled democracy."

Gandhiji explained that the present Working Committee was not his choice but that of the Congress President who had been democratically elected. His part consisted mainly in persuading the Congress President to exercise his choice unfettered by consideration of personalities or the old tradition. The present Working Committee could not stay there for a day if it did not reflect the mind of democracy. The only condition was that

[1] & [2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 11-8-1946

[3] The questioner was the Premier of one of the Congress-ruled Provinces.

CWMG - LXXV

democracy should be wide awake and functioning. As an illustration, he mentioned the case of Mr. Churchill, who, in spite of his unique victories and achievements, had been set aside by the British people the moment he ceased to reflect the nation's mind.

The return of labour to power in such overwhelming strength is a great event in the history of political democracy. It has a lesson which we would do well to take to heart.

Another in the company suggested that some sinister influence was at the back of the present strike fever. The motive was not economic but political. What was the remedy?

A. You should reason with the strikers, warn them of the danger and resign if they or the people at large do not listen to you.

Q. But we owe a responsibility to the country. Shall we be justified in abandoning the country to sinister influences, who in fact want the Congress to go out of office and want to create chaos?

A. That is the only way in which democracy can function. It will educate the people. Sinister influences will not flourish if popular support is lacking. Once the people realize that the Congress won't carry on its rule by force, they will cease to act thoughtlessly or in an irresponsible manner and the sinister influence will be sterilized.

Harijan, 18-8-1946

154. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Representatives from Hyderabad have seen me. They are Shri Kashinath Vaidya and Swami Ramanand Tirth. They have discussed with me the so-called reforms contemplated in the State. I have studied them somewhat as they appeared in the Press. The reforms seem to be only so-called. To me they appear to be a step backward rather than forward. I do not know that you can do much to alter them but I wonder why you cannot scrap them altogether. The least that any State can do at this time is to recognize the status and influence of the States' Peoples' Conference, of which Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is the President, and secure its endorsement before proceeding

CWMG LXXXV

with any popular measure. This ensures smooth passage for any such thing.

Rajkumari has already drawn your attention to Shrimati Padmaja Naidu's pamphlet on police atrocities in some of the Hyderabad villages. I would like you to enlighten me on these two points. I am sorry to have to worry you when you have just begun your new career.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

155. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Shyamlal has sent me the letter regarding Kamalabehn. This seems a rather difficult case but our course is clear. Let her deliver the child and if when it is three years old, she still has her heart in the work of service we can make full use of her. In the meanwhile she will have a lot of spare time which she should utilize to increase her knowledge of the art of service, serve women wherever she happens to be and adapt her own life to village ways and make it becoming of a village woman. And in order to do this she should maintain close contact with the activities of the Association.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

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

156. TESTIMONIAL TO MUKUL CHANDRA DE

SEVAGRAM,
August 11, 1946

Shri Mukul De is extremely keen on the development of Indian art. It is man's prerogative to desire that which is good. But God has kept the fulfilment of man's desires in His own hands. Therefore, prayerful reliance on God must be Shri Mukul De's sole support.

M. K. GANDHI

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

CWMG - LXXXV

157. HIS GREATEST CHARACTERISTIC

The greatest characteristic I can think of about Mahadev Desai was his ability to reduce himself to zero, whenever occasion demanded it.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

158. NOTES

SOUTH AFRICA

The heroic struggle of the Indian settlers in South Africa continues with unabated zeal. It promises to be prolonged. The longer the resisters are made to suffer, the greater will be their glory and reward. It is true of all long suffering. What the Government of the Union of South Africa has done so deliberately is not going to be changed suddenly, even for the sufferings of the brave men and women. This is said not to damp the zeal of the fighters but to steel them for greater and longer suffering. Their spokesmen, when they were in India, were told in plain language that they must not expect the struggle to close quickly. Time runs always in favour of the sufferer, for the simple reason that tyranny becomes more and more exposed as it is continued. In reality it is never long. Sufferers need never lose hope whether their struggle appears to have a longer lease of life or shorter, when the result is a certainty.

GOA

The Goan authorities are going on merrily with their 'humanizing' activities by gagging the people of Goa. The latest instance is that of their 'court martial' sentencing Shri Braganza Cunha to eight years and deporting him to a far off Portuguese settlement in Africa for the crime of daring to assert his elementary right of civil liberty.[1] Well has the Working Committee passed a resolution in condemnation of the policy

[1] *Vide* pp. 109-11.

CWMG - LXXXV

of the Goan authorities which stands in striking contrast to the action of the French Governor who has encouraged the people to throw in their lot with the people in British India.

SEVAGRAM, August 12, 1946

Harijan, 18-8-1946

159. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Your p. c. is interesting. You should give me the solution to your triangles. I admit my failure. I thought I knew geometry fairly well. You have demolished my pride. Having performed the act of destruction, you should now instruct by teaching me in small doses. Nothing of your correspondence is destroyed. Indeed I preserve it for days in the hope of giving time to the study of the problems set by you. And then it is destroyed.

Yours,
BAPU

UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD, SIND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

CWMG - LXXXV

160. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 12, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. If you cannot get [money] from Jayantilal, tell Sumatibehn about it. She will either give you the money or get you the book. If there is any difficulty, do let me know. If necessary, you may show her this letter.

I hope your studies are progressing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10241. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

161. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

Yours of the 3rd instant (No. 624/3) has only arrived here today, having gone to Panchgani first.

The position in Goa has not improved from the news that comes to Gandhiji. I enclose a copy of a note[1] he has written for the coming *Harijan*. While "intervention in the affairs of a friendly foreign country" may not be possible, surely a friendly remonstrance against harsh and unjust treatment of Indians should not be an impossibility.

At Gandhiji's suggestion I also enclose a copy of the Archbishop of Bombay's letter.[2] It will give you an insight into the way things are

[1] *Vide* pp. 151-2.

[2] Gandhiji had received a complaint against the Roman Catholic Bishop of Goa to the effect that the Bishop was party to the lawlessness there. Gandhiji wrote to the Archbishop of Bombay that the matter

happening in Goa. Is it not an unfriendly act to regard Indians from this part as strangers going to Goa?

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Encl: 2

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 100-1

162. LETTER TO MADHUSOODAN C. PAREKH

[*August 13, 1946*][1]

CHI. MADHUSOODAN,

I have your letter. Having known your father as intimately as I did, the news naturally came as a shock. But who can prevail against death? It will be enough if you all preserve the good name he has left behind and bring glory to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MADHUSOODAN CHAMANLAL PAREKH
P. B. NO. 40
AHMEDABAD

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

called for investigation by him. The Archbishop's reply was to the effect that "the Patriarch of Goa is responsible to the Holy See alone" and that "with all countries of the world the universal Catholic Church has to live on working compromise as to all non-essentials".

[1] The source has this letter among those dated August 13, 1946.

CWMG-LXXXV

163. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL (GADHADAWALA),

I think we should all be content with whatever Shantilal can do. But if Sir Chunnilal wishes to offer something, I would say let us have the estate known as Preston and the bungalow so that we can also open a sanatorium for the poor. Shantilal's plot cannot accommodate two projects. Therefore, please consider this matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL MOTICHAND SHAH
GADHADA, *via* BHAVNAGAR

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

164. LETTER TO MOHANLAL RUPANI

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I got your letter and Rs. 51. The amount has been credited to the Harijan account. Vrajlal's brother is bound to be like him. I can therefore understand your not introducing him. Still, if he had come to see me I would have spoken to him. I infer from your letter-head that you are quite well off. Is there some rule that letter-heads must only be printed in English? Vrajlal has lived his life in such a way that we remember him every moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOHANLAL RUPANI
MANEKIA CHAMBER
1ST MARINE STREET
DHOBI TALAO, BOMBAY

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

CWMG - LXXXV

165. LETTER TO DR. S. R. U. SAVUR

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI DR. SAVUR,

I got your letter. I am sorry I cannot accept the use of the Roman script for learning or teaching Hindustani. I have explained the reasons in *Harijan*.[1] If we have occasion to meet I shall be able to explain to you how the Roman script would be disastrous for us.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. R. U. SAVUR
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
MADRAS

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

166. LETTER TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN

SEVAGRAM,
August 13, 1946

BHAI SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN SAHEB,

I was very glad to have your letter. I see that you still take a keen interest in the affairs of our people in South Africa.[2]

You have made many useful suggestions. Can't they be made public with the permission of the Viceroy? You may be aware that from 1890 till the Boer War the British Government had an Agent-General in the Transvaal, and the correspondence he carried on with the Transvaal Government was published. That is the general practice.

May I make public use of any part of your letter?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXIV, pp. 6-7.

[2] The addressee had been Indian High Commissioner in South Africa in 1941-43.

CWMG - LXXXV

167. LETTER TO RATANBEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

CHI. RATANBEHN,

I have your letter to Chhaganlal. I have received Rs. 51 which you sent for distributing food-grains among the Harijans.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. RATANBEHN
C/O HASMUKHLAL FAUJDAR
15 LILY COURT
CHURCHGATE, BOMBAY

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

168. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

SEVAGRAM,
August 14, 1946

BHAI MAHTAB,

I got your letter in English. Why in English? In the letter I had sent to you, one of the complaints was that you yourself were going to start a mill. If it is so, do you need to ask for my opinion? In any case I would hardly have appreciated your reasoning that Orissa, because it is poor, needs a mill. For, that would mean that every poor region or village should have mills to remove its poverty. And if such is your view, I can hardly say anything.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB
CHIEF MINISTER
ORISSA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

169. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have been planning to write to you but could neither write nor dictate a letter till the pressure of the Working Committee [meeting] was over. Today all the [members] of the Working Committee have left as also the Congress President, hence I am dictating this letter early in the morning. I have been thinking all these days about what you mentioned to me last time. I don't feel like making for you such arrangements as you desire in connection with the work I expected from you. Since you want to serve the villages you should appreciate the position and learn to live among and become one with all the others in the institution. And if you cannot learn this in my company it is going to be very difficult for you to learn it in any other place. If I were to create for you the facilities that you desire it would only mean that after all you can practise nature cure only under certain conditions, which means only in the towns or where urban conditions can be created. I don't suggest it is a failing on your part. I have many friends whose habits are similar to yours. I content myself with whatever I can get out of them but you have yourself said that you want to give me much more and accordingly I hope to take from you a great deal. I shall persuade myself to be content even if I don't get as much as I hope. In that case both of us, or rather all three of us, will have to understand this. And I for my part do believe that under the present circumstances it does not seem as though you would be able to work here comfortably. But then only after I stay with you for some time and you get more used to me will you be in full flood.

In case the Gujarati language of this letter is incomprehensible and if you often come in contact with Valjibhai you may consult him or the boys at his house and they will be able to correctly interpret the letter to you. I would recommend that you should be in frequent contact with him. He is very cultured and is also a man of erudition. It is worth paying

a visit to his house. It will not be surprising if I happen to go to Delhi from here. But I don't know.

Read out this letter to Gulbai. It will be good if Jehangirji is also made familiar with the ideas expressed herein.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

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

170. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUS-BORN,

Your sweet letter. Your report is a good and great document. And I am making of it the wisest use I know. Have already written to Sir Mirza.[1] Hope to make still better use if it is necessary.

You should take care of the obstinate old (with apologies) Singer[2].

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

171. LETTER TO BALWANTRAI K. THAKORE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI BALWANTRAI,

I have your letter. I should very much prefer your hybrid Gujarati to your chaste English. Had you written hybrid Gujarati I could have had some fun at the cost of the man of letters that you are and would have gloated over the fact that I would not write such hybrid Gujarati. Besides, the practice of writing in Gujarati, however hybrid, is likely to result in the writing of chaste Gujarati.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mirza Ismail", 11-8-1946 and 20-9-1946.
[2] Sarojini Naidu, the addressee's mother

CWMG - LXXXV

For my part I like your scheme. But I think it cannot be implemented under the present circumstances. The Working Committee has received many such suggestions. Among them are some like yours. But in history there is no such thing as writing on a clean slate.

I hope you are all right.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

172. LETTER TO HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE,

I am glad you sent me a copy of your letter to Panditji. You will have to go deeper into it. The youngsters who threaten violence if a particular thing is not done will either have to conform to discipline or go ahead with the violence and face the consequences. If you will not show this firmness, I am afraid even those who wish to help you will not be able to help you fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE
NAVASARI BUILDING
HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

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

173. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. I am sorry that nothing materialized at Baroda. If you leave India you are not likely to earn more elsewhere. Nor can you say that you know Gujarati. Besides, in a city like Bombay private tuitions should be easily available.

CWMG - LXXXV

My advice therefore is that you should not attempt go abroad in a vain bid to earn more but be content with whatever you can get in India. Your Semitic origin will be least resented in India. You know that the Sassoons have earned millions in India and are still going strong. And this is only one instance.

AMALABEHN
31 WODEHOUSE ROAD
FORT

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

174. LETTER TO BEGUM LATIF SYED

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

DEAR BEGUM SAHIBA,

I learnt about Dr. Latif only through Sarojini Devi. I was grieved. May God grant you courage and may you always serve the country as Doctor Saheb did.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BEGUM LATIF SYED
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

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

175. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
August 15, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. It is good that at last you wrote. I am glad to learn that you have recovered. How can you ask for my blessings for a trip to America? I did not know you had so much feminine obstinacy. But I also understand that Tendulkar too wants you to benefit from the American trip. If both of you are inclined that way who am I to say no? But if you ask me, my only answer will be: first accomplish something here and then go out. I know how little Tendulkar has gained from going abroad. I think he has gained nothing, but that is

CWMG - LXXXV

my own assessment. Others may not agree with me on this point.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10949. Courtesy : Indumati Tendulkar

176. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

BHAI RANGA,

Your letters continue to be written in English. I will however, write only in the national language. If you are unable to read or understand the national language you may enlist Bharatibehn's help.

It is not in my hands to hold or not to hold the Kisan Conference in Wardha. It is in the hands of Kamalnayan and Sardar. Besides, in the present conditions of scarcity of food, holding a large conference anywhere is a difficult matter. This, however, is not the only purpose of my writing this letter. I hear that there is much ostentation about your work and much impropriety, too. If it is so, it needs thinking over. No one had said so before. It is only recently that someone casually mentioned the matter to me and I ought not to keep it from you.

The continued scarcity of food in Mysore and Rayalaseema regions is a sad affair. If people have to starve I shall blame none but ourselves. If we can survive only by importing food we deserve to perish. Besides, we now have our own government in many provinces. Can't we do something? It is not big conferences that we want. What is required is understanding, hard work and purity. In the absence of these qualities, the poor must die.

PROF. RANGA

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

177. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 15, 1946

Friends and admirers of Mahadev Desai have been following the practice of observing his death anniversary by occupying themselves with something dear to him. His was a rich, gifted hand. He had many loves. Among these the spinning-wheel held the first place. He span regularly and beautifully like the artist that he was. No matter how fatigued or overworked he was, he always found time for spinning. It refreshed him.

Among his many accomplishments, not the least was his peerless handwriting. There he was master. Ramadas Swami in one of his couplets has likened beautiful handwriting to a lustrous pearl. The characters which Mahadev's pen traced were like pearls without a flaw.

His third quality which all should emulate and copy was his love of the Indian tongues. He was a linguist. He attained proficiency in Bengali, Marathi and Hindi and he learnt Urdu. In jail he attempted to learn Persian and Arabic under Khwaja Sahib M. A. Majid, who was a fellow prisoner.

The song which you have just heard was one of Mahadev's favourite songs. He has rendered it into Gujarati verse too.

> When the heart is hard and parched up, come upon me with a shower of mercy,
>
> When grace is lost from life, come with a burst of song,
>
> When tumultuous work raises its din on all sides shutting me out from beyond, come to me, my Lord of silence, with Thy peace and rest.
>
> When my beggarly heart sits crouched, shut up in a corner, break open the door of my mind, and come with the ceremony of a king.
>
> When desire blinds the mind with delusion and lust, O Thou Holy One, Thou wakeful, come with the light and Thy thunder.
>
> — *Gitanjali*

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The occasion was the fourth death anniversary of Mahadev Desai. The programme of the day included mass spinning in the Mahadev Desai Bal Bhavan, reciting from the *Bhagavad Gita* and singing of songs.

That summed up the innermost yearning of the deceased's soul. May it do yours too. Mahadev's life was an inexhaustible well of virtues which you can all share. The sharing won't diminish its volume. That is the beauty of spiritual treasures. As the Upanishad says:

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।।

Harijan, 1-9-1946

178. PREACHING TO EMPTINESS

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

Downes was a Seventh Day Adventist. He was a quack like me. He was my guest years ago in Durban. One day he said he must preach the simple life to those who cared to listen to him. He succeeded in borrowing a chapel hall for one hour in Mercury Lane and asked me to preside. I warned him that with me as chairman in the very early days of my life in South Africa, probably in 1894, he must not expect an audience. He would not heed the warning. Precisely at the advertised time Downes began his address to an audience of one. I asked him in vain to wait a few minutes for other comers. He would not be party to stealing God's time and unconcerned, he went on with his speech. So far as I remember, a few stragglers, under ten, came in during the speech. I happened to relate this experience to Horace Alexander whilst I was in Delhi. He gave me in return the stranger story of Stephen Grellet, a Quaker, preaching to emptiness. I asked him to give me the authentic version for the readers of *Harijan*, it being a rich experience of living faith in God. I reproduce below the story as sent by Horace Alexander.[1]

Harijan, 8-9-1946

[1] Not reproduced here. It told of how Stephen Grellet, a quaker preacher, instructed by the Lord to preach to woodcutters in some backwoods of America, preached in an empty building and how a woodcutter, hiding there had heard the sermon and in turn preached to other woodcutters and brought into the fold at least a thousand of them.

179. DO NOT FORGET HARIJANS[1]

A correspondent writes:

> Shri Ganesh-utsava started by the late Lokamanya is coming near; most of our ministers and leaders will be invited by various associations to speak on this occasion. I desire to suggest to the speakers that they should accept such invitations, provided that the management would allow Harijans to take part in the function; they should also make it a point to take at least one Harijan with them when they go to address the congregation.

The above suggestion is reasonable and apt. If caste Hindus really want to stamp out untouchability they should have the company of Harijans in their gatherings, and especially on such occasions as the celebration of Hindu festivals they should not fail do so to.

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 25-8-1946

180. MASS MURDER

A friend writes:

> The food famine situation in Mysore and Rayalaseema is daily growing more serious. Unless imports pour in sufficient quantities, the local co-operative stores will fail to supply rations—starvation rations as they are, since only 8 oz. of rice is being given to peasants who need 24 oz. to keep them fit—to the peasant masses and I am afraid that we may have to be prepared to face deaths due to starvation in November and December.

If even half of what he says is true, it is a sad reflection on our capacity to cope with food famine in a vast country like India where there is land lying waste or ill-used and water running rapidly into the sea for want of human ingenuity to dam and store it. The writer says that unless imports "pour in sufficient quantities", meaning undoubtedly from outside

[1] This appeared as a "Note". The translation is based on the English version published in *Harijan*, 25-8-1946.

CWMG - LXXXV

India, "mass deaths due to starvation in November and December" are a certainty. I suggest to everyone concerned that if this happens, the Government of the country will be guilty of mass murder.

To look to outside sources for food supply is to invite starvation. Has it ever been made clear that India has no capacity for growing sufficient food between now and November? Need a vast country like India with its teeming millions starve, even if the whole world were to declare a blockade against it?[1]

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946
Harijan, 25-8-1946

181. MOVE ON[2]

On reading about my persistent darkness, a correspondent sends me the following lines of comfort:

The path may be clouded;
Move on, for the orbit is fixed for your soul;
And though it may lead into darkness of night,
The torch of the Builder shall give it new light.

SEVAGRAM, August 16, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

182. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

Can we say that your problem has been solved? Dr. Bhagavat is a saintly man. Each time [I see him] he impresses me more and more. One can gain a lot from him provided one has the faith. I have no doubt about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

[1] *Vide* also p. 162.
[2] This was published under "Notes".

CWMG - LXXXV

183. LETTER TO GANGABEHN BHATT

[*August 16, 1946*][1]

CHI. GANGA,

I am glad that you and Purushottam have gone there[2]. An undertaking is incomplete as long as there is no woman worker. Kanchan has set up a separate household and Zohra has gone to study nursing. Abha too has set up a separate household.

And Amtussalaam looks after my food and other things. Write to me how you both fare there.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT
URULI KANCHAN

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

184. LETTER TO MAGANLAL

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

BHAI MAGANBHAI,

Chi. Paramanand saw me last night and gave me your cheque for Rs. 5,000. I am having the cheque sent to Uruli Kanchan. It will be utilized for the land purchased at Uruli Kanchan for a like amount. Chi. Paramanand informs me that if I agree you are willing to become one of the trustees of the Uruli Kanchan trust. Jehangir Patel and Dr. Dinshaw Mehta are my co-trustees. A local gentleman has also been taken on the trust. I shall have to obtain these gentlemen's consent. However, before I initiate the process I must let you know that this trust has no merely ornamental names. All the trustees must mean business. This has been the tacit understanding among the original trustees. Hence, unless you can stay at Uruli Kanchan from time to time and participate in its activities I would consider your becoming a trustee

[1] The source has this letter among those dated August 16, 1946.
[2] Uruli Kanchan

CWMG - LXXXV

as having no meaning. I know you are a hard-working man. Hence if you mean it you can be of much use. Moreover, you must have faith in nature cure. If you do not have it, your being a trustee would be a mockery. And how can I place you in such an embarrassing position? I understand from Chi. Paramanand that you will also want to build a house in Uruli Kanchan for your residence. This I shall certainly welcome, on the understanding that the ownership of the property will go to the Trust. The premises will be utilized under the provisions of the Trust and the trustees will make use of it for the Trust's business when you are not using it yourself. If Chi. Paramanand marries your daughter the couple will naturally use the house. You of course will be there.

SJT. MAGANLAL
CHOPDA

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

185. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

Chi. Paramanand has given me all the news from there. He has brought a cheque for Rs. 5,000. This can be credited only there. I have written[1] to Maganlal regarding the problems that will have to be tackled in connection with his appointment as a trustee. Paramanand will tell you. I also learn that Gangabehn has arrived. That is a good thing. I hope Purushottam is better there. I expect you have had enough rainfall. Have you started implementing the suggestions I had left? How is Gokhale getting along? Balkrishna should write to me. Blessings to all the friends there.

SJT. MANILAL
URULI KANCHAN

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

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LXXV

186. LETTER TO RAMKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

CHI. RAMKRISHNA,

You are going West.[1] I do not quite see its benefits. But when a strong wind is blowing who can remain unaffected? Think what you will be taking from here and what you will be bringing from there. The student days are for the development of thought.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 3067

187. MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA[2]

SEVAGRAM,
August 16, 1946

The goodness of a good man is itself his true jubilee. Dr. Zakir Husain's great work itself is his true greatness.

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

[1] The addressee was a delegate of the All-India Students' Congress to the International Students' Congress which was being held at Prague, Czechoslovakia.

[2] This was sent to Dr. K. G. Saiyidain on the occasion of the University's Silver Jubilee.

CWMG LXXXV

188. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *August 17, 1946*][2]

GANDHIJI: To appreciate fully the present policy of the A. I. S. A. you have to take in its etiology. In the initial stages the emphasis was on bringing relief to the poor. Incidentally it provided a living link between the classes and the masses and assumed a political significance. . . We cannot make further headway on those lines. We cannot, for instance, further increase the wages. Khadi won't bear it. So far it was spun and woven by the masses. Now it must still be by the masses, but for their own use. The new policy of the A. I. S. A. has not failed. The latest figures show that it is steadily though slowly making headway.

There are difficulties. Weaving constitutes the bottleneck. We have not established a sufficient hold on the weavers. The fault, again, is mine. If I had from the very beginning insisted on all learning weaving along with spinning things would have been different today. The working capital of the A. I. S. A. now stands at twenty-five lakhs. It has taken twenty-five years to reach that figure. During that period it distributed over seven crores of rupees as wages among four and a half lakhs of the poor spinners and weavers, principally spread over twenty thousand villages of India. I do not know of another instance of such a huge turn-over with so little capital in such a wide area.

FRIEND: That is good but by no means unique. The Chinese Indusco did better.

G. That is not a fair comparison. I studied in detention Nym Wales' book which was recommended to me. Indusco's activities were carried on under abnormal circumstances with the backing of the Chinese National Government. Besides, all its production was war-time production. You need not have gone as far as China for your illustration. The work of the Calicut Mission in South India would have provided a more apt instance. In each case the field was restricted. In the case of khadi it is trying to serve the whole of India.

[1] & [2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Khadi On Trial", 17-8-1946

F. We cannot today attract more artisans by offering better wages. The general level of wages in the country is already so high.

G. We do not want to.

F. You mean to say you want them to produce for self.

G. Yes.

F. How can that be made practicable?

G. I explained that to Mr. Casey[1] last year. I told him that by adopting my scheme, not only could we solve the cloth problem for Bengal, but for the whole of India. The essence of that scheme was that, instead of supplying textiles to the people, they should be taught how to make cloth for themselves and provided the necessary means—instruments, raw materials, etc.,—for the same. A reasonable time limit should be fixed after which no textiles would be rationed in the area covered by the scheme. In German East Africa, I am told, cloth shortage during World War I was actually met by the Negroes being induced to manufacture their own cloth. Whether that is so or not, if India made full use of her spinning and weaving tradition which is universal and the matchless hereditary skill of her artisans, she could not only solve her own difficulty but even help the world to meet the present crisis by releasing her mill production, for countries less favourably placed in the matter of cloth manufacture.

F. The fact, however, remains that in spite of there being such an acute cloth scarcity, khadi has failed to step into the breach. It has missed the bus.

G. Thanks to Government interference. They arrested khadi workers, burnt stocks of khadi and put khadi production under every conceivable handicap.

F. The vacuum is growing. Production charges have already touched the ceiling and yet the wages that we can offer are not adequate to attract even the unemployed.

G. Where are these unemployed?

F. Well, there are one lakh of I. N. A. men.

[1] R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal in 1945, whom Gandhiji met in Calcutta on December 1, 2 and 3, 1945. *Vide* Vol. LXXXII, pp. 167 and 179.

G. I made an offer to them. It has yet evoked no response. You can take the horse to the trough but you cannot make it drink.

F. Cannot Government formulate a scheme?

G. It has been done in Madras. It is under examination. Nothing can be imposed from above. Everything has to be worked from below. And those who work them should have faith and conviction and spirit of service. A Government ukase won't do the trick. Government can assist. As I told Mr. Casey, I am prepared to work out my scheme if it is left to me and the Government accord necessary facilities. That offer still stands.

F. The danger is that, if we stop the supply of textiles to any area, as envisaged in your scheme, it may accentuate the present discontent and even cause an upheaval. There are elements ready to pounce upon and exploit any excuse to foment discontent. Restriction on cloth supply might even be enumerated as an 'atrocity' as prohibition was by a certain section in Bombay. How can we contemplate or invite a disturbance like that? This is not a constructive approach to the question. It smacks of compulsion.

G. Where is the question of compulsion? As it is, there is not enough cloth to go round. The stocks of cloth available for distribution being short of the demand, rationing becomes a necessity. The question is only of wise distribution. No stocks may be expected from outside for some time. America and England are making strenuous efforts to increase their cloth production. But it is all needed there. If we nationalize our textile industry and work it on a double shift basis, it would probably solve the problem of cloth shortage, but not of mass poverty. I won't then be able to press the case for khadi, not because there would be no case but because I won't be able to carry conviction.

F. That is not my point. An element of compulsion there is in all governmental measures. . . . If a fundamentally unsound and unstable economic situation is sought to be propped up by governmental compulsion, there is danger that it will crash one day and spread ruin all around. I am wondering if the organization of khadi production on the present lines is not an instance of that type, whether pure theory does not need to be tempered with a measure of practical realism to suit the changed conditions. For instance, the woollen manufactures in Kashmir are not for self-use. They cater for the market for fancy goods outside Kashmir. They are extremely popular. Now, if we introduce machine carding, they can hold their own

against all competition. But that would be against the fundamental khadi principles. I have been thinking whether a compromise cannot be effected. To run cottage industries with man-power exclusively, has not much prospect of survival in this age of machinery. We may try to canalize economic trends, we may not run against them in a head-on collision. If we could run cottage industries with the help of cheap electricity, for instance, they would be able to hold their own without losing their essential character. After all, decentralized production is what we want. We might have projects for the development of cheap hydraulic power as an aid to irrigation schemes. They can be in operation in from six to ten years. It will then be possible to take electricity to every village. Shall we under those circumstances be able to work khadi on the present lines? Normally speaking, supply should balance demand. But instead of establishing khadi on a permanent basis, we are crippling it by artificial restrictions with the result that a lot of corruption and dishonesty has crept in. . . .

G. It is open to all those who cannot or do not want to spin to go in for mill cloth, whether Indian or foreign. I am walking with my eyes open. This is not the first time in the history of khadi that demand has outstripped supply and *vice versa*. Each time heroic measures were adopted and the crisis was overcome. I do not expect a different result this time. Only, we must have faith and patience and the courage to apply the right remedy which is what I am doing at present. If in the process khadi dies, I must be prepared to take even that risk.

F. That is begging the question. It won't go down with people. We have got to adjust our policy to the popular need.

G. I cannot do that. Having discovered the error, I must correct it. That may take time. Therefore, I have suggested the removal of the khadi clause from the Congress constitution. When it was sought to be removed unsuccessfully at the Assam Congress, it gave me satisfaction. Now I will encourage and welcome abolition. If it has intrinsic merit, khadi will survive the Congress abolition. If it has not, it will deserve to go under.

F. That, however, would not solve our fundamental problem.

G. I am afraid I won't be able to convince you by argument. Time alone will show who was right.

F. You said weaving was the bottleneck. A weaver weaving mill yarn, can today earn as much as Rs. 3 a day. The spinner and the weaver of the hand-spun won't work for lower wages.

G. I don't want him to. That is why I have recommended doubling of hand-spun yarn. If he depends on the supply of mill yarn, he is doomed. Mill-owners are not philanthropists to go on providing yarn to the handloom weaver when he enters into effective competition with them. But a weaver working on doubling hand-spun yarn will, in the end, be better off than the mill yarn weaver, for the former will find steady employment all the year round.

F. The very basis of textile industry has been revolutionized. Now they are preparing synthetic textile fibres from coal, air and water. Felting of cotton fibres with the help of resins is taking the place of weaving. Unless we make sure that our khadi policy rests on a sound practicable basis and fits into the over-all picture, khadi is bound to fail.

G. It may, but the labour expended on it won't have been wasted.

F. No good effort is ever wasted. But the latest orientation of your khadi policy continues to perplex many a sincere khadi lover and worker. Their perplexity ought to be removed. Some of them even talk of going in for uncertified khadi.

G. The perplexity won't be removed if they have no faith in khadi.

F. So long as there is demand for khadi, it ought to be fulfilled even if prices of khadi have to be raised.

G. That means that khadi will become fancy goods. It won't be right to use a vast organization for such a purpose. Our duty is to find out and remedy if there is any fundamental defect in our khadi policy and if in the process it is found that khadi is not basically a sound proposition, it should be given a decent burial. Today khadi is on its trial. It will successfully emerge from it only by virtue of its inherent strength and if it lacks that strength, all bother about it will be love's labour lost.

F. All I know is that where there is widespread and genuine demand for a commodity and the supply falls short, it should be possible to devise ways and means to adjust the economic balance and satisfy the demand in question.

G. I can only warn you of the danger. There was a time when we used machine-carded slivers for spinning. We might as well have used mill yarn. If we had not broken away from it and had not introduced hand-carding, khadi would have been defunct by now. The late Sir Gangaram said to me: "Only

give up the spinning-wheel, concentrate on the handloom and I am with you." He did not realize what we know today, that the use of mill yarn is the principal stranglehold on the handloom industry. In hand-spun yarn lies its only salvation. It the spinning-wheel goes, the handloom is bound to follow suit. Khadi will cease to have any value in my eyes if it does not usefully employ the millions. Many of the "compromises" that have been suggested are such as to take away from it its essential character. The late Sir Fazalbhai prophesied to me when I saw him thirty years ago that khadi was ultimately bound to fail. He is gone but khadi has remained. Maybe a new era has now opened and khadi is an anachronism in it. Only, I do not feel so.

Harijan, 25-8-1946

189. CONFUSION ABOUT RAMANAMA

A friend writes:

> Regarding your suggested cure of malaria by Ramanama,[1] my problem is that I do not understand how to rely on a spiritual force for my physical ailments. I am also not sure if I deserve to be cured and if I am justified in praying for my salvation, when there is so much misery amongst my countrymen. The day I understand Ramanama, I shall pray for their salvation. Otherwise I would feel more selfish than I do today.

This is from a friend whom I believe to be an earnest seeker of truth. I take public notice of his difficulty, as it is typical of that of many like him.

Spiritual force is like any other force at the service of man. Apart from the fact that it has been used for physical ailments for ages with more or less success, it would be intrinsically wrong not to use it, if it can be successfully used for the cure of physical ailments. For, man is both matter and spirit, each acting on and affecting the other. If you get rid of malaria by taking quinine, without thinking of the millions who do not get it, why should you refuse to use the remedy which is within you, because millions will not use it through their ignorance? May you not be clean and well because millions of others will not be so, ignorantly or maybe even cussedly? If you will not be clean out of false notions of philanthropy, you will deny

[1] *Vide* pp. 139 and 178.

CWMG LXXXV

yourself the duty of serving the very millions by remaining dirty and ill. Surely refusal to be spiritually well or clean is worse than the refusal to be physically clean and well.

Salvation is nothing more and nothing less than being well in every way. Why should you deny it for yourself, if thereby you show the way to others and beyond showing it, actually serve them in addition by reason of your fitness? But you are wholly selfish when you take penicillin in order to get well although you have the certain knowledge that the others cannot get it.

The confusion lying behind my correspondent's argument is obvious.

What, however, is true is that the taking of a pill or pills of quinine is much easier than gaining the knowledge of the use of Ramanama. It involves much effort as against the mere cost of buying quinine pills. The effort is worth making for the sake of the millions, in whose name and on whose behalf my correspondent will shut Rama out of his heart.

SEVAGRAM, August 17, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

190. TELEGRAM TO KUNJUKRISHNA MENON

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KUNJUKRISHNA MENON
TEACHER, MALAYALAM SCHOOL
PATTOM, TRIVANDRUM

VELUKUTTY NAIR MUST NOT FAST.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

191. TELEGRAM TO KAMTA PRASAD

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

KAMTA PRASAD
CHAKRATA

DO NOT KNOW MERITS CASE

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

CWMG - LXXV

192. TELEGRAM TO MADARNAHAK VIRAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MADARNAHAK VIRAM
AJMER

PLANS UNCERTAIN. DO NOT COME NOW.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

193. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

MY DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am instructed by Gandhiji to send you a copy of a wire[1] just received by him. It needs no comment. Things in Goa seem to be in a bad way.

Kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 101-2

[1] This was about ill-treatment in jail of Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary, Goa National Congress; *vide* also p. 180 and p. 209.

CWMG LXXXV

194. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your English letter. Do you have my letters read out to you? If you could tell me whether you read my letters yourself and can follow them fully or have to have someone explain them to you, I could do something about it. If Ramprasad's case is likely to take long I shall have to think about the matter a little. I thought you needed a man urgently, and that obtaining sanction was only a formality. But what you say is right. Consider it only after having consulted your association. It would be better if you could tell me how much time it will take. But this you ought to bear in mind that Ramprasad is not unoccupied here. All I wish to convey is that I can spare him without inconvenience to me.

You will find in *Harijan* the answer to the question you have raised regarding Ramanama.[1] Nevertheless you will please ask me again if you do not understand it or are not satisfied with it. I think it is another matter whether you put it into practice or not. However, as a trustee you ought to have a correct understanding of it. And if I am making a mistake you should correct me. I note that Dinshaw has been seeing you. Write to me if you have anything to say regarding the views I have expressed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL HOUSE
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 175-6.

CWMG - LXXV

195. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I am happy to know that there is no law against the Harijans in the State. Though, personally, I don't like gold ornaments being worn whether on the feet or any other part of the body, forbidding this by law is irksome. Poor Harijans can enjoy the sight of gold only on other people's persons. How can they own any gold? But what is the difficulty in getting rid of old ideas of prestige?

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN
BIKANER STATE

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

196. LETTER TO MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS

SEVAGRAM,
August 17, 1946

BHAI MANGHARAM,

I got your letter. Why should you grieve over your mother's death? We are all destined to go the same way—some now, some later. Our dharma is to go on doing our duty.

The money will be used for Harijan work.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS
HYDERABAD (SIND)

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

CWMG - LXXXV

197. GOA[1]

The following telegrams have been received regarding Shri Kakodkar's arrest and imprisonment:

> Purushottam Kakodkar arrested in connection recent Satyagraha movement Goa. In spite being political prisoner imprisoned dingy ill-ventilated cell in company criminals awaiting trial for murder robberies. Food supplied most ordinary insufficient being half normal meal. Expressed willingness to work for his meal. Also pleaded on behalf his other unfortunate companions in cell for better treatment. In respect food authorities turned deaf ear. He is on hunger strike since last three days. Authorities' attitude arrogant offensive.
>
> Purushottam Kakodkar fifth day hunger strike. Condition precarious. Allowed see persons under guard. Attitude authorities unconcerned.

If the charges attributed to the Goan authorities are true, they reflect great discredit on them. It is to be hoped that the civil resisters of Goa will not be cowed down by any ill-treatment, however grave it may be.

I am not sure about the wisdom of the hunger-strike resorted to. Let me hope that it will produce the desired effect. In any case, having been undertaken, it must be prosecuted to the end.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946
Harijan, 25-8-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

CWMG-LXXXV

198. DISLOYALTY TO KHADI

A correspondent writes:

> On 31st July 1946, at 6 p.m., 13 college students (khadi wearers) headed by a prominent Congressman, who is also a councillor, came in the Khadi Bhandar. The sale was closed due to shortage of khadi. Only a few pieces of khadi were kept in the cupboard upstairs, as it was not possible to satisfy about 1500 khadi wearers from these few pieces. They at once went up, took thirteen full pieces forcibly, asked the Manager to take money, and also without yarn, and on refusal of accepting money in protest by the Manager, they went away with the cloth.
>
> Was it not the duty of the Manager to lodge a complaint against them in the police, or what action should he have taken in preventing them from taking away the cloth?

The Manager should really have resisted the looting, non-violently, even at the risk of losing his life. He is entitled to lodge a complaint against the miscreants, provided that all other avenues of voluntary return of the loot have been explored and have failed.

Rowdyism by students has become a byword. If "a prominent Congressman" encouraged them, it was a matter of shame. The use of looted khadi betrays woeful ignorance of the elements of swaraj and makes khadi such a mockery.

SEVAGRAM, August 18, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

199. LETTER TO JAYAKUNVAR DESAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. JAYA[1],

There is a letter from Manu saying that Bihari[2] has typhoid. Don't let typhoid scare you or Bihari and don't let anyone scare him. It has been my unfailing experience that if one leaves it alone it disappears after it has run its course. You may daily give him enema. I know from experience that if the patient is given fruit juices, his intestines heal up on their own. The doctors have other theories. What can I write to you about Ramanama? Trust everything to God. Keep me informed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JAYABEHN
HARSHAD VILLA
NEHRU ROAD
VILLE PARLE

From microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIII

200. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is good, but there is still room for improvement. Try and see what you can do. It is not proper that you give me no news about Sumi[3]. Learn Urdu by your own efforts. In my view, you will be receiving more useful education if you start going among the villagers and propagate spinning, etc.

[1] Daughter of Amritlal Tulsidas Gandhi, Gandhi's cousin
[2] Addressee's son
[3] Sumitra Gandhi, daughter of Ramdas Gandhi

CWMG - LXXXV

Why do you write "majah" instead of "Maja".

Blessings from
BAPU

KU. SITA GANDHI
BENARES HINDU VIDYAPITH
WOMENS' HOSTEL
BENARES, U. P.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4988

201. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. VANU,

I have your letter. I had also got the letter which you sent with Dada. At that time I thought that since you would be soon meeting me it was pointless to reply. Besides, even if I had written I could not have done so in detail. We shall have a little talk when we meet. I am not at all happy about Narahari's illness. He may consult a homoeopath if he wishes. I wish him, even for selfish reasons to get well somehow. From your letter I assume that all of you will arrive here around the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

KU. VANAMALA PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 5798. Also C. W. 3021. Courtesy : Vanamala M. Desai

CWMG - LXXXV

202. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

I keep forgetting to write to you. I am glad to learn that you are taking so much interest in coaching the children. Make them develop the habit of writing. They should cultivate good handwriting; they should learn the three scripts, Gujarati, Devanagari and Persian. Those who are not Gujaratis should learn the last two. If they line the paper they will not fumble. There should be no mugging. If they follow everything intelligently they can make great progress.

Let me know if what I have written is wrong.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

203. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

BROTHER BHAGAWAT,

Chi. Paramanand has come here. He has given all the news. Your work is going on well and everybody has got the impression that you are a silent worker. I want to know three things from you. (1) What about the shoes? (2) Why the indifference in regard to the rules of cleanliness? (3) And why the growing of long hair? The experiment in balanced diet I have liked very much. I want to do it for myself. It saves us from many difficulties. But I am sorry that I have not yet been able to start on it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 2741. Courtesy : Manilal B. Desai

204. LETTER TO L. N. GOPALASWAMI AYYAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

BHAI GOPALASWAMI,

This is in reply to your letter of 19th June. It is not good that you felt tired. You should first discuss the matter with Bapa as well as with me. Whatever step has to be taken should be taken only after that. I have had a talk with Rajaji and you will have got my message. You should not give any importance to the statements made by the Harijan M.L.A. Taking notice of such a thing in *Harijan* would only lend it unmerited prestige.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

205. SPEECH AT MEETING OF DOCTORS[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 18, 1946

Gandhiji while thanking them all for the trouble they had taken, said he was afraid elaborate schemes costing large sums of money would not do. He wanted Sevagram to serve as a model and therefore he wanted nothing there which could not be multiplied in the 700,000 villages. If they could do that satisfactorily even in one village, it might solve the problem of the other villages of India. Otherwise progress would be at a snail's pace and ambitious planning in a few villages would only stand out as a monument of costly futility.

D.D.T. spraying was already being carried on. Gandhiji suggested that it should be intensified. The Government could use the place as a centre for experimental survey and malaria control. They could build a few septic

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The meeting had been called by Dr. Sushila Nayyar with a view to devising ways to rid Sevagram of malaria and improving the sanitation.

CWMG - LXXXV

tanks as an experiment, but he felt sure that trenching, properly carried out, must remain the solution in the vast majority of cases. Shri Aryanayakum of the Talimi Sangh has offered to make an experiment to see if trenching could not be done without fly-breeding.

Harijan, 1-9-1946

206. WHAT CAN VIOLENCE DO?

If newspaper reports are to be believed, responsible ministers in Sindh and other equally responsible Leaguers almost all over, are preaching violence in naked language. Nakedness is itself a virtue as distinguished from hypocrisy. But when it is a hymn of obscenity, it is a vice to be shunned, whether it resides in a Leaguer or any other person. Any Muslim who is not in the League is a traitor, says one. The Hindu is a *kafir* deserving the fate of such, says another.

Calcutta has given an ocular demonstration of what direct action is and how it is to be done.[1]

Who is the gainer? Certainly not the Muslim masses nor the sober followers of Islam which itself means sobriety and peace. The very salute *salam alaikum* means 'peace be unto you'.

Violence may have its place in life but not that which we have witnessed in Calcutta, assuming of course that newspaper accounts are to be trusted. Pakistan of whatever hue does not lie through senseless violence. When I write of senseless violence, I naturally assume the possibility of sensible violence, whatever the latter may be. The Calcutta demonstration was not an illustration of sensible violence.

What senseless violence does is to prolong the lease of the life of British or foreign rule. I believe that the authors of the State Paper issued by the Cabinet Mission desire peaceful transfer of power to representative Indian hands. But if *we* need the use of the British gun and bayonet, the British will not go or, if they do, some other foreign power will take their place. We will make a serious mistake, if, everytime the British bayonet is used, we trot out the agent provocateur. No doubt he has been at work. Let us not ride that horse to death.

[1] On August 16, which the Muslim League had declared "Direct Action Day", savage riots broke out in Calcutta. During four days of rioting, according to official estimates, some five thousand were killed and fifteen thousand wounded.

Calcutta has earned a bad repute of late. It has seen too many wild demonstrations during the past few months. If the evil reputation is sustained for some time longer, it will cease to be the City of Palaces, it will become the city of the dead.

Would that the violence of Calcutta were sterilized and did not become a signal for its spread all over. It depends upon the leaders of the Muslim League of course, but the rest will not be free from responsibility. They can retaliate or refrain. Refraining is easy and simple, if there is the will. Retaliation is complicated. Will it be tooth against tooth or many against one?

SEVAGRAM, August 19, 1946

Harijan, 25-8-1946

207. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely to ask you how you would arrange the latrines for the Ashram and the village. Subsoil water being so near the surface, medical men who gathered here yesterday voted for septic tanks. I know you are averse to the idea. Send me your own opinion and a description of the preparation of compost. I forget if you include night-soil also as they do in Indore. Anyway give me an accurate description for me to print or show to medical friends.

Don't recommence work unless you are quite fit. You have ample to do in Mussoorie.

It is raining as I write.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

R. K. reminds me that I have already published your writings[1] on the thing. If they are enough don't trouble.

From the original : C. W. 6518. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G. N. 9913

[1] In *Harijan*, 10-3-1946 under the title "From Rubbish to Gold"

208. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I could reach your letter of the 10th only today. I have already dictated a postcard to Jaya.[1] Let us hope that Bihari will get well.

Who can convince Jaisukhlal? The description you give me of the conditions there has shocked me. I have seen Mahua. But from what you say it would appear, it is worse than what I had thought it to be. I remember that I stayed there only for a day.

If you can stay right near the seashore, things will be better. Why does Jaisukhlal fall ill so often, in spite of all his careful observance of dietary restrictions. There must be some reason. He must look for it and get well.

Your work seems to be progressing well. The important thing is that you are at peace there and have got independent social work. You should take up sanitation work. If you succeed in cleaning up Mahua, you will deserve a medal.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

209. LETTER TO PYARELAL

August 19, 1946

CHI. PYARELAL,

Meet Prabhudayal and find out what he says about [my] Hindustani. Don't my Hindustani speeches go direct as they are?

Blessings from
BAPU

PYARELALJI

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

[1] *Vide* p. 182.

CWMG - LXXXV

210. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I learn from Prabhudayal's diary that in Nalwadi, the place from which milk is distributed is very dirty. How far is the complaint true? If there is truth in it, study the rules of dairy hygiene and follow them. Our *goseva* must be ideal.

Blessings from
BAPU

RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

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

211. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 19, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

Read the enclosed letter and send me your comments. Can we today produce khadi for the market? Can we render any other service? The other questions are also there. Think over them too.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

212. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I cannot quite understand why you had to undertake the fast. Who made the complaint? And have I not said that no one may undertake a fast without asking me? This is the best course.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHIRUBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

213. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 20, 1946

CHI. KASHINATH,

I had thought of writing to Father. But then for the first two days I forgot all about it. Later when I suddenly remembered it no one could tell me his name. I think I had asked you to leave me his name and address and you had said I should ask someone or the other. No one however could give me the name. It is possible that you left it with Krishnachandra, but he stays in Paunar. I could not get it from the Mahila Ashram either. Now that I have to reply to your letter I shall say here what I want to write to Father. Tell him it is only natural for a father to be grieved by the passing away of a young son. But if one takes a dispassionate and broad view, why should one grieve? Everyone who is born must die, the only difference being whether death comes soon or late. Why grieve over it then? And one who looks upon all children as his own—and Father must adopt such an attitude—over whom can such a person grieve? Thus I would suggest that if the cause of this death has been found we should try

CWMG - LXXV

and remove the possibility of its recurrence in respect of others. The main cause of typhoid is believed to be contaminated water. Wherever this cause has been removed casualties from typhoid have been reduced almost to nil.

Now the reply to your letter. Wherever there is a clash between groups of workers it should be understood that neither party seeks Government help. If this is assured the conflict tends to stop. And if they do not accept Government help one of the parties should wisely and courageously stay calm. The conflict will then dissolve. Everyone does not readily realize this. Hence, one should acquire enough strength for self-defence. Detecting and removing the cause of conflict is the universally accepted remedy. But where one party is determined to secure power by resorting to conflict, then there is nothing one can do. It is very clear and also painful. And the remedy lies either in the violent or the non-violent way described above.

SHRI KASHINATH TRIVEDI

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

214. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I got the *rakhi* today. May you and Shankerlal get well and render service. I am getting along well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI
MAJOOR MAHAJAN
BHADRA, AHMEDABAD

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

CWMG - LXXXV

215. LETTER TO LILAVATI MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

CHI. LILAVATI,

I went through your draft law about ill-matched couples early this morning after the prayers. It seems to me that enacting such a law will bring no immediate gain. I think for the desired reform to come about a good deal of public opinion will have to be built up. There is every chance of a law not backed by public opinion remaining confined to the statute book. Have you not had such experience? Hence, if nothing has yet been done I would suggest your systematically cultivating public opinion in this regard. A few armchair reformers expressing a pious desire should not be mistaken for public opinion. In fact these reformers, at least some of them, do not hesitate to offer themselves as eligible candidates when opportunity arises.

I have your reply regarding the matter at Worli. And let me know if you come to know anything more. At the moment I do not wish to write anything to the Ministers.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI MUNSHI
BOMBAY

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

216. ADDRESS TO HINDUSTANI PRACHAR TRAINEES[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 21, 1946

We are slaves of the English language but we should overthrow its domination and use our language. If you want to

[1] The students of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha's training college had assembled in Gandhiji's cottage to hear him. A meeting of the Sabha also decided during the day to bring out Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu-Hindustani dictionaries.

be good Hindustani propagandists you must also learn to be good Bhangis like me.

You must try to grow your food, at least green vegetables, and cook for yourself and not depend on others or on servants as you are now doing.

Gandhiji recalled how he used green vegetables which tribesmen brought him during his satyagraha march in South Africa and advised students to grow some vegetables for their daily needs as it required little labour. He laid stress on dignity of labour which occupied a prominent place in Nayee Talim and asked students to realize its significance.

The Hindu, 23-8-1946

217. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have received a reply to my letter to Vaikunthbhai from which it appears that khadi is not likely to face any difficulty in the Bombay Presidency. All the same we shall see if any difficulty does crop up.

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

218. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I got your beautiful letter written in as shabby a hand as mine. But can the pot call the kettle black? It would not be wrong if you engaged a clerk instead of sparing the Government the expenditure. Now that you have supplied me all the details, I shall be able to write something.

I take it that the articles that have been exempted include khadi.

To
VAIKUNTHBHAI MEHTA

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

219. LETTER TO V. T. KRISHNAMACHARI

SEVAGRAM,
August 22, 1946

BHAI KRISHNAMACHARI,

The Rajasthan branch of the Charkha Sangh informs me that the Jaipur State does not give khadi full exemption from tax or licence fee, etc. Can't poor khadi be exempted?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR KRISHNAMACHARI, DIWAN
JAIPUR

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

220. ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI

What English-knowing Indian has not felt the shame and sorrow at his failure to discover an equivalent for an English word in either his mother tongue or the national language? A Gujarati lad has an English-Gujarati dictionary in such a case to help him; similarly a Urdu or Hindi knowing lad has his dictionary to fall back upon. But for Hindustani, which is neither Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi and which is the tongue of the common folk of the North, whether Hindu or Mussalman, a writer has no dictionary to fall back upon. An attempt will be made through a column at least of the *Harijan* each week to furnish for English a Hindustani word or two, spelt in both Nagari and Urdu script. An endeavour will be made to give the names of those who will contribute their labour to this fascinating task. This is pioneer work and therefore will, like all pioneer work, have defects. Those who detect them, will confer a favour by drawing the attention to them of the Editor. I would suggest to students that they copy out these words week by week in a note-book and add to or amend the attempt. They will find that the labour will combine recreation with instruction.

CWMG - LXXV

Only those English words which are in common use have been selected from a standard English dictionary. In reading the following[1], the reader should also know that no claim is made that the equivalents are the best possible or that they are exhaustive. They are a help to the searcher. The plan for this week is that those who are helping me to conduct the *Harijan* have prepared the first list. Kakasaheb and Acharya Shrimannarayan looked at the selection. The first letters of their names "Ka" or 'Shri' have been given in parenthesis after the addition.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

221. WE ARE ALL INDIANS

A Roman Catholic student from Goa had the sad experience of being told by some of his fellow students in Bombay that he was a Portuguese and therefore a foreigner. When he told them that the Roman Catholics of Goa had castes just like the Hindus, he was not believed. These transitory lapses will take place whilst we are shedding our narrownesses and claiming all to be free Indians, slaves neither of the British, nor of the Portuguese nor any other foreign rule. If the same students were wisely handled, they would be proud to know their friend as an Indian and not as a Goan and be known themselves as Indians, not Bombayites. Everyone's religion is his own concern but his nationality is a corporate thing, carrying with it important and far-reaching consequences. That even among converts there are castes is a reflection upon Hinduism and should set every Hindu athinking and make him become, with me, a Bhangi.

SEVAGRAM, August 23, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] Not reproduced here

222. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

Express SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

DOCTOR DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

YOUR WIRE. NATURE CURE FORBIDS DESPAIR NOTWITHSTANDING ODDS. WROTE ON FIFTEENTH.[1] GOING DELHI SUNDAY. HOPE MOTHER BETTER YOU ALSO. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

223. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Express SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

RASHTRAPATI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
18 HARDINGE AVENUE
NEW DELHI

WIRE RECEIVED. LEAVING SUNDAY. STAYING BHANGI QUARTERS. INFORM BIRLA BRIJKRISHEN.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] This was not received by the addressee; *vide* p. 224

CWMG - LXXV

224. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR LETTER. HOPE YOU WELL ENOUGH. ATTEND DELHI MEETING[1].

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

225. TELEGRAM TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

KASHINATH TRIVEDI
RANIPURA
BARWANI

TARAMANIBEHN CAN BE SENT PROVIDED YOU HAVE FIXED MAHILASHRAM. SHE CAN STAY SEVAGRAM FOR A TIME.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee which was held from 27th to 30th July, 1946

CWMG - LXXXV

226. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I have your letter. One too much crushed by debts feels not debts; one too much crushed by suffering feels not suffering. What are you afraid of ? I have told you that you have neither relatives nor friends till you have passed your examination. Your studies are your relatives. I leave for Delhi on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10242. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

227. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter. Chi. Lilavati in her letter told me that you were busy day and night with the Constituent Assembly work. I feel no pity for you on that score, provided of course that you are not working at the cost of your health.

I am glad that the Sharma-Gadodia case is over. I did feel hesitant about burdening you with that work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7700. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

CWMG - LXXXV

228. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

BHAI UTTIMCHAND,

I have your letter. I was delighted to see your Hindustani. I read the Urdu also. I am sending the cheque to Sardar. I like the analogy from geometry and I got the answer too by drawing the figure.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SIND)

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

229. ADDRESS TO TRAINEES OF BASIC TEACHERS' CAMP[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 23, 1946

One of the complaints that has been made by one of you is that too much emphasis is laid here on manual work. I am a firm believer in the educative value of manual work. Our present educational system is meant for strengthening and perpetuating the imperialist power in India. Those of you who have been brought up under it have naturally developed a taste for it and so find labour irksome. No one in Government schools or colleges bothers to teach the students how to clean the roads or latrines. Here cleanliness and sanitation form the very Alpha and Omega of your training. Scavenging is a fine art you should take pains to learn. Persistent questioning and healthy inquisitiveness are the first requisite for acquiring learning of any kind. Inquisitiveness should be tempered by humility and respectful regard for the teacher. It

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". There were 79 trainees sent by various Congress-ruled provinces and by the Kasturba Trust. The meeting was held in the Talimi Sangh Hall.

must not degenerate into impudence. The latter is the enemy of receptivity of mind. There can be no knowledge without humility and the will to learn.

Useful manual labour, intelligently performed, is the means *par excellence* for developing the intellect. One may develop a sharp intellect otherwise too. But then it will not be a balanced growth but an unbalanced distorted abortion. It might easily make of one a rogue and a rascal. A balanced intellect presupposes a harmonious growth of body, mind and soul. That is why we give to manual labour the central place in our curriculum of training here. An intellect that is developed through the medium of socially useful labour will be an instrument for service and will not easily be led astray or fall into devious paths. The latter can well be a scourge. If you grasp that essential point, the money spent by your respective governments in sending you here for training will have been well-spent.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

230. COCHIN[1]

I have read all that has appeared in *The Hindu* of 30th July about the announcement[2] made by the Maharaja of Cochin. It is good as far as it goes. His Highness deserves congratulations for his courage. But good words do not carry us much further, unless they are accompanied by present action. It would certainly be a tremendous advance if the Maharaja were to make the beginning today, irrespective of what Travancore or other States do or do not do. Will Cochin become a part of what is called British Malabar today, the Maharaja keeping for himself no status other than what the free vote of the adult population of Cochin gives him?

SEVAGRAM, August 24, 1946

Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

[2] The Maharaja of Cochin in a statement had declared that he was prepared to discuss the unification of his State with Malabar and Travancore to form a State of Kerala.

CWMG-LXXV

231. LETTER TO MADALASA

Not revised *August 24, 1946*

CHI. MADU,

I feel pity for you. I am also angry with you. What you have told me fills me with pity. But I am angry because you kept it to yourself all this time.

We should blame no one except ourselves. That is the only way to be happy in life and remain clean. I have told you that you should find some work which will leave you no time to think about yourself. Mahila Ashram work was one such activity, but it did not suit you. You should, then, find some work which you can do alone or with a friend you will choose. If you can think of nothing, you could learn all the processes of spinning. Read books on nature cure. There are some in Gujarati, and in Hindi, too.

Do write to me every Tuesday, and that at length. Do not lose your temper with anybody, not even with yourself. Learn to sing the *bhajans* aloud.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 327-8

232. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter.

Next week the dictionary must be published.[1] We can only try, however. Please send me what you can. That will satisfy me. How can we pass imperfect material in order to

[1] English-Hindustani dictionary which was to be serialized in *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* from September 1, 1946.

CWMG - LXXXV

finish the work? After all it is only a beginning. It was not possible to send for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10973

233. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

August 24, 1946

I had long talks with Kanchan. I only pity her. She can take no decision just now. She certainly desires conjugal pleasure and to bear children. This wish on her part cannot be despised. You are a married man. No one can find fault with you if you beget progeny. It is only right for you to satisfy her and find satisfaction yourself. It is another matter if, seeing your ascetic disposition and out of love and compassion for you, she herself releases you. But at present this is beyond you both. You have not the necessary firmness of mind. Kanchan certainly wants to taste of the worldly pleasure. The two of you should therefore stay there for the present. When I arrive there it will not be necessary for you to visit the Ashram too often. You may come whenever you conveniently can. It will not matter if you don't. If in the meanwhile my plans have crystallized, we shall know how matters stand with regard to you. Kanchan has suffered much. She must not suffer more. She will explain the rest if she can. I have given you quite enough in this letter. I am not revising this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10239. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

234. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 24, 1946

When the Ashram was first started in Kochrab we set before us certain ideals. The same ideals are before us today. What is our duty in terms of these ideals in the face of the conflagration that is raging in the country today? Let us be humble and confess that we have not got the strength today

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's 'Weekly Letter', 3-9-1946

to meet all the expectations that the people entertain of us. But we are sincerely striving for it. If we had fully realized the principles for which we stand, we should have rushed into the blaze and offered the purest sacrifice which might have conceivably quenched the flames.

He then proceeded to give his definition of 'pure sacrifice'. It was not the thoughtless annihilation of the moth in the flame. Sacrifice to be effective must be backed by the uttermost external and internal purity. There is nothing that such sacrifice cannot achieve. Without the requisite purity, sacrifice is no better than a desperate self-annihilation devoid of any merit. Sacrifice must, further, be willing and it should be made in faith and hope, without a trace of hatred or ill-will in the heart.

Although we have fallen short of the ideal, we have never been found wanting in honest endeavour. The art of jail-going we have learnt with the rest. But jail-going is only the beginning, not the end of satyagraha. The acme of satyagraha for us would be to lay down our lives for the defence of India's just cause. Let us then pray to God to give us the requisite purity and fearlessness in the true sense of the term, to make our sacrifice worthy of the altar. Then alone shall we be worthy of the name of the Ashram.

Harijan, 8-9-1946

235. HINDUSTANI v. *URDU AND HINDI*

A Bombay Government circular of 16-8-1939 reads:

It has been observed that the word "Hindustani" is being used indifferently for Hindi or Hindustani. Please note that Hindustani is different and distinct from both HINDI and URDU, and when a reference to that language is to be made, it should be made as "Hindustani" only.

On 9th October 1940 a press note was issued:

In September 1938 the Government of Bombay announced their decision to introduce the study of Hindustani in the schools of the Province. Steps were accordingly taken to implement that decision and the language is being taught in the primary schools, secondary schools and in the training institutions. In actual practice the teaching of the language in the schools has raised certain difficulties which have to be considered. The chief of them are lack of literature in the language, as it has yet to develop, and the absence of suitable text-books for use

in schools. The Hindustani text-books now in use have been found to be defective, both in regard to the language used in them which is said to contain too many words of Hindi origin and in regard to the subject matter of the lessons included in them, some of which are stated to be unsuitable for Muslim pupils. Besides, both Urdu and Hindustani have so much of a common vocabulary that it has been suggested that it is unnecessary to insist on the teaching of Hindustani in Urdu schools. The Government having carefully considered the whole question have now directed teaching of Hindustani in other institutions. Urdu educational institutions in the Province, i. e., the primary and secondary schools and training institutions where the medium of instruction is Urdu, should be exempted from the inclusion of such teaching in the curriculum.

Another circular issued in 1941 exempts Hindi schools from the teaching of Hindustani, thus leaving Hindu schools where the medium is other than Hindi or Urdu for teaching Hindustani. What is the present Government of the Province, which is based on popular will, to do?

The answer is contained in the admission that the present Provincial Government is based on popular will. If the Hindi schools wish to have Hindustani, the national language, taught in the primary and secondary schools, it should be taught. Naturally the question has to be decided by the parents of the children learning in these schools. If they do not want it and an attempt is made to impose it by force, the claim for being a popular Government cannot be sustained. I should certainly advise the parents to want their children to be taught it. It should never be forgotten that Hindustani is essentially a cross between Hindi and Urdu and written in both the scripts. If the parents want either only Hindi or Urdu and only one script, they cannot impose it on an unbelieving or unwilling Government. Either party has freedom of action.

The question whether Hindustani is or can be a national form of speech is irrelevant at this stage. The argument has, moreover, been examined often enough in previous issues of the *Harijan*.

SEVAGRAM, August 25, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

CWMG - LXXXV

236. ADVICE TO AN ASHRAM INMATE[1]

SEVAGRAM,
August 25, 1946

Why should you want to touch my feet? Millions cannot do that and what millions cannot afford, we should voluntarily renounce. I go so far as to say that if ahimsa cannot be practised by the millions, I have no use for it for myself. But if they did not want to, although they could, I would hold on to it, even if I were all alone. People say that ahimsa is only for the saint and the seer. I think otherwise. If what they say is right, it ceases to have any value in my eyes. Similarly, if it were open to me alone to desire and strive to live for 125 years, I would not entertain that desire. But everybody can and should desire to live for 125 years, for the service of God and His creation. Self-interest too demands that. For what would life be worth in a world in which I am the sole survivor of all those I have worked with and known?

Harijan, 1-9-1946

237. ALTERNATIVE TO INDUSTRIALISM

A correspondent writes:

> Do you then believe that industrialization of India—to the extent of India producing her own ships, locomotives, aeroplanes, etc., —is necessary? If not, will you kindly suggest the alternative means by which India shall discharge her responsibilities as a free and independent nation?
>
> If you believe in the establishment of such industries, who should, in your opinion, exercise control over the management and the profits that will accrue?

I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India. Indeed, I believe that Independent India can only discharge her duty

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". The inmate had wanted to touch Gandhiji's feet as Gandhiji was leaving Sevagram. According to the source this incident took place on the 25th morning.

towards a groaning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life by developing her thousands of cottage [industries] and living at peace with the world. High thinking is inconsistent with complicated material life based on high speed imposed on us by Mammon worship. All the graces of life are possible only when we learn the art of living nobly.

There may be sensation in living dangerously. We must draw the distinction between living in the face of danger and living dangerously. A man who dares to live alone in a forest infested by wild beasts and wilder men without a gun and with God as his only Help, lives in the face of danger. A man who lives perpetually in mid-air and dives to the earth below to the admiration of a gaping world lives dangerously. One is a purposeful, the other a purposeless, life.

Whether such plain living is possible for an isolated nation, however large geographically and numerically in the face of a world armed to the teeth and in the midst of pomp and circumstance, is a question open to the doubt of a sceptic. The answer is straight and simple. If plain life is worth living, then the attempt is worth making even though only an individual or a group makes the effort.

At the same time I believe that some key industries are necessary. I do not believe in armchair or armed socialism. I believe in action according to my belief, without waiting for wholesale conversion. Hence, without having to enumerate key industries, I would have State ownership where a large number of people have to work together. The ownership of the products of their labour, whether skilled or unskilled, will vest in them through the State. But as I can conceive such a State only based on non-violence, I would not dispossess monied men by force but would invite their co-operation in the process of conversion to State ownership. There are no *pariahs* of society, whether they are millionaires or paupers. The two are sores of the same disease. And all are men "for a' that".

And I avow this belief in the face of the inhumanities we have witnessed and may still have to witness in India as elsewhere. Let us live in the face of danger.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

CWMG - LXXV

238. ENGLISH NOTICES[1]

You and Congress Governments advocate immediate discontinuance of English as the medium of instruction in this country. Will you not exert your influence through the *Harijan* to get all sign and direction boards, plates of offices, names of roads, streets, lanes, villages, schools, colleges, hospitals, etc., written in the regional language of the district? A change in Government or semi-Government institutions will be a lesson to private shops, stores, saloons, etc., to follow suit. Articles in the Company's and other Acts requiring a name-board in English must go.

I believe that nowadays the tendency is towards the use of the regional language on signboards, etc. The correspondent is right regarding Government institutions and offices. Now that there are national Governments, the change should be introduced.

If any such rule exists in Company's or other Acts as referred to by the correspondent, it should certainly go.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

239. HINDUSTANI PRACHAR EXAMINATIONS

The examinations for the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Wardha, had been announced to take place on September 15th. But owing to the postal strike, letters were not delivered regularly for nearly a month, nor did the centres receive the examination books in time. In the circumstances, the time for examinations has been postponed to November 17th (Sunday). In view of the extra time afforded, it is hoped that advantage will be taken to open more centres and more examinees will be forthcoming. The last day for receiving applications for the examinations at the Wardha office is 30th September.

I endorse the hope that the extra two months gained by the postponement will mean more entrants for the examinations.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 25, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] This and the following item were published under 'Notes'.

240. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
August 25, 1946

MY DEAR KU,

I am told that Zaverbhai has accepted a post under the Government on a fat salary. If this is so, it is a backward step.

In my opinion no responsible person belonging to our organization can accept any pay for services. Our advice and service should be rendered gratis. Rent and conveyance expenses actually incurred may be charged. We get money from the well-to-do, the government get from the starved masses. The less we have to do with Government money, the better.

Love.

[PS.]

I am sorry. I have to run away. Hope to be back in about a week.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 10183

241. LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL

ON THE TRAIN
FROM SEVAGRAM TO DELHI,
August 25, 1946

BHAI SATYAPAL,

I got your letter. I am glad to know that you are happy.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL (OF LAHORE)

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

CWMG - LXXV

242. LETTER TO DR. SHEIKH MUHAMMED ALAM

ON THE TRAIN,
August 25, 1946

BROTHER ALAM,

I have your letter. I do remember the Begum and your daughter. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu : G. N. 33

243. GOA[1]

The game of hunting lovers of civil liberty is going on merrily in Goa. A small power because of its smallness often acts with impunity where a great power cannot. If the facts are as they have come to me, Shri Purushottam Kakodkar is fasting in his prison and may soon join the majority. As a believer unto death in satyagraha, neither I nor any satyagrahi should deplore the death. In such deaths of spotless victims lies the seed of true liberty.

But what of the Portuguese power which boasts of philanthropy and alliance with the Roman Catholic Church? That power will have to justify itself before man and God. The blood of the innocents (assuming the innocence of the victims) will cry out from their tombs or their ashes. It is more potent than the voice of the living, however powerful and eloquent.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading 'Notes'.

244. *IF I WERE THE MINISTER*

The talks with the Ministers concerned at Poona on 29th to 31st July on village crafts and basic education have given rise to a lot of correspondence and private discussion. For the guidance of the Provincial Governments and others interested in the question of khadi which has naturally occasioned the bulk of the correspondence and discussion, I set forth below my thoughts on the subject.

I refer the reader to my note in the *Harijan* of 28th April last. My views, then expressed, remain unaltered. One thing has created a misunderstanding. Some friends have read compulsion in that note. I am sorry for the obscurity. In it I had answered the question as to what representative governments could do if they wished. I had, I hope pardonably, assumed that such governments' notices too could not be interpreted as compulsion. For every act of a *bona-fide* representative government would assume consent of the voters represented. The voters would mean the whole populace, whether registered as voters or not. With that background, I wrote that the Government should notify to the villagers that mill cloth would not be supplied to the villagers after a certain fixed date, so as to enable them to wear khadi prepared by themselves.

Whatever the meaning of my article of 28th April last, I want to state that any scheme adopted about khadi without the willing co-operation of those concerned must mean death to khadi as a means for attaining swaraj. Then the taunt that khadi was a return to the darkness and slavery of the Middle Ages would be true. But I have held the contrary view. Whilst khadi under compulsion was a badge of slavery, khadi intelligently and voluntarily prepared, primarily for one's own use, was easily the badge of our freedom. Freedom is nothing if it is not all-round self-help. I for one would have nothing to do with khadi, if it were not a free man's privilege as well as duty.

A friendly critic asks whether khadi thus prepared could also and at the same time be for sale. Yes, if sale is its secondary use; not, if manufacture for sale is its only or even primary use. That we began with sale of khadi shows tempo-

rary necessity as well as our limited vision. Experience is a great teacher. It has taught us many things. Not the least is its primary use. But it is by no means the last. But I must leave this fascinating field of speculation and proceed definitely to answer the question put in the heading.

My first business, as the minister in charge of revival of the villages as the centre of all governmental activity, would be to find out from among the Permanent Service honest and incorruptible men capable for the work. I would put the best among them in touch with the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A., creations of the Congress, and bring in a scheme for giving the village crafts the greatest encouragement. I would stipulate there should be no compulsion on the villagers, that they must not slave for others and that they should be taught to help themselves and rely upon their own labour and skill for the production of articles of food, cloth and other necessaries. The scheme would thus have to be comprehensive. I would instruct my first man, therefore, to see the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and see what it has to say.

Let us assume that the scheme, thus produced, contains a clause saying that the villagers themselves declare that they would not want mill cloth, say, after one year from a fixed date, that they require cotton, wool and necessary implements and instruction, not as a gift but to be paid for on the easiest terms. The scheme provides too that it will not apply at once to the whole of any province but only to a part to begin with. The scheme further tells one that the A. I. S. A. will guide and assist the working of the scheme.

Being convinced of its soundness, I would give it legal form in consultation with the law department and issue a notification, fully describing the genesis of the scheme. The villagers as well as the mill-owners and others would have been party to it. The notification will show clearly that it is the people's measure, though bearing the Government stamp. The Government money will be used for the benefit of the poorest villagers, making the largest return possible to the people concerned. It will, therefore, be probably the most profitable investment in which expert assistance will be voluntary and overhead charges the least item. The notification will give in detail the whole cost to the country and the return to the people.

The only question for me as minister is whether the A. I. S. A. has the conviction and capacity to shoulder the burden

of creating and guiding a khadi scheme to success. If it has, I would put my little barque to sea with all confidence.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946
Harijan, 1-9-1946

245. THE PLACE OF MEDICINE IN NAYEE TALIM[1]

Shrimati Asha Devi does her own work and is considerate of my time. However, one day she asked me to give her five minutes. Her contention was that Nayee Talim should provide for some elementary instruction in medicine and she wondered whether, to make this possible, she herself should undergo training in medicine for four or five years.

I realized at once that with the best efforts on her part she had not been able to free herself wholly from the hold of the old system of education. Asha Devi, after all, has taken an M.A. degree from a University which was created by the British. I myself possess no degree, and I ceased long ago to attach any value to the little knowledge I acquired at High School. I have besides taken in deeply the system of nature cure. So I said to her: "You say the first lesson our children have to learn is how to keep fit and how to keep themselves and their surroundings clean. I say this covers all the medical knowledge we need. Nayee Talim is intended for the millions in villages. It is for their good. They live close to nature and yet do not know the laws of natural living. Those who know those laws do not follow them. It is from observing their way of living that we conceived the need for Nayee Talim. The knowledge that Nayee Talim imparts is scarcely to be had from books. It is from the book of nature that this knowledge is to be had. We must similarly seek what medical knowledge we need from the same book of nature. This means that if we know the laws of hygiene and follow them and take the right nutrition we can become our own doctors. The man who eats in order to live, who lives in friendship with the five basic substances, namely, earth, water, ether, sun and air, who is a servant of God who has created these, can never fall ill. And if he does, he will surrender himself to God's care and calmly meet his end. He will be content to use such medicinal herbs and remedies as the grounds and fields of his village yield. Tens of millions of people live and die thus.

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 1-9-1946.

They have not so much as heard of a doctor, let alone seeing one. We must make ourselves just like these villagers and teach village boys and adults who come to us also to live in that way. Doctors say that 99 per cent of all diseases are caused by insanitation, by eating things not fit to eat and by lack of proper nutrition. If we can teach 99 per cent of the people the art of living, we can forget the remaining one per cent. They will find some doctors like Sushila Nayar. We need not bother too much about them. Today pure water, pure earth and pure air are not available. We live sheltered from the sun. If we pay attention to these and take proper nourishment we shall have done the work of ages. Acquiring knowledge of this requires neither degrees nor money in crores of rupees. All that is needed is faith in God, the spirit of service, an acquaintance with the five basic substances and knowledge of proper diet. We can acquire all this with our own effort and in very little time without going to schools and colleges.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI, August 26, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 1-9-1946

246. TELEGRAM TO SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN

NEW DELHI,
August 26, 1946

SIR SHAFAAT AHMED KHAN
CLARENDON COTTAGE
SIMLA

THANK GOD YOU ARE SAFE.[1] HOPE RECOVERY WILL BE RAPID.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The addressee had resigned from the Muslim League to join the Interim Government. On August 24, he was waylaid in Simla and stabbed seven times. He was sworn in on September 11.

247. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. D. D. GILDER

Express

NEW DELHI,
August 27, 1946

DR. GILDER
MINISTER
POONA

PLEASE CONVEY WISHES DOCTOR VISHWANATHAN FOR SUCCESS ANTI-MALARIA CAMPAIGN.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

248. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA

[*August 28, 1946*][1]

HEAD
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU
NOVA GOA

HAVE JUST SEEN YOUR OFFICIAL CONTRADICTION ABOUT TREATMENT OF PRISONER KAKODKAR. PLEASE WIRE WHETHER YOU WILL LET A REPRESENTATIVE OF WEEKLY "HARIJAN" INTERVIEW PRISONER AND REPORT ON FACTS.[2]

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source has "August 18" which appears to be a slip; *vide* pp. 180, 209 and 222-3. However, Pyarelal Papers have "August 29".

[2] The Goan authorities refused to "accept in a purely internal matter the interference of a newspaper man".

CWMG-LXXXV

249. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this as a friend and after deep thought.

Several times last evening you repeated that you were a "plain man and a soldier" and that you did not know the law.[1] We are all plain men though we may not all be soldiers and even though some of us may know the law. It is our purpose, I take it, to devise methods to prevent a repetition of the recent terrible happenings in Calcutta.[2] The question before us is how best to do it.

Your language last evening was minatory. As representative of the King you cannot afford to be a military man only, nor to ignore the law, much less the law of your own making. You should be assisted, if necessary, by a legal mind enjoying your full confidence. You threatened not to convene the Constituent Assembly if the formula you placed before Pandit Nehru and me was not acted upon by the Congress.[3] If such be really the case then you should not have made the announcement[4] you did on 12th August. But having made it you should recall the action and form another ministry enjoying your full confidence. If British arms are kept here for internal peace and order, your Interim Government would be reduced to a farce. The Congress cannot afford to impose its will on warring elements in India through the use of British

[1] For Wavell's version of the interview, *vide* Appendix II.

[2] The reference is to the riots that had occurred in Calcutta.

[3] Gandhiji had found Wavell's attitude so unhelpful that he caused a cable to be sent to Sudhir Ghosh in London to the following effect: "Gandhi says Viceroy unnerved Bengal tragedy. Please tell friends he should be assisted by abler and legal mind. Otherwise repetition of tragedy a certainty." Sudhir Ghosh accordingly met Pethick-Lawrence and Attlee to convey to them Gandhiji's feelings. For Sudhir Ghosh's letter to Gandhiji on the subject, *vide* Appendix III.

[4] This was to the effect that the Viceroy had invited the President of the Congress to make proposals for the formation of an Interim Government and that the Congress President had accepted the invitation.

arms. Nor can the Congress be expected to bend itself and adopt what it considers a wrong course because of the brutal exhibition recently witnessed in Bengal. Such submission would itself lead to an encouragement and repetition of such tragedies. The vindictive spirit on either side would go deeper, biding for an opportunity to exhibit itself more fiercely and more disgracefully when occasion occurs. And all this will be chiefly due to the continued presence in India of a foreign power strong in and proud of its arms.

I say this neither as a Hindu nor as a Muslim. I write only as an Indian. In so far as I am aware, the Congress claims to know both the Hindu and Muslim mind more than you or any Britisher can do. Unless, therefore, you can wholly trust the Congress Government which you have announced, you should reconsider your decision, as I have already suggested.

You will please convey the whole of this letter to the British Cabinet.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, p. 322; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 221-2

250. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letters. The letter to Sushila I have given to Kishorelal and told him to forward it to her. You are in a proper quandary. Your duty, it seems clear, is to court imprisonment. There is no doubt at all that a fight has to be given. It is difficult for me to advise what should be done about the Press. You alone can decide. I should like Sushila being with you. But it appears that her duty is to be here. I cannot think of sending Arun and Ila there and I could not countenance Sushila leaving them and going. This is the difficulty. You must consider and decide. In coming to a decision please give no thought to what I might want or

other elders might want. Of course you have to consider what Sushila would want.

Here everything is in confusion. No one can tell what will happen. I do not even know how long I shall have to be in Delhi. My heart is in the Ashram of course. I shall see where He takes me. Devdas already cabled to you, so you will see that no compromising step has been taken here and you may rest assured that none will be taken. I shall not be surprised if the newspapers there publish fabrications to harm the cause. Wasn't I similarly attacked in 1896 ?[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4989

251. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter here. I am glad that Ila has recovered. All that I could write to you is covered by my letter to Manilal, a copy of which is attached.[2] For the present I am camping here. I cannot say when I shall move out.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI

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

252. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

August 28, 1946

CHI. ARUN (GANDHI),

I am sorry that you and your friend told a lie. We are apt to fall into the habit. I regard this as the worst among all bad habits. It will be good if in future you keep away from it.

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

[1] The reference is to the assault on Gandhiji in Durban on January 13, 1897 following a distorted summary of a pamphlet of Gandhiji by Reuter; *vide* Vol. II and XXIX.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG LXXXV

253. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SEVAGRAM,[1]
August 28, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have given you quite a lot of work. Take care of your health, only doing what you can. This applies to Shakaribehn too. She must not ruin her health. See about Anna[2] and Kamala. If they both work well, they can do a lot of work.

Please tell Govind Reddy that I was not able to have a talk with him. I cannot say definitely when I shall be arriving there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10641

254. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

You were in my thoughts on Monday, but how was I to write? Yesterday also passed in the same way. Today I am writing at 6.30 in the morning. This is the last day of Ramzan. Remember what true Ramzan is. Be firm of resolve and make your body as strong as steel. How is Jajuji? How is Kishorelal? How is your finger? I am well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 526

[1] This is a slip. Gandhiji was in Delhi on this date.
[2] Harihar Sharma

CWMG - LXXV

255. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[*August 28, 1946*][1]

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I expect you have started going to the Khadi Vidyalaya. You should have a healthy body and healthy mind.

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

256. LETTER TO KAMALA SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

CHI. KAMALA,

If you have really become what you say, you will be able to render a lot of service. When the mind has been thoroughly cleansed, the body also will be all right. There is a saying that if the mind is pure the Ganga flows at one's door-step. In other words, if the mind is steady and *sattvic* the body too must become so.

I am not writing to Anna[2] separately.

SHRIMATI KAMALABEHN SHARMA
SEVAGRAM

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

[1] In the source this letter is placed among the letters of this date.
[2] Addressee's husband Harihar Sharma

CWMG - LXXXV

257. LETTER TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

BHAI LAKSHMINARAYAN,

I got your letter and was sorry to read about Chi. Saraswati. You have both been tested. I hope she will get completely cured by naturopathy. Munshiji has written to me about your case. Sharma[1] came and saw me. I still do not have his opinion. Both of you will be informed when I have it.

LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA
DELHI

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

258. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
August 28, 1946

Even today I cannot tell you how long I may have to stay in Delhi. I am certainly here till the day after tomorrow because the Working Committee meeting will be held then instead of tomorrow. I hope to be able to speak to you day after tomorrow.

We run away from fear. We should not. Those who do have no faith in God. When God resides in our hearts, where is the need to get scared? If one loses one's life, it is because God wills it so. We do not matter at all. If we are beaten, it is God who has to put up with the beatings. How can one who always thinks of God get scared?

Referring to the Calcutta riots Gandhiji said:

I am not able to say what I want to say. Words fail me. Over such an outrage happening in India it is better to remain silent. Very often silence is the most effective communication because silence is filled with truth.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 29-8-1946

[1] H. L. Sharma

259. SALES TAX[1]

I have received many letters in regard to the Sales Tax Act of the Bombay Presidency. Many arguments advanced against it are, in my opinion, thoughtless. Nevertheless, I placed some of the complaints before the Finance Minister. Shri Vaikunthbhai Mehta is a cautious and conscientious Minister. He has sent me a full reply.

It appears that this Act was framed before the popular Government came in. The present Ministry have made some essential changes in it. The letters received by me were full of criticism giving the impression that the present Government was wilful, indifferent to public opinion and the tax was already in vogue. As a matter of fact, not only has the collection of the Sales Tax not begun, but it has been postponed till October 1st and may be delayed still further if need be. Moreover, many articles of necessary use have been exempted, thereby showing that the Government has paid due attention to public objections and inconvenience. I am aware that there are people who hold that there should be no Sales Tax at all. A great deal has been said in favour of this view. But no government could exist if it were to listen to abstract objections. In other words, it is wisdom, in such cases, not to raise basic issues.

The Sales Tax is in vogue in many provinces. The main criterion in judging any tax should be that it does not hit the poor. It should also be seen that the money raised thereby is used for the public good.

A popular ministry is responsible to the legislature, and cannot do anything without their consent. Every elected member in a popular legislature is responsible to his voters. Therefore the voter who represents the public should ponder well before embarking on any criticism of the government of his creation. Moreover, one bad habit of the people should be borne in mind. They do not like any tax whatsoever. Where there is good government, the tax-payer gets full return for his money as, for example, the water tax in cities. No tax-payer could get water on his own for the same payment. But even so, and in spite of the fact that the tax is levied by the popular will, tax-payers always resent even paying such

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-9-1946.

taxes. It is, of course, true that one cannot prove the benefit of all taxes as easily as the one I have cited as an example. But as society grows in size and complexity and the field of service also grows, it is difficult to explain to the individual tax-payer how he gets his return for any particular tax. This much, however, is clear that taxes as a whole should stand for the general benefit of society. If this were not so, the argument that taxes were levied by popular will would not hold. To the extent that we are still under foreign rule, the Government is not wholly responsible to the people. But in the Provinces today the Governments are popular to a large extent and we must judge the Sales Tax accordingly.

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

260. GOA

With reference to Mr. Gandhi's short commentary on Goa in the *Harijan* of the 18th instant,[1] where he gives the so-called "contrast" between French and Portuguese authorities, we have to state the following for your knowledge and publicity purposes:

There is nothing more out of place as a comparison between French India and Portuguese India. The objects, administrative methods and the goal are absolutely dissimilar in their essence. The recent integration (1816) of the French possessions in India in the French Colonial Empire and its setbacks, have nothing in common with Portuguese India which for more than 400 years, has been benefited by the Portuguese administration, completely identifying its destinies with the Motherland.

If the inhabitants of French India wish to identify their destinies with Free India (what has yet to be ascertained), the same does not happen in Portuguese India where the totality of the inhabitants wish to continue under the beneficial action of Portuguese administration which has been the cause of its material and moral progress to the point of Goa being the pride of the Portuguese colonizing effort and part and parcel of the Motherland.

These being the facts based on historical data, we trust you will publish the relevant corrections in your paper:

This letter to the Editor of the *Harijan* from the Head of the Government Information Bureau, Nova Goa, makes sorry

[1] *Vide* pp. 151-2.

CWMG - LXXV

reading. It is an example of the truth of the proverb, "Comparisons are odious." Surely there is not much to choose between French and Portuguese imperialism. The hands of imperialism are always dyed red. The sooner imperialistic powers shed their imperialism like Ashoka the Good, the better it will be for the groaning world. One may be pardoned for giving credit to France where credit is deserved, as it is in the case of French India, assuming, of course, the truth of the newspaper version of the statement of the Governor of French India. Moreover, it is ridiculous for the Head of the Government Information Bureau to write of Portugal as the motherland of the Indians of Goa. Their mother country is as much India as mine. Goa is outside British India but it is within geographical India as a whole. And there is very little, if anything, in common between the Portuguese and the Indians of Goa.

I have read also the contradiction of my statement about Shri Purushottam Kakodkar. I must adhere to it in spite of the contradiction of the Portuguese authorities in Goa. Here is what his wife says in her letter dated 24-8-1946 :

> Shri Purushottam Kakodkar, Secretary of the Goa National Congress, was arrested while talking to a friend on 9-8-1946 by the Portuguese authorities. On the 10th he was removed to Panjim (Nova Goa). On the 11th and 12th, he was kept on half rations. When he learnt that the authorities were deliberately underfeeding him, he went on hunger strike on the 13th and was still fasting on 20th.
>
> The Portuguese Government is undeterred in its policy and up till now (24-8-1946) no attention has been paid to the written request sent in by Shri Kakodkar for adequate food supply to himself and other prisoners.

I ask the Portuguese authorities whether they would allow a representative from the *Harijan* to meet Prisoner Kakodkar and ascertain facts for himself ?

NEW DELHI, August 29, 1946

Harijan, 8-9-1946

261. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Express

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

RAJAJI
BAZLULLAH ROAD
THYAGARAYANAGAR

YOUR WIRE. YOU MUST NOT OVERSTRAIN YOURSELF BUT BE COMPLETELY WELL FOR TASK AHEAD.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

262. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

DR. DINSHAW
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

REGRET MY LETTER NOT RECEIVED. NOW POSTING COPY. DESPONDENCY NOT PERMISSIBLE. HOPE MOTHER BETTER.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

263. LETTER TO D. V. RAMASWAMI

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

CHI. RAMASWAMI,

I have your letter. The news of Mother's death has only brought me relief. Of what use can life be for a person ridden by disease. Besides, she was also advanced in age.

It is good that Hanumantha Rao's widow is looking after the Kasturba Trust work in Sithanagaram.

CWMG - LXXXV

Your work of service should now pick up momentum.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI D. V. RAMASWAMI
VIZAGAPATTAM, ANDHRA

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

264. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,
August 29, 1946

BHAI PANTJI,

I see that Mirabehn is unable to do any work these days. She has shown me the correspondence she carried on. Now that the Ministry too has changed, is it advisable to have her even as an honorary adviser? She is, of course, a devoted worker and does not crave for office as such. Besides, her health, too, has suffered from incessant travelling. Please let me know what in the present circumstances would be the right thing to do. I wanted to talk it over with you, but could not do so.

In my opinion, Mirabehn may not be able to do much work for about two months. The fever still persists. Perhaps it is better to spare her.

G. B. PANT
LUCKNOW

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

265. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

MANAGER
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

RAMPRASAD SHOULD REPORT HIMSELF TO JEHANGIRJI PATEL ON THIRD FOR DISCUSSION AND SETTLEMENT.[1]

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* also p. 227.

CWMG - LXXXV

266. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have not been able to write to you two. However I often think of you. I shall therefore only express the hope in this letter that both of you are calm. Whatever you do, do as a part of your duty. I hope that you will make each other happy, spending the least time in idle talk, and enjoy dreamless and sound sleep at night. Your daily activities must be going on as regularly as clock-work. You will also be improving your Urdu. I am not in a position yet to say when I shall be free from here. I am trying to make it as early as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8392. Also C. W. 7216. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

267. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

Be composed. Therein lies your good. Remember what I have told you. Your physical condition depends entirely on your mental condition. I do feel pity for you, and that is why I also feel irritated with you. Why do you make yourself an object of pity? I look upon you as a child. But considering your age, you ought not to be a child in mind. You should learn to think systematically. You should find your own path in life. Your day should be spent in service of some kind; your night should be given to sleep.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8254. Also C. W. 6978. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

268. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIRJI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say[1]. I shall write in English whenever I have anything special to say. But I do want you to get used to reading and writing Gujarati.

I have wired Ramprasad to see you on the 3rd.[2] I have also written to Bhai Bhise. Your committee can now do as they like. I hope Khurshedbehn is well. It will be more than enough if she maintains her health. I am glad that Dinshaw will be going with you. Please comfort him.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

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

269. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

You have to go and see Jehangirji Patel on the 3rd. I think you will benefit by going to him. At present he has called you only for an interview. I should like you to see him and have a frank talk with him and try to join him if you find the work good.

Enclosed is a letter from Jehangirji.[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* p. 178.
[2] *Vide* p. 225.
[3] *Vide* also the preceding item.

CWMG - LXXXV

270. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Your resolve to present yarn on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti is indeed commendable and I hope it will succeed. My faith has ever been increasing that if we all take to spinning with the right understanding we can make greater headway along the path of freedom.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

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

271. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

August 30, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

Thinking over the talks I had with Dada[1] and with you and the letter that is in front of me, I have come to the conclusion that your work in the U. P. should be wholly independent of the Charkha Sangh work and should be complementary to it. You have many workers. They are capable. Though we all work for the same cause, there still remains a difference of outlook between the Charkha Sangh and the Gandhi Ashram. I feel that if Gandhi Ashram grows independently, the khadi activity will probably develop faster. I am taking the step in this hope.

You would still be under the debt of the Charkha Sangh. I think it is indeed difficult, if not impossible, for you to pay off the whole sum right now. Therefore, I would advise you to return the sum in ten annual instalments. In case of failure

[1] J. B. Kripalani

CWMG - LXXV

to send the yarn or the instalment as promised or in case of khadi work being given up, the whole amount must be returned forthwith. The first instalment—cash as well as yarn—will be payable one year after the date of this letter.

If your work does not succeed in any part of U. P., the Charkha Sangh will have the right to work there independently. The step is being taken in the hope that it will promote decentralization and help the Gandhi Ashram to develop independently.

If you want any modification, please let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN BABU
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

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

272. TELEGRAM TO MURIEL LESTER

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

MURIEL LESTER
22 CLUB BACK ROAD
BYCULLA

WELCOME. CAN COME HERE. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

273. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter dated August 1, 1946. There is nothing wrong in your spending your life there [in Bochasan]. What you write about the Muslim boy makes interesting reading. I take it you have arranged for his education. If he is a Gujarati boy it is desirable that he knows Gujarati very well.

CWMG - LXXXV

And since he is a Muslim he ought to be taught to read the Koran. It is our duty to see to that.

Blessings from
BAPU

GANGABEHN VAIDYA
BOCHASAN

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

274. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have received Shri M[unshi]'s award. From what you told me I had thought it was in your favour. Now I find that it is not in your favour but against you. When I receive fair copies of the document I shall send one to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 364

275. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have your letter as also the draft of your award. I have gone through the note you wrote for my information. I see that you have taken great pains over it. I agree with most of what you say in the note. You suggest that I should keep it confidential. I would rather show it to Sharma, if you would permit me. Your verdict is clear and concise. You had better write it in either Gujarati or Hindi. It need not be on stamped paper. The thing is not at all meant for a court of law. Of course it will be a different matter if such an action will involve any infringement of the Stamp Act. In that case we must affix the stamps. It will suffice to send your verdict only

CWMG - LXXXV

to me, and I shall forward it to both the parties, although it will be all right if you send a copy direct to each party. Of course you will send one copy to me. Do as you think right. I am required to stay here till the 7th. Please mind your health and if possible become as strong as steel. You have to render much service. I have sent the gist of your verdict to Sharma.

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

276. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
August 31, 1946

Congress leaders were going into the Interim Government to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for the people, declared Mahatma Gandhi, addressing the prayer meeting on Saturday evening.

On September 2, Mahatma Gandhi said, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Babu Rajendra Prasad and others were going to wear crowns. But they were not going to be crowns of gold. They were to be crowns made of thorns which would try them sorely. They were going there—they whose whole life had been one of sacrifice—not to enjoy themselves or lead lives of ease but to serve the masses the more.

Gandhiji said he did not want the people to imagine that India was going to be free on September 2. Freedom he said, was not bought easily, nor was it a cheap commodity. It demanded its full price always. The leaders were going there to make the path of freedom somewhat easy for them. It was up to the people to help the leaders by being ready for sacrifices and willing to wear a crown of thorns themselves.

The A. I. C. C., Mahatma Gandhi said, was going to be held shortly in Delhi. Residents of Delhi would then be on trial. He hoped they would be sober, disciplined and peaceful and make such arrangements as to ensure the safety of the smallest child. They could only maintain their honour, as did Draupadi of old, by relying on God who alone could sustain them. He would not speak to them on the recent holocaust in Calcutta. Silence, he said, was his best friend.

He drew the attention of the congregation to a 'bhajan' sung during the prayer and said that it was a hymn which had been sung in his ears even before he went to jail in India for the first time in 1922. At that time he was sentenced to six years and for the first part of his prison life was kept by himself with two prisoner wardens to look after him. Since prayer had become part of his very being even while he was in South Africa, he used to sing the daily 'bhajan' however indifferently himself.

Out of the many who went to prison, Mahatma Gandhi said, there were those who looked out for every opportunity to escape, every opportunity to deceive and cheat. But he had long since decided that the ideal of a true satyagrahi was to make the prison a palace, and this could only be done by faith and prayer. The 'bhajan' (sung at the prayer meeting on Saturday) used to sustain him. It taught them that they could only be true to their resolution if they relied on God. He alone could keep them on the straight path. What could be the ideal of each one of those present except to make India free and keep themselves pure?

The Hindustan Times, 1-9-1946

277. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HEAD
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU
NOVA GOA

ALL OVER WORLD I HAVE HEARD OF FOREIGNERS AND FOREIGN JOURNALISTS BEING ADMITTED BY COUNTRIES CARING FOR WORLD SYMPATHY AND OPINION EVEN IN DOMESTIC SCANDALS.[1] SHOULD NOT HAVE THOUGHT THAT PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT WAS INDIFFERENT TO CRITICISM OF OUTSIDERS.[2]

The Hindu, 3-9-1946. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

278. TELEGRAM TO HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

HANDLOOM CLOTH MANUFACTURERS AND
MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION
HOSHIARPUR

APPROACH GOVERNMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* p. 214.

[2] The Goan Government's reply to this was : "There are no domestic scandals in this country. That is why I don't find your point of view either correct or sound."

CWMG - INDEX

279. LETTER TO MADALASA

BHANGI NIWAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I got your letter. Keep up the spirit which that letter reveals. Never miss a Tuesday in writing to me, whether you receive my reply or not. Only one thing is required for keeping up your cheerfulness, namely, a living faith in God. Have a frank talk with Shriman, calmly and courteously. Similarly with Mother. You should be generous towards everybody and never take amiss what they say.

I shall have to stay here up to the 10th at any rate.

Kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 328

280. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 1, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

A cutting from the *Indian Opinion* sent by Sushila has reached me here in Delhi. If what it says is true it is a very serious matter. If the whole of the Negro population enters into a bloody conflict with the whole of the Indian population, there is not the least doubt that both will perish. One must have the capacity to fight to win in a bloody conflict. Neither party has this. Any help from the whites will be quite out of the question. You will lose even such help as you are now getting. I cannot therefore believe that except for a few crazy individuals there are any Indian groups who would wish to oppose the ghettoes through violence. There is only one sure way and everyone knows it. Your path, therefore, is clear.

CWMG - LXXXV

Even if you are alone you must clearly and courteously state your views and if they put you in prison you must go to prison. I am becoming more and more convinced each day that Sushila should not go there for the present. If she takes care of the children as a good mother should, she will be doing her duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4990

281. ANTIDOTE

After giving a graphic description of the recent unfortunate and disgraceful happenings in Calcutta, a writer asks:

> What is our duty in such circumstances? The Congress gives no clear instructions to the rank and file in such crises. Sermons on non-violence from afar are of little use. To have offered non-violent resistance would have meant allowing all property to be destroyed and every Hindu to be killed.

The Congress Working Committee has given the clearest possible lead in the last sentence of its resolution published in the newspapers.[1] Fratricide will not abate by "intimidation and violence but by mutual understanding, friendly discussion and, if necessary, by agreed arbitration." One does not need to believe in non-violence as a creed to perceive the truth of this practical proposition. If through deliberate courage the Hindus had died to a man, that would have been deliverance of Hinduism and India and purification of Islam in this land.

As it was, a third party had to intervene in order to still mutual savagery. Neither the Muslims nor the Hindus concerned have gained by the intervention. Supposing that the Calcutta virus extends to the whole of India and British gunpowder keeps the two from stabbing one another, the British power or its substitute will be in possession of India for a long time to come. The length will be measured by the period required by the parties coming to sanity. It will come either by an exhausting mutual fight, independent of the foreign element or by one party eschewing violence in spite of the heaviest odds. Successful mutual strife is obviously impossible in the present state of general igno-

[1] The Working Committee met in Delhi from August 27 to August 30.

rance of the use of modern weapons and their inaccessibility. Non-violence does not require any outside or outward training. It simply requires the will not to kill even in retaliation and the courage to face death without revenge. This is no sermon on ahimsa but cold reason and the statement of a universal law. Given the unquenchable faith in the law, no provocation should prove too great for the exercise of forbearance. This I have described as non-violence of the brave.

Unfortunately for us, we are strangers to the non-violence of the brave on a mass scale. Some even doubt the possibility of the exercise of non-violence by groups, much less by masses of people. They restrict its exercise to exceptional individuals. Only, mankind can have no use for it if it is always reserved only for individuals.

Be that as it may, this much is clear that if the people are probably not ready for the exercise of non-violence of the brave, they must be ready for the use of force in self-defence. There should be no camouflage. Self-defence must be pure and simple. Then too it must never be cowardly or crude. It must, therefore, never be secret. Such is stabbing in the back and evading detection. I am conscious of the fact that we are a people unarmed and untrained in the use of arms. Opinions will differ as to whether it is good that we are in that position. There can be no denying the fact that no one needs training in the use of arms in self-defence. What is wanted for the purpose is strong arms and stronger will.

Doing injury to another is obviously violence but harbouring injury to another and yet unwillingness from cowardice to defend oneself or one's neighbour is also violence and probably worse than the first.

What then are the leaders to do? What are the new Ministers to do? They must ever seek to attain communal harmony—never under threats, ever for its own sake. I regard a Muslim or any non-Hindu as my blood brother, not in order to please him but because he is born of the same mother Hind as I am. He does not cease to be my brother because he may hate or disown me. I must woo him even, it may be, in spite of himself. The new Ministers must resolve never to use British troops, no matter what their hue is, not even the police trained by them. They are not our enemies. But they have been hitherto used not to help the people but to keep them under the foreign yoke. They should now, as they can, be used for constructive purposes. The military are specially qualified for such work.

They are trained and expected to bring into being canvas cities in a moment. They know what it is to procure and keep clean water and make perfect sanitary arrangements. No doubt, they know how to kill and be killed in the act. The public knows this part of their work only too well. But it is by no means the most substantial part of their work. It is the background which should be prized, advertised and followed. The animal part of it is unhuman, the other part is essentially human and clean. Let us copy it and humanize the troops if we can. The attempt is worth making. It can only be made by those who are not deceived by the glamour that hangs round them and the awe they inspire. This is possible only when we have the courage to face death without revenge or retaliation in mind or deed.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

282. FOR READERS

The 'Question Box' has become a regular feature of the *Harijan*. It tries to resolve the doubts of questioners as far as possible. But the post often contains questions which have been answered in one form or the other on more than one occasion. Readers should study the contents of 'Question Box' carefully.

Then there are letters asking for medical advice for sick people. The desire is there to answer such questions. But the fulfilment must take time. It is difficult too to satisfy incomplete postal inquiries. Ailing correspondents should wait awhile.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

283. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION: WHAT IT SHOULD BE LIKE[1]

The Congress session is in the offing. The question arises what it should be like, considered from the villagers' point of view, for only the villagers' point of view can be relevant in India. If we want the villages to survive and become strong and prosperous the exhibition should be free from all pomp and ostentation characteristic of the cities. There should be no

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Gramodyog Patrika*.

place for city games and entertainments. The exhibition should not under any circumstances be reduced to a show or a source of revenue. It should not become an attraction for traders. No goods should be sold, not even khadi or other products of village industry. The exhibition should become a place of education. It should be interesting and should be such that, having seen it, a villager should be inspired to learn some craft or other. There should be people to explain to the visitors the shortcomings of the villages in general and how to remove them. They should be shown what progress has been made since the work for the uplift of villages was first taken up. There should also be someone to instruct the villagers in the ways in which village life can be made artistic. Let us now see how the exhibition can be made to conform to these requirements.

(1) There should be two models of villages: one showing an average village as it is today and the other showing the village as it will look after the reform. The reformed village will be clean, with dwellings, village paths, general surroundings, fields and the condition of the livestock greatly improved. There should be maps and charts and books to show how different industries are carried on and developed.

(2) Guidance should be provided on how the various village industries are run and where the necessary tools for them are to be had or manufactured. There should also be demonstrations of the working of the various industries. Along with this we should show the following things:

(a) Ideal village diet
(b) The difference between cottage industry and machine industry
(c) An object lesson in animal husbandry
(d) A model latrine
(e) An art section
(f) Organic manure *v.* chemical fertilizers
(g) The utilization of hides and bones of dead cattle
(h) Folk music and folk dances
(i) Village sports, gymnastics and wrestling
(j) Nayee Talim
(k) Village herbs
(l) Village maternity home

If further things can be added keeping in view the guidelines enunciated above, this may be done. The things I have enumerated should be taken only as illustrations. I have not included here the various village crafts, of which the charkha

is the first. Without them the exhibition should be considered as of no value.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 2-9-1946

284. WHY GO ABROAD?

An Indian doctor went to America in order to learn neuro-surgery, so that he might return and serve his people here. He has with difficulty secured a seat in the Columbia University and is working as a house surgeon.

He writes to ask me to influence students not to go abroad for the following reasons:

(a) The amount our poor country spends on sending and training ten students abroad could be better utilized by securing the services of a first rate professor who could train 40 students as well as equip a laboratory.

(b) Students who come here acquire basic knowledge in research but do not know how to equip a laboratory on their return home.

(c) They have no chance of continued work.

(d) If we have experts brought out, our laboratories will also get perfected.

I have never been an advocate of our students going abroad. My experience tells me that such, on return, find themselves to be square pegs in round holes. That experience is the richest and contributes most to growth which springs from the soil. But today the craze for going abroad has gripped students. May the extract quoted serve as a warning!

New Delhi, September 2, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

CWMG - LXXV

285. NOTES

The Devadasi System

A correspondent writes:

> It is a well-known fact that you are trying your best to uplift the Harijan community and even spending your most precious time in the Harijan Colony. But may I assure you that there are thousands of Devadasi girls of the Harijan community residing in Poona and Bombay and are leading a life of public prostitution. Why should this be so? Is it because these girls belong to low caste community and are induced to lose their moral character that they are neglected by the public and put to the shameful life of prostitution?
>
> May I be justified in stating that this is a most important and urgent problem. Is it not possible to stop this illegal practice in the Bombay province as in Madura and Madras by the Madras Government under the ruling of Section 366A, 366 B, 372 and 373 of the Indian Penal Code, page No. 574?

I have, on more than one occasion, written about the shame attached to the Devadasi system, whether in temples or in other places. "Prostitutes" is commonly supposed to apply to women of lewd character. But the men who indulge in vice are just as much, if not more, prostitutes as the women who, in many instances, have to sell their bodies for the sake of earning a livelihood. The evil practice should be declared illegal. But the law can only help up to a point. The evil exists clandestinely in every country in spite of the law. Vigorous public opinion can help the law as it also hinders.

Untouchability and the Flush System

Q. Do you consider that the adoption of the flush system is one way of eradicating untouchability? If so, you would not presumably oppose its introduction on the basis of your dislike of machinery.

A. Where there is ample supply of water and modern sanitation can be introduced without any hardship on the poor, I have no objection to it. In fact, it should be welcomed as a means of improving the health of the city concerned. At the moment, it can only be introduced in towns. My opposition to machinery is much misunderstood. I am not opposed to

machinery as such. I am opposed to machinery which displaces labour and leaves it idle. Whether the flush system will remove the curse of untouchability is open to grave doubt. This latter has to go from our hearts. It will not disappear through such means as has been suggested. Not until we all become bhangis and realize the dignity of the labour of scavenging and latrine-cleaning, will untouchability really be exorcized.

NEW DELHI, September 2, 1946
Harijan, 15-9-1946

286. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL, RAJENDRA PRASAD AND JAGJIVAN RAM[1]

VALMIKI MANDIR,
NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

Since after the prayer I have been thinking only about you people. Abolish salt tax, remember Dandi March, bring together Hindus and Muslims, remove untouchability, adopt khadi.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 324

287. LETTER TO JHAVERBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. JHAVERBHAI,

I have your letter. If I had met you, I would have told you in person.[2] But on receiving the complaint, I took the first opportunity, and thereby no harm has been done. In Nagpur, the Government must provide the accommodation. It must at any rate give you the travelling expenses. I am of opinion that we should not demand expenses for boarding and lodging, and that

[1] The addressees had gone to seek Gandhiji's blessings before they went to the Viceroy's House for the swearing-in ceremony. It being Gandhiji's Silence Day he wrote this note.

[2] The addressee had taken up a job in the Government; *vide* p. 208.

CWMG - LXXXV

is what I have stated. Only thus can we remain clean. But we will talk further about it when I arrive there.

I fear I shall have to stay on here till the end of this month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 1360

288. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have written to Manilal. A copy is enclosed. You will have all the news from it. Stay there quietly and look after the children. You may render any other extra service if you can. I shall have to stay on here till the 10th, or even till later; I can't say. We live from moment to moment.

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI
AKOLA

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

289. LETTER TO DR. SUSHILA NAYYAR

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

Mataji wished you were here today. For no particular reason. She just expressed a fond wish since today a popular government is assuming office.

I have no doubt that your place is there till Vijaya arrives. I shall be here certainly till the 10th. Maybe I shall have to spend the whole month here. Let us see what God wills. Bal must have gone to Calcutta.

I hope you are well and the work of the clinic is progressing well. There is no letter from you. Chand has gone to Amritsar.

The weather cannot be said to be too warm.

SUSHILA NAYYAR
SEVAGRAM

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

CWMG - LXXXV

290. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

You must have got one letter I wrote from here. Of course you are always in my thoughts. I had a talk with Khan Saheb, too. For the present he does not ask for you. Later we shall see. He went back the day before yesterday.

I have a lot of work to do here. Still I am well. You should become strong. What do you do? I may have to be here the whole of September. I am certainly here till the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 529

291. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

CHI. ANAND AND GANGI,

I have your letter. I continue to write the "Thought for the Day". It does not look too good Mahadev being ill. I hope he has recovered by now.

Your foot will be all right. I have not received the album yet.

Blessings to all three from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

292. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 2, 1946

At last the way to purna swaraj has been opened. The whole of India has waited for this day for years and years and made innumerable sacrifices. Whatever our quarrels with the British Government in the past, we must thank it today, for it has voluntarily arrived at a settlement with our leaders.

A correspondent asks me, now that the Government is in the hands of Indians, when the Viceroy's House will be turned into a hospital for the poor. My answer is that this will be done when people have all the power in their hands. So far we have not secured full independence. There was no exaggeration in what I had said on the subject at the Round Table Conference. Undoubtedly Harijans are amongst the poorest of the poor. The Viceroy is still there in the Viceroy's House. And so long as he occupies his office as Viceroy, it will be discourteous to tell him to vacate it.

We shall have full freedom only when our uncrowned king Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and his colleagues in the Interim Government devote themselves to the service of the poor as people expect them to do.

This is a memorable day in the history of India. There is no occasion, however, for illuminations and jubilation. We must remember that today our ministers are putting on the crown of thorns.

The Muslim League, which is the second most important organization after the Congress and represents the Muslims of India, has not joined the Interim Government. Muslims are related to us by blood, for they are the children of the same land. They are angry with the Hindus. The Muslim League contends that the Hindus have betrayed them. The followers of the League are observing this day as a day of mourning. But the Hindus should not answer anger with anger and blow with blow. Time was when the Ali Brothers were with the Hindus. So, even though the Hindus cannot join the Muslim Leaguers in observing the day as a day of mourning, they should avoid illuminations, feasting and other forms of rejoicing. They should be

patient. They should ask themselves for what failing of theirs the Muslims have come to regard them as enemies.

The Muslim League wants to launch direct action both against the British Government and the Hindus. But it cannot ride two horses at the same time. If it wants to non-co-operate with the British it must co-operate with its Hindu brethren. Then I really do not understand why it wants to non-co-operate with the latter. This is not in keeping with the teaching of Islam. I too claim to understand Islam a little. In South Africa I have lived and worked with Muslims.

The Congress cannot enter into a pact with the British against Muslims. The Congress agreed to join the Interim Government solely in order to secure freedom for the whole of India. This means that it wants freedom for the Muslim League too, and that is what wisdom, democracy and humanity demand. Nevertheless if the Muslim League continues to regard the Interim Government as its enemy, the latter should, by its actions, prove it wrong.

The question has been asked what the Congress Ministers should do as a first step. Here, my mind goes back to the days of the Dandi March. Our women played a great part at that time. The heroism and sacrifice they displayed then was unprecedented. The Dandi March symbolized the resolve of the Congress to secure freedom for the poor. The cry was raised that salt tax be abolished. Therefore the very first step of the Interim Government should be to abolish that tax, so that the poorest villager can have the feeling that the dawn of freedom has arrived. The poor include Hindus as well as Muslims of India.

I have said a good deal about communal unity. Unlike the abolition of salt tax this cannot be achieved by a stroke of the pen. The Ministers will have to stake their lives for it. If I had my way I would not let them seek military or police help. Well, if Hindus and Muslims must fight each other it is better that they bravely do their fighting themselves. So long as we depend on the British for protecting us, true freedom will not be ours.

We are also committed to eradicating untouchability and to promote khadi. Being a Bhangi myself I have been pleading with the Viceroy, as the representative of the British Government, to improve the lot of the Bhangis. Now I shall go to the Interim Government for this. They must do something about the living quarters of the Bhangis.

They must encourage khadi activity to clothe the naked poor of the country. By promoting hand-spinning and hand-

weaving villages should be made self-sufficient in cloth. Some people object to the condition that khadi may be bought only on tendering yarn. But why should anyone, I ask, expect to have anything without working for it?

If members of the Interim Government want khadi for furnishing their houses or offices they should come to me as friends. I shall give them the yarn for getting the khadi. There is no doubt a shortage of khadi in the country today. Still I shall try to secure for them as much khadi as they order. I cannot of course promise them the fine khadi produced in Andhra.

I hope the Interim Government will provide the right leadership to the country and take it forward on the path of truth, purity and genuine swaraj. Every Indian must whole-heartedly support this Government.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 3-9-1946

293. SOUTH AFRICA

Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan who, but for the recent murderous assault on him, would have joined the Interim Government[1] yesterday wrote on August 6th to me an interesting letter from which I quote as follows:

> My study of the Indian community while I was in South Africa convinced me that but for your heroic work in the Union, the Indian race in that country would not have survived as a self-respecting community. You built up, cell by cell, the power of resistance in a highly gifted race and your work in that country is the inspiration of the Indian race in South Africa at the present time.
>
> My sole aim in South Africa was to lay the foundation of Indian unity in Natal. I do not think I succeeded completely in my aim but I am inclined to think that the heroic struggle which our race is carrying on at the present time would have been impossible but for the dissolution of the Natal Indian Association and A. I. Kajee's Natal Indian Congress and the revival of the Natal Indian Congress, which you had founded in 1894. This was accomplished on August 29th 1943 and since that time, there has been only one political organization of Indians in Natal.
>
> The South African situation is complicated and owing to conventions of diplomacy, my lips are sealed. My despatches from South Africa

[1] *Vide* p. 213.

which give a complete picture of the political situation for three years and are very exhaustive, cannot be published owing to conventions of international intercourse. . . .

I came to the conclusion that no redress of our grievances in South Africa is possible unless we are masters in our own homeland and India is free.

In reply to my letter[1] acknowledging receipt of the above, Sir Shafaat Ahmed Khan further writes :

You will be glad to hear that since my return from South Africa, I have been busy preparing my speeches in South Africa and have added a section in my book, shortly to be published, on the history of the Indian community in South Africa. In this I have made bold to give a brief account of your work there and followed with the greatest interest your march to Volksrust, etc. . . .

For more than three years—1942-45, I wrote lengthy despatches to the Government of India on the South African problem and in April 1943 I warned them against General Smuts' policy and told them to take the strongest measures against the Union Government in connection with the Pegging Act. . . . Strong measures have been taken now, but I am afraid it is too late. If the Congress forms a National Government soon and the new member in charge of the Department decides to publish these despatches, particularly from April 1943 onwards, they will clear up numerous points for the next session of U. N. O. I am bound to say that the convention is that such despatches are not published unless and until there is rupture of relations between two countries. I offer no opinion as to whether they should be published at all. This is a matter which the new Government should decide.

NEW DELHI, September 3, 1946
Harijan, 8-9-1946

[1] *Vide* p. 156.

CWMG - LXXV

294. LETTER TO PUSHPA DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. You may by all means join Nayee Talim. Sushilabehn tells me that you could do a lot of good work if you became a village nurse. Meet her also and then make your choice. Anything that makes of you a calm, steady and devoted worker will be welcome to me. "Live as you like, but attain Hari anyhow." This is what Akha said. Had I not been so far away, we could have talked more. Bhansalibhai's decision and . . .[1] are for your good.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did you receive any reply from your father? . . .[2] is at peace.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9273

295. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

Guide Pushpa as you think fit. Let us hope that she becomes a sincere and dedicated worker. Sushilabehn has written suggesting that she should become a nurse. Discuss the matter with her also, and then guide Pushpa as you think best. I shall approve of either idea. Pushpa alone can say what would interest her more. It is difficult to say whether she knows what

[1] A few words are illegible in the source.
[2] The letter is damaged here.

CWMG - LXXXV

is best for her. That she is a simple girl we have observed ever since she first arrived.

Please eat regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9274

296. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I saw the dictionary. I feel that we should go a little faster.[1] I therefore suggest that you regularly give four columns. That will make one leaf. If one whole leaf can be given, one can tear it off and preserve it. That was Kakasaheb's idea, but I was afraid that I might not be able to cope with the work. But now I have gained confidence. So I shall be able to send 120 words. This time if you can give four columns do so. You have enough material for it. Pyarelal has already written to you about sending the Muslim gentleman here. If you can spare him, please send him here immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9968. Also C. W. 6942. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

297. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You say, "You and your circle have separated me from Father and so thrashing my arms and legs I try to swim on my own." Now is that true? When did I separate you? Who is my circle? You too are my circle. I have written to you that you may come whenever you wish. Yes, I have asked

[1] The first instalment of the dictionary covered only half a column containing thirteen words.

CWMG - LXXXV

for Jaisukhlal also to come with you. If you can find the strength to face the world by yourself I am ready to keep you here by yourself. But you alone know that. I do miss you of course. Many people ask me when you will be coming. The field of service is wide and the means of learning the work are many. Sushila tells me that if I were to send for you, she would make of you an excellent nurse. Chand has passed the examination. Zohra has joined the hospital. If you were to come, three would get trained. Now the hospital is quite separate. I suppose you know that it is in the Birla Dharmashala?

Your problem is difficult. But if you are going to stay there be patient. The fruits of patience are sweet. Wait for a message from me. For you it is already there.

The talk about my going abroad is quite unfounded. Or are you referring to India? In India of course I have to travel from place to place. If you accompany me your routine of studies will be disrupted.

Jaisukhlal must improve his health. Everything has been fixed about Umia and Pratap. All the expenses on Vilas will be paid by Birla.

There is a separate letter for Atmaram.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

298. LETTER TO ATMARAM

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI ATMARAM,

I have your letter. You should put up everything to Nanabhai and do as he says.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. ATMARAM
C/O JAISUKHLAL HATHI
MAHUVA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

299. LETTER TO DHIRUBHAI DIKSHIT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. DHIRU,

I have your letter. I understand about your fast and I am happy. Tamarind-water cannot be the cause of eczema because tamarind cures eczema and such other ailments. That is to say tamarind possesses the same properties that are found in lime. But the tamarind that is offered for sale is treated with chilli-water. Moreover, much of the tamarind available in the market contains dirt and is far from clean. I would say water mixed with such tamarind ought to be shunned. But the fault does not lie with the tamarind. It is due to the chilli, the salt and the other impurities mixed with it. Tamarind sold in the market is also mixed with liberal quantities of salt, in the absence of which it cannot be preserved for long. I have myself consumed tamarind in fair quantities and also persuaded others to do likewise. I do not remember anybody having come to harm on account of it. But I took dry pods of fresh tamarind and dispensed their juice or pulp. Please read out all this to Dr. Bhagawat, so that he will avoid buying the tamarind sold in the bazaar. Tamarind can be had almost free if it is stocked during the season for it, because tamarind trees are found everywhere and I have never heard of their being leased out.

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

300. LETTER TO SHRILAL BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI SHRILAL,

I got your letter of the 29th on the 31st. The names of Vithaldas and others are not to be found on the Exhibition Committee. Have you consulted Jajuji and Kumarappa? I am glad that you have stopped the sale of khadi. I am of the

CWMG - LXXXV

opinion that products of other village industries ought to be sold as usual. This covers the answer for you.

SHRILAL BHATT
GANESHBAG
DADISHETH AGYARI LINE
BOMBAY

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

301. LETTER TO HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI HAREKRUSHNA MAHTAB,

I have your letter of August 23. I could not reply earlier as I was tied up with the work here.

I have received a note which I pass on to you. You will find that it is unsigned. Why, I do not know. If the note is a concoction and the statements contained therein are false, I shall have nothing to say. But it is my firm conviction that the absence of big mills is not the cause of Orissa's poverty. And if, to set up four mills, one lac and nine thousand spindles have to be procured, the Orissa Government may as well forget about khadi. I conveyed the same opinion to Prakasam. His Textile Commissioner had come to see me on his behalf and left only yesterday. Big mills are not going to revitalize the Orissa villages, and the real India lives in its villages. Now that the Government is in the hands of the people, it is the duty of people's representatives to turn their full attention to the villages, and see that the wheel hums in every home and all the local industries are revived everywhere. This is my cherished dream and, I assume, yours too.

Supposing the members of the Orissa Assembly are not of this opinion, you should resign as Premier and let the reins of Government pass into the hands of those who favour setting up of big mills in Orissa.

I send you the letter I have received regarding the Sambalpur scheme. I shall certainly write on the scheme after I fully understand it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG LXXXV

302. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

Dr. Shaukatullah Ansari[1], who was here yesterday, tells me that your health is deteriorating and that there is fear of a nervous breakdown. People say that you keep working till past midnight. I am certain this is not at all good. For the work ahead of you, you need great care. This becomes impossible if you overstrain your mental resources.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

303. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter regarding reforms in Bikaner State. I do not wish to write anything on the matter yet. I had advised the Maharaja Saheb that whatever is to be done should be done in consultation with Pandit Jawaharlal's All-India States People's Conference. If that were done the work would progress more smoothly.

Why is the Maharaja Saheb's appeal in English? How many among the Bikaner subjects know English? Why, again, is the Bikaner seal on documents in English? In my opinion, you ought to learn Hindustani. Should this not be possible, it would be better to have the help of a secretary to carry on your work in Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

DIWAN, BIKANER

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

[1] Son-in-law of Dr. M. A. Ansari

304. LETTER TO LADORANI ZUTSHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Doing work of service among the coolies of Mussoorie is not an easy job. I am afraid you will not be able to do it. Consult Jawaharlalji and others.

I did not get your previous letter of 15-8-1946. Besides, in Africa people hardly get to know things.

SMT. LADORANI ZUTSHI
22 HAMILTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

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

305. LETTER TO RAM NARESH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

BHAI RAM NARESH,

I was sorry to learn of your illness. You must be getting the *Harijan Sevak*. I have started a new feature[1] in it. You may contribute to it whatever you can. You may suggest any additions or alterations to the terms already included. You may include as many village expressions as you can. If you can suggest any idiomatic expressions, well, let me have a whole lot of them.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHI
VASANT NIWAS
SULTANPUR

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

[1] A glossary of English-Hindustani words in Devanagari and Urdu scripts, started from September 1, 1946.

306. LETTER TO A ZAMINDAR

[*September 3, 1946*][1]

RAJASAHEB,

I have your two letters. Why do you sign in English? I have written a lot about the zamindars; I cannot remember in which particular issues. A good many collections of my articles have been published. With a little effort one of your secretaries will be able to look these up and tell you. My opinion, in brief, is that no zamindar or rich man should perish. The greatest need is to bring about a change of heart in them. If every zamindar, every Rajah and every millionaire lives as a servant of the people there will be no problem. In the final analysis land belongs to the man who has worked on it. The present system which divides people into capitalists or landlords on the one hand and the have-nots or serfs on the other, should not be tolerated. All this I have explained in my articles a number of times.

As to religion, I feel our country, and indeed the world, should have room for all religions. I consider no one high and no one low. The duties enjoined on a Brahmin or Kshatriya are for all. Only, some have these in greater measure than others. But these are duties, never rights. One who claims a right to Brahminhood is not a Brahmin. Similarly, the claimant to the prerogatives of a Kshatriya ceases to be one. I have shown the easiest way to save Hinduism and that is that we should all become Bhangis voluntarily. For a Bhangi can have knowledge, valour and business acumen, while the spirit of service will always be there. In my own view all these are for service.

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

[1] In the source this letter is placed among the papers of 3-9-1946.

CWMG - LXXV

307. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 3, 1946

The Viceroy's House is kept very neat and clean.[1] Not a scrap of waste paper, not a piece of rag can be spotted anywhere. The houses occupied by former members of the Viceroy's Executive Council were equally clean and well appointed. There is no gainsaying that we have not learnt the art of external sanitation to the degree that the English have. What is so distressing is that the living quarters of the menials and sweepers employed in the Viceroy's House are extremely dirty. This is a state of affairs the ministers of our new Government will not tolerate. Although they will occupy the same well-kept bungalows, they will see to it that the lodgings of their servants are kept as clean as their own. They will also have to pay attention to the cleanliness of the wives and children of the staff. Jawaharlal and Sardar have no objection to cleaning their own lavatories. How can they have any in having the living quarters of their attendants cleaned? A one-time Harijan servant of Jawaharlal is now a member of the U. P. Assembly. I shall be satisfied only when the lodgings of the ministers' staff are as neat and tidy as their own.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 4-9-1946

[1] Gandhiji was commenting on the fear expressed by some Englishmen that with the departure of the British the gardens of the houses occupied by the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council would suffer neglect, the furniture would be ruined by oil and grease, the lavatories would be left uncleaned, and so on.

308. NOTES[1]

The Lowly Cow

A knowledgeable sister writes:

> Q. 1. With the exception of those cows or buffaloes that are in calf, cannot all others, whether in milk or not, be used to plough the land? This would be of immense help to the farmer but the general public is averse to the idea. What is your opinion?
>
> Q. 2. There is a great dearth of pasture land in our country. It is difficult for the farmer to provide fodder even for useful cattle. Are you then in favour of the slaughter of all such animals as cannot be made use of or do you think this slaughter should be forbidden by law?

A. 1. The first question was put to me as long ago as 1915. I felt then as now, that if the cows referred to were used for purposes of ploughing the land, it would not hurt them. On the contrary, it would make them strong and increase their yield of milk. But this benefit could only come about provided the cow was treated as a friend and not cruelly as cattle in our land so often are. This friendly treatment should of course be insisted on for animals from whom we take service. Every living being has to work within his or its limitations. Such work uplifts, never lowers either man or beast.

A. 2. The second question also has long since been answered by me. Cow-slaughter can never be stopped by law. Knowledge, education, and the spirit of kindness towards her alone can put an end to it. It will not be possible to save those animals that are a burden on the land or perhaps even man if he is a burden.

Khaddar

Readers of the *Harijan* may well say that in the present atmosphere of mad frenzy any talk of khadi is meaningless, because many khadi-loving persons live in cities and so far, the trouble is, by the grace of God, confined to cities. As a

[1] The Hindi original was published in *Harijan Sevak* 15-9-1946.

CWMG - LXXXV

matter of fact, all city-dwellers are by no means party to the senseless strife, and those who truly love khadi must always be actuated by thoughts of peace. We have either to make khadi universal among the masses or give up all dreams of non-violent swaraj. Therefore, all who love and believe in peace, however fiercely the storm of communal strife may rage around them, will forget neither the spinning-wheel nor khadi. They may omit their meals but not the charkha.

The request given below on behalf of the Charkha Sangh is thus quite proper. Such requests have been made by other khadi-loving organizations too. Those who look upon khadi in the above light will act on the resolution passed by the A. I. S. A. as referred to below:

1. The Trustees of the Charkha Sangh hereby appeal to all Khadi Bhandars and all khadi-lovers to try their utmost to secure 78,000 ordinary co-operators for the coming seventy-eighth Khadi Jayanti, of which number, at least half shall be self-sufficient.

2. By an ordinary co-operator is meant one who is a habitual khadi-wearer and will donate at least 6 hanks of self-spun yarn annually to the Charkha Sangh.

3. By 'self-sufficient' is meant one who, unless prevented by illness or other sufficient and unavoidable cause, regularly produces, whether spun by himself or through his family members or friends, at least $7\frac{1}{2}$ hanks yarn, per month or 5 hanks, if he has done his own ginning, carding and slivering.

4. The Charkha Sangh has also passed a resolution to the effect that in all khadi producing centres, at least one square yard per person, according to the population, must be used by the people in the area. This much at least must be accomplished.

NEW DELHI, September 4, 1946
Harijan, 15-9-1946

CWMG - LXXXV

309. CABLE TO SUDHIR GHOSH

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

SUDHIR GHOSH
18 GROSVENOR PLACE
LONDON

YOU MUST BE SOLE JUDGE. I HAVE NO OBJECTION. AM HERE FOR SOME TIME.

GANDHI

Sudhir Ghosh Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

310. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your two letters. You have completed sixty. You should aspire to live to 125 and serve till the end.

Tell Gokibehn[1] not to worry about me. What was accomplished on the 2nd was nothing very great.[2] A great deal more still remains to be done. I shall indeed be happy if you keep her with you. It is good that you send her milk. Read this out to her with my humble *pranams*.

What you wrote to Kamalabehn Nimbkar was right. She has met me often. She is very talkative, and as obstinate. If she writes to me, I shall see what can be done.

I hope Jamna[3] is well. With me are Kanu, Abha, Sushila, Pyarelal and R. K. A gentleman named Prabhudas has arrived from Bardoli. As typist we have Parasram. Muriel and Gladys have just arrived.

[1] Gandhiji's sister
[2] The reference is to the formation of the Interim Government
[3] Addressee's wife

CWMG - LXXV

I hope Purushottam[1] and Vijaya[2] are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./II. Also C. W. 8635. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

311. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I understand about the Hindustani. Do what you can. I am getting the translation from English into Hindustani done by Rajkumari as best as I can. What will come of it I do not know. In the end I have had to accept your suggestion of giving two pages. You believe it can be managed. I do realize that it is not advisable to go to Madras at present. Everywhere there is chaos. We have to make our way through it. I have been feeling that to ensure regular progress in our work, all of us must stay in one place for some time. I don't know when that will be possible.

Now, about Goa. I cannot understand how you can go to Belgaum, for I feel that if you go you will have to stay there for a long time. If you do not stay on, the work will suffer. I therefore feel that it might be better if you would be content with whatever you can do from Wardha.

I understand about Konkani. I am confident that you will be able to attend to such activities from Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10974

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's daughter-in-law

CWMG - LXXXV

312. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 4, 1946

Gandhiji said that they had a right today to hope that their country would soon become a country where there was no sorrow and sighing. That country, however, of the poet's imagination, Gandhiji reminded them, was in their hearts and they all knew the conditions necessary for bringing about that peace and happiness. If everyone made room in his heart for God, there could be no sorrow and no sighing. But today, alas! the people were filled with fear and anger. Brother quarrelled with brother and returned anger for anger and blow for blow. What could their Ministers do? Were they expected to send military and police to protect them? The whole atmosphere was rotten. Offices and staff had been multiplied a hundredfold. No wonder bribery and corruption were rampant.

On Tuesday, Gandhiji said, he had spoken to them of the duty of proper attention to hygiene and sanitation. It was an essential factor for health and the duty of every citizen. But inward cleanliness was even more necessary and much more difficult. Nevertheless, if they did not purify themselves, they would make Government impossible for their Ministers and displace the very men whom they had put in power.

Gandhiji again referred to the evil of untouchability. It pained him to hear and read of the persecution of Harijans in villages. If there was an epidemic they were beaten. They could not draw water from wells. They lived in hovels. This state of affairs, Gandhiji said, may not exist in the country of our dreams. All human beings are one in the sight of God and they must look upon Harijans as no less members of the great human family than they themselves were.

Gandhiji then said a word to the Bhangis whose first servant he said he was. It pained him to hear of the bribery and corruption among them. He did not want their so-called leaders to oppress them. He did not want Bhangis to look upon themselves as beggars at anyone's door. They must demand justice and fight for it but with clean hands. And now with their own Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others as Ministers they need have no fear that justice would not be meted out to them.

The Hindustan Times, 5-9-1946

313. TELEGRAM TO J. P. BHANSALI

Express

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHANSALIBHAI
ASHRAM SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

YOU MAY GO TO RAJNANDGAON IF YOU CAN SPARE YOURSELF.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

314. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. It is quite frank. May your twelve-year vow be a complete success. Never mind that you forgot to mention it to me beforehand or to obtain my prior permission. The work there will proceed but slowly. There are three Harijan settlements in Uruli Kanchan. In which of these three do you conduct the prayers? I think it is not proper for us to go for prayers where we are not wanted by the people. We cannot impose our dharma on others. Hence, if you have gone there after consulting the Harijans of the settlement you don't have to quit now. However, I would not consider it wrong to go to each Harijan settlement by turns. All of you should consult each other and then do what you think right.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANIBHAI
URULI KANCHAN

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

CWMG LXXXV

315. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. By all means take the Preston land if you can. Sir Chunilal can certainly put up a building on the site if he wants. The final ownership should be the Trust's. It should also be used in a manner that the Trust can afford. The plot is so large that Sir Chunilal can have a piece of it for himself. Only Dr. Dinshaw Mehta can say where such a piece can be carved out. He knows every nook of the land. I have been there only once.

I am writing to Kumarappa and suggesting to him that he should pay a visit. I am not writing separately to Bachhraj.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MOHANLAL, GADHADAWALA

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

316. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BHATT AND GANGA BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM AND GANGA,

I have your letter. It is a pleasure to read the letters from you both. Mix with everyone as much as you can. You must do nothing beyond your capacity. Why don't you ask Rama also to write? What does she do?

You must not force yourself to take any food that you cannot digest or that does not agree with you. This rule should be strictly followed. And you should regard as medicine whatever food you take; you should never eat anything only to indulge the palate.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN BHATT
URULI KANCHAN

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

CWMG - LXXXV

317. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,
September 5, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

I have your letter. It is lucid, though it leaves me with something to say. But you are right. We shall be able to decide something only when we meet.

I hold that soap is not necessary for cleanliness. I gave up the use of soap many years ago. I only use it to wash my hands after a visit to the toilet, which means that one cake lasts me a year. As compared to soap, I consider the use of soap-nut more beneficial. However, letting dirt collect in the hair or the eyes or the teeth or the ears, I regard as a crime. I have noticed that we are very careless in observing the laws of hygiene. The rest when we meet.

DR. BHAGAWAT
URULI KANCHAN

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

318. HARIJANS AND WELLS[1]

Shri Hardev Sahay writes:

Last evening (4-9-'46) in your address to the prayer gathering, you drew the attention of the public to the disability attached to Harijans in the matter of drawing water from public wells. After 25 years of incessant effort on their behalf, we have not yet succeeded in removing this disability. No one knows of their sufferings more than you.

It is my humble opinion that now that Congress Governments are in power, they should forthwith proclaim their policy towards the Harijans and remove all such of their disabilities as they can by law. In this connection I should like to draw your attention to conditions in the Punjab. Leave aside the question of drawing water from wells, Harijans are not even permitted to obtain land for sinking a well for themselves. I would beg of you to appeal to the Punjab Government

[1] The Hindi original of this was published in *Harijan Sevak*, 15-9-1946.

CWMG - LXXXV

to provide wells for Harijans at State expense, wherever there are no facilities of drawing water or at least provide them with land for sinking wells for themselves. There are ever so many villages in the Punjab where, even if the Harijans are willing to spend their own money, they are not given the requisite land.

There are a few places where the Government has started making wells for the Harijans; but they are wholly insufficient. It is surely the duty of the State to see that a proper supply of drinking water is available to all its citizens.

The writer is perfectly right in what he says. It is the duty of the Government to provide wells for the Harijans. It is not enough only to give the land; the Government should be responsible for sinking the wells.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946
Harijan, 15-9-1946

319. QUESTION BOX

NATURE CURE A PANACEA

Q. It has been said that nature cure can be applied to every disease. If so, can it cure short or long-sightedness, cataract and other eye diseases? Can one avoid spectacles? Can hernia, tonsils etc., which need the surgeon's knife be cured by nature cure?

A. I know that the claim attributed to nature cure has been made by its exponents. I do not count myself among them. This much, however, can be safely claimed. Disease springs from a wilful or ignorant breach of the laws of nature. It follows, therefore, that timely return to those laws should mean restoration. A person who has tried nature beyond endurance, must either suffer the punishment inflicted by nature or, in order to avoid it, seek the assistance of the physician or the surgeon as the case may be. Every submission to merited punishment strengthens the mind of man, every avoidance saps it.

FORCED MARRIAGE

A sister writes:

What is an unwilling girl to do when her parents insist either upon her marriage or leaving the parental home? Where is she to go if she has not been educated enough to earn her own living? Whose protection is she to seek?

CWMG LXXV

A. The question makes sad reading. It is wholly wrong of parents to force marriage on their daughters. It is also wrong to keep their daughters unfit for earning their living. No parent has a right to turn a daughter out on the streets for refusal to marry. Let us hope that such cruel specimens are rare. To the girl concerned, my advice would be not to look on any labour with her hands, down to scavenging, as beneath her dignity. Women may not look for protection to men. They must rely on their own strength and purity of character and on God as did Draupadi of old.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

320. CHARKHA JAYANTI AND HINDUSTANI

Shri Giriraj informs me that some examinees resent the holding of the Hindustani examination of the Gujarat Vidyapith on the 22nd because that date falls on Charkha Jayanti, i. e., *Bhadarva Vad* 12. According to me, those who sit for the Rashtrabhasha examination are doing pure work. Khadi is the highest symbol of ahimsa. The same is true of all the other constructive activities of the nation. Khadi is the nucleus of all the activities. I therefore hope that on that day the number of examinees will go up and not go down. *Bhadarva Vad* 12 should never be a holiday. It is certainly not a day of enjoyment. On that day we should become more alive to the cause of service. And to sit for Hindustani examination is as much a matter of glory as it is a work of service.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-9-1946

321. CONGRESS MINISTRIES AND AHIMSA[1]

Shri Shankarrao Deo writes:[2]

> People find it strange that men who once called themselves satyagrahis should, on becoming Ministers, resort to the use of the army and the police. They feel it is a violation of ahimsa, whether accepted as a creed or as a policy. It would seem they are right. This contradiction between the belief and the practice of Congress Ministers confuses our workers and they find it difficult to face the critics, inside the Congress and those outside the Congress who want to make capital out of it.
>
> By and large the ahimsa of the Congress has been the ahimsa of the weak. This was the only thing possible under the prevailing conditions in India. . . . I admit that there can be no objection to people who accept ahimsa only as a policy accepting positions of power. Thus many Congressmen have accepted positions in the Government and you have permitted them to do so. . . . But having won power through ahimsa, how should we practise ahimsa in such a way that government becomes redundant? If you do not suggest a way satyagraha will be deemed to be an insufficient means for the end we seek.

I think the answer is easy. For some time now I have been saying that the words "truth and non-violence" should be removed from the Congress constitution. If we proceed on the assumption that whether these words are removed from the Congress constitution or not we certainly have become removed from truth and ahimsa, we shall be able to judge independently whether a certain action is right or wrong.

I am convinced that so long as the army or the police continues to be used for conducting the administration we shall remain subservient to the British or some other foreign power, irrespective of whether the power is in the hands of the Congress or others. Let us suppose that Congress ministries do not have faith in ahimsa. Let us suppose further that Hindus, Muslims and others seek protection from the army or the police. In that case they will continue to get such protection. Then these Congress Ministers who are votaries of ahimsa and do not like

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946.
[2] Only extracts from the letter are translated here.

to seek help from the army or the police may resign. This means that so long as people have not learnt to settle their quarrels themselves, goondaism will continue and we shall never be able to generate the true strength of ahimsa in us.

Now the question is how to generate such strength. I answered this question [in the *Harijan* of] August 4[1] in my reply to a letter from Ahmedabad. So long as we do not develop the strength to die bravely, with love in our hearts, we cannot develop in us the non-violence of the brave.

Would there be State power in an ideal society or would such a society be Stateless? I think the question is futile. If we continue to work towards the building of such a society, to some extent it is bound to be realized and to that extent people will benefit by it. Euclid has defined a straight line as having no breadth, but no one has yet succeeded in drawing such a line and no one ever will. Still we can progress in geometry only by postulating such a line. This is true of every ideal.

We might remember though that a Stateless society does not exist anywhere in the world. If such a society is possible it can be established first only in India. For attempts have been made in India towards bringing about such a society. We have not so far shown that supreme heroism. The only way is for those who believe in it to set the example.

NEW DELHI, September 6, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

322. LETTER TO INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, LAURENCO MARQUIS

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter and the demand draft for Rs. 3,425. Thanks for the same. I think you did not write the letter yourself, nor have you signed it. It should not be so.

I would like it even if you wrote an [indifferent] hand; some day it would improve. I am utilizing your gift for khadi

[1] *Vide* pp. 54-5.

work, because you have left the decision to me. This is one of the many welfare activities carried on by me which badly needs funds.

HINDI MAHILA MANDAL
POST BOX 393
LAURENCO MARQUIS

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

323. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I have your letter. You are right about the examination. I am writing in *Harijanbandhu*.[1]

You are in somewhat of a dilemma over the dictionary. If there is need for another dictionary, it will also be prepared. Our misfortune is that the English-knowing people are unable to render even common English words into Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8776

324. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

NEW DELHI,
September 6, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi criticized the public for sending hundreds of telegrams daily to the Viceroy and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He considered them a foolish waste of public money and at the same time waste of the Viceroy's and Pandit Nehru's precious time. Time was when the Viceroy was all-powerful and could do everything. But now he had of his own free will relegated his powers to the Cabinet of which, like the King of England, he was constitutional head. The King of England could not do anything without the consent of his Ministers. The people of England even beheaded

[1] *Vide* p. 265.

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

CWMG - LXXXV

one monarch because he went against their will. Gandhiji hoped that the people's Ministers here would never do anything of the kind because they had in their possession the matchless weapon of satyagraha, should occasion ever arise for its use. In any case, the people who sent these wires should realize that apart from burdening the recipients and the telegraph offices they were also wasting the people's money. The well-to-do imagined that it was their money, but it really belonged to the starving masses whom they exploited.

Gandhiji then turned with a heavy heart to the continued strife in Bombay. He did not know who killed whom. But it was tragic that some people even rejoiced that Hindus were strong enough to kill in return those who tried to kill them. Such revenge was folly. He would far rather that Hindus died without retaliation, for that was the only way to quench the fire of hatred. He did not want the people to ask the Government anywhere for military and police protection. They must generate their own strength and not rely on anyone else. Even if they demanded this help the Ministers should refuse it. The Ministers and leaders should be willing to go into the fray themselves and lay down their lives for the sake of Hindu and Muslim honour. As for military, they should be harnessed to all kinds of constructive work at which they were adepts. Let them grow more food for the starving millions and all kinds of other work that was waiting to be done.[1]

Some members of the Delhi Municipality and businessmen had come and complained, said Gandhiji, that in Delhi it was the Chief Commissioner's and Deputy Commissioner's raj. He had told them in reply that the remedy lay in their own hands. They should go to the Municipality for service only, with no personal end to serve. He was afraid they would not be able to stand that test. They had many sins of omission and commission to answer for. As elected representatives in the Municipality, they were responsible for the Harijan hovels and the dirt and squalor of Delhi. Businessmen and contractors exploited the poor. If communal strife occurs in Delhi, it is the citizens who are responsible. The day for the Commissioner's raj is over. It must now be the people's raj, but the people must be alive to their responsibilities.

Gandhiji brought his discourse to an end by expressing sorrow at the Qaid-e-Azam's recent utterances. He was the leader of a powerful organization and it behoved him to weigh every word he spoke. If he did, it would redound to his credit; it would be for the good of Islam, for the benefit of Hinduism, too, and for the welfare of India as a whole. But, said Gandhiji, each one was responsible for his own correct action and correct action on the part of everyone would make the Qaid-e-Azam act aright too.

The Hindustan Times, 7-9-1946, and *Harijan*, 15-9-1946

[1] What follows is from the *Harijan* report.

325. PROHIBITION

The following extracts from Rev. E. Gordon's writing provoke thoughts on total prohibition:

> With famine facing the country, we cannot very well quarrel with sincere efforts for combating the menace, but why prohibition of foodstuffs such as pastries, ice cream, etc., which have real food value, and why talk of prohibition or severe reduction of supply of sugar to aerated water and other mineral water manufactures and yet keep absolutely silent about the prohibition or severe reduction of cereals and sugar to the distilleries and breweries? Is the drinking of alcoholic liquors any less of a luxury than the eating of pies, pastries and cakes? Can even the most astute and ardent lovers of alcoholic beverages argue that these drinks are so essential to life that no reduction can be made in the amount of cereals and sugar required to make whisky, beer, etc.?
>
> Granted that there is a certain amount of food value in beer, is it equal in value to the barley that could be used in making bread or cakes?
>
> The President of the United States has ordered a drastic cut in the quota of wheat to be issued to distilleries in the U.S.A. How can we from India plead with America to send us large quantities of grain to save millions from death by starvation, when no published statements assure us that grains, whether imported or grown in this country, will be used for intoxicating drinks?
>
> We give our whole-hearted approval to the Congress Ministry of Madras in their desire to introduce prohibition as soon as possible. Notwithstanding all that anti-prohibitionists say about the failure of prohibition in the United States, if they would honestly look at the other side of the picture, they would find that the drinking is far worse now than it was then and the amount of spirituous liquors is increasing year by year. Other things being equal, we sincerely believe that under prohibition, honestly tried and courageously and indefatigably enforced, India will forge ahead much quicker and more rapidly than she could without prohibition. She will prove to the world the extent to which liquor has dragged and is dragging down the nations of the world.

The Reverend gentleman is right. India has the capacity and the opportunity to lead the world in the matter of prohibition. Can she forgo the revenue derived from this degrading traffic? She must, if she is to live. I have a hideous tale from

CWMG - LXXV

South Africa, related to me by satyagrahi Cachalia Junior, a worthy son of the deceased father who was a hero of the first Satyagraha campaign in that country. He tells me that a thoughtless agitation has brought to the Indian community the freedom to drink, with the result that it is sapping their moral strength. I know what this deadly freedom means. On this issue there is no difference of opinion between Hindus, Mussalmans and, shall I say, others in India save the liquor interest.

I have no doubt that the loss of revenue which drains the moral and material means of the poor drinkers will be more than balanced by the gain accruing to them from prohibition. Moreover, the military burden, in defence of which the argument for the maintenance of the excise revenue has so far been used, cannot hold water in the New India, where that burden will no longer exist. The excise revenue must, therefore, be sacrificed without delay and without hesitation. No thought of the loss of this revenue, should interfere with the progress of this much-needed reform. Whether the happy conjunction between the Congress and the League takes place or not, the Congress Provinces should dare to do the right.

The positive side of prohibition must run side by side with the negative. The positive consists in providing the drinker with counter-attractions giving him health and innocent amusement.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

326. HARIJAN WORK IN KISTNA DISTRICT

Shri G. Ramachandra Rao writes a letter giving an account of his Harijan work. The following is a precis of it:

> We have taken up the problem of the use of public wells by Harijans. Section 126A of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920 provides for the use, by persons of whatever caste or creed, of wells, tanks, reservoirs, water-ways, etc., maintained by a *Panchayat*. It even imposes a fine of Rs. 100 on anyone who obstructs its operation. But the law is honoured in the breach where the Harijans are concerned. It is pathetic to see the latter often waiting in long queues for hours at a time in front of a public well for some generous non-Harijan to fill their pots with water. We chose Kankipadu village where a public well is maintained by the local *Panchayat* and explained to the leaders, not only the implications of the law but also their moral obliga-

tions. The response, after about three weeks of propaganda, being heartening, we called a public meeting where, owing to overwhelming support for the proposition, it was announced that in future Harijans would be allowed to use the well in question without molestation.

The next morning, however, the Harijans themselves were found to be too timid to take advantage of the decision. It was a sad commentary on their mentality and we had to work hard to bring them to the well. As soon as they began drawing water, a reaction set in among the caste Hindus, the vast majority of whom, even at personal inconvenience, refrained from coming to the well. A few, however, remained staunch to their resolve and gradually the opposition was worn down. I had also to appeal to the Deputy Inspector of Local Board to explain to the people the implications of section 126A.

This experience has encouraged us to take up similar work in other villages too, where Harijans have no facilities for obtaining water. I am of opinion that for the removal of such disabilities, moral persuasion and legal provision should go hand in hand. Absence of one renders the other inefficient. The existing Government acts dealing with social disabilities are vague and weak. This defect must be remedied and the Government of Madras, who have set aside one crore of rupees for Harijan work, might well utilize a certain sum for publicity of the provisions of the relevant laws already on the statute-book. Execution of the law is as important as its passing.

Professor Rao deserves hearty congratulations for his assiduous work on behalf of the oppressed Harijans. His effort ought to be supported by the public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946
Harijan, 15-9-1946

327. ABOUT HINDUSTANI[1]

A gentleman from Bihar writes:

The great and commendable work that is going on under your leadership for Hindustani-Prachar is of immense help for the country's progress and freedom. A nation that has no language of its own has hardly any right to exist. And that is our misfortune today. Yet our leaders are not fully aware of the problem. In spite of your efforts, Congress workers are not whole-hearted in this regard. You will also be

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 15-9-1946, under the title "Regarding Hindustani".

CWMG - LXXV

aware that at Congress Committee meetings as also in our legislatures, most people, including even those whose mother tongue is either Hindi or Urdu, prefer to speak in English. Is it not possible to make it obligatory for Congressmen to speak, whether at meetings or in legislatures, in Hindustani, as it is obligatory for them to wear khadi? Some concession can be allowed in regard to those who cannot at all speak Hindustani, but a time-limit should be set for them also to learn Hindustani. My experience is that responsible Congressmen who know Hindustani prefer to speak in English. This must be stopped. Unless this is done no transformation is possible in the country. The Congress is assuming the responsibility of office. Here too Congressmen should carry on their work in Hindustani.

The correspondent is quite right. The lure of English has not left us. And until it goes, our own languages will remain impoverished. Would that the people's Governments everywhere would do their work either in the national or provincial languages! But to attain this, they must have people representing all languages in their offices and the public should be encouraged to address the Government in the provincial or the national language. We shall not only be saved much expense by adopting our own languages but it will also make things much easier for the general public.

NEW DELHI, September 7, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 15-9-1946

328. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAKANT,

I have your letter addressed to Bapa dated July 24, 1946. The number of English words you use betrays your imperfect and inadequate knowledge of Gujarati. I wonder how, being what you are, you can marry a Harijan girl and be happy or make her happy. Moreover, I should like to know what it is that you call revolutionary in such acts of service. Strange that a revolutionary though I am I fail to understand what you want to say.

I certainly have a Harijan girl in view but I cannot afford to let her marry just anybody. I can only give such an alliance a religious character and hence indulgence can have no

place in it. My advice therefore is that you should come and see me when I settle down at Sevagram.

SJT. CHANDRAKANT MEHTA
MORVI HOSTEL
[BANARAS] HINDU UNIVERSITY
BANARAS

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

329. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

You are too simple. God has not yet opened fully through my instrumentality the portal of swaraj for India. We are yet to enter it. I take it that you are not regretting that you gave up cereals. Anyone who can take milk and milk products does not need what are known as cereals. If we can eat fruit, sweet and sour, and various kinds of leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, then there will be no need for cereals. This is my experience through many years. Now that you have resumed taking cereals I must warn you to guard against diseases caused by grain. So far as we are concerned, nothing needs to be celebrated. Following dharma is imperative for all of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

GOKULBHAI BHATT
SIROHI, RAJPUTANA

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

CWMG-LXXXV

330. LETTER TO KISANLAL C. TEJPAL

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

BHAI KISANLAL,

I have your letter. I agree with what you say. What is there to celebrate so long as we have not achieved complete independence? At the most we can say that we have got a glimpse of independence. But it would be a sign of stupidity to rest content with that. At present Hindus and Muslims in the towns are fighting each other. At such a time overseas Indians will have helped in bringing independence nearer if they effectively display unity. Since you live in Egypt you can contribute much in this regard.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KISANLAL CHHOTALAL TEJPAL
C/O N. CHHOTA LAL & BROTHERS
SAQQUARA EL GIZA
CAIRO

From a copy of the Gujarati : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal. Also *Harijanbandhu*, 15-9-1946

331. LETTER TO GIRIRAJ KISHORE

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

CHI. GIRIRAJ,

I was distressed to see your letter. Yesterday I heard the purport of your letter. This morning I went through Krishnamurti's article. I could not follow it fully so I asked to see your letter. What a messy handwriting! It is unbecoming for you to write such a hand. You are a teacher, your handwriting should be a model, as should be all your work.

Krishnamurti's article is good, but it is unnecessary to publish it. The English handwriting is also not good, and the letters are too small.

CWMG - LXXXV

Do everything neatly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 8777

332. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 7, 1946

The speeches being made by the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers cause me much pain. They say that they will take what they want by force. It is true that the reins of the Government are now in the hands of the Congress, but this only adds to their responsibilities and duties. During the struggle for freedom Congressmen were arrested, beaten and persecuted. They were even killed. These are now things of the past. Had the Congress taken to the path of violence it would have come to a bad end. In true suffering there is no room for revenge. Then alone can success be assured. The 40 crores of Indian people, that is to say the teeming millions in the villages, do not think of violence. They are slaves. Violence is lodged only in the hearts of a handful of men in the cities.

I am a villager. I belong with the villagers. The Congress has accepted power for the sake of these downtrodden villagers. I had taken up the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity long before I joined the Congress. I had a number of Muslim friends when I was at school. I went to South Africa to plead the case of some Muslim friends of my brother. I had gone there to gain my livelihood, but soon after my arrival there I gave the first place to service. As a coolie-barrister I served my friends of the labouring class. I had gone as an employee of a Muslim firm and I served the Hindus through them. My memory of those days is a happy one. It is a matter of deep regret that even in South Africa communal differences have arisen. Nevertheless they are unitedly fighting for the rights of Indians. I still remember those hefty Muslims, and especially Seth Cachalia, who participated in the satyagraha and who said they would rather die than live as slaves. When the Qaid-e-Azam and his followers describe Hindus as their enemies I am surprised and pained. I am not a Muslim but I venture to say that Islam does not preach enmity towards anyone. I think I

am as much a Christian, a Sikh and a Jain as I am a Hindu. Religion does not teach one to kill one's brother however different his belief. No one can treat another as his enemy until the latter has become his own enemy. Muslim League leaders were not right when they said that they would compel the Congress, the Hindus and the British to accede to their demand.

I am reminded of an incident during the Khilafat days. I was speaking at a meeting of Hindus. I said to them: "If you want to protect the cow then protect Khilafat. If required even lay down your lives for it." When I said this it brought tears of joy to the eyes of the Ali Brothers. But what a tragic change we see today. I wish the day may again come when Hindus and Muslims will do nothing without mutual consultation. I am day and night tormented by the question what I can do to hasten the coming of that day. I appeal to the League not to regard any Indian as its enemy. I appeal to the English not to nurse the thought that they can divide Hindus and Muslims. If they do they will be betraying India and betraying themselves. Hindus and Muslims are both born of the same soil. They have the same blood, eat the same food, drink the same water and speak the same language. The Qaid-e-Azam says that all the Muslims will be safe in Pakistan. In Punjab, Sind and Bengal we have Muslim League Governments. Can one say that what is happening in those provinces augurs well for the peace of the country? Does the Muslim League believe that it can sustain Islam by the sword? If it does it is committing a great error. The very meaning of the word 'Islam' is peace and I am certain that no religion worth the name can be kept alive except through peace.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 8-9-1946

333. TELEGRAM TO MANAGER, SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

MANAGER
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA
TELL SANKARAN TO COME.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

334. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 8, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

From the difficulty you mention it would appear that only as much English matter can go in as we can send from here. The same, we may take it, applies to the Hindustani. Only what we send from here will be published, and that just as it is. I take it that you have the necessary resources and facilities for having the Devanagari transcribed into Persian. But if you cannot do even this much you must tell me and we shall have the Urdu also sent from here. That of course would be too much. All our people should know both the scripts. That includes the compositors.

I understand what you say about Hunner. But I am thinking of sending all the Hindustani matter from here. Would you still want to engage him? I have sent to you the long letter he wrote to me. If you return it to me I shall send Hunner the necessary reply.

You will have started giving four columns of the English-Hindustani. I don't think it is necessary to give it in *Harijan Sevak*. We proceed on the assumption that those who read *Harijan Sevak* do not know English. Since these will be four columns now it will make one whole leaf. It should go to the

readers of *Harijan* free of cost. Those who ask for it separately should be charged 2 pice in cash.

If the prayer book is printed here on behalf of Navajivan and if it is printed quickly, what objection can we have? There is a great demand for it here. My feeling is that it cannot be printed in Ahmedabad as quickly as it can here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9969. Also C. W. 6943. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

335. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
[*September 8, 1946*]

Though she could never swim in plenty, India could grow enough food for her requirement, chances of wastage being eliminated, said Mahatma Gandhi in his after-prayer speech on Sunday evening. Talking of cloth shortage, he said that if only the country took to the khadi scheme, no Indian need be in want.

Gandhiji said that their President Jawaharlalji had also referred to these two primary needs in his broadcast on Saturday evening. He had appealed to those countries abroad who could spare food also to send it to India. Gandhiji had no objection to anyone who could spare anything and felt like sending out foodstuffs. But he was quite certain that India could not live if she was going to depend on outside aid for her food. He had maintained from the beginning that India could grow enough food for her requirement.

An English sister who was like a relation of his, was with him just now on her way to China. She was a woman who had chosen to make her home among the poor in London and when he went there for the (second) R. T. C. she had invited him to stay with her which he gladly did and looked upon Kingsley Hall as a palace. She had told him how strictly rationed they were for everything in England, how rationing included everyone from the King and Prime Minister downwards and how proud everyone was to share the burden. These people were disciplined and war had taught them to suffer willingly. If one goes further into the war-devastated countries of Europe, the suffering was much worse and would be still greater with the approaching winter.

Today the whole world was starving, and why should India look for relief from outside. Gandhiji maintained that if everyone put his shoulder

to the wheel all would be well with them. No one must eat a morsel more than he required and everyone who had any little piece of land should at once grow vegetables or cereals on it. In the U. P. he had been told that 75,000 bighas of uncultivated land was waiting to be ploughed. All this meant that they could produce much more food if they directed their energies to it.

Gandhiji said it hurt him to hear it said that Travancore had food only for 15 days more. This was a land of plenty and yet the poor lived in perpetual want because of exploitation by a foreign power and the city folk. Gandhiji explained that when he said that enough food could be grown he did not mean that they could afford to waste anything. They would never be swimming in an ocean of milk. That was possible only for God. But for the absolute lack of any milk or ghee or even oil for the poor the city folk must hang their heads in shame.

Gandhiji next turned to India's nakedness. The answer to this was, in his opinion, quite simple. People talked glibly of starting more textile mills. But they needed none of these. The mills existed today in their villages in the shape of hands, spindles, wheels and looms. The art was an old one and was alive. He knew, as President of the Spinners' Association what wonders could be worked if only everyone would take to the wheel. It was a crying shame that we who had plenty of cotton to export should have to depend upon mills. He appealed to each one to spin and send the yarn to him. He would have it woven and given to the poor or sold to the giver of enough yarn. It was up to the public to be true to themselves and help to the utmost to solve the problem. The solution lay in their own hands, not in those of the few members of the Cabinet.

The Hindustan Times, 9-9-1946

336. WHAT TO DO?

A friend sends the following questions:

Q. 1. You have all along held and expressed the view that persons should observe strict non-violence even when attacked by hooligans or others. Does this hold good when women are attacked or outraged? If people are unable to follow your lead regarding non-violence, would you advise them to die as cowards or resist aggression with violence?

Q. 2. Should you not unequivocally condemn the dual role that the Muslim League is playing today? While, on the one hand, its leaders are openly preaching violence and *jehad* against Hindus, the same men continue, on the other hand, to hold office as Ministers, having a controlling hand on all the threads of administration, including police and justice.

CWMG-LXXV

Q. 3. Is there no constituted authority in India which can put a stop to this grave anomaly which is unprecedented in history?

Q. 4. Do you realize that if the present happenings are allowed to continue, civil war will become inevitable? How would you advise your countrymen to face such a catastrophe, if it comes?

A. 1. In a society of my imagination, outrage posited by the questioner cannot take place. But in the society in the midst of which we are living, such outrages do take place. My answer is unequivocal. A non-violent man or woman will and should die without retaliation, anger or malice, in self-defence or in defending the honour of his womenfolk. This is the highest form of bravery.

If an individual or a group of people are unable or unwilling to follow this great law of life, which is miscalled my lead, retaliation or resistance unto death is the second best, though a long way off from the first. Cowardice is impotence worse than violence. The coward desires revenge but being afraid to die, he looks to others, may be the Government of the day, to do the work of defence for him. A coward is less than man. He does not deserve to be a member of a society of men and women. Lastly, let me add that if women had followed or would now follow my advice, every woman would protect herself without caring or waiting for aid from her brother or sister.

A. 2. Of course, the dual role adverted to is unequivocally bad. It is a sad chapter in our national life. My condemnation is of universal application. Fortunately it is so bad that it cannot last long.

A. 3. The only constituted authority is the British. We are all puppets in their hands. But it would be wrong and foolish to blame that authority. It acts according to its nature. That authority does not compel us to be puppets. We voluntarily run into their camp. It is, therefore, open to any and every one of us to refuse to play the British game.

Let us also admit frankly that the British authority is struggling to quit India. It does not know how. It honestly wants to leave India but wants before leaving to undo the wrong it has been doing for so long. Being in the position of 'the toad under the harrow', I must know where it hurts. I have been telling the authority, if it will undo the wrong quickly, to leave India to her fate. But those who compose the British service cannot realize this obvious fact. They flatter themselves with the belief that they know India better than we do ourselves. Having successfully kept us under subjection for over a century, they claim the right

to constitute themselves judges of our destiny. We may not grumble, if we are to come into our own through the way of peace. Satyagraha is never vindictive. It believes not in destruction but in conversion. Its failures are due to the weaknesses of the satyagrahi, not to any defect in the law itself. The British authority having decided to quit, (whatever the reason), will show growing defects and weaknesses. Parties will find that it is more and more a broken reed. And, when parties quarrel as Hindus and Muslims do, let one or the other or both realize that, if India is to be an independent nation, one or both must deliberately cease to look to British authority for protection.

A. 4. This brings me to the last question. We are not yet in the midst of civil war. But we are nearing it. At present we are playing at it. War is a respectable term for goondaism practised on a mass or national scale. If the British are wise, they will keep clear of it. Appearances are to the contrary. Even the English members in the Provincial Assemblies refuse to see that they were given seats by the Act of 1935, not because it was right but in order that they might protect British interest and keep Hindus and Muslims apart. But they do not see this. It is a small matter. Nevertheless it is a straw showing the way the wind is blowing. Lovers and makers of swaraj must not be dismayed by these omens. My advice is satyagraha first and satyagraha last. There is no other or better road to freedom. Whoever wants to drink the ozone of freedom must steel himself against seeking military or police aid. He or they must ever rely upon their own strong arms or, what is infinitely better, their strong mind and will which are independent of arms, their own or other.

NEW DELHI, September 9, 1946

Harijan, 15-9-1946

CWMG - LXXV

337. TELEGRAM TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHIMANLALBHAI
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

REGRET NOT RETURNING BEFORE TWENTYFIFTH. INFORM ALL.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

338. LETTER TO SIBNATH BANNERJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SIBNATH (BANNERJI)[1],

I am silent. I dislike this craze for the West. What this army of men and women will bring, I shall watch. Only do not seek my blessings for what I dislike. My opinion you know.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Vice-President, E. I. Railwaymen's Union

CWMG - LXXXV

339. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 9, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I have your letter. God has granted your wish, for I cannot leave here before the 24th.

If you work only as much as your health permits, both your body and mind will become as strong as steel. You will then be able to do as much work as I want you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 528

340. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

FOOLISH KUSUM,

Manibehn gave me the news of Jadavbehn's demise. I said I wouldn't write anything till Kusum wrote to me. I do not wish to offer you condolences. I have looked upon you as a wise woman. Should I say now that you are ignorant? Jadavbehn led a very happy life. Both of you sisters have rendered valuable services. She had to depart, as you and I and all of us have to. You should have asked me to cheer you up and prayed that you might cultivate total dedication to service. From what you say I understand that Jadavbehn also expected the same from you . . .[1] Has my wish yet been fulfilled?

It is still far off. I wish to live for 125 years, whereas you are wishing me only a hundred years. This is another instance of your stupidity. What is Pushpa's[2] age? Give my blessings to Manibhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 1855

[1] Some three lines are illegible here.
[2] Addressee's younger sister

CWMG - LXXV

341. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have received your two letters. Perhaps Anantram will have arrived there by now. I am glad that Krishnachandra is convinced by Vinoba's persuasion. Balvantsinha and Om Prakash came here and have now proceeded to Khurja. I would consider Hoshiari's problem to have been solved if Gajraj goes to you. It would be excellent if Madhu's shortcomings are overcome. You will be receiving twenty-five tents. They have been dispatched from there along with poles and pegs. I hope all the mosquito-nets have been got ready and there is no shortage now.

Manmohan Choudhari, I hope, has recovered by now. How did he get fever? I hope Prabhudas and Arjun have also recovered and Sinharaj is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10651

342. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

Your letter does not show impartiality. However, if the information contained in it is correct it is startling. I must show your letter to Jhaverbhai. Or I would say that there is no substance in your complaint. About the salary I have already taken steps. I will proceed after I get the reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. GAJANAN NAIK
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

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

343. LETTER TO GOKULBHAI BHATT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI GOKULBHAI,

Herewith a letter from Jagannath. Read it and return it with your comments. I am postponing any further action until I have your reply.

SJT. GOKULBHAI BHATT

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

344. LETTER TO MRS. HARILAL DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your joint letter. I have certainly tried to do *tapashcharya.* It can be said to have borne fruit when we get rid of what Akha Bhagat has described as the "excess growth" and when Hindus and Muslims live as one. Will the Doctor undertake this surgery?

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

[C/o] DR. HARILAL DESAI
AHMEDABAD

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

CWMG - LXXXV

345. LETTER TO JAGANNATH JANI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI JAGANNATH,

I have your letter, which I have passed on to Gokulbhai. After I have his reply I shall make further inquiries if necessary.

SJT. JAGANNATH JANI
ROHIRA, SIROHI STATE

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

346. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD VYAS

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have your letter giving me full and detailed information. I shall be able to reach there only after the 24th, when we shall have a long talk. I hope Kanta was able to manage during your absence.

I expect you could observe things in Bombay too. Perfect your Urdu.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMPRASAD VYAS
SEVAGRAM

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

CWMG - LXXXV

347. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

M[unshi] is here today. He has sent you a copy of his award. The stamped one he has sent to Gadodiaji. He has also made a deposition. If you want I can send you a copy, but it is not necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 368

348. LETTER TO VITHALDAS KOTHARI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have your letter. I cannot regard the Hindustani translation as accurate but I see no misinterpretation in it. Since there is a question-mark I cannot see the possibility of any frightful interpretation of it. But I might understand what you want to say if you throw more light. I cannot revise what I have written regarding Kakodkar's case. Please remember that I have not said it in regard to fasting in general. I had only Kakodkar's fast in mind. The only untoward outcome of the fast would have been that he might have died and I would not have regarded it as a terrible consequence. I would have regarded it as wrong if the fast had been given up owing to fear, hunger, or a false notion of morality.

Uncertified khadi means khadi that does not come up to the standard, but is it not khadi all the same? I for one would regard it as wrong to use mill cloth in place of such khadi. The fact is it is wrong to expect at present khadi for book-binding and so on.

SJT. VITHALDAS KOTHARI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

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

349. LETTER TO PRABHU

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI PRABHU,

Sushilabehn has given me your two cheques. The beginning has been good. The receipt, etc., will be sent by Kanu Gandhi. It will go along with this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Both the cheques will be utilized only for the work that was dear to Mahadev.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 9229

350. LETTER TO ABIDALI JAFARBHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI ABIDALI,

I have your long letter. Isn't there a Gujarati proverb saying that suspicion is a demon and ambition a witch? This applies in your case. Whatever I did I did only out of love. It is true that I do not have confidence in your capacity for thought or your non-violence and I have said as much in my letters to you. When you accepted my advice to give up your fast and vacate the Congress House I was very happy and realized that you were as loyal as ever.

As regards prayer I see no need to say anything. I believe you totally when you say that you pray every day and that you have faith in prayer. And this makes me happy. One who has sincere faith in prayer is saved from many sins. I have no faith and no interest in going to Western countries. I try to dissuade those wanting to go. Only today I wrote to Sibnath Bannerjee along these lines.[1] Yesterday I spoke to Ruikar. That they may not stay back at my behest is beside the point. I

[1] *Vide* p. 283.

CWMG - LXXXV

gave them the advice I considered right and my duty was done. I think now I have answered all your points. I shall have to be in Delhi till the 24th. I would prefer your coming to Sevagram rather than Delhi to see me. But if there is something urgent you want to ask that you cannot put down in a letter, you may come over to Delhi. I was sorry that nothing had yet been done about arbitration.

Blessings from
BAPU

ABIDALI JAFARBHAI
BOMBAY

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

351. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. What shall I say to you? What can I do ? I consider it a great crime to let one's health deteriorate to such an extent. You are now wasting time, causing anxiety to your parents and others you hold dear. Well, what has happened has happened. Observe henceforth the rules of health and get well. I shall be here till the 24th. Sushila's wedding is to take place at Wardha on 2nd October. After that I shall be there. Don't worry. Cheer up.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

352. LETTER TO G. B. PANT

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAIJI,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to Mirabehn. I am well. There is nothing to worry about. We are all in God's hands.

Blessings from
BAPU

GOVIND BALLABH PANT

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

353. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

SWAMIJI,

I have your letter. I am carrying on correspondence. Now you are coming on the 15th. I shall be here. We shall have a talk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

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

CWMG - LXXXV

354. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Both your letters came into my hands only yesterday. I shall now be here till the 24th, but I think it is pointless for you to come here to see me. Stick on there and do whatever work Sushilabehn gives you.

Your chief task is to bring about a change in your diet. You should set about this. If you maintain good health under all circumstances, I shall feel that at least in your own case nature cure has been of benefit. Chimanlalbhai does not take medicines. It would be a great thing if he, too, showed some improvement. The rest when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
SEVAGRAM

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

355. LETTER TO SHIVAJI

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

BHAI SHIVAJI,

I have your letter. I was indeed sorry that even though Kakodkar was consuming fruit and milk he was considered to be fasting. At least you could have said that he was fasting on milk and fruit. When we utter what is untruth or very near to it it is our duty to correct ourselves even though this should cause us temporary harm. My experience is that this never causes harm. I am confessing my error through the Press and to the Goan Government.[1]

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

[1] *Vide* p. 294.

CWMG - LXXV

356. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 9, 1946

I am asked when the salt tax will be removed; and why it has not been removed already. The question implies impatience. The Cabinet has only been in office for eight days. The Finance Member has not yet taken charge of his office. We must wait. The Cabinet must do everything after full deliberation. It is I who should be impatient, for it was I who initiated the fight for the abolition of this tax. I also know how the loss of revenue can be made up for. Nevertheless I think we should not be impatient. We should not hustle the Cabinet. The Cabinet is of the people and works under their mandate. We must have faith that the salt tax will go and he who has faith can afford to be patient. There are many other things that the Cabinet has to do for the people as quickly as possible. If we continue to give it our support it will surely do all that should be done for the good of the masses.

Yesterday I told you that if we would learn to make our cloth ourselves there would be no need for anyone to go naked. Many people do not know how to spin. It is therefore proposed to start classes in the Bhangi Colony from September 11 to 22 for all wanting to learn the various processes from ginning to spinning. Morning classes will be held from 7 to 11 a.m., afternoon classes from 2 p. m. to 6 p.m. Only Re. 1 per head will be charged. Those who wish to join may send their names either to Shri Kanu Gandhi or to Gandhi Ashram, Chandni Chowk, by the morning of September 11. I hope as many persons as can will take advantage of this opportunity.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 10-9-1946

357. TELEGRAM TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

I HAVE NOW LEARNT FROM MY ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENT THAT BY THE HUNGER-STRIKE OF SHRI KAKODKAR HE MEANT EXCLUSION OF ALL FOOD EXCEPT MILK AND FRUIT. HE ADDS TOO THAT THIS PARTIAL FAST IS DISCONTINUED. I REGRET THE ERROR INTO WHICH I WAS LED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-9-1946, and *The Hindustan Times*, 12-9-1946

358. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I kept the enclosed letter for two days. I am sending it now. See from it the love Sushila has for you and if you can come do so before the 2nd October. I would be glad if Jaisukhlal came too. I have not invited anyone. Need I invite you?

You must have got my previous letter. I am here till the 24th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXIV

[1] *Vide* p. 180 and p. 292.

CWMG - LXXV

359. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 10, 1946

BHAI JAJUJI,

I am quite certain that a Provincial Government which goes about setting up new mills should formulate no schemes for khadi. No Government is obliged to start a new mill. Prakasam's wire has arrived only today. I enclose a copy of it. I was under the impression that there would be no khadi exhibition at the Congress session. We have still not received any invitation. When the Gandhi Ashram workers consulted me, I told them that they could do so independently but they said they did not want to do anything without my consent and that it would be desirable that the Charkha Sangh itself took the initiative. I then asked them to consult you. In my opinion, we should not take the responsibility but should give whatever help they ask for. I have advised the Gandhi Ashram workers not to incur any expenditure. All the expenses should be borne by the Reception Committee. No khadi should be sent. The Khadi Vidyalaya may offer training in all the processes of khadi-making such as carding, making slivers, weaving, etc. They should sell all village industry products except khadi. They should demonstrate the techniques employed in the various village industries. For this they should seek help, though not monetary, from the A. I. V. I. A., the Talimi Sangh and the Goseva Sangh. Now you may write to them as you think best.

I hope you are keeping good health.

I forgot to send you a copy of the letter I wrote to Vichitra.[1]

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

[1] Presumably of August 30, 1946; *vide* pp. 228-9.

360. *LEPROSY AND CONTAMINATION*

Dr. R. G. Cochrane, Principal of the Missionary Medical College for Women in Vellore, writes:[1]

> My good friend Mr. Jagadisan has brought to my attention a paragraph in the *Hindu* of Madras of August the 26th. It reads: 'Bihar is going to have a separate jail for the leper prisoners, it is learnt, to save other prisoners from contamination. Arrangements are being made in the first instance, it is understood, to segregate about 100 such prisoners at Govindpur in the District of Manbhum.' I was so pained by the news that I could not resist the urge to write to you, for you have been a consistent champion of those who suffer from leprosy and indeed, of all persons in society who are undeservedly stigmatized. I feel that I should write to you and say that it will be a great pity if the Bihar Government were to build a separate jail for prisoners with leprosy. It is a gratuitous measure whose only effect will be the strengthening of the public's prejudice against leprosy. On examination, it is likely to be found that 80 per cent at least of the prisoners with leprosy are non-infective, and therefore there is absolutely no reason why these should be separated from the other prisoners. With regard to the prisoners who suffer from infective leprosy, the main precautions are that the prisoner should not come into contact with healthy persons during night and should avoid direct close contact during the day. As leprosy is a mildly contagious disease, even its infective types, a prisoner with infective leprosy could be more easily dealt with than prisoners with other infective diseases. And yet, if the report is true, the Bihar Government is going to act on the fear of 'contamination'. The very use of this word indicates a mediaeval attitude to leprosy. It is a great pity that statements are being continually published to suggest that leprosy patients are contaminated in some way or other.
>
> We in Madras, enthusiastically supported by Mr. Jagadisan, are doing all we can to protest against the discrimination of the patient suffering from leprosy on the grounds of social stigma. It is no more of a disgrace to get leprosy than to get measles, and not until the general public realize that it is not a rapidly spreading plague, as it is commonly believed to be, shall we make any advance in the control of leprosy. I am very grateful to hear from Mr. Jagadisan that you

[1] *Vide* p. 300.

CWMG - LXXV

have now put leprosy work as an integral part of the nation's Constructive Programme. Your remark that the leprosy patient is as much a part of society as the tallest of us moves me deeply. May I hope that India's leaders will follow your footsteps and do the right thing by the leprosy patient?

It is to be hoped that the information about Bihar is not true and that, if it is, this letter of his will dissipate the fear of leprosy. "Superstitions die hard." In this land of faith and superstitions, both flourish abundantly. Hence, they often intermingle and the contamination of superstitions—a multitude—seems to have overlaid faith, so much so that it is hard to distinguish between the two. But my faith, which burns too bright for the army of superstitions to touch it, tells me that leprosy is no contamination. We must learn the laws governing infectious and contagious diseases and obey them.

Dr. Cochrane is, I believe, a medical philanthropist. He knows a great deal about leprosy and lepers. I fancy that the National Governments will not be wrong in accepting his judgment that, of all the diseases of the kind, leprosy is the least among them. In its virulent form, it deprives a patient of his limbs and defies ordinary medical treatment. What nature does is yet unknown. But the ordinary man does not need to bother about this difficult matter. Enough if he realizes that a leper is as much his brother as any other, and he is on no account to be shunned.

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946
Harijan, 22-9-1946

361. TIRED OF SATYAGRAHA?[1]

News comes from Durban that a group of Indians has sprung up in South Africa who have lost faith in satyagraha. They cherish the dream that they can overthrow the rule of the White man there only by joining forces with the Negroes, the coloured people, other Asiatics and European sympathizers and adopting violent means. The rumour, if there is any truth in it, is disturbing and a definite fly in the ointment. All, whether they believe in non-violence or not, should realize that Indians in South Africa gained world-wide esteem simply because, in spite of being a handful, they showed infinite capa-

[1] The Gujarati original of this was published in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.

city for suffering and did not, through losing their patience, resort to sabotage and violence. They learnt the wholesome lesson that true well-being springs from suffering and that victory lies in unity. From my own experience, my firm advice to Indians in South Africa is that they should, on no account, be lured away into throwing aside the matchless weapon of satyagraha.

This does not, however, imply that they are not to accept the help of the coloured people, Negroes and any other sympathizers or that they will not help them in their need, should occasion arise. The only condition is that satyagraha should be their one and only weapon. If they go astray from the path of non-violence, they will conform to the description of the poor woman who as an Indian proverb goes, went in search of a son and succeeded in losing her husband!

NEW DELHI, September 11, 1946
Harijan, 22-9-1946

362. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, SRI NARAYANA DHARMA PARIPALANA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

SECRETARY
WALLUVANAD SNDP
OTTAPALAM

EVERY GOOD ACT CARRIES ITS OWN BLESSINGS.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

CWMG - LXXV

363. TELEGRAM TO GANESH TRIPATHI

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

GANESH TRIPATHI
SECRETARY STEEL EMPLOYEES UNION
CAWNPORE

NO INTERVENTION FOR UNAUTHORIZED FAST.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

364. TELEGRAM TO MEHR CHAND KHANNA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

MEHR CHAND KHANNA
MINISTER
PESHAWAR

MISS LESTER ARRIVING FRONTIER MAIL FRIDAY. INFORM DOCTOR KHANSAHEB AND BADSHAH KHAN.

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Ganesh Dutt, a worker of J. K. Iron and Steel Mills, had gone on a fast from September 1 to press his demand for increased bonus. He gave up the fast on September 12 on the persuasion of Congress workers.

CWMG - LXXXV

365. LETTER TO DR. R. G. COCHRANE

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

DEAR DR. COCHRANE,

I have just read your letter which I am publishing in *Harijan*[1] and a copy of which I am sending to the Bihar Minister concerned. I suggest that you should send me a well-considered medical opinion, signed by as many medical men as possible. I have been carrying on correspondence with the Sind Ministers also with whom I have not been able to make much headway. Hence my suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

MISSIONARY MEDICAL COLLEGE
VELLORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

366. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MADU,

If you see only the faults in yourself and only the virtues in others you will advance fast, be happy and never experience sorrow. We have no right to expect anything from anyone. We are debtors and that is why we have been born. We are not creditors. Let this sink in your heart and the whole world will appear good to you. This is not mere pious advice but the surest way of making the stream of life flow smoothly.

Many kisses to Rasagulla.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

[1] *Vide* pp. 296-7.

CWMG - LXXV

367. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter just now. I have already sent a wire informing everybody about the date of my arrival. It would be strange if you did not receive it. I cannot reach there before the 25th.

I have not so far been able to share the dictionary work with others. All the work is being done by Rajkumari and myself. She has to give to it 6 to 7 hours every week. It would be good if you could go on sending the words you select. For the present of course we can do even if you send nothing. We are managing somehow. But the words you can send without too much trouble can certainly be useful. But you should not take this to mean that you must send them at any cost.

As for Tarachand, ask him to send only what he can. I think you won't get any help from him about the dictionary.

Sushila had written to me about Chandan's[1] illness. There has been no news since.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10975

368. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter before me. I like your suggestion, but who can have it implemented? The Ministers did meet but God knows what the outcome was. For my part, I am at the moment pursuing the Madras scheme because the Minister there tells me that he will do what I ask him to do. Let

[1] Addressee's daughter-in-law, wife of Satish Kalelkar

me see how things shape. I take it that you would have come for the A. I. S. A. meeting.

I hope you are in good health. Enclosed please find a letter for Lakshmi which you should read before passing it on to her. I am sending a copy of my letter to Narandas.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR
SABARMATI

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

369. LETTER TO LAKSHMI SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I have preserved your letter of July 14. You ask me to show you the way but I don't think I can. Do as you think right. Go ahead along your own way. You have the land, you have the money and still you ask for help. This is something I don't like. I should like you not to take money from anybody and to preserve your self-respect. In my view a person who has money of his own and expects money from other places has bartered away his self-respect. I learnt this lesson when I was even younger than you are. I have conducted myself accordingly, and this is a thing that those who are regarded as my children as well as others should learn from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. LAKSHMIBEHN MARUTI
SABARMATI ASHRAM

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

CWMG - LXXXV

370. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you think is correct. I shall write if I can think of something on the basis of what you say. I have the feeling that now is not the time for this kind of writing. However, if after thinking over it I feel that something can be written, I shall do so.

You yourself never say anything about your health. Dr. Jivaraj tells me that you are somewhat better. The rest you must be seeing in the papers.

Blessings from
BAPU

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
BOMBAY

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

371. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I had your letter and the newspaper cuttings. You will see that I have made use of them. I shall be here till the 24th. Then off to Sevagram. Arun, Ila will be well. I also have your letter of 3-9-1946. You are not to worry about what will happen to Ila.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SUSHILABEHN GANDHI
AKOLA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

372. LETTER TO HARGOVIND GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
September 11, 1946

BHAI HARGOVIND GUPTA,

I had and still have a great regard for Ganesh Shankarji. Since Maithilisharanji is associated with the work it will be a literary accomplishment. But the true memorial to him will be if we generate in us a spirit of self-sacrifice even to the extent of laying down our lives.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARGOVIND GUPTA
GANESH SHANKAR HRIDAYATIRTH
CHIRGAON (JHANSI)

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

373. UNCERTIFIED KHADI v. MILL CLOTH[1]

A Gujarati friend[2] asks:

> Ever so many national organizations insist that not only should their staff be dressed in khadi, but that even books should be khadi-bound. Since certified khadi can only be had from the recognized bhandars on payment of a certain quota of yarn, they naturally resort to uncertified khadi. Is this right? Is not mill cloth preferable to uncertified khadi? Is not insistence on khadi that results in buying it from uncertified shops really a false pretence?

When, among other things, there is a dearth of khadi, it is improper to insist on its use for purposes of bookbinding, etc. When there was an abundance of khadi, it was I who recommended its use for all such purposes. The entire Congress Camp in Ahmedabad in 1921 was bedecked in khadi. Today it would be madness to attempt such a thing. Time and circumstances alter methods.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 22-9-1946.
[2] Presumably Vithaldas Kothari; *vide* p. 288.

CWMG - LXXXV

But I do not understand the writer's plea for mill cloth as opposed to uncertified khadi. What is uncertified khadi? Is it not hand-spun and hand-woven cloth though uncertified? That there may be fraud about it is another matter. The Charkha Sangh cannot guarantee cent per cent purity in even certified khadi. That nothing in this world is proof against deceit has been true throughout the ages. Drawbacks in uncertified khadi are well known. In it there is no fixity of wages to the spinners and the weavers. Those who sell it make what profits they like. Often do persons set up shops, merely to spite the Charkha Sangh Bhandars. Nevertheless, where there is no fraud, all cloth which is hand-spun and hand-woven must be called khadi. What a person spins and has woven into cloth for himself, is not certified in the legal sense and yet it is khadi in the highest and purest sense of the term. It would be a crime on that person's part to use mill cloth instead of the cloth made from the labour of his own hands.

The upshot is that exclusion of mill cloth must be maintained. Uncertified khadi should be avoided as far as possible, but where certified khadi is not available and the choice lies between mill cloth and uncertified home-spun preference should be given to the latter, assuming of course that it is pure khadi. You may condemn, if you like, as uncertified, cloth made out of the labour of one's own hands; but the fact remains that it is a purer production than certified khadi. And, if all span enough to have cloth woven for their requirements, what need would there then be for the Charkha Sangh? Heaven and earth would then ring with cries of victory to the Charkha Sangh.

NEW DELHI, September 12, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

374. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI JIVANJI,

I glanced through *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak* today. I was a little unhappy to see that, while *Harijanbandhu* has sixteen columns, *Harijan Sevak* has only eight. I don't understand the reason behind this. Maybe you were not able to cope with the Hindustani articles. If I go a little deeper into this, I can find out whether or not this guess is correct. But I don't propose to do so. I will say only this: that as I have already informed you, you should print only as much Hindustani matter as I send from here and whatever translations you require for *Harijanbandhu* should be made from Hindustani, never from English. Though you have capable translators there to translate from English into Gujarati, I do receive complaints from time to time. Hence the best course would be that I should send from here Hindustani and Gujarati translations from English. Or I shall send Hindustani from here and Gujarati you can do there. It should be child's play to translate from Hindustani into Gujarati. If, however, there are any complications even in this, let me know. We should receive no complaints about translation. If we follow this policy there will be no difference in size between *Harijan Sevak* and *Harijanbandhu*. Our ideal should be to have the same size for all the three. It will take us some time to reach this ideal, for many things have to be put across to foreign readers and that can be done only through English.

I have already written to you about the dictionary and, therefore, I don't repeat it here. It will be all right if you give four pages every fortnight. One column contains nearly forty words, which means 320 words for eight columns. I shall be satisfied with that. I shall not keep you waiting for it till the last. I hope to supply it in good time.

When I had dictated the above I looked again at Pyarelal's suggestion and found that the Urdu and Hindi editions of *Harijan Sevak* are not identical word for word. I must of course admit my negligence, namely, that I don't go through

all the issues. Certainly I don't compare them. I did so today out of curiosity and discovered this. Pyarelal tried to put up some defence for this difference but he has not so far been able to justify it. Let us see if he can. He told me, however, that the Persian script occupies more space. This I knew and, therefore, I started looking into the issues and inspected the issues of September 1. On doing so, I found that the Hindi edition had eight pages whereas Urdu had sixteen and also that Urdu had nineteen articles and Hindi had thirteen. I will be glad if you explain to me the reason for this difference. If I go further into it, I may discover something more. I shall see what I myself can do. But I do expect it of you that you will not attempt anything beyond your capacity. You will then be able to do full justice to what you do.

You did very well in sending me the two complaints regarding the dictionary. If there are any other complaints, send them too. If there are any mistakes, it won't be difficult to rectify them. I will procure a copy of the dictionary which you have mentioned. I have told Brijkrishna about it.

Not revised.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9970. Also C. W. 6944. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

375. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am inclined to think that the cost of the stamp was borne by M[unshi]. He is a lawyer of the first rank and at present he earns maybe 15 to 20 thousand rupees a month. Be that as it may, he is of a generous nature. Perhaps Gadodiaji will remit the cost of the stamp. I have not met him. You are at liberty to feel that the award is against you. But I do not feel so. I had written to you that all that should have been in your petition was not there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 368-9

376. LETTER TO MORARJI DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAISHRI MORARJI,

Nagadi Sheth of South Africa brings you this note. This gentleman was an active participant in the struggle that I carried on in South Africa. Please see him.

BAPU

SJT. MORARJI DESAI
MINISTER

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

377. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI PANIKKAR,

I have your letter. I understand your point. That your boys and girls will learn to read, write and correctly understand Hindi and Urdu—even this will be good.

But I cannot understand why, even in Bikaner, you cannot get all the work done in Hindustani. We shall talk about it if we have occasion to meet. I appreciate English in its own place.

BAPU

DEWAN, BIKANER

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

CWMG - LXXV

378. LETTER TO MOHAMMED YUNUS

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. There was nothing the matter with me except for a mild cold, which too has now gone. Do not worry. Who can harm a person as long as he is protected by God or keep him when He wants to take him away?

All that you have written about Calcutta is shameful. Joint electorates are a noble solution, I agree, but how to bring it about remains to be seen.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB MOHAMMED YUNUS
(OF BIHAR)

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

379. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI MOTI BABU,

I could not reply to you earlier owing to pressure of work. Do please forgive me. If the Prabartak Sangh would go along with the A. I. S. A. you should strictly follow the rules of the latter. That would please me very much. But so long as the Sangh's views on khadi are at variance with mine it would be best to work separately, though in a spirit of friendship.

I appreciate the sentiments you have expressed with regard to khadi. The policy of the A. I. S. A. is inspired by the same sentiments and its experience in the field is extensive and, if one may say so, unique. I would therefore urge that you or some other representative of the Sangh should have a

CWMG - LXXXV

talk with a representative of the Bengal branch of the A. I. S. A. and do as seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MOTILAL ROY
PRABARTAK SANGH
CHITTAGONG

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

380. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH MITTAL

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

BHAI OM PRAKASH MITTAL,

Swamiji gave me your letter. It would be wrong on the part of the Chamars to refuse to remove dead animals. In my view we should all do the work. We cannot oblige anyone to do a job.

A rise in wages is always to be welcomed. But what I say is of no significance. The right decision can be arrived at only after hearing both the sides. All the committees can jointly decide on the right course.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI OM PRAKASH MITTAL
MOREGANJ
SAHARANPUR

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

CWMG - LXXXV

381. LETTER TO RANDHIR SINGH

NEW DELHI,
September 12, 1946

KUMARSHRI RANDHIR SINGH,

I have your letter. I do not think what you say about the existing condition is correct. Yes, I would certainly say that if zamindars and jagirdars devoted themselves to the service of their people no one would be able to touch them. After all, Maharana Pratap became what he was because he always was a servant of his people.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

382. DISCONTINUE IT[1]

A Hindi journalist writes that the kind of dictionary that *Harijan* has been publishing already exists and asks why there should be another. If the question has substance I should think that *Harijan's* labour is wasted. If such a work exists it will cause me surprise and pain that none of my co-workers told me about it or themselves knew of its existence. I am making enquiries and have asked for a copy of the dictionary that has been mentioned. If I find I have made a mistake I shall set it right and save the labour.

Another friend, writing in English, has said the same thing and added that my Hindustani is in fact Urdu and it is making me more and more unpopular in the Hindi world. The same is true of the Urdu world, only for the opposite reason. The charge here is that in the name of Hindustani I am introducing into Urdu words from Hindi, that is Sanskrit. I welcome both charges. My Hindustani is neither Urdu nor Hindi. It is the mingling of the two. The Saraswati that is to flow from the confluence of these two is still invisible. Scholars tell me that at one time it had become visible and then it disappeared. Be

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946, under the title "Stop It".

that as it may. The idea behind Hindustani Prachar is that the two languages, which have the same grammar but derive their vocabulary from two different sources should not remain separate but should mingle and flow as one stream. Whether the effort will succeed or not will depend upon the zeal of those working for it. If they put some vigour in their efforts they will not go in vain. In the end of course success is in the hands of God. And where He is the Doer and the Destroyer, what cause is there for grief and sorrow?

And is the purpose of the effort to gain popularity? A public servant is not flattered by praise nor frightened by censure. He who swells with applause and droops with criticism cannot render service. The reward of the worker lies in the work he does. I would therefore request my critics that, rather than criticize me, they should help in this noble cause and enlarge and enrich the language written and spoken by the masses of such a vast country as India. Then both the sister languages Hindi and Urdu will shine and India will advance. It will not offend God if I call Him Khuda or Ishwar and my knowledge of that Supreme Power will increase. What quarrel can one have with a person who respects both the languages and wants to unite the two?

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

383. GUJARAT — PROUD OR INSANE?[1]

Who would not like Gujarat to be described as proud? One might in jest also describe Gujarat as insane. At the time of writing Gujarat appears not to be proud but insane in the proper sense of the word. Shri Parikshitlal is a servant of Harijans but how can he cope with the mad Gujarat? Those who are untouchables while alive remain untouchables when dead. On the cremation ground at any rate all should be one. Once the dead body is reduced to ashes any impurity in it is also burnt up. Nevertheless Harijans have not the right to burn their dead on the cremation ground. It required much effort to persuade the mahajan of Navasari to let an old Harijan be cremated on the common cremation ground. How could it be called a favour?

[1] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946, under the title "Proud or Insane".

What is there in it to be pleased about? "In a treeless country the castor-oil plant is honoured." Similarly when a Harijan body was allowed to be cremated on the cremation ground, the event was eulogized. It was justified. The result was good.

Then there is another case, which is wholly tragic. Shri Parikshitlal has furnished me the name and other particulars of the village which I shall not give here.[1] The reprehensible part of it is that when cattle die of an epidemic the Harijans are held responsible. The so-called *savarna* Hindus do not even bother to see the obvious cause of the mortality among the livestock. When there are rains grass comes up. It is infested with insects. The starved cattle go mad at the sight of the grass and devour it, insects and all. Then they sicken and die. The cause is thus obvious and Harijans' cattle suffer no less. And yet the Harijans are held responsible and they are subjected to abuses and beatings by the caste Hindus. Such is the woeful tale the letter before me contains. I wish my words could reach the villagers concerned.

Now that the reformers hold the reins of the Government, the villages can be rid of much of the ignorance if the officials will make the effort. If the mahajans shed their superstition, if the Harijans wake up and the Government and Harijan Sevaks do their duty there is a chance that Gujarat can be freed of this evil.

NEW DELHI, September 13, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

384. TELEGRAM TO K. S. DESHPANDE

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

DESHPANDE[2]
74 NARAYAN PETH
POONA

CONTEMPLATED OPENING OF TEMPLE GOOD WORK DESERVING IMITATION WIDE SCALE.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* however Vol. LXXXIII, pp. 222-3.

[2] Krishnaji Shivaram Deshpande of Sri Ram Mandir, Thakurdwar, Bombay

CWMG - LXXXV

385. TELEGRAM TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

JAIRAMDASJI
CARE HINDUSTAN
KARACHI

SEPARATE ELECTORATES IMPOSSIBLE. BUT RESERVATION CERTAIN SEATS SUBJECT TO MERIT DESIRABLE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

386. LETTER TO JEHANGIR PATEL

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,[2]

I send this letter to you in English. So far as I am aware you are a bankrupt concern if what Ramprasad has told me is true. And it is altogether wrong to get a good worker and to expect him to be a collector of funds. I should like to talk to Balasahib[3] about this. I take it that Bapa also is in this concern. Ramprasad tells me that your Association is under debt. He cannot be of any use in wiping it off. He can be of inestimable use so far as management of the Association is concerned and that too among the Adivasis. All other difficulties that he has mentioned can be easily waived. He has said so to me but I know that he must not be used for collecting funds. And please know that neither you nor members of your Association are in any way obliged to entertain Ramprasad's services.

[1] Presumably this was in connection with the memorandum submitted by the Sind Provincial Scheduled Castes Federation demanding representation for Scheduled Castes on the local bodies. A similar telegram was also sent to the Sind Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[2] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

[3] B. G. Kher

CWMG - LXXV

As to Ramanama, we must talk about it. You cannot have it mechanically. It is not like a quinine pill or sun-bath. It stands on its own and by itself. I can understand and appreciate your objection to Ahuramazda because of the bad associations. Hence it is that we describe God as long suffering and patient beyond human endurance. Just now you must swear by your injections and pills although you are a trustee for nature cure.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JEHANGIR PATEL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

387. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I will write and send something for the *Rentiabaras*.[1] It will be published in the *Harijanbandhu* of the 22nd[2]. I will, therefore, send you a copy of what I write.

You must meet the demand for the equipment. There are two ways of securing the wood. You should collect or buy up old and disused furniture from people. The other way is to use the minimum quantity of wood in making the equipment. The box-charkha is a development of the Gandiva, and the latter can be set up anywhere if you have but the two wheels. For instance, it can be set up on a desk or on a parapet and one can easily spin on it standing. At any rate one can spin sitting. I had tried all these methods in Yeravda jail and found them suitable. In some jails there are cement platforms, covered with wooden boards, to sleep on. I used to place the Gandiva on the board. Then I had tried and made a charkha from deodar strips obtained from packing cases. I think I had even brought it to Sabarmati. Ultimately we have to work in the villages for the poor and should, as far as possible, acquire even in cities only such things as can be introduced in villages. Think over the matter from this point of view.

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar
[2] *Vide* pp. 320-1.

I have written to Kishorelal about a man. I have received about five names. We cannot trouble Mavalankar. And Saralabehn is ill.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

388. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. KISHORELAL,

As usual Narandas has asked for someone in connection with Charkha Jayanti. He is asking for Saraladevi Ambalal. The other is Mavalankar. I think Mavalankar cannot go, nor should he be bothered with such functions. You should therefore find someone and send him. Dada Dharmadhikari, Gopalrao, Shriman, Janakibehn, Kaka—send any of these. These names are not in any order of preference or otherwise. I have dictated them as they have occurred to me.

Chimanlal writes that your health continues to be weak. But what is the point of lamenting over it? I get letters from Parikshitlal now and then. Both the incidents that he has narrated are painful. That we have to launch an agitation even for cremating the body of a Harijan in the cremation ground is a matter of shame.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

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

CWMG-LXXXV

389. LETTER TO ANANTRAM

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

CHI. ANANTRAM,

I have your letter. Have a good time in the hospital. Do some service as well. Go to the Ashram only when you are fully calm. Ramanama can work wonders. You have to prove it. Who will believe one's just saying it?

What if I did not come to the jail? How can I find time for such things?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of Hindi : S. G. 134

390. LETTER TO K. S. DESHPANDE

NEW DELHI,
September 13, 1946

BHAI DESHPANDE,

Sushilabehn told me about your father's death. I will not express grief. He was a very virtuous and devout man. He has left behind a great legacy for you. You must add to it and bring glory to your work of service.

A wire has been sent regarding the Harijan temple.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TATYA DESHPANDE
74 NARAYAN PETH
POONA

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

CWMG - LXXXV

391. COLLECTIVE PRAYER

Q. You believe in mass prayer. Is congregational worship as practised today a true prayer? In my opinion, it is a degrading thing and therefore dangerous. Jesus said : "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, but enter into thine inner chamber and having shut thy door pray to the Father which is in secret." Most people in a crowd are inattentive and unable to concentrate. Prayer then becomes hypocrisy. The *yogi* is aware of this. Should not the masses, therefore, be taught self-examination which is the true prayer?

A. I hold that congregational worship held by me is true prayer for a collection of men. The convener is a believer and no hypocrite. If he were one, the prayer would be tainted at the source. The men and women who attend do not go to any orthodox prayer house from which they might have to gain an earthly end. The bulk of them have no contact with the convener. Hence it is presumed, they do not come for show. They join in because they believe that they somehow or other, acquire merit by having common prayer. That most or some persons are inattentive or unable to concentrate is very true. That merely shows that they are beginners. Neither inattention nor inability to concentrate are any proof of hypocrisy or falsity. It would be, if they pretended to be attentive when they were not. On the contrary, many have often asked me what they should do, when they are unable to concentrate.

The saying of Jesus quoted in the question is wholly inapplicable. Jesus was referring to individual prayer and to hypocrisy underlying it. There is nothing in the verse quoted against collective prayer. I have remarked often enough that without individual prayer collective prayer is not of much use. I hold that individual prayer is a prelude to collective, as the latter, when it is effective, must lead to the individual. In other words, when a man has got to the stage of heart prayer, he prays always, whether in the secret or in the multitude.

I do not know what the questioner's *yogi* does or does not. I know that the masses when they are in tune with the Infinite, naturally resort to self-examination. All real prayer must have that end.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

Harijan, 22-9-1946

Blank Minute Books

A student writes:

> It has become a fashion for all to pose as political workers. And politics consist in speeches and participation in election campaigns. You would be pained to know that the minute books of Congress Committees are entirely blank, except for proceedings of annual sittings. It is all power politics. Students also get drawn into its vortex. What is your ideal of a political worker?

I have all along stressed the need for constructive work and to that end, I drew up a list of items for the guidance of all workers. I hold that if the constructive programme were worked with vigour and understanding, the result would be far more than mere political swaraj. Speeches and election campaigns would be almost unnecessary if our workers established the Congress in the hearts of the people through service. Then there will be more service than power and the weekly or fortnightly meetings of Congress committees will be filled with a recital of the activities and achievements of committees in the wide field of work.

Is It Not Cowardice?

Q. Non-violence in your opinion is not cowardice, but it is a form of resistance to injustice. You have admitted that it is wrong to arrest and imprison innocent persons which civil resisters are. And you have cheerfully courted arrest and imprisonment. Is this not inconsistent and cowardly?

A. Evidently you do not know the working of non-violence. An unjust law is itself a species of violence. Arrest for its breach is more so. Now the law of non-violence says that violence should be resisted not by counter-violence but by non-violence. Any breach of a law carries with it a penalty. It does not become unjust merely because I say so. Nevertheless, in my opinion, it is unjust. The State has the right to enforce it, whilst it is on the statute-book. I must resist it non-violently. This I do by breaking the law and by peacefully submitting to arrest and imprisonment. I call such behaviour

an act of bravery to the extent required. That imprisonment for a man like me today carries no suffering with it is irrelevant, if it may be assumed that ordinary prison-treatment would make no difference in my mental condition. Thus non-resistance in the case under discussion is an essential condition of non-violence, not a symptom of cowardice. Resistance in the shape of refusing to be arrested etc., on the other hand, will in this case be certainly blustering, thoughtless violence and might be classified as cowardly brag.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946
Harijan, 22-9-1946

393. CHARKHA JAYANTI[1]

What is known as Charkha Jayanti is not Gandhi Jayanti. It is true it has become linked with my birthday, but the reason for this is clear. Formerly the charkha bore no relation to freedom. If anything it stood for the slavery that lay behind it. For a crust of bread our women had to go through the drudgery of spinning. They span and a few cowries or pies were thrown to them each day. I remember watching, in my childhood, the Thakore Saheb of Rajkot throw money to the poor on the *Shili Satam*[2] day. I considered this throwing of money a game and it was fun to watch the game. I can imagine how, much in the same way, cowries must have been thrown to women spinners for their yarn and how greedily they must have pounced on them.

It was in 1908, in South Africa, that the idea came to me that if the poor of India were to be delivered from serfdom, we would have to learn to look upon the charkha, and the yarn produced on the charkha, not as a symbol of slavery but as a symbol of freedom and plenty. The person who to my knowledge understood this most fully was Narandas Gandhi. From this he understood the significance of the Charkha Jayanti. Before the date *Bhadarva Vad* 12 became associated with the charkha neither he nor anyone else, to my knowledge, had celebrated that day as my birthday. I was well known among the people in South Africa but I do not recollect anyone there

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

[2] The seventh day of the moon in the month of *Shravan*, observed as the day of *Shitala*, the goddess of smallpox

celebrating my birthday. It was only here that the charkha was associated with it and Charkha Jayanti began to be observed on the day. It was then thought that my birthday according to the Western Calendar should also be observed and so two days, namely *Bhadarva Vad* 12 and October 2, came to be observed as Charkha Jayanti. Narandas took, as he still does, a leading part in all this. As I write this I can remember the observances in Rajkot on *Bhadarva Vad* 12 and October 2. But Charkha Jayanti will be truly observed when the charkha, which is the symbol of freedom and ahimsa, hums in every home. What can the observance signify if a few poor women, or even a million poor women, spin to earn a pittance? What great work will have been accomplished? This is possible even under a tyrannical regime and is indeed the normal thing in the capitalist system. The doles given to the poor help in sustaining the affluence of the millionaires, even if such doles be in the form of wages.

The observance will have meaning only when both the rich and the poor understand that all are created alike by God, that all must work to attain glory and that the freedom of all will be protected not by guns but by the ball of yarn, not by violence but by non-violence.

If we consider the atmosphere of the world today, what I have said above will sound ludicrous. But if we think deeply, this alone is right; this alone is true for all time. For the present it is only devotees of the charkha like Narandas who show this faith. Let us all observe Charkha Jayanti and October 2 in a similar spirit.

NEW DELHI, September 14, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-9-1946

394. AN APPEAL TO CORRESPONDENTS[1]

Some good people waste money on sending wires, asking me to secure seats on the Interim Government, others regarding strikes in various places, yet others on matters of fasting. To all these I would say that they not only take unnecessary trouble and waste money but pile work on an over-worked group of co-workers and helpers, without securing needed help from me. I have no wish to influence the National Cabinet in the choice of co-ministers and I hold that it would be wrong on my part or anybody else's to do so. The members of the Cabinet should be left undisturbed in their choice if they are to render national service in an efficient and honest manner. In matters of strikes and fasts, my views are well known. These should give sufficient guidance when and where required. It is impossible and improper for me to give opinion on incomplete and one-sided data. And I have no time for studying individual cases. I have only limited capacity left in me. I assure correspondents that it is being exercised to the full extent without needing further additions.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946
Harijan, 22-9-1946

395. VILLAGE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Kini has been a secretary in the education department in Mysore. He has sent a very long article for *Harijan*. His contention is that India is poor and has remained so because the Government has kept the poor of the villages away from right education. He believes that the existing colleges and universities in our cities cannot serve our villages because the education imparted in these is designed to advance western influence and it is difficult to introduce education that will be of use to the villages.

Dr. Kini is of the opinion that there should be village universities for the villagers where adults also can study.

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

Dr. Kini writes to say that the village universities should provide instruction in agriculture, horticulture, village sericulture, animal husbandry, poultry farming, bee-keeping, fishery, khadi industry, rural sanitation and hygiene, rural electrical engineering, rural roads and transport, rural home economics, rural pottery, rural economics, rural sociology, rural reconstruction, rural trade, rural bullion and banking, etc. If all these subjects were taught in the villages as sciences, the writer feels that the face of rural India would be changed. The villages then would not have to look to the cities for help but on the contrary the cities would have to look to the villages for help.

I have just given a gist of Dr. Kini's article. If the Central and the Provincial cabinets accept his suggestions a great thing can be achieved. To give his proposals a concrete shape, Dr. Kini should consult Dr. Zakir Husain and the Aryanayakums. I personally believe that even urban universities can be changed.

NEW DELHI, September 15, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

396. LETTER TO JOHN MATTHAI[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith my file as it is. I see that some papers are missing. But what I send would give you what you need.

Yours sincerely,

DR. JOHN MATTHAI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] An economist, then Minister for Transport and Railways in the Interim Government

397. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Your letter. You have done well to join the C. S. P.[2]

Who suggested that you showed off or did anything to please anybody? If you did, you [would] not be a *dandi* that you are. Cheer up!

Love.

KHURSHED NAOROJI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

398. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter. I approve of the idea of giving eight columns of the dictionary every fortnight. You may, therefore, do whatever is convenient for you. The readers will probably find eight columns more convenient because it will be easier to preserve and bind them. It is for you to consider and decide what to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9971. Also C.W. 6945. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

[1] The source has "Vahala Behn" in Hindi.
[2] Congress Socialist Party

CWMG - LXXV

399. LETTER TO ANNADA SHANKER CHAUDHARY

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI ANNADA,

I got your letter. Since we now expect the salt tax to be lifted, I shall not publish your article. Let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ANNADA BABU
924 COLLEGE STREET MARKET
CALCUTTA

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

400. LETTER TO DHARMANAND KOSAMBI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMANANDJI,

Swami Satyanandji says that you are almost fasting. Please do not do so. It would be good to take four times a day as much of cow's milk as you easily can with half as much juice of some fruit mixed with it. If you wish to take some vegetable with it, such as lettuce, radish, gourd or carrot, it should be taken in boiled form. This too would be a kind of fast. You may do what work of service you can. I shall be glad to have a wire that you have accepted my advice.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* p. 341.

CWMG - LXXXV

401. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

We do not lend glitter to gold; similarly the name *gurukul*[1] also does not need any embellishment. Forget about the name and such other things. All noble deeds carry their own blessings. Remember this and stop begging for blessings from others.

ASHOK ASHRAM
P. O. KALSI (DIST. DEHRA DUN)

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

402. LETTER TO HUNNAR

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI HUNNAR,

I had your letter. There has been some delay in replying as I was in correspondence with Jivanji[2]. I should indeed like to have you with me as I do not have many Urdu hands who can work with speed. Moreover, Pandit Sunderlal has spoken to me about you at length. However, Jivanji says that these days he is short of Urdu help. Therefore as long as you are required there you should keep quiet and so will I.

SHRI HUNNAR
NAVAJIVAN OFFICE
AHMEDABAD

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

[1] A residential school run on traditional lines
[2] Jivanji D. Desai

CWMG - LXXV

403. LETTER TO SYED RAZA ALI

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. Thanks. It was a misunderstanding on your part. It was wrongly reported in the papers. I shall not bother you with arguments. And I don't have the time.

RAZA ALI
RAZA LODGE
MORADABAD

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

404. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 15, 1946

Gandhiji said that the sight of 144 of them attending the spinning classes[2] daily in the fullness of faith, made him hug the hope that one day the whole of India would be clad in khadi. When he started the spinning revival in 1918, India was buying 60 crores worth of foreign cloth excluding Indian mill cloth. This was the largest single import. Next came sugar with 18 crores and then hardware with 7 crores. Today, with the inflated prices the price of all mill cloth, indigenous and foreign, was probably 300 crores. Gandhiji asked his audience to ponder and realize what wealth this would mean to India, if 300 crores worth of cloth was produced by their own hands in the villages. There was a veritable mint of gold for them and if khadi became universal, the villages would rise to unknown heights. Today our masses were poverty-stricken, without the lustre of hope or intelligence in their eyes. The pure hands of the spinners could create this miracle for them and everyone could help. They should have understanding hearts and seeing eyes to detect the beauty in khaddar even if it is coarse and not be allured by mill finery which could never clothe their nakedness in the true sense of the term. The only way to clothe their nakedness

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". A report of the speech was also published in *The Hindustan Times*, 16-9-1946.

[2] Under the eleven-day spinning course organized by Kanu Gandhi

CWMG LXXXV

and drive away hunger was for them to grow their own food and make their own cloth. If this happy consummation could be achieved, the eyes of the whole world would be turned towards India. Today everything seemed to be going wrong in this land. He referred to the story that had appeared in the Press of the mad gunmen in Bombay who caused death of several innocent people. This shameful news must have been flashed over the radio to the world and they must hang their heads in sorrow. But, said Gandhiji, if they would only listen to him, all would be well with India. If all purified themselves and all thought of themselves as Indians, then they would have succeeded in learning the true lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

405. TALK WITH A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 16, 1946*]

If I were a dictator, religion and State would be separate. I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it.[2] The State would look after your secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody's personal concern!

You must watch my life, how I live, eat, sit, talk, behave in general. The sum total of all those in me is my religion.

Asked which movement, e.g., women's, political, scientific or religious, would have had the most far-reaching influence in the world of tomorrow and would be considered 50 years hence as having had the greatest impact on world affairs as a whole and for the greatest good of mankind, he said it was wrong to bracket religious movement with the rest. He said:

It is the religious movement that will dominate the future. It would do so today but it does not, for religion has been reduced to a Saturday or a Sunday affair; it has to be lived every moment of one's life. Such religion, when it comes, will dominate the world.

Q. Do you feel there is any special significance in the increasing number and magnitude of labour strikes, especially in India of late? What do you think will be the outcome of this labour trouble in India?

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 16-9-1946

[2] The missionary had asked whether in free India religion would be separate from the State.

A. Strikes have today become a universal plague. There are strikes everywhere, America and England not excepted. But in India they have a special significance. We are living under an unnatural condition. As soon as the lid is removed and there is a crevice letting in the fresh air of freedom, there will be an increasing number of strikes. The fundamental reason for this spreading strike fever is that life here as elsewhere is today uprooted from its basis, the basis of religion, and what an English writer has called 'cash nexus' has taken its place. And that is a precarious bond. But even when the religious basis is there, there will be strikes, because it is scarcely conceivable that religion will have become for all the basis of life. So there will be attempts at exploitation on the one hand and strikes on the other. But these strikes will then be of a purely non-violent character. Such strikes never do harm to anyone. It was such a strike perhaps that brought General Smuts to his knees. "If you had hurt an Englishman," said Jan Smuts, "I would have shot you, even deported your people. As it is, I have put you in prison and tried to subdue you and your people in every way. But how long can I go on like this when you do not retaliate?" And so he had to come to terms with a mere coolie on behalf of coolies as all Indians were then called in South Africa.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

406. POOR OR SMALL COUNTRIES

Shri Chandrashankar, basing himself on well-known English writers, has very ably described for *Harijan* the plight of the small countries during war time.[1] I give here the gist of it. The Gujarati readers are not going to benefit much by its translation. What will they gain by knowing the names of English writers? It will be enough if we know what views eminent writers of contemporary Europe hold on war.

They say that a time has come when only big and wealthy countries can fight a war. They have the money and the armed forces. The big nations either swallow up the small nations or wipe them out. Besides, the small nations are not able to manufacture armaments. They buy them from big nations and have to procure even spare parts from them. In

[1] Chandrashankar Shukla's article "What Can Poor Nations Do?" appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

the result small nations end up by becoming subservient to big nations.

Very often, whether they wish it or not, small nations are forced to buy arms from big nations. For example, when a big nation owes money to a small nation, it repays neither in cash nor in goods but in arms. Accepting such arms has only one implication for a small nation, namely, that it has become a vassal of the big nation.

The writers conclude that the time has come when small nations cannot have independent existence. They may well believe that triumph will not be of truth but of those who have the arms, the money and the bombs. But if we have faith, we will proclaim that in the end truth will prevail, never untruth. Experience also teaches this.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

407. CATTLE WEALTH[1]

Mirabehn writes that India cannot survive without cows and bullocks. In the war vast numbers perished and vast sums of money went down the drain. But the greatest loss was the destruction of the cattle wealth. Lakhs of cows and bullocks were slaughtered by the army for food. Breeding cattle requires about five years. Something can be done about it if the country wakes up right now. This work requires knowledge, incessant effort and assistance from the Central and Provincial governments. Can we hope for it?

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

[1] According to the source this was written in Hindi, but the Hindi version is not available. This appeared under the heading "Notes".

CWMG LXXXV

408. RAMA THE SON OF DASHARATHA[1]

An Arya Samajist writes :

> How can the Rama whom you believe to be undying, be the Rama who is the son of Dasharatha and the husband of Sita? Tormented by the doubt, I do join your prayers but take no part in singing the *Ramdhun*. This irks me for you say that everyone should join in singing and you are right. Could you not so modify the *Ramdhun* that all can join in it.

I have already explained what I mean by everyone. It means everyone who can join heartily and sing in unison. The others should remain silent. But this is of small importance. The more important question is how Dasharatha's son can be imagined as undying. Tulsidas himself has raised the question and answered it. Such questions cannot be answered by the intellect or to the satisfaction of the intellect. This is a matter of the heart and the heart alone knows the ways of the heart. I first worshipped Rama as Sita's Lord but, as realization and experience grew, my Rama became undying and all-pervasive. This means that He continued to be Sita's Lord but the content of that description was enlarged. This is how the world goes on. The Rama of the man who conceives him merely as Dasharatha's son cannot be all-pervasive. But to the man for whom Rama is all-pervasive, Dasharatha also becomes all-pervasive. It may be said that this is all arbitrary, "to each man according to his faith". But I see no other way. If all religions are essentially one, we have to harmonize them. Today they are kept separate and that is why we kill each other. When we are tired of religion, we become atheists and then our ego alone is left and nothing else, not even God. But when we acquire true understanding, the ego perishes and God alone remains. Rama then is and is not the son of Dasharatha, the Lord of Sita, the brother of Bharata and Lakshamana. All honour then to those who not believing in Rama, the son of Dasharatha, still join the prayers. This is

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 22-9-1946.

not rationalism. I have merely outlined what I do and what I believe.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 22-9-1946

409. TRACTORS v. *BULLOCKS*[1]

Under this heading Mirabehn has written an article for *Harijan*. Since it merits consideration I give a gist of it below:

Some people say that there should be no mechanical ploughs or tractors. They require large fields. In the long run the soil is ruined as it does not get cow-dung manure and also the cattle are rendered useless. Mirabehn admits that there is substance in the argument.

But in reply she says that in U. P. alone there are 79 lakh acres of fallow land. Almost all the provinces have such fallow land. It is difficult to plough such land with the help of bullocks and even if it was done it would take years to bring it under cultivation. So she says that to start with such land should be broken with tractors. This can be done immediately. For the rest bullocks should be used. We would thus be making a legitimate and limited use of tractors and this would cause no harm. She agrees that using tractors permanently would be harmful. Also she says the tractors are imported from abroad and trained personnel are needed to operate them. Besides tractors require other implements. At the moment our country is not ready for that and it should never be.

NEW DELHI, September 16, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 29-9-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

CWMG - LXXXV

410. LETTER TO RUKMINI ARUNDALE

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. What would you have me write? Basantibehn[1] had excelled me in many fields not one. I had become her devotee before you were born. Isn't it 60 years now? Wouldn't it suffice to publish just this?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI RUKMINIDEVI
THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR

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

411. LETTER TO JAMES HENRY COUSINS

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

DEAR COUSINS,

In the midst of my preoccupations I mistook your letter for Rukmini Devi's and this I did in spite of the fact that you had mentioned Mrs. Cousins. My love to you both. Please take my P.C. to Rukmini Devi[2] as the contribution of a humble devotee of the late Dr. Annie Besant. That we had political differences as well as perhaps others did not affect my devotion to her many gifts.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Annie Besant
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LXXXV

412. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZ

September 16, 1946

BHAI WAIZ,[1]

I have your letter. Indians abroad—*Pardesvasi Hindi. Pravasi* is not correct. It means travelling or traveller. "Abroad" is not given in the *Harijan* Dict., because perhaps it is common.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. A. WAIZ
I. I. C. A.
SOHRAB HOUSE
235 HORNBY R[OA]D
BOMBAY FORT

From a photostat : G. N. 7940

413. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

CHI. SILLY MADU,

I got your silly letter. Even so I find it sweet. You are as silly as ever. With Shriman looking after all your affairs, how are you ever going to be wise? Kamalnayan has immersed himself in business running into lakhs. The sisters are busy with their families. What is so strange about his going his own way? Don't mind Savitri leaving. Enjoy yourself and be happy. Leave all to Rama—even Kamalnayan. Nothing is going to happen to him as long as God protects him. Don't worry about anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 329

[1] The superscription is in Hindi. So are the first sentence and the words italicized in the text.

CWMG - LXXV

414. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur read out to me the report of your speech published in yesterday's *Dawn*. If it is true I am sorry that a competent *maulvi* like you should spread such false rumours. I have never, even in my thoughts, been inimical to Urdu. In South Africa as well as here I have always tried and am still trying to blend Hindi and Urdu. That it may be regarded as a mistake on my part is a different matter. But I am no one's enemy. It was I who first raised the issue of Urdu in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

I am not writing this for the sake of argument but to remove the misunderstanding if possible.

Your letter has come but I have not yet been able to reach it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI ABDUL HAQ

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

415. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 16, 1946

When the charkha class is in progress, all else appears insignificant to me. For in every thread drawn I see Rama. I see swaraj in it. The thought of 20 crores of our people spinning fills me with boundless joy. How long it will be before that number of people take to spinning is another matter. But not to believe this possible will only show our ignorance and lack of faith. Is it impossible for the whole or even half of the population of the country to spin for half an hour everyday? If we cannot make even this small sacrifice for the country, what can we be worth? Is it so very much to ask?

From the yarn that will be spun we can have enough khadi to clothe ourselves. I appeal to all to spin.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 17-9-1946

416. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

J. C. KUMARAPPA
AIVIA, WARDHA

YOU MAY ARRANGE ANY DATE FROM THIRD TO SEVENTH.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

417. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

KRISHNADAS GANDHI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

YOU CAN ARRANGE ANY DATE BETWEEN SEVEN AND THIRTEEN CONSULTATION KASTURBA TRUST.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

418. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. CHIMANLAL,[1]

I am in the Harijan Colony today. It is 3 a. m. As I have woken up, I have started writing letters. I am writing to Sharda. She has fallen ill again. Never mind if Shakaribehn has gone away. There was no alternative. It seems now her time will be divided between Surat and Sevagram. Do only

[1] This is in Devanagari script.

CWMG - LXXV

that which can be done well. It will be good if you do not over-burden yourself. I hope Pushpa is doing well.

A good many persons seem to be ill there. They should all get well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10652

419. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

I am writing this at 3 a. m. I woke up early and so I am writing important letters. You never quite recover fully. I do not like it. Neither Sevagram nor Surat suits you. It is good that Shakaribehn has gone there. Keep her as long as you wish. I want that all three of you[1] should get well. I am here till the 24th at least.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 10069. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

420. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I am glad you have written a long full letter after many days.

I agree with your view as regards students. But who is to bell the cat? Lilavati Munshi has discussed at length the question whether they should give one year or more for public work. But who will persuade the students! You yourself are weak. Besides, you think too much and hence nothing tangible is achieved by you. Others do not think, nor do they influence students. Those who can influence students believe in the kind of work you write about and all of them honestly hold the opinions they express. Such is the prevailing confusion.

[1] Addressee's husband and their son

CWMG - LXXXV

And it is not confined to this country but prevails throughout the world as one can see from the papers. Now tell me, what we should do.

What you write about the happenings in Bombay and other places is correct. But the idea you have expressed appears to me to be rather immature. If there were two parties, one calm and the other agitated, I have no doubt that the former would stand to gain in the absence of the police and the military. This you can say, that no one barring me would carry on without the police or the military. Mine is a voice in the wilderness. Indeed I need and I yearn for clearer vision, greater penance and greater courage. But can it all come for the yearning? Isn't it a fact that "the fifth and the last factor is the Unseen"[1]? This is the truth. Let us therefore cling to devout faith and hope for human effort and Divine grace. The effort should be sincere. I can elaborate further. But where do I have the time? Sushila will write about what she was given to read. I don't let her have much time either. If I can organize things better or if they settle down themselves, I shall get some more time. There is much work to do. God's will be done.

Are you keeping well? How are Santok and Radha?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

421. LETTER TO GANGA A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. GANGI,

It is good you wrote a long letter. I am making inquiries. I shall write to you later. You are serving Anand and Mahadev so well. God will prosper everybody. I am writing this quite early in the morning. I shall not write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Bhagavad Gita* xviii, 14; the other four being the field, the doer, the various means and several different operations

CWMG - LXXV

422. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. I also got the notebook you have sent for the daily thoughts. This I am writing in the morning at 3 o'clock. Your toe must be all right now. However many troubles you may have, you must be happy.

What can I write about Mahadev? God will give him back his strength. I am writing to him. Also to Gangi.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

423. LETTER TO MAHADEV A. HINGORANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MAHADEV,

You should not have written when you were so weak. Write when you are fully recovered. Quietly, slowly get strong and then write.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

424. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. MALKANI,

I have received several letters about the Karachi Khadi Bhandar. Please write to me what the facts are.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 950

425. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

NEW DELHI,
September 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I have your letter. How did you fall ? Were you not careful ?

Ramanama is the cure for sleeplessness. I know of no better remedy. One should have faith in Ramanama. There are no doubt external remedies, such as that there should not be too much of fatigue, laziness, heat or cold. One should neither be too full nor hungry, that is to say everything should be even. The mind should be healthy. I wish your body to become as strong as steel. And may you have equanimity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 11667

CWMG - LXXXV

426. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

SATYANANDJI
DEHRIGHAT

PLEASE TELL KOSAMBIJI NOT TO BE OBSTINATE. HE SHOULD TAKE MILK AND FRUIT.[2] WIRE RESULT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

427. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 18, 1946

A U. S. Army general came to visit me a little before the prayer this evening. I was spinning at the time. As you all know the charkha to me is an inseparable companion. Whether I went to jail or journeyed to England, the charkha went with me. I laughingly told the American friend that since he would soon be going back to the U. S. A. he should tell his compatriots that Gandhi intended to defeat them with his puny spindles. The general laughed heartily at this but he understood the economic necessity of everyone producing to satisfy his own wants.

This is what I meant by defeating the U. S. A. Today India has to import cloth because, for our own fault, we do not have enough cloth in India. It will be a real victory for us when we can, without depending on mills, produce enough cloth to meet our requirements. This cannot be done through use of force. People should be able to look after their primary needs.

If it is folly to look to others for the foodgrains we need, it is equally folly to depend on others for our requirements

[1] Name assumed by Baldev Chaube, a village worker who had founded a Harijan Gurukul in Dehrighat, Distt. Azamgarh, U. P.

[2] *Vide* p. 325.

CWMG - LXXXV

of cloth. In doing this we go against the principles of natural living and that because we are too lazy. Laziness is a sin that makes us stray from our purpose. He alone is a wise man who makes full use of every minute of every day of his time. If we can but be self-reliant in food and clothing we shall be at peace with the whole world.

It is thus in the charkha that genuine freedom is to be found. The charkha is necessary for villages as well as towns. I have not the slightest doubt that if the inhabitants of Delhi take up spinning they can produce enough cloth for their needs.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 19-9-1946

428. QUESTION BOX[1]

What Use Ahimsa?

Q. In whichever direction in the world one looks today one sees only violence, onslaughts on people's rights and power politics. This is true even of America and England where it is said the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. Have you considered what your ahimsa can do in such a situation?

A. It is true there is power politics everywhere. But you are mistaken in thinking that in America and England the voice of the people is the sole arbiter. The voice of the people should be the voice of God. That is why we say that the *Pancha* are *Parameshwar*. But where people themselves feed on other people, how can one say that the voice of the people is the voice of God? We see how America and England live on the coloured races, exploit other peoples. It needs no proving. Exploiters are seen to co-operate with exploiters but that does not make their voice the voice of the people. Where the voice of the people is the voice of God the people do not want to live on others. They have truth on one scale of the balance and ahimsa on the other, both always having equal weight. This covers my whole reply. For me ahimsa is not disabled; it is not weak; it is supreme. Where there is ahimsa there is Truth, and Truth is God. How that God manifests Himself I do not know. All I know is that He is all-pervading and where He is all is well. There is therefore

[1] The sub-titles are from *Harijan*, 29-9-1946, in which a translation of this appeared.

one law for all. Wherever in the world truth and ahimsa reign there is perfect peace and perfect happiness. If they are not to be found anywhere we must understand that they are hidden from view. But they cannot totally disappear. Those who possess the barque of this faith will safely go across in it and carry others across.

Should Foreigners Be Welcome?

Q. You say that foreigners who decide to live in free India as Indians will have no cause for fear. You will admit that such has not been the case in any other country. Where emphasis is on self others are not disliked but even so some suspicion of them always remains. Can free India escape this?

A. I am firmly of the view that free India will escape this. I can cite striking evidence for it. But it is not necessary. Only this much must be remembered: foreigners have to live here as Indians. If a foreigner staying here wants to protect his rights as a foreigner it can become difficult. It will mean that he wants to stay in free India as a superior person. This must lead to friction. The present quarrel with the British Government cannot go on when India is free. If it does, India cannot be said to be free.

New Delhi, September 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

429. LETTER TO ABDUL HAQ

New Delhi,
September 19, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter. I could go through it only today. I have no knowledge of what you write about. If you kindly send me the minutes of the proceedings, I shall be able to understand and also to suggest what ought to be done.

Yours,
M. K. Gandhi

Maulvi Abdul Haq
Delhi

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

CWMG - LXXXV

430. CONGRESS MINISTERS, NOT SAHIB LOG[1]

A Congress worker asks:

> Should the Congress Ministers live in great State like their English predecessors? Will it be right for them to use Government cars for private work?

From my point of view there can be only one reply to both the questions. If the Congress wants to continue as a people's organization, the Ministers cannot live as *sahib log* nor use for private work facilities provided by Government for official duties.

NEW DELHI, September 20, 1946
Harijan, 29-9-1946

431. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

BHANGI COLONY,
NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR SIR M. ISMAIL,

Much as I should like to I may not write to you in Urdu.

I have now talked to Swami Ramanand Tirth and Shri Kashinath Vaidya. As I have already told you the contemplated reforms are no reforms.[2] The more I think of them the more I feel that they are not worthy of you. You may not seek to impose them on the inhabitants of Hyderabad. If you are sure that the States Peoples' Conference does not represent them, then of course I am out of court.

Maulana Sahib wants to help you. Sarojini Devi likewise. I count myself among them. But you know my limitations. I am a born satyagrahi and hope to die as such and that is my limitation as it is my strength. Strength has got to be proved. The limitation stares all my friends in the face.

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes". The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 29-9-1946.

[2] *Vide* also pp. 149-50.

CWMG - LXXV

If you cannot scrap the reforms and if you will not impose them you should postpone them and see whether they admit of amendments. Of course, their real guide is the States Peoples' Conference. But they have not yet learnt to forget me as I would like them to do. And since you and I know and like each other I must write this for what it is worth.

The Hindu, 31-12-1946

432. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

This is only about the *Bhajanavali*. This is going by air-mail instead of by wire. Devdas will not be able to print 25,000 copies in four days. So the question is about the Congress. He says it will be in the third week of November. If, therefore, you can print it before that, please reply immediately so that I can send the book to you or make some other arrangement—if, that is, you so desire. If you cannot print it by November, do write or wire to me and say also when you can print it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9972. Also C. W. 6946. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

433. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter about Urdu. We shall have to think a little more about it and since I shall be there in a few days I should like to meet you and discuss the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10976

CWMG - LXXXV

434. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. KRISHNADAS,

I have posted Jajuji's letter after reading. I think it should be enough if the exhibition is not run in the name of the A. I. S. A. I am of the opinion that if they ask for any help we may give it without going out of our way and without incurring any expenditure. I think since we intend to hand over everything to Gandhi Ashram they had better undertake this work as their own and carry it through as best as they can.

I regard the work of handing over everything to Gandhi Ashram as incomplete so long as I do not have a reply to my letter on the subject, a copy of which I have forwarded.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KRISHNADAS GANDHI
SEVAGRAM

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

435. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS ASAR

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. LAKSHMIDAS,

A portion of the Sabarmati Ashram has been rented out for a camp of the sisters of the Kasturba Trust. The tenancy expires on December 10. I think it would be helpful at this critical time if these people could somehow be accommodated for a longer period. You should therefore start some new activities. I feel it will be worthwhile retaining them even if you have to put up some huts. But consider the matter only on its merit and if after examining the pros and cons you find that they cannot be accommodated, please don't hesitate to write to me.

CWMG - LXXXV

We shall discuss your scheme about khadi when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. LAKSHMIDAS ASAR
ASHRAM, SABARMATI

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

436. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I could have your letter read out to me only today. Yesterday Mridula came and gave me a copy of your letter. The original also reached me yesterday. I arrived here on the 16th. The stock of mail is so large that I hardly ever manage to read any letter the day it arrives. In other words, with the co-workers I have I cannot hope ever to cope with my correspondence. And increasing the number of co-workers is something I would not like. Although I wish to live for 125 years I regard my life as ephemeral. I do not therefore like to increase my commitments.

I do not know if there is now any need for you to hurry because as you say you have permission to stay on in Sabarmati till the 10th of December. I think many changes can take place in the meanwhile. Hence it would be better if you stayed on till we meet. For my part I am making arrangements to secure the Sabarmati accommodation for a longer period. Hence you had better stay on till we hear about it. I am sending this by airmail instead of sending you a wire. I need not write more at the moment. I hope you are well.

Do not work beyond your capacity.

How is Nirmalabehn's health?

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SARALADEVI SARABHAI
AHMEDABAD

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

CWMG - LXXXV

437. LETTER TO ANJANA CHOWDHARY

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

DEAR ANJANA,

I have your letter. I must thank you for the account you have sent me. How long does it take you to spin four hanks (of 640 rounds each) every day? How much time does Subhadra spend on spinning?

What does Sita do?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha, p. 186

438. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I have your letter. Now I can reach there any time after the 25th. I shall explain then. Meanwhile, do whatever is possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

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

CWMG - LXXV

439. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
September 20, 1946

BHAI VICHITRA,

I think the substance of Jajuji's letter to you is that the exhibition which I have allowed to be put up in the name of the Gandhi Ashram and on their own responsibility should be a training camp and not a money-making business. It would be better to leave out woollens also. Whoever needs these can get them from the Gandhi Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT

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

440. FOOD SHORTAGE

There is nothing so depressing as when fear pervades the atmosphere. I remember an occasion when the waters of the Sabarmati were rising fairly high and a message said to be from Sardar Patel was received after midnight to the effect that inside of an hour the Ashram would be covered with the rising waters and that we were likely to be drowned in them if we did not vacate. It was a most anxious time for all of us—men, women and children. A sigh of relief went up to heaven when it was discovered that after causing some loss to property, the angry waters had begun to subside and that no loss of life need be feared.

Precisely in the same manner the danger of shortage reported from authoritative quarters bids fair to demoralize us into a panic which would be more fatal than real starvation. Such was my plight when a paragraph in the papers was read to me that of all the places in the world its intrepid Diwan had seriously contended that Travancore had a storage of foodgrains

CWMG - LXXXV

only for a fortnight. Knowing Travancore so well I imagined all sorts of calamities not merely for Travancore but for all India. Travancore with its luxuriant growth of edible tubers, coconut and fish had no need to starve for a single day, even though it might have no other supply from the other parts of India. My faith in Travancore kept me whole. And to my joy I discovered that the shortage was not of food but of wheat and rice only. Travancore can grow rice, not wheat. So far as the cereals are concerned the inhabitants of Travancore are rice-eaters. They take to wheat with difficulty and under stress. Would that the present distress could make us shed our provincialism and induce all India habits so as to make us feel fully at home, no matter which part of India we happened to find ourselves in. For the moment, however, my object would be fully served if all responsible men in India would definitely tell the people in their respective provinces, districts and States, not to look beyond India for supply of food but to grow what they can themselves and learn to eke out a living from their own produce. And, if the numerous authentic letters I receive are an indication of things as they are or should be, we need fear no starvation for want of life-giving vegetables plus a little milk for vegetarians and fish, flesh or fowl for non-vegetarians.

Let India realize that as yet we have no appreciable quantity of food from outside our shores. Many are willing to help but they are themselves for the most part sufferers or have more calls on them than they are able to cope with. The transport difficulty is very real for all of them and our own will commence when the food-stuff reaches our shores. Internal transport and distribution constitute a problem by themselves. It is, therefore, practical wisdom to brace ourselves for the struggle and declare with one voice our resolve that we shall grow our eatables for ourselves and perish bravely in the attempt if we must.

This is the only way and no other.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

CWMG-LXXXV

441. DO NOT ELIMINATE TRUTH AND NON-VIOLENCE[1]

A correspondent who sends his name and describes himself as devoted to service writes :

> I read *Harijanbandhu* regularly. Recently in your reply to Shri Shankarrao Deo you said : "I have been saying for some time that the words 'truth and non-violence' should be removed from the Congress constitution."
>
> If this happens in the existing circumstances, people will lose their faith in the Congress because they will feel that so long as it was not in power it was thought best to adhere to truth and non-violence but now that power has come it contemplates removing these words from the constitution. They might even infer that the removal is being resorted to in order to counter the Muslim League's threat of direct action.
>
> If these words are eliminated from the constitution Congress will fall from the high pedestal which these means alone have secured for it. It will lose in prestige. You have always said that you yourself cannot go forward one step without truth and non-violence and is it not their adherence to these that makes the public think of Congressmen as trustworthy, merciful, full of the spirit of service and bravery? The tree must perish if its roots are destroyed. You must see to it that the roots go deeper and deeper and are not eradicated.
>
> Therefore I feel that you should compel every Congressman to follow these principles and if he refuses, he must leave the Congress.

How can I, a champion of ahimsa, compel anyone to perform even a good act? A well-known Englishman has said that he would rather be free and make mistakes than be unfree and avoid them. I agree with him. The reason is obvious. The mind of a man who is good under compulsion cannot be good; in fact it gets worse. And when compulsion is removed all the defects well up to the surface with even greater force.

Besides, no individual should have the power to force others. Even the Congress cannot force its members to follow truth and non-violence. These have to be accepted willingly from the heart.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946. The *Harijan* translation reproduced here has been revised to bring it into conformity with the original.

I have been recommending the elimination of these words from the constitution for over a year, long before the Muslim League contemplated direct action. Thus my recommendation has no connection with the League's resolution. But I have no help for those who invariably attribute sinister motives to my words.

I have strong grounds for my recommendation. The Congress may not hide untruth and violence under the guise of truth and non-violence. Is not this an all-sufficing reason? If Congressmen would not be hypocrites, nothing could be better than that Congress should adhere to these two pillars.

It could never be my wish that the Congress, the moment it comes to power, should discard the very ladder by which it has climbed so high. I believe that if Congressmen, while in power, renounce truth and non-violence, the lustre surrounding the Congress will grow dim.

We must all guard against one mistake. There is no rule against following what is not in the constitution. Indeed my hope is that when these words are removed, all, or a large majority of Congressmen, will heartily follow truth and non-violence even to the point of death.

The writer has forgotten to mention one thing which I should like to clarify. The words in the constitution are 'peaceful and legitimate'. I have no right to interpret them as truthful and non-violent, if they don't bear that meaning. Congress has adopted them as a policy, not as a creed. The question of my right to retain or eliminate them does not arise. But whilst it lasts, policy is tantamount to creed and hence becomes obligatory. Of course, my recommendation has no meaning if 'peaceful' can be interpreted as violent and 'legitimate' as untruthful.

NEW DELHI, September 21, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

CWMG-LXXXV

442. LETTER TO INDRAVADAN MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1946

BHAI INDRAVADAN MEHTA,

I have your letter. You do admit that you are full of anger. Do you know anger is half way to insanity? How can one deal with insanity? However, if you are a regular reader of *Harijan* you will see that I have said much the same thing that you suggest.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

443. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 21, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. Last night I had a talk with Sushilabehn. She says that you should take up some Kasturba Trust work. However, you can work wherever you want after you have finished your training, whether in Samau or in the Frontier Province, as Akbar may desire. But the condition will also be that wherever you are you will work for the Trust for three years. I think under the circumstances I should like you to join. In this way you will be bound down to one place, which will be better.

I do not like your constipation persisting. Sushilabehn says that you are not careful enough about your diet and sleep. This is not right. You must make your body strong as steel. As for night work, it is difficult but if you accustom yourself to having complete rest there may not be any difficulty.

We shall now meet in a few days. Manu too might reach in time for the wedding.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

CWMG - LXXXV

444. NOT SENTIMENT BUT REASON

Prof. Brij Narain has devoted two columns of the Lahore *Tribune* in support of the salt tax. I dare not combat his arguments though they make little appeal to my lay mind. He has come to the gratuitous conclusion that I ask for repeal on grounds of sentiment rather than reason. He reminds me of armchair politics and philosophy. Salt tax hits not only men, women and children, but also fish and cattle. Reason demands its immediate repeal. It is not the amount of the tax that kills, it is the monopoly and all it means that kills the poor villager and his cattle. Imagine what would happen if the poor were prohibited from breathing air or drinking water without permission of the Government. The condition as to salt is not radically different. The scientist has not taken the trouble to study what this prohibition to prepare salt even for one's own consumption has cost India.

Prof. Brij Narain will not allow the Congress to be nationalistic enough even to warrant its abolishing a monopoly which presses heavily upon all the poor people without distinction, unless the Professor ignorantly imagines that the Muslims have no poor to think of.

NEW DELHI, September 22, 1946
Harijan, 29-9-1946

445. ABOUT KHADI BHANDARS[1]

Since I wrote on happenings in the Karachi Khadi Bhandar, I have received several letters about other bhandars also. The gist of these is given below:

1. Khadi in bhandars is available only to friends of those in charge or to those who have influence.
2. Even if the bhandar is replete with khadi the reply the ordinary customer often gets is that there is none.
3. Some bhandars have no facilities for having yarn woven into khadi, while others cannot supply charkhas and their accessories.

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-9-1946.

4. In the circumstances khadi workers in many bhandars earn wages for doing no work. Time and again one's yarn is not accepted on the plea that it is too coarse.

It would not be right to console oneself by saying that all these complaints are untrue. Such conduct as described is unwise, callous and disloyal. None of these defects should obtain in any bhandar, much less in khadi bhandars. How can khadi command respect, if its servants behave in the manner described? It is to be hoped that every khadi bhandar will become a model of service and thereby not only raise itself but also maintain the honour that khadi carries.

NEW DELHI, September, 22, 1946

Harijan, 29-9-1946

446. ENTRY IN DIARY[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

The inwardness of the spinning-wheel seems to have been forgotten. I was angry. I have to consider what my duty under the circumstances is. It seems to be so very hard to maintain detachment of mind in the midst of this raging fire. My heart-searching continues.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

447. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The treasurer of the A. I. C. C. asks me to say that he has received Rs. 2,400 on behalf of the President of the Congress from the Indian community in Manila, Philippine Islands, for the purpose of famine relief.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

448. KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR[1]

Numerous letters have been received with reference to the note in the *Harijan* of 25-8-'46 entitled "Disloyalty to Khadi".[2] I am making inquiries and hope to announce the result as soon as they are completed.

Harijan, 22-9-1946

449. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I have your letter. I liked this one. If it is true that so long you have only been receiving, then you have to pay twice the amount in debt. You should therefore go on paying it and be happy. Will you be able to come to Wardha about the time that I arrive there?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchaven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 329-30

450. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 22, 1946

CHI. A. S.,

I am wearing today all the things you have given. They are good.

If we are not worthy of sacrifice and still die it won't be called a sacrifice. You have still to make yourself deserving. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 529

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".
[2] *Vide* p. 181.

CWMG - LXXV

451. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Isn't it good I received your letter? Would it not be better if you, as also Anand were at Sevagram while you were in indifferent health? Maybe you will recover there; Anand also will recover and Gordhandas's worry will be lessened. You are of no help to him. Under the circumstances it is your duty to leave Surat. Both of you should think over this. Do not think of your bitter experiences in Sevagram. I will see only your foolishness in harbouring such thoughts. I have always considered you a generous person. We ourselves should commit no mistakes, but if others find fault with us we should not worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 10070. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

452. LETTER TO RAMANAND TIRTH

NEW DELHI,
September 22, 1946

SWAMIJI,

The following is my suggestion regarding the trouble that has arisen in Hyderabad State in the name of 'Reform'[1] :

If the desired changes cannot be brought about by the Reform, it should be completely boycotted. By boycott I do not mean that we should resort to picketing or take out processions or hold meetings. Our job would be to have peaceful volunteers go from house to house and explain to the voters that the Reform is only so in name, not in substance. We may distribute leaflets in the language of the masses. The strength of the people will grow if they abide by all the restrictions that might be enforced by law, and if the boycott is successful it

[1] *Vide* pp. 149-50 and 344-5.

CWMG - LXXXV

will be a big victory for the State Congress. There must not be the slightest exaggeration in the language of the leaflets and the facts should be absolutely correct. The reason why I offer this suggestion is that there is yet no awakening in the State's subjects in general. If my opinion is not warranted by the actual position and Pandit Jawaharlal advises otherwise his advice should be accepted.

Blessings from
BAPU

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH

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

453. LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. HEMANT KUMAR,

I got your letter about Nanalal Kavi. I had written something to his son about the matter. I got the news late; it is not that I omitted to write for want of courtesy. I shall now see what I can write.[1] Have you now recovered fully?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HEMANT KUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM, SABARMATI

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

[1] *Vide* the following item.

CWMG - LXXV

454. THE LATE POET NANALAL[1]

A friend reproaches me as follows :[2]

One or two others also wrote in a similar vein. I kept silent. I shall be silent no more. If I thought it proper not to write in *Harijanbandhu* it was not because of any personal grudge. I had none of that. The readers should know that I notice someone's death when there is something special about it. Thus I did not notice the deaths of many friends in *Harijanbandhu*. Poet Nanalal sometimes praised me and sometimes censured me as he felt disposed. He had the right to do both. I never felt hurt by his criticism. A man may speak as he feels. Why should one be hurt by it? It would not do simply for this reason to refrain from noticing his death. The fact is, I have very little understanding of poets and poetry. I remember reading only one of his books, *Jaya-Jayant*. I could not understand the poetry in it but I liked the subject-matter. I could not even read fully what he wrote about me.[3] The reason is that my life has been spent in working amidst storms. Such reading as I was able to do was done in jails. What should I do reading words in my praise : should I be flattered or should I weep? I hardly read anything for its literary worth. Should I relate anecdotes from my pleasant association with him? I kept silent because of this dilemma. It is recognized that Gujarat has suffered a loss in his death. What difference would my words make? Besides, I hold that good deeds are their own reward. Good and wicked deeds have their own laws, and only they are valid. Praise and blame are passing things and have no value. That is my belief.

NEW DELHI, 23-9-1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

[1] Nanalal Dalpatram Kavi (1877-1946), eminent Gujarati poet

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that Gandhiji should have noticed poet Nanalal's death in *Harijanbandhu*; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] Nanalal wrote "Gujaratno Tapasvi", eulogizing Gandhiji on his fiftieth birthday in 1919. He turned into a critic of Gandhiji after the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December 1921.

455. TELEGRAM TO SATYANAND

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

SATYANANDJI
DEHRIGHAT

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND THIS OBSTINACY ON KOSAMBI'S PART.[1] PLEASE PLEAD WITH HIM AGAIN DESIST. GET WELL AND COME TO ME.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

456. LETTER TO RENUKA RAY

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. RENUKA,

Your long letter written after so many years revived old and pleasant memories. You and your husband[2] seem to have risen to the occasion during the terrible crisis thro' which Calcutta passed on and after the fateful 16th.[3] Who knows what is in store for Bengal and the rest of the country in the near future? We have not gone through the worst yet. My views I have set forth as accurately as was possible in my article in *Harijan* of 15th inst.[4] Read it again and again and follow one of the two ways described therein, never the third.

Do write again when you feel like it.

Blessings from[5]
BAPU

RENUKA RAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* p. 341.
[2] Satyendra Nath Ray
[3] The reference is to the riots on August 16, which the Muslim League had observed as Direct Action Day.
[4] *Vide* pp. 186-7.
[5] This is in Hindi.

CWMG - LXXV

457. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. JAMNADAS,

Your explanation is correct. It is false to assert that there would have been no need for the police or the military if the Hindus had been helpless. The fact is that if the two communities fight each other, under whatever conditions, and both find themselves in a desperate situation, then in their own interest they are likely to behave. Such a situation will offer an opportunity to the person who wants to bring about amity. Today there is no such opportunity. Animosity and venom are growing. But the plain fact is that in the face of the intervention by the police and the military, no one can do anything. Just now both the parties need them. So the question of their not being called in does not arise. However, it is our duty to draw attention to the matter whenever there is opportunity.

I understand what you say about students. You should persevere. Let me have your suggestions with detailed information that I can use.

We shall leave for Wardha in a couple of days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAMNADAS GANDHI
BOMBAY

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

CWMG - LXXXV

458. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

I have your letter. How did you get malaria? Do you use a mosquito-net? It is good that your blood is improving. Don't be in a hurry. Come to Sevagram when you have completely recovered. I plan to leave here for Wardha the day after tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. CHANDRANI
C/O SARDAR KARMA SINGH
RTD. S.D.O.
KATRA JALLIANWALA
AMRITSAR, PUNJAB

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

459. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 23, 1946

The music of the charkha murmurs sweetly that we are all one, born to be equal sharers in the goods of the earth with no one higher or wealthier than the other. Yet the world is today full of inequalities of wealth and invidious distinctions of high and low. This is folly. In our arrogance we forget that we are all one day going to be levelled with the dust by death that knows no distinctions. The second lesson is that we are to earn our bread by the sweat of our brow — what a Russian savant has called "bread labour", and the third is that if we are one of and with the people, we should refuse to give food to those who are not in need or to take more than we need for health. If we all did that there would be no scarcity of

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, also reports the speech.

CWMG - LXXXV

food in this land and we would refuse to look across the seas for food-stuffs.

Yet his nearest comrades were about to make the mistake of serving refreshments, after the *Jhanda-vandan* by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, to volunteers and Harijans who were not in need of such.[1] Was it not criminal to fritter away food-stuff that would serve to keep alive twenty men, to provide titbits to Harijans and volunteers who were certainly not suffering pangs of hunger? They were deceiving themselves if they thought that thereby they served the Harijans. The real hunger of the Harijans which needed to be satisfied was not for morsels of food but for decent living as self-respecting equal citizens, for a square deal as human beings, for freedom from fear, inculcation of clean and sanitary habits, thrift, industry, education. That required perseverance, self-sacrifice and patient intelligent labour on our part. If they gave him money to feed Harijans he would refuse to accept it. For he did not want to make beggars and idlers of them. He pointedly referred to the fact that Dr. Rajendra Prasad was their Food Member who wanted to save for the famishing every morsel of food. In the circumstances he very much questioned whether the oversight of his comrades was not due to his being lax with himself. Was he not allowing himself to partake rather too freely of the fruits that were placed before him? The lesson of yesterday, he remarked, was a grave warning for all, if we are to learn truly the lesson of the charkha.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

460. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[2]

NEW DELHI,
[On or after *September 23, 1946*]

Q. Wrangling and corrupt practices have today become a common feature of our elections. What should be the attitude of Congressmen with regard to the elections?

A. What you say only shows that we seek leadership instead of being servants of the nation. There can be no room for wrangles when service is the ideal. Congressmen should realize that only a few can become leaders, the goal for all

[1] This was to be in celebration of Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's report under the title "Some Posers". The questions were asked by the Presidents and Secretaries of various Provincial Congress Committees who had assembled in Delhi for the A. I. C. C. session held on September 23 and 24.

Congressmen to set before themselves can only be to qualify as true servants of the nation. An institution that suffers from a plethora of leaders is surely in a bad way. For instance, if every Khudai Khidmatgar aspired to become the chief, it would make the life of Badshah Khan hell besides disrupting the Khudai Khidmatgar organization itself.

If Congressmen lived up to the creed which they professed, viz., the attainment of swaraj through truthful and non-violent means, paraphrased in the Congress constitution by the words "peaceful and legitimate", there should be no wrangling and no corruption. The existence of election wrangles and irregular practices is thus only a proof that the Congress policy of "attainment of swaraj through 'peaceful and legitimate' means" is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. I have, therefore, suggested that it should be dropped in the amended constitution that is to come into being. Pending the setting up of the new constitution I have suggested a plan of work which does away with further elections for the time being and which requires all Congressmen to be active servants. If it is adopted it should cut across all our difficulties and troubles.

Q. Very few minorities' representatives have been returned at the elections. What remedy do you suggest?

A. Minorities being a minority, their representation in the Congress organization will naturally be proportionately less. If they feel dissatisfied, they can keep out of the Congress without ceasing to be Congressmen as I have done. It is my claim that I am not less a Congressman but more by reason of my ceasing to be even a four-anna member of the Congress. At Faizpur Congress the question was raised by Mrs. Anasuyabai Kale at a gathering at which I was present. On interrogation it was found that the number of those who were four-anna members was very small. But in reply to the question as to how many in the gathering were not four-anna members, a forest of hands went up. These are real Congressmen seeking no reward but seeking ever to serve it. Bereft of them it would dwindle into a parlour show. The only worthy aim of a Congressman can be to belong wholly to the Congress, never to capture and dominate the Congress. If everybody took up the correct attitude there would be no minorities and majorities. To try to 'capture' the Congress would be to kill the Congress. And a Congressman who is worthy of his salt would die rather than be guilty of the murder.

Q. The policy of the Interim Government is to keep down the prices of foodgrains. Would it not adversely affect the production of foodgrains?

A. I want to reduce the prices of foodgrains still further. I claim to be a peasant myself and I know that only a fraction of the price paid by the consumer actually reaches the grower of food. It should be the business of the Interim Government to see that the tiller of the soil gets full value of his produce and that every pie paid by the consumer reaches the peasant's pocket or else it should get out. The Interim Government can never be guilty of wishing to provide cheap grains to the consumer at the expense of the grower of food. The trouble with the cultivator is not low prices but the middleman.

Even in khadi production I set the target of 8 as. a day for the spinners. We actually reached the rate of 4 as. in spite of the objection that dear khadi would spell the ruin of khadi production. That illustrates my attitude towards the producer. I would eliminate the middleman altogether. It is he who today sponges upon the agriculturist. Otherwise, there is no reason why the peasant should starve. At the same time a peasant who profiteers or exploits the black market belies his calling. He is no less an exploiter than the zamindar.

Q. The growth of parties in the Congress is having a very adverse effect on the Congress organization. What is the remedy?

A. There can be only one party in the Congress, i. e., that of Congressmen and no other. That is not to say that there is no room in the Congress for individuals or groups holding different opinions. I do not believe in dead uniformity. "All men are born equal and free" is not Nature's law in the literal sense. All men are not born equal in intellect, for instance, but the doctrine of equality will be vindicated if those who have superior intellect will use it not for self-advancement at the expense of others, but for the service of those who are less forward in that respect than they. Today there are all sorts in the Congress. That is why I have suggested the removal of the words "peaceful and legitimate" from the Congress objective. That need not mean abandonment of truth and non-violence by Congressmen. The object is only to purge out hypocrisy. It jars. Let those who believe in the doctrine of the sword openly avow it. To take the name of non-violence when there is sword in your heart is not only hypocritical and dishonest but cowardly. Our non-violence vis-a-vis the British Government has been the non-violence of the weak. Otherwise, why

should there be all these wrangles among ourselves? We try to justify the disorganization and chaos in our midst by pointing to the example of "squatters" in England, forgetting that blind imitation would not help us. There is nothing more demoralizing than fake non-violence of the weak and impotent. If we had the requisite non-violence in us, our public life would be characterized by utmost toleration. There will then be room for as many parties as there are opinions. Differences of opinion would be an indication of healthy independence of mind which is the law of life, not party intrigues and party strife. The latter are incompatible with independence.

Q. How should the Hindu-Muslim questions be tackled?

A. I must own defeat on that point. I know that mine is today a voice in the wilderness and yet I claim that mine is the only practicable solution. I can never subscribe to the view that because certain members of a particular community have indulged in inhuman acts, therefore the whole community may be condemned outright and put beyond the pale. The Muslim League may call Hindus names and declare India to be *Dar-ul-Harb*, where the law of *jehad* operates and all Muslims who co-operate with the Congress are Quislings fit only to be exterminated. But we must not cease to aspire, in spite of this wild talk, to befriend all Mussalmans and hold them fast as prisoners of our love. It would be a present possibility if Hindus in their lakhs offered themselves, to be cut to pieces without retaliation or anger in their hearts. Non-violence is today rightly laughed out of court as Utopian. Nevertheless, I maintain that it is the only way to keep Hinduism alive and India undivided. The history of the Congress non-violence for the last twenty-five years has taught us nothing if it has not taught us that.

Q. How can we counteract the activities of the Communists, who are openly opposing the Congress?

A. The principle which I have laid down vis-a-vis the Hindu-Muslim question also holds good in respect of the Communists. By "Muslim" I mean the Muslim League. For, not all the Muslims are Muslim Leaguers. The Muslim Leaguers have today raised the slogan that ten crores of Indian Muslims are in danger of being submerged and swept out of existence unless they constitute themselves into a separate State. I call that slogan scare-mongering pure and simple. It is nonsense to say that any people can permanently crush or swamp out of exist-

ence one fourth of its population, which the Mussalmans are in India. But I would have no hesitation in conceding the demand of Pakistan if I could be convinced of its righteousness or that it is good for Islam. But I am firmly convinced that the Pakistan demand as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for the unity and brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possibly warring groups are enemies alike of India and Islam. They may cut me to pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong.

The question of the Communists stands on a slightly different footing. They seem to have made trouble-making their profession. I have friends among them. Some of them are like sons to me. But it seems they do not make any distinction between fair and foul, truth and falsehood. They deny the charge. But their reported acts seem to sustain it. Moreover, they seem to take their instructions from Russia, whom they regard as their spiritual home rather than India. I cannot countenance this dependence on an outside power. I have even said that we should not depend even on Russian wheat in our present food crisis. We must have the ability and courage to subsist on what our soil can give us rather than depend on foreign charity. Otherwise, we shall not deserve to exist as an independent country. The same applies to foreign ideologies. I would accept them only to the extent that I can assimilate them and adapt them to the Indian scene. But I must refuse to go under them.

My formula for the Communists, therefore, is that I would prefer to die at their hands, but I will not retaliate.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

461. TALK WITH AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*][2]

Q. Are you full of the joy of life? Why do you want to live for 125 years?

Gandhiji told him that his desire to live up to 125 years was not for enjoyment but service. He explained that both were not the same and proceeded to explain to the puzzled interviewer the doctrine of "enjoyment through renunciation" as set forth in the *Ishopanishad.*

Q. When did your real enjoyment of life begin?

A. When I was born.

Q. No, I mean when did that pattern of life begin when service became a joy for ever?

A. When I understood the inner meaning of life.

Q. Is that India's speciality?

A. The only speciality of India is her poverty as America's is her glamour of riches.

Q. May not there be occasions when one may have to compromise ideals with expediency?

A. No, never. I do not believe that the end justifies the means.

Q. Is it possible that your activities may some day be removed from the political field?

A. Perhaps you do not know that I felt compelled to come into the political field because I found that I could not do even social work without touching politics. I feel that political work must be looked upon in terms of social and moral progress. In democracy no part of life is untouched by politics. Under the British you cannot escape politics in the good sense. It embraces the whole life. All who breathe must pay a tax. That is British rule in India. Take the salt tax for instance. It

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Pyarelal explains that the talk took place about the same time as the "Talk with an English Journalist", which was before September 24.

CWMG - LXXV

concerns everybody. The collector of revenue and the policeman are the only symbols by which millions in India's villages know British rule. One cannot sit still while the people are being ravaged.

Q. Then your job will never be finished?

A. It will be finished only with my death. I must be watchful, whether it is the foreign government that is in power or indigenous, if I am a social reformer in the true sense of the term. This is applicable to all.

Q. When people attain power they grow away from the people. What about here?

A. Let us hope and pray that this will never happen here. I have likened our people's office-acceptance to wearing a crown of thorns and pretty sharp thorns at that.

Q. What do you think of the students' strikes?

A. It seems to be a universal malady, an epidemic.

Q. Do you ever feel depressed?

A. I believe in an over-ruling Power as I believe I am talking to you just now. This may be unreal, but that *is* real. It dominates me and enables me to remain calm even in the midst of storm.

Gandhiji's questioner next asked his opinion about predestination.

A. It is a much-abused word. It is true that we are not quite as free as we imagine. Our past holds us. But like all other doctrines this may well be ridden to death.

Q. This provoked the question as to how one could overcome the unpleasant effects of one's predestination since predestination was a reality.

A. By taking the pleasant with the unpleasant in perfect detachment and thereby sterilizing the unpleasantness of its sting, even as you have tackled the problem of the prickly pear by removing its thorns through judicious selection and cultivation and converting it into edible fodder for cattle.

Q. How to prevent the next war?

A. By doing the right thing, irrespective of what the world will do. Each individual must act according to his ability without waiting for others if he wants to move them to act. There comes a time when an individual becomes irresist-

CWMG - LXXXV

ible and his action becomes all-pervasive in its effect. This comes when he reduces himself to zero.

If the third war comes, it will be the end of the world. The world cannot stand a third war. For me the second war has not stopped, it still goes on.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

462. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*]

I am filled with agitation; why could not I suffer this inner anguish with unruffled calmness of spirit? I am afraid I have not the detachment required for living up to 125 years. That also explains why charkha and khadi are making such slow progress. Success of khadi is impossible without infinite patience. A burning passion coupled with absolute detachment is the key to all success.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

463. TALK WITH AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST[2]

NEW DELHI,
[Before *September 24, 1946*]

India is on the march to Independence, it is coming whether there is an agreement between the Muslim League and the Congress or not. No one can stop it. It is her destiny. She has bled enough for it. Of course, if there is heart-co-operation between the two, the progress will be quicker and smoother. But it must be real heart unity—not a make-believe.

Gandhiji, who claims kinship with Pressmen and therefore their friendship, began by telling this friend what he considered to be the function of journalism.

There are occasions when a journalist serves his profession best by his silence.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 24-9-1946. The talk took place in the course of Gandhiji's morning walk.

CWMG - LXXV

Did not Gandhiji believe in the capacity of the average man to judge correctly provided he had enough knowledge of facts?

Not knowledge of facts. What passes for facts is only impressions or estimates of things and estimates vary. Hence one gets different versions of the same event. What is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts but right education. And the true function of journalism is to educate the public mind, not to stock the public mind with wanted and unwanted impressions. A journalist has, therefore, to use his discretion as to what to report and when. As it is, journalists are not content to stick to facts alone. Journalism has become the art of 'intelligent anticipation of events'.

As a public man and a social reformer, it is for me to judge when to say something and when to hold my tongue. What the world needs is not words but action. Actions and thoughts tell far more than speech. And this applies to all men both great and small.

Q. What do you think of Russia?

A. Russia is an enigma to me. It hurts me to think (if the reports are true) that a country which stood for the people has turned into an imperialist power. But I may not pass judgment on a great people and a great man like Stalin. I lack the data.

Q. Is the world progressing? Has the making of life and struggle for existence easier in the modern world resulted in the dulling of man's instincts and sensibilities?

A. If that is your comment, I will subscribe to it.

Q. And the atom bomb?

A. Oh, on that point you can proclaim to the whole world without hesitation that I am beyond repair. I regard the employment of the atom bomb for the wholesale destruction of men, women and children as the most diabolical use of science.

Q. What is the antidote? Has it antiquated non-violence?

A. No. It is the only thing the atom bomb cannot destroy. I did not move a muscle when I first heard that the atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima. On the contrary, I said to myself, 'Unless now the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind.'

CWMG LXXXV

Q. What would be your fatherly advice to a young man about to launch into the world?

A. To hold his tongue. Was it not Shakespeare who said, 'Lend everybody thine ear, thy voice to none?'

Q. You followed that policy fairly in your own case.

A. Yes, I used to think in my early days that I was a dunce and an idiot, that I should never be able to speak. Now I feel thankful for that disability.

Q. You have been a fighter all your life. What has fighting done for you?

A. It has braced me for the next struggle. Fighting has done me good. What it has done to others, I do not know.

Q. Considering that the difference between the Muslim League and the Congress has narrowed down to one or two basic issues would it not be better to make a little sacrifice to secure agreement?

A. You cannot sacrifice a principle to gain a doubtful advantage.

Q. After hearing both sides of the controversy, an outsider feels at sea. The only course, it seems, is to suspend judgment under the circumstances.

A. When two parties cannot agree and both are sincere in their convictions it is clear one of them must be wrong. Both cannot be right. The world must be the arbiter in that case. It dare not withhold judgment. It has often been found in the progress of non-violence that even people who want to be perfectly just come to wrong judgment.

Before taking leave the friend tendered Gandhiji congratulations in advance on his coming birthday.

I attach no importance to it. Every day one is reborn. I, at any rate, am.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

CWMG-LXXV

464. *ELEVEN-DAY CHARKHA CLASS*[1]

The class was held in the Bhangi Colony. Shri Kanu Gandhi has given me an account of it. I give below some noteworthy parts[2] of it.

In my opinion, this class has been of great value. The numbers of the learners, the class from which they came and the perseverance with which they worked are worthy of note. Thousands turned up to see the small exhibition. Leaders joined in the collective spinning, which is a good sign. It is good to see what perseverance can achieve.

NEW DELHI, September 24, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 29-9-1946

465. *LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA*

BHANGI COLONY,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Please do not think of a garden party for anyone, much less for the charkha class people. They do not come here now. Moreover, I am averse to encouraging entertainment being provided to anyone at this time of scarcity. Every morsel of food saved is so much food gained. Nevertheless, your good wishes I shall always treasure.

M. W. H. DE SILVA
CEYLON GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 29-9-1946.

[2] Not translated here. Kanu Gandhi had said that 156 adults and 3 children attended the class, which was held from September 11 to 21, and that to encourage people an exhibition was held on the 22nd demonstrating the various processes of spinning.

466. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

DELHI,
September 24, 1946

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have both your letters. I got the cheque with the second one. I hope to be in Wardha on the 2nd October. I am glad that you and Manu will be going there. It is good news that you have got well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

467. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 24, 1946[1]

Being awarded prizes should not fill the recipients with pride.[2] Many feel, and I am one of them, that people should not be given prizes for doing good work. Good work should be its own reward. I find it most annoying that when we do something worth while newspapers are filled with our praise.

Plying the charkha means doing body labour for the sake of India. By spinning we lend dignity to labour. The charkha teaches simplicity and strengthens our faith in God. The charkha is not a small thing. If we spin with full realization of the secret of the charkha, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians are seen as children of the same God. God comes to pervade the whole world. Let us partake of the goods of the world only as trustees. Then we shall see that India has become much stronger and risen much higher. India does not want to rise higher at the cost of others.

[1] *The Hindustan Times*, 25-9-1946, which also reported the speech, assigns to this the date September 23, probably wrongly.

[2] Earlier Gandhiji had distributed prizes to three women and two men for the best performance at the examination held for the charkha class.

CWMG - LXXV

If India rises all rise with it. This is the message of India and this is the message of the charkha too.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 25-9-1946

468. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

[On or before *September 25, 1946*][2]

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the I[ndian] N[ational] C[ongress], had with the consent of the W[orking] C[ommittee] assured Pandit J[awaharlal] N[ehru] that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own and that the Pundit should come back from Kashmir in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress. The Pundit willingly returned though not without misgivings. The W. C. regret to find that his misgivings were true. From all accounts received by the W. C. things are not going on as they should in that State. Repression of a subtle type is going on. Reforms though promising-looking on paper are reported to be so only in name. The W. C. cannot conceive the possibility of substantial reforms whilst unchecked repression is going on in Kashmir. The W. C. therefore earnestly recommend to the Kashmir State they should invite the Congress to send a deputation of reputable men of unquestioned ability and impartiality to find whether there is repression of liberty in Kashmir, whether there is tampering with the voters and whether reforms promised are substantial enough to secure contentment and prosperity of the people of the State. In this recommendation the W. C. invite the co-operation of all the enlightened States of India and the people residing in the States.

The W. C. have noted with regret the sentence on Sheikh Abdulla, the President of the Kashmir People's Congress, but they would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring.

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The National Conference under Sheikh Abdulla had launched in May, 1946, a "Quit Kashmir" movement. The Sheikh and his supporters were arrested. Jawaharlal Nehru, when he attempted to enter the State was arrested. He returned from there after Azad gave him the assurance that the Working Committee would take up the cause of Kashmir. For the Working Committee resolution as passed, *vide* Appendix IV.

[2] The Working Committee met on September 25, 1946.

469. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

You have been good enough to send me your good wishes on my so-called birthday.[1] Thereby hangs a tale. The Indian calendar date is observed only in Gujarat, Bombay, never outside. Everywhere else in India and outside it is the Roman calendar date. And the birthday began to be observed only when it became identified with the revival of the spinning-wheel in its modern form, making it the symbol of freedom of the masses through constructive means. Can you in any way identify yourself with the rebirth of the wheel ?

In any case I repeat my thanks for your good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 219

470. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Herewith is my proposal as promised. In it I have endeavoured to minimize all dislocation and loss to the Government save what abolition of the tax must involve. But while salt will no longer be a dutiable article, as a source of national instruction, refining a vital food adjunct of all dirt and increasing its output for man and beast will continue and make increasing progress from day to day. I hug the hope that loss of revenue as a burdensome tax will be more than made up by increase in the consumption of salt.

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar fell on September 22.

If you discover any flaw in this presentation, please tell me without the slightest hesitation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.

[ENCLOSURE]

Salt monopoly shall cease as from the first day of October 1946, and the duty on salt as from the first day of January 1947, subject to the exceptions and conditions hereinafter set forth.

The humanitarian clause on salt of the agreement popularly known as Irwin-Gandhi Pact shall be in full operation and all inspection of and interference with private manufacture of salt for evasion of duty shall forthwith cease.

Government control of salt works and factories hitherto maintained shall continue unabated till complete nationalization of salt industry is attained. These factories and works unlike private manufacture for sale shall carry duty up to 31st December.

In order to give full effect to the foregoing notification, any change in the Salt Act or rules or notices issued thereunder and required in law shall be made as soon as practicable but without interference with full effect being given to the foregoing notification.

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 162-3

471. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 25, 1946

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Your letter is full of ignorance and sentimentality.

What I am doing I am not doing in anger. The error you people committed became merely the means. I was awakened. I sensed luxury in my food. The changes I have made are natural to me. It is not at all an atonement. You should rather pray that it may become natural to me. If it does not, I shall revert to my old diet. I have not given up leafy vegetables. I take their juice. There is more of jaggery than fruit. If it becomes necessary to take wheat I shall take it. Your atonement does not lie in feeling distressed, but in being awake

and alert. Nor does it lie in fasting or imposing hardships on yourself. It lies rather in overcoming ignorance and sentimentality and giving yourself up to work with carefulness and detachment. Do not worry about me at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2497

472. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 25, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi spoke to the prayer audience on two matters on Wednesday evening. First, he related how Shri Prakasam, Prime Minister of Madras, had undertaken to carry out three big schemes in that province, viz., the production of khadi with a view to clothe the entire province with it in time, the encouragement of village industries and the introduction of Nayee Talim in the villages.

Mr. Prakasam and his Ministry were also determined to root out the evil of untouchability, which was a special blot on the fair name of Madras, as also to bring in the much-needed reform of Prohibition. All these schemes had for many years been part and parcel of the Congress programme. To bring them into active existence, Gandhiji said, needed not so much intelligence as faith and determination, the faith and determination that enable man to die for a cause.

Congress leaders had to be true to their word and pure of heart. They must not be tempted by crores. They must be willing to go smiling to the gallows, if need be, for the sake of their principles. Textile mills had been started everywhere even before the last war. The provinces were being asked to start new ones. The machinery for them would be costly, but the money that was supposed to follow in their wake was the lure. Gandhiji explained how he thought textile mills were like poison for village India and therefore to be avoided.

People might wonder, Gandhiji explained, how he lived as a guest of a mill-owner—but these mill-owners had, in spite of his views, taken him in as one of their family, and non-violence demanded tolerance and love for all even if they differed from one. Shri Prakasam had promised Gandhiji that he would not be tempted with new textile mills for Madras and he would even hope to eliminate the existing ones as soon as enough khadi became available. For as Gandhiji said, mills and khadi could not go hand

in hand. Khadi clothed everyone and put crores worth of cloth into the hands of the poor. The crores accruing from mills went into a few hands.

The second topic which Gandhiji referred to was food. Gandhiji said that Shri Rajendra Prasad had the heart of a king. He would share his last crust of bread with the poor. The moment he heard a cry of distress from the South he got rice from wherever he could and promised them supplies. Gandhiji asked Shri Prakasam how his province could ever starve. He knew well the people of South India. His first introduction to the latter was in South Africa through a poor indentured labourer Balasundaram whose case he had sponsored. The poor man had had his teeth knocked out. Later, when indentured Indians joined the Satyagraha movement he saw how clever and self-reliant they were. They only got a pound of bread and an ounce of sugar and during the resistance march he heard them singing and cooking a vegetable meal for themselves from soft edible leaves on the ground. Theirs was a land which produced the banana, the coconut, the yam, tamarind, greens and chillies. What more did they want?

They with their intelligence and resourcefulness could easily learn to do without rice if they were asked to do so. Gandhiji said he had asked Shri Prakasam not to worry. Shri Rajen Babu and he (Mr. Prakasam) had promised he would not. It remained to be seen what strength he was given by God to make Madras self-sufficient. It behoved everyone today, wherever they were, to be self-reliant and resourceful, brave and willing, with intelligence and determination to face the food crisis. If all joined forces it would be well with India.

The Hindustan Times, 26-9-1946

473. TELEGRAM TO S. V. VENKATESWARAN

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

VENKATESWARAN[1]
TEXCOM
MADRAS

GANDHIJI APPROVES YOUR SCHEME[2] SUBJECT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT NO NEW MILLS WILL BE CREATED AS EXPLAINED.

PYARELAL

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] S. V. Venkateswaran, Textile Commissioner, Madras

[2] The khadi scheme of the Madras Government which envisaged making villages as far as possible self-sufficient in cloth.

474. TELEGRAM TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

JAJUJI
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA
WIRED APPROVAL VENKATESWARAN.[1]

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

475. TELEGRAM TO BABA ANANDRAO DESHMUKH[2]

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

DESHMUKH
MINISTER
NAGPUR

SUCCESS PIECEMEAL PROHIBITION DOUBTFUL NEVERTHELESS WISH SUCCESS. HOPE YOU ARE ATTENDING EDUCATIONAL SIDE.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

476. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 26, 1946

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have only today been able to go through your papers concerning Ratlam. It seems you had no choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 7701. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Minister for Excise in the Central Provinces

CWMG - LXXXV

477. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI APPA,

I am ashamed to read about your illness. If we workers keep falling ill, the service that we render will also be sickly; and how can any illness come to a nature cure worker? Now, get well soon, and write to me in detail. For the sake of people like you Dr. Bhagawat's retirement from the profession would be interrupted, wouldn't it?

Blessings from
BAPU

APPASAHEB PATWARDHAN
P. O. LANJE
DT. RATNAGIRI

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

478. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

BHANGI NIVAS,
NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI SHRIRAMULU,

Bapuji got your letter. He says that for a Hindu to fast when Muslims are killed and thus to give up his life is quite wrong. One should not do this. About the temple of Nellore, Bapuji was under the impression that it had been thrown open to the Harijans. Do not be hasty. The Madras Government say that they are going to have the temple opened to Harijans.

Yours,
AMRIT KAUR

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 46

CWMG - LXXXV

479. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

BHAI MAITHILISHARAN,

I got your curious letter and also the four lengths of khadi from the two friends. May I thank you?

I have lost quite a lot for the sake of the charkha, but I do not feel the loss. I have gained more. It can be a true gain only when I feel perfect non-attachment. But that appears to be remote. When my own people err I lose my patience. That must not happen. That is the message of the charkha. Let us see when this comes about. If I wish to live up to 125 years I must achieve this state [of non-attachment] soon.

You must introduce weaving too in the household; it is not difficult. I should have laid stress on it from the very beginning; I did not. Well, morning is when we wake up. Kabir was a weaver, yet he left behind immortal poetry. If all of you turn weavers your poetry will have much greater power.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

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

480. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 26, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi asked the prayer audience on Thursday evening to ponder over the fact that all was not well with them. News of stabbing affrays came daily whether from Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Dacca or elsewhere. This showed that they were not making any real progress. The latter could only be if they made God witness to every action of theirs. Mirabai's hymn that they had listened to during the prayer told them that God was the only one who could rid them of their woes and heal their pain. The devotee called God "Thou"—the most familiar of epithets—because

all contact with Him was through love. It was up to man to own his own weakness. He was nothing without God's grace. If they leant on Him, then alone would one or the other party drop the sword.

A brave Bengali had put some questions to him, Gandhiji said, as to how they should act at such times as Calcutta had recently been through. His advice was that the highest duty would be for Hindu or Muslim to lay down his life without retaliation. Gandhiji said he was daily receiving letters from friends to say that some relative or other had died. He wrote to all that they should not mourn nor should they expect him to sorrow with them. Man is born to die. Death is the natural corollary to physical birth. It is the soul alone that is immortal. So, whether God sent them a natural death or whether they were killed by the assassin's knife, they must go smiling to their end.

Man cannot really kill anyone, said Gandhiji. That power rests in God's hands. If they realized this, there would not be knives and sticks seen all over the place, as they were today. Gandhiji, therefore, asked all to pray to God to rid this land of the present trial and give them the strength to live and die without killing.

The Hindustan Times, 27-9-1946

481. DISCUSSION WITH LORD WAVELL[1]

September 26, 1946

Lord Wavell left the Interim Government not a moment's respite. On the 26th September, he invited Gandhiji to meet him. In the course of their meeting he again returned to his pet theme:

VICEROY: The League must be brought in somehow.

GANDHIJI: The Congress is ready provided the League is willing to come in a straight way. Let Jinnah seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and come to an honourable understanding. It will be a great day if and when the Congress and the League come together in the Interim Government after a mutual understanding, without any mental reservations, and not to non-cooperate and fight.

V. The only stumbling-block is the inclusion of a nationalist Muslim in the Interim Government. The Congress has undoubted right to nominate a nationalist Muslim. But in view of the fact that Jinnah is obstinate on that point, where is the harm in waiving it?

G. One may waive a right, one cannot waive a duty.

[1] For Wavell's version of the discussion, *vide* Appendix V.

V. But if the League refuses to come in, what happens to the Constituent Assembly?

G. I admit that in that event the Constituent Assembly cannot properly meet. I must, however, make it clear that in this I represent nobody but myself.

V. Let us pursue this line of thinking a little further. If the Constituent Assembly is not called, what happens next?

G. The National Interim Government will carry on administration as it is doing at present. If you do not allow it to continue, you will expose your *bona fides* to suspicion.

V. How can we do that?

G. Then, do you want to retain power for yourself under this excuse? If you do that the whole world will condemn you. All you may insist on is that the Interim Government should include the Muslim League representatives. The Congress is prepared to do that.

V. For that I shall need a mandate from the British Cabinet. I can only act according to my instructions. I admit that my sympathies are with the League. My endeavour to bring in the League will continue.

Mahatma Gandhi : The Last Phase, Vol. I, p. 261

482. THE RIGHTS OF HARIJANS[1]

I have received letters from Harijan friends and some have been to see me too. They feel that now that power is in the hands of the people, there should be more than one Harijan minister. According to the population ratio the number should be at least three, and they should be similarly represented in every department. They hold that it would be erroneous to argue that there are not enough able persons among them. Besides, it is not as if only able persons were taken in every province. Numerous instances of nepotism could be cited.

I am not ready to admit the correctness of all they say. My ideas in this regard are different. Man must pursue his duty, his dharma. Rights spring only from duties well done. Such rights alone are becoming and lasting. There are vast numbers of non-Harijans possessing ability. If they all claimed their right society would be disrupted. Performance of duty

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946.

is open to every one. The field of service is immense. Only a few can become leaders and those who try to do so do fall behind. I know, however, that people do not act as I have suggested. There is generally a scramble for power and many have to be disappointed.

Holding the views I do, and having acted on them and made others act on them over the last fifty years, I have no interest left in fighting for personal rights. I shall therefore advise Harijan brethren that they should think only of their duties. They may be sure that rights will follow fast on the heels of duties done.

NEW DELHI, September 27, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 6-10-1946

483. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It occurs to me that I should reduce to writing my impressions of our talk of yesterday.[1]

You were good enough to explain to me at length the result so far of your effort at peace-making between the Congress and the Muslim League. In the course of our conversation you told me that your leanings were towards the League. In your opinion there was left only one point of difference between the two parties, viz., the question of representation of a non-League Muslim out of the Congress quota. You recognized fully the reasonableness of the Congress position but you held that it would be an act of high statesmanship if the Congress waived the right for the sake of peace. I urged that if it was a question of waiving a right it would be a simple thing. It was a question of non-performance of a duty which the Congress owed to non-League Muslims. I entirely agreed with you on the proposition that it would be a great day if and when the Congress and the Muslim League came to a mutual understanding without reservations, mental or otherwise, and that it would be worse than useless if the two came together only with a view to fight each other. Moreover, I stressed the point that Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah should

[1] *Vide* pp. 383-4 and 521-2.

seek an interview with Pandit Nehru and try to come to an honourable understanding. If, however, the worst happened and the Muslim League boycott of the Constituent Assembly persisted and the British Government decided to discontinue the Constituent Assembly, I would hold it to be perfectly honourable. For, even though the Cabinet Mission had led one to suppose that they would continue the Constituent Assembly, I did not expect that they would or could continue it in spite of the successful boycott by one of the major parties. You then interpolated the remark that there were three parties, not only two. The States were the third party. You added that if the boycott persisted you had grave doubts as to whether the States would come in.

Though I might be alone to hold the view, I said that I could not envisage the framing of a workable constitution if one of the two parties withheld co-operation and force had to be used to keep the boycotters under restraint.

You then asked me to work out the logical conclusion of the discontinuance of the Constituent Assembly and asked me what I thought of the Interim Government. I told you that I had little doubt that no matter what happened, the National Government, having been once summoned, should continue to function unless they themselves felt unable, owing to their own incompetence or inability, to do so. I added that the Congress had put up its very best men, not at all in the spirit of gaining power for a party but in the spirit of selfless service of the whole nation. They were so considerate towards you and the League that they had hesitated to fill in the two Muslim seats in the hope of the League coming into the Interim Government. You doubted if you could contemplate the continuance of the Interim Government and that in any case you were only a servant of the Crown and that you would have to take your order from His Majesty's Government. Whilst I appreciated your stand, I said the continuance of a *bona-fide* National Government at the Centre was a vital necessity and that any departure from it would lay the British people open to the gravest suspicion on the part of the people of India and would be a tragedy of the first magnitude.

At the conclusion of our cordial talk, encouraged by you to say anything further if I wished to, I mentioned the Kashmir case about which the Working Committee had passed a very just resolution which, in the event of Kashmir State's obstinacy or notions of false prestige, might lead to far-reaching consequences and I asked for your friendly, as distinguished from legal, assistance to smooth out rough edges.

I had a talk last night with Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel and as a result I have decided to stay on here for some days, maybe even a month.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 604-6; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 223-5

484. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, NEW, DELHI,
September 27, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

Whilst I thank you for your letter I shall await your promised counter-proposal if any.[1] Our agreed idea, I thought, was that the Finance Minister should not be troubled until you and I had either come to an agreement or had unfortunately agreed to differ. This was in order to save him unnecessary labour.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., I.C.S.
SECRETARY, FINANCE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

485. LETTER TO INDUMATI G. TENDULKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. INDU,

I have your letter. May you be happy in marriage and do great service. Come to Sevagram when you can. For the present I shall be here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 6258

[1] *Vide* pp. 376-7.

CWMG LXXXV

486. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. In my opinion milk and fruit-juice is the diet for you, and of course rest. Maybe even a single day's fast without water will prove efficacious. If the bowels don't move having an enema might be necessary. But since Dr. Bhagawat has arrived there is no need for me to say anything more. Ramanama is of course there. I hope you have received the postcard I wrote yesterday.[1] It would be easier to guide you if the cause of the pain could be detected.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN
P. O. LANJE

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

487. LETTER TO HUSSEINBHAI

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

BHAI HUSSEINBHAI,

I have your letter. I understand that you had to rush back owing to the demise of your aunt who was also your mother-in-law. Is there any need for condolence? Birth and death are companions. One follows the other. Then what is there to grieve over? Let us live as God ordains.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* p. 381.

CWMG - LXXXV

488. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. You have given me really painful news. I hope Tara is all right now. Arun's fever is likely to be as you say. I can understand your being upset by the news of the death[1]. But this is a common occurrence; it is inescapable. Whoever is born must also die. Vijayabehn has shown great courage and fortitude.

I am writing to Manilal and enclosing a copy of the letter with this.

I had a letter from Sita. Ask Ila to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

489. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
September 27, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi at his after-prayer speech on Friday evening, narrated a curious incident of a magistrate resorting to hunger-strike in order to persuade people in his area to obey his orders.

This story had come to Gandhiji from an Indian State. Briefly, some goondas had looted some shops and even beaten some persons. The inhabitants were frightened and the shopkeepers closed their shops. A special magistrate was sent to restore order. He could not prevail upon the shopkeepers to open their shops in spite of the assurances he gave them. As the people were put to great inconvenience the magistrate, instead of resorting to the law and forcibly having the shops opened, undertook a fast. The effect on the populace was almost immediate and calm was restored and the culprits caught.

Gandhiji said he had never heard of such action by a magistrate. As a rule, officials were hard and rigid. It was, however, possible for the Vice-

[1] Of Narayanbhai Patel, Vijaya M. Pancholi's father

roy or a Prince to act as this magistrate did. Officials differed only in rank. Perhaps people would say that it would be madness for them to do so. But Gandhiji did not think so. Many people today resorted to hunger-strike for all sorts of demands. Those were not proper fasts. This fast was undertaken to allay the sufferings of the poor people and melt the hearts of those who were putting them to trouble. It was, therefore, a big act if the story was true. It should be a matter of pride and joy that there was such a magistrate in India. He hoped there were many more.

Shri Suchetabehn having sung one of Gurudev's Bengali hymns at the prayer that day (Friday), Gandhiji referred to the desirability of having such gems translated into Hindustani. Mahadev Desai, who was a worshipper at the shrine of Gurudev's poetry, had done a translation of this particular 'bhajan' into Gujarati. There were few among them, but there ought to be many more, who should be familiar with Indian languages so that they could easily make translations of what was worth while. Gandhiji hoped to give them a Hindustani translation of the 'bhajan' the next day and to continue the practice when a non-Hindustani 'bhajan' was sung. He would not promise them printed translations. A servant of the people was a jealous trustee of the money he might raise.

The Hindustan Times, 28-9-1946

490. A DEED OF MERCY[1]

A Pathan, an ex-I. N. A. man, now employed by a firm, tried to defend a lad of 10 years. His entreaty was in vain. The assailants stabbed both the boy and the Pathan. The boy died. The Pathan lives. The deceased boy's father offered Rs. 4,000 as a reward for his bravery. He refused saying he tried to do his duty and would not take the reward offered. Would that such instances were multiplied!

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946
Harijan, 6-10-1946

[1] This appeared under the heading "Notes".

CWMG - LXXV

491. RIDING TWO HORSES[1]

There are a fair number of Tantis in Orissa. In law they are classed as Harijans and are known as Pan-Tantis. Many of them earn their living in Kolhan in Singbhum District. They do not call themselves Pan-Tantis but only Tantis. As a result they are not classed with Harijans in Bihar. Their leaders also, when entering office, do not identify themselves as Harijans. In my view what they do is right. Why should one desire to be classed as a Harijan? What is to be gained by it, unless it is the votes, Governmental assistance and scholarship from the Harijan Sevak Sangh for education? Why should one demean oneself for this? The very idea is debasing. Is one to debase oneself for bread?

Tantis do not have to be Pan-Tantis. Today we have popular governments. It is their duty to see that backward classes get the same deal as Harijans in the matter of education, etc.

It was the British Government that constituted the Harijans into a separate class. To the popular government all poor and illiterate people are one, or should be. It cannot distinguish between high and low, between this religion and that, for all are Indian.

The Tantis should not try to become Harijans. They should also not hanker after Government jobs. What will happen to the crores of other Indians will happen to them and others like them. I shall therefore advise the Tantis that they should themselves work to improve their condition. Others also should help them.

NEW DELHI, September 28, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 6-10-1946

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 6-10-1946.

492. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

ALL MEETINGS STAND BUT AT DELHI.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

493. LETTER TO LORD WAVELL

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of yesterday's date for which I thank you. As the conversation between us turned out to be important as I conceived it, I thought I would let you have my impressions so that you could correct me if I had erred. For I had to report the purport of our conversation to Pandit Nehru and other friends. Even during the Cabinet Mission's negotiations I had sent to Lord Pethick-Lawrence or Sir Stafford Cripps, as the case may be, my impressions of our talks and this was beneficial. As for your correction,[1] of course I accept it unhesitatingly. But my impression definitely was that at the very outset of your description of what had happened between you and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I understood you to say that although in some of his presentations he was unreasonable, your leanings were towards the Muslim League. But after your correction my impression loses all its value.

I would like to have your other corrections also if you have the time. Although we may never make public use of our conversations, I have found, throughout my 55 years' stormy public

[1] The Viceroy in his letter of September 27 had said : "I definitely did not say that my leanings were towards the Muslim League."

life, written records of inestimable value for promoting mutual understanding and further conversation. But, of course, I am in your hands in this matter and your wishes shall prevail for I want to fulfil your "hope" that I "should use" my "influence for a settlement". For this cause, which I have at heart, I would naturally ever want to understand you correctly and fully if only because, of all the persons in India, you enjoy a unique position.

I am,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

The Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, pp. 618-9; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 226-7

494. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have both your letters. I have already taken such action as they indicated. You will have seen it from the newspapers. Only I have not been able to find time to write to you.

I keep getting heaps of cables from there. Some of them are contradictory. The situation there would appear to have changed further. If, though alone, you remain unconcerned and do not swerve from your duty because many do not join you, I shall consider your contribution to have been ample. Jawaharlalji directly deals with the questions concerning South Africa. We often meet. The Indian delegation to the U. N. O. will include the best people available. My going is ruled out. Jawaharlal may go if he can be spared. Rajaji's name also deserves to be considered. You should not worry on this score either. Ultimately everything will depend on what you people there are able to do. Have no doubts about that.

For the next fifteen days or more I shall be in Delhi. The massacres here are very painful. The outcome is in God's hands. Sushila is intelligent and therefore must be giving you all the news. I could write pages, but do not have the time.

Medh has not met me yet. Nor has he met Sushila. Do not at all worry about Sushila and the children. Devdas is engrossed in his work. He meets me only occasionally.

I have replied to your question in *Harijan*.[1] You must have read it.

Cachalia had come to see me. He left a favourable impression on me. He seems to be an able man. I think he is good enough to be made even a trustee. But you alone can be the ultimate judge. Nagadi also came and spent a fairly long time with me.

I am well. There is no cause for worry. The heat here has gone down considerably.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 4991

495. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

You must have seen from the newspapers that my going to Sevagram has been put off for the present, and the marriage also has been postponed. I shall, however, be happy if you and Jaisukhlal come over. Jaisukhlal writes that he will meet you in Bombay and then both of you will come here. I am here. I am heavily occupied with work.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 297-8.

CWMG - LXXV

496. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

BAPA,

I have both your letters. I am dictating this in the midst of a great rush. I have been going through some literature about the Mahanadi. I have discussed the subject with many people, including Dr. Khosla.

Work among the Bihar Adivasis is complicated. At the moment I am held up in Delhi. I have already sent a circular wire calling for the meetings of all the Sanghs[1] in Delhi. You will be getting it too. So I take it you will shortly be coming here. We can then talk about the Adivasis. I would not so soon put you on the giant wheel of embarrassment, lest the old man that you are should reel!

I have gone through your letter about Tata. I have asked the Tata people a few questions in this regard.

SJT. AMRITLAL THAKKAR
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY
KALI GALI
CUTTACK

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

[1] Presumably the Khadi Gramodyog Sangh, Sarva Seva Sangh, Talimi Sangh, Akhil Bharatiya Charkha Sangh, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Adim Jati Seva Sangh, etc.

CWMG - LXXXV

497. LETTER TO SHEELA

NEW DELHI,
September 28, 1946

CHI. SHEELA,

Your letter. Everyone did well. Do you ever observe silence during daytime while you are awake? You should do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHEELABEHN
NAWABHARATI
MEERUT

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

498. CRIMINAL WASTE[1]

All the suggestions made by the writer can and should be adopted at once if a major disaster is to be averted.

Harijan, 29-9-1946

499. THOU TOO, BIHAR !

It is a grim irony of fate that Bihar, which did so well during the golden days of satyagraha should now disgrace itself by criminal lawlessness. If the news published is authentic, chain-pulling and stopping trains without cause has become a common occurrence in Bihar, with the result that the trains rarely run to time. Passengers consider it superfluous to buy tickets for train journeys. Under a national government, they argue, payment should be unnecessary. *Jai Hind* is regarded as a cry for loot and murder.

[1] The article under this title by Amrit Kaur described the inefficiency with which stocks of foodgrains were handled and suggested ways of saving food.

CWMG - LXXV

I do not know what truth there is in these charges which are as wild as they well can be. I know some parts of Bihar where persons do not distinguish between things lawful and unlawful. I have even heard the argument that I am largely responsible for the prevailing lawlessness, not only in Bihar but throughout India. I need hardly say that it is a thoughtless charge. The lawlessness, if it can be so described, that I have advocated is like prescribing wholesome and necessary food for the body. Behind my 'lawlessness' there is discipline, construction and well-being of society. It is an effective protest against unjust and injurious law or act. It can never take the form of selfish evasion of a duty. It is a duty never to pull the alarm chain except in well-defined and rare emergencies and never to travel without due payment for the class in which we travel. Loot, arson and murder have never been part of my programme of so-called lawlessness. The answer to the argument that whilst my programme may be good enough for a select few, it can never be for the masses, lies in the question whether I am expected to starve the masses of good food for fear of their taking bad or poisonous food.

I have purposely entered upon what appears to be a personal note, not at all in self-defence, but in order to drive the point home that what is said to be going on in Bihar is administration of rank poison. That way lies not self-rule but licentiousness, not independence but helpless dependence, not life but suicide. Is Bihar of Brijkishore Prasad and Rajendra Prasad that I have known and lived in come to the pass described above? Let the public workers of Bihar not permit the senseless destruction of the fair work of construction done with patient toil. Bihar, beware!

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946
Harijan, 6-10-1946

500. NOTES

Co-operatives in Kerala

Sjt. Kelappan came to see me two days ago and informed me that co-operative movement was going strong and had become very popular in Kerala. If the societies are sound, it was heartening news that Sjt. Kelappan gave me. I, however, expressed my serious doubts. The secret of successful co-operative effort is that the members must be honest and know the great merit of co-operation and it must have a definite progressive goal. Thus holding a certain sum of money in co-operation for the sake of making more money by charging exorbitant rates of interest is a bad goal. But co-operative farming or dairying is undoubtedly a good goal promoting a national interest. Such instances can be multiplied. I wonder what these numerous Kerala societies are. Have they honest inspectors who know their work? It may be mentioned that such movements have often proved disastrous when the management has been dishonest and the goal questionable.

Guruvayur

Who does not know this historic struggle? Sjt. Kelappan had threatened to fast for the opening of this temple to Harijans.[1] He suspended it on my strong advice and assurance that I would fight for it. Then followed a successfully carried out referendum which resulted in an overwhelming vote of caste Hindus in favour of the opening. But the Zamorin protested helplessness. Later, I went to Guruvayur and a great public meeting signified its decided opinion in favour. I had the pleasure too of meeting the Zamorin who courteously reiterated his helplessness. Other Kerala temples have been opened. Travancore has set a brilliant example by its great State proclamation. The Minakshi and Palni temples are open. Why should Guruvayur yet remain closed? Surely no satyagraha should now be necessary? It is up to the Provincial National Government to see that the opinion of the great bulk of the temple-going public is not defeated by legal technicalities. It is a thousand pities that even at this time of

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI.

day there are temples in India which shut out Hindus, miscalled Untouchables.

NEW DELHI, September 29, 1946
Harijan, 6-10-1946

501. LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It is very good of you to want to do something for the charkha class. So far as I am concerned, the delicacy of your gesture is equal to the best you can do. However, in order to please yourself, I suggest a small donation to the cause of the removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,

M. W. H. DE SILVA
(CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA)

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

502. LETTER TO PHEROZE

NEW DELHI,
September 29, 1946

BHAI PHEROZEBHAI,

I have your letter. Why in English? Have you forgotten your Gujarati? And why are you staying in bed? Why are you subsisting on your friend's sympathies? What did you do all these years?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

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

CWMG - LXXXV

503. *HAND-SPINNING* v. *MILL-SPINNING*

Some time before the Provincial Ministries throughout India were formed, I had heard that quotas of spindles were offered to the Provinces on pain — if a particular province did not take its quota — of the refused quota being transferred to the other provinces. Now that the Provincial administrations are in full swing, the question has arisen as to whether these Governments can admit new mills and, at the same time, promote hand-spinning on a national scale. My answer is emphatically in the negative, if the encouragement of hand-spinning is meant to be sincere. Behind the India-wide quota is the fundamental belief that mills alone can and must supply India's needs for cloth and that hand-spun may be permitted to exist for the fastidious few. That was not how hand-spinning was conceived in Congress resolutions and that certainly is not the way that the A. I. S. A. has progressed. If the national Governments have come to the conclusion that hand-spinning has and should have no future, they should not waste a single rupee along the lines followed by the A. I. S. A. If, on the other hand, they share the belief of the A. I. S. A., they should forgo their quota even if the forgoing should involve some initial loss. The loss will be demonstrably for the future gain of the masses.

Another question has arisen as to why the Working Committee should not, at any rate, declare a uniform policy to be followed by all the Congress Provinces. There is nothing to prevent the Committee from doing so. But it is open to them to say that the Congress policy has been enunciated times without number. Each Province has to measure its own belief in the Congress scales. The Working Committee might not go into details.

Then why may not the Central Government lay down a policy? The answer is obvious. The Central Government represents all India and all parties. It may not, therefore, lay down any exclusively Congress policy, much less a policy in a matter wholly within the jurisdiction of the Provinces. It would be an unwarranted interference with the rights of Provinces.

Looked at from all points of view, in the matter of khadi as of prohibition and other subjects allotted to the Provinces, the Provinces must evolve along their own lines. They will miserably fail if they look to the Working Committee to guide them.

The Central Government simply has not the right, even if it had the unholy wish.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946
Harijan 6-10-1946

504. SCAVENGERS' LOT

Q. You have doubtless written on this subject before but I would like you to say a word again in regard to the duty of municipal and other authority as well as private employers in the matter of providing Bhangis with the proper means of scavenging. Unless water-tight iron pails are provided, for example, the drippings during the rainy season, through baskets or gunny bags, fall on the unfortunate workers. All scavenging should really be able to be done without soiling the hands or any part of the body. If this were so, the work would assume a dignity which it does not carry at the moment. Along with the supply of proper means of scavenging, sweeping, etc., the Bhangi needs instruction. It is a matter which local and provincial authority should take up in the cause of cleanliness.

A. I would advocate bye-laws requiring authorized receptacles, brooms, etc., which would avoid physical handling of dirt and would also prescribe simple working costume. Inspectors or overseers will be trained for the humane and sanitary work instead of being expected to exact work anyhow. The result of the present system is maximum of insanitation and minimum of work plus bribery, corruption and bad manners.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946
Harijan, 6-10-1946

505. HOW?

A correspondent writes:

> You are aware of the backward States of the Simla Hills. The Raja Saheb of Rampur Bushahr is a man of orthodox views. Recently a young man of a high caste Hindu family married a Koli girl. The Lambardar of the village (Mandhol) brought the matter to the notice of the ruler. The Raja Saheb has sentenced both husband and wife to six months' imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 each. Such action is intolerable and retards progress. Some others who were contemplating inter-caste marriages have been deterred.
>
> Must we wait till autocracy is wiped out?

The rule of one man over many is intolerable. It must end. How is the question. The way is for the many to begin to live. To cut off the head of one ruler is easy enough. Remember the legend of Ravana. He had ten heads. As soon as one was cut off, another popped up in its place. The moral is that no cutting off of heads becomes necessary in the presence of a living Demos. The one will respond and submit. In the given instance the couple will cheerfully undergo the sentence. Only many should follow their example, if the tie is not lustful bondage but a bond of love born out of the zeal for reform. If the reformers do not wish to suffer imprisonment, they should migrate to a free place where they can live without let or hindrance.

NEW DELHI, September 30, 1946
Harijan, 6-10-1946

CWMG-LXXXV

506. TELEGRAM TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

MAVALANKARJI
AHMEDABAD

SO FAR I AM CONCERNED FOURTEENTH SUITABLE. WIRING SHYAMLAL.[1]

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

507. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

MAVALANKAR DESIRES FOURTEENTH KASTURBA EXECUTIVE. HAVE WIRED ACCEPTANCE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

508. TELEGRAM TO ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

ZAMINDARI AND MALGUZARI SABHA
NAGPUR

ADVISE SEEK APPOINTMENT AFTER RETURN WARDHA.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] The Sabha had held a meeting on 22nd at Nagpur to oppose the abolition of zamindari and its representatives had sought an interview with Gandhiji.

CWMG - LXXXV

509. LETTER TO NIRMALA

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, September 30, 1946

CHI. NIRMALABEHN,

I cannot bear your still being bed-ridden. You have faith, you have humility—how can such a one contract a disease? It is a puzzle for one like me. It makes short work of my learning. If I was to stay in one place I would ask you to come to me and do what I can towards your recovery. Will it ever be?

Well or unwell, "drink the joy of Ramanama".

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. NIRMALABEHN
(THE) RETREAT
SHAHI BAGH
AHMEDABAD

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

510. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
September 30, 1946

Wherever I may be I am always surrounded by an atmosphere of spinning and khadi. I informed you the day before yesterday that another charkha class would be held here from today for seven days. This time the teachers are better prepared and all the accessories for teaching are also available. It was intended not to admit more than 30 persons at a time to the classes. But 38 came this morning and 34 this afternoon. There were 21 men and 17 women in the morning and 14 men and 20 women in the afternoon.

This shows that there is enough faith and enthusiasm in a certain section of the public. Is it then the fault of those who

[1] It being a silence day, this message, which was in Hindi, was read out at the meeting.

CWMG - LXXV

are responsible for teaching or the present age that spinning has not become universal? To put the blame on the times in which we live shows lack of courage. Faith and diligence should rise above circumstances. If all work were to be carried out on this basis and in this spirit, God would surely reward our labours.

Gandhiji requested those who had charkhas in their homes and were not using them to make them over to him either for payment or as gifts. More wheels were needed for the classes. Those whose charkhas were not in working order should take them to the Khadi Bhandar, Chandni Chowk, where they would be set right.

The Hindustan Times, 1-10-1946

511. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[*September 1946*][1]

Again you are making a mistake. The reason for my saying no is different. There is considerable danger in this. Instead of peace there can be rioting. I do not have the time now to explain. Have faith in my words if you can and forget about the thing. Service lies in refraining. If you want to sleep at Devdas's, you may go there. Eat, play, spin and read the Koran. Do you tell beads?

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 687

512. LETTER TO HANNAH

As at Sevagram, Wardha,[2]
India,
October 1, 1946

MY DEAR HANNAH[3],

Manilal tells me you have not yet shed your sadness. I had hoped that you had left all your sadness in India as lumber to be thrown away. Those like you who believe in God should have no sorrow. When the life is wholly dedicated to Him, we live a consecrated life as trustees to do His will and to

[1] This was obviously written when the addressee was in Delhi with Gandhiji, i. e., in September, 1946.

[2] Permanent address

[3] Niece of Herman Kallenbach, Gandhiji's friend and co-worker in South Africa

work for Him. Therefore, you have to live free from care. If you would be worthy of Herman you cannot afford to worry. Choose some field of service. It will leave you not time for worry. All enjoyment has to be derived from service. If you could have kept well here, I would have asked you to come and share the life with me. But that cannot be.

Tell me all about your activities and your health.

This goes care of Manilal as I do not know your address.

All whom you came in touch with whilst you were in India often think of you with affection.

Love.

BAPU

HANNAHBEHN
C/O MANILAL GANDHI
S. AFRICA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

513. LETTER TO SAROJ NANAVATI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SAROJ,

Just now, after the morning prayer, Kakasaheb tells me that today is your birthday. He says that the few lines you sent for me were left behind there.

May your devotion to service go on increasing and Raihana's with yours, or yours with Raihana's. You may be separate in body, but are not you one in spirit?

Blessings to both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10465

CWMG - LXXV

514. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

BHAI JAMSHEDJI,

Tulsiram is an admirer of yours. That is why I was drawn towards him. He pleaded with me to write something to you. I told him that I knew you better than he did. You are dedicated to service. May your work of service grow.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAMSHED MEHTA
KARACHI

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

515. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. SARALABEHN,

I am at present held up here. The meetings[1] will be held here. So, even though the meeting of the Agents may not take place it will be good if you come over about that time. We can then have talks. If you want to come even earlier you may do so whenever you please.

Preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Of the various Sanghs

516. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

You sent no letter with Deo. I am wearing only your dhoti. Now it will be one day yours and one day Avantikabai's.

I have been detained here. I may leave by the 20th. You should get well and be of steady mind. The sheep that is to be sacrificed should be free from blemish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 530

517. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

NEW DELHI,
October 1, 1946

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. I am glad that you have taken up weaving. If you learn all the the processes relating to cotton everything will be all right.

My stay here is getting prolonged.

Blessings from
BAPU

HOSHIARIBEHN
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

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

CWMG - LXXV

518. LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD

October 1, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Please sell khadi worth Rs. 50 to Tulsiram. You may assume that he has tendered the necessary yarn. However, please charge him the price of the yarn.

M. K. GANDHI

GANDHI ASHRAM
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

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

519. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

[*October 1, 1946*]

In the song that has just been sung, the poet says that he who loses the self finds God. If we understand its significance, we really need nothing more. This is what the spinning-wheel teaches us. You might ask how it is possible to find God through the spinning-wheel. As I have told you before, the spinning-wheel enables us to identify ourselves with the millions. The millionaires imagine that money can bring them anything in the world. But it is not so. At any moment death might come and snuff them out. Some are being stabbed daily but losing one's life that way is not the same thing as shedding the self. One has to learn to efface the self or the ego voluntarily and as a sacrifice in order to find God. The spinning-wheel rules out exclusiveness. It stands for all, including the poorest. It, therefore, requires us to be humble and to cast away pride completely.

It holds the key to swaraj. But can one spin for swaraj and yet not be filled with subtle pride? If pride is there, spinning won't bring one the swaraj of the spirit or the realization of God.

When the self is shed the change will be reflected in our outward behaviour. It will show in the least of our little acts.

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 7-10-1946

CWMG - LXXXV

The whole outlook on life will be changed. Everything we do will be undertaken not for the self but for all.

The hymn goes on to say that to find God one need not go out anywhere. He resides in our hearts. But if we instal the self or the ego there we dethrone poor God. I have here used the epithet 'poor' advisedly. For, although He is the King of kings, Most High, Almighty, yet He is at the beck and call of anyone who has reduced himself to zero and turns to Him in uttermost humility of spirit. Let us then become poor in spirit and find Him within ourselves.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

520. TELEGRAM TO SHYAMLAL

Express

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

SHYAMLALJI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

SUSHILA[1] SAYS DIFFICULT CONVENE MEDICAL MEETINGS NOW. THEREFORE ADVISE POSTPONEMENT AGENTS MEETINGS ALSO.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

521. LETTER TO M. W. H. DE SILVA

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I shall treasure your cheque for the cause of untouchability. May your work in India result in bringing the two countries together as never before.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. W. H. DE SILVA
CEYLON REPRESENTATIVE IN INDIA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

CWMG - LXXV

522. LETTER TO DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your kind letter of 18th Sept[ember] only three or four days ago. You know why it came into my hands so late.

You are more Sudhir's director than I. He was wanted by the Cabinet Mission and he went at their instance. My part consisted in not dissuading him from going. In any case I have never thought that his youth went against a man. But let Sudhir's work tell its own tale. He is due on Saturday next.

You have given me interesting information about your activities. I am jealous of your youth.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. FOSS WESTCOTT

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

523. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have received the other clothes sent by you. Much work had been done. I see ignorance in your letter. Ability comes from doing work. There you eat without earning your bread. All this shows that you write for the sake of writing. Do go to Borkamata and do whatever work you can. Only God knows where our good lies. How can man know God's will? Therefore one should go where one's heart may lead. After all God resides only in the heart.

Sankaran will come with Jajuji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 531

524. LETTER TO POTTI SRIRAMULU

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

CHI. RAMULU,

Now all your letters to me are in English. It is not good. Do not go about with a placard hung round your neck. The thoughts confined to the placard are valueless.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 107

525. LETTER TO PANDURANG PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

BHAI PANDURANG,

I have your letter. I do hope that Appasaheb will recover. You did well in writing to me. I shall be more careful. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PANDURANG PURUSHOTTAM PATWARDHAN
SAHITYA MANDIR
RATNAGIRI

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

CWMG - LXXV

526. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 2, 1946

It is as though God had sent us a special message in the form of this song.[1] In truth the springs of India's life are drying up. It would be folly to suppose that because there is a Congress Government at the Centre all is well. I shall not dwell on the stabbings that are going on, shocking as they are. To illustrate to you how the springs of our life are drying up, I shall say something on what is going on in Goa.

Goa is a small island. It is an integral part of India. News has come that Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia has been arrested immediately on his arrival there and placed in solitary confinement. A few days ago Shri Kakodkar was arrested for having raised his voice for civil liberty and sentenced to imprisonment for nine years. It is being said that he may be deported.

Dr. Lohia is a learned man. I may not agree with his views but this does not mean that I can remain untouched by his case. You must all be as much pained as I am by the arrest of Dr. Lohia and the happenings in Goa. I carried on some correspondence with the authorities in Goa, but it was infructuous. To tell any Indian that he cannot enter Goa is as insulting as to tell me that I may not enter any particular part of India. Goa is as much a part of India as Kashmir or any other State. It is intolerable that Dr. Lohia should be treated as foreigner and denied the right of entry into Goa.

Let us see what steps Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who has donned the crown of thorns, and Lord Wavell take to see that this high-handedness on the part of the Goa authorities is stopped.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 3-10-1946

[1] A song written by Rabindranath Tagore and sung at the congregation. Translated, its first line read: "When the springs of life are drying up, do then come as a shower of mercy."

527. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

In the context of the forthcoming Congress Presidential election, some friends tell me, it is being said that I am in favour of Acharya Kripalani being elected. I have also been shown a newspaper report to this effect. Although I do have my own personal views in the matter I have told friends who came to consult me not to cite my name in any way in connection with the election. It is my firm view that Congressmen should exercise their vote in this election without being influenced by any other Congressman or by those who are not members of the Congress, such as myself. Congressmen should consider what is best in the interest of the country and vote accordingly.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 4-10-1946

528. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 3, 1946

Gandhiji expressed satisfaction that the second charkha class was going on better than the first. There were fewer absentees. They had only three more days left, but if the will was there much work could be done in three days.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter he had received asking him how they should celebrate *Dussehra*. Should they take out a procession and eat and drink and be merry? Yesterday he had told them that the fountain of life had gone dry. Could there be rejoicing in a country where daily stabbings were taking place and brother hated brother? *Dussehra* was the celebration of Rama's victory over Ravana, but this victory was not achieved by violence.

When Vibhishana asked Shri Ramachandra how unarmed, unshod, without any armour, he was going to defeat the heavily-armed and mighty Ravana with his chariots, Rama's reply was that it was faith and purity that would win the battle. His bow was his self-control. His victory was

the victory of good over evil. Gandhiji, therefore, advised the people to spend *Dussehra* quietly at home in prayer if they had understood the real meaning of religion and *Dussehra*.

Gandhiji added that he was daily receiving letters of abuse saying that his doctrine of non-violence was emasculating Hindus, that he was no Mahatma, that he was injuring them and leading them astray. He had never laid claim to being a Mahatma. He was an ordinary mortal as anyone of them. He hoped he had never injured anyone. What he told them he told them for their own and universal good. He had said that if they could not act non-violently they should defend themselves violently rather than be cowards.

But the ability to die smiling at the hands of a brother without any retaliation, physical or mental, was the highest bravery. In no case was it right to spoil for a fight. That was no self-defence. It was bad for them, bad for the country and utter disloyalty to their leaders. It was hindering them in their march towards swaraj.

Gandhiji reiterated that today no one had a right to feast and eat one morsel more than necessary. If they behaved in a disciplined manner, India would live. If they did not, then India would die and they would be unable to hold their heads high.

The Hindustan Times, 4-10-1946

529. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

SATISBABU
KHADIPRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

DONT WORRY ABOUT ACCOMMODATION. WIRE TRAIN DATE ARRIVAL.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

530. AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CONGRESS, THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND THE NAWAB OF BHOPAL[1]

October 4, 1946

The Congress does not challenge and accepts that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have today an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restriction or limitation should be put upon the Congress to choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress as their representatives.

II. It is understood that all the Ministers of the Interim Government will work as a team for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case.

I accept this formula.

M. K. GANDHI
HAMIDULLAH [NAWAB OF BHOPAL]
SHOAIB QURESHI

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. III, p. 282

[1] This was intended to enable the Muslim League to join the Interim Government, which was to consist of 14 members—6 from the Congress, 5 from the League and 3 representatives of minorities to be nominated by the Viceroy. Jinnah put forth the condition that there should be no Muslim among the nominees of the Congress. Gandhiji therefore accepted the formula laid down in the agreement. As it was, it found no approval from other Congress leaders, notably Nehru, who found the formula "not happily worded". In a letter to Jinnah he was prepared to concede to the Muslim League "the right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognized the Congress as the authoritative organization representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress." He further suggested that no formula was necessary. In the event the Congress list contained the name of Asaf Ali and the League nominated Jogendranath Mandal.

CWMG - LXXV

531. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SUMI,

I am glad you are comfortable there. You will do as much as you can, with due regard for your health, and go forward. That is what I hope.

I had certainly hoped to be in Sevagram this time[1] but I am held up here till the 20th on account of the work. Let us see when I can get away.

Let me have news from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUM. SUMITRA R. GANDHI
KHALASI LINE
NAGPUR

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

532. LETTER TO ZOHRA A. CHAVDA

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. You have my letter with you. You can make use of it in my absence so that the apparent contradiction will disappear. You should therefore quietly go on doing your work and improve your health.

Manu is at present here. Jaisukhlal too was here; he left last night. Manu will stay on for some more time.

Write to me what you decide.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Presumably for Charkha Jayanti

CWMG - LXXXV

533. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

DELHI,
October 4, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I agree that you should resign. But I see a number of difficulties in pursuing nature cure work in Khurja at present. I have not taken any decision yet. When you come here I shall understand your mind better. Then we shall decide. So come on Monday the 7th at 8 p. m. If in the meanwhile some other work crops up you will have to wait.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 370

534. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

It is impossible for me to send individual acknowledgments to the senders in India and abroad of numerous messages of birthday greetings. I must content myself with sending them my thanks through the courtesy of the Press.

The Hindustan Times, 5-10-1946

CWMG - LXXV

535. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 4, 1946

In the song that has been sung Mirabai says that she has bought Govind. There is a similar song by her in Gujarati, too. How can one buy God? Not with money, but with love certainly. The yarn lovingly drawn by a student of the spinning class can find God. Our Rashtrapati yesterday said that Afghanistan was in need of cloth. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as President of the Congress, is not only our Rashtrapati, but he is also our Prime Minister. We cannot shut our eyes to the needs of others. Today we have to confess we have gone berserk and are fighting each other. But in 1920 we had resolved to fight the British with truth and non-violence. We achieved our freedom through non-violence and the whole world is congratulating us. How then can we be enemies of anyone? Badshah Khan is a Pathan. His Pathan brethren from across the border have asked us for cloth. It is India's duty to give them this help. This river of love can and should flow from India. Time was when India produced all the cloth it needed and more, when its muslin was famous the world over. Today, owing to our laziness, we go naked in our own country. By plying the charkha we can not only meet all our requirement of cloth but also that of other countries. It is to be regretted that there are not enough charkhas for this second charkha class. Carpenters have forgotten the art of making charkhas, though they make any number of chairs and tables. But we shall teach spinning on *taklis*.

I appeal to everyone to spin and bring the yarn to me. I shall have it woven to provide cloth to those who need it.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 5-10-1946

536. ROWDYISM RUN RIOT

A correspondent from Jubbulpore describes the rowdyism exhibited by a section of the Hindus at a benefit performance in aid of the local convent school for girls. A Hindu friend actually organized the show. The actors in the little drama were all girls from the convent. Towards the end there was a scene in which an orphaned girl, tired of the world, was praying to God. Angels appeared and advised her to have faith in her Christ and the play ended with a hymn in praise of Jesus. This was the signal for pandemonium. The Hindus who created the disturbances raised a hue and cry against Christianity, the organizer who tried to speak was unable to make himself heard and money for the tickets was demanded back. The writer asks whether this scene could have taken place if the hymn sung had been in praise of Shri Krishna instead of Jesus.

If what the correspondent says is true, the behaviour described was wholly unworthy. It betrayed extreme intolerance. Those who do not like things that do not coincide with their notions need not patronize them but it is ungentlemanly to behave like less than men when things are not to their taste.

NEW DELHI, October 5, 1946

Harijan, 13-10-1946

537. QUESTION BOX[1]

IS NOT WORK WORSHIP?

Q. Would it not be better for a man to give the time he spends in worship to the service of the poor? If a man did this, would worship be still necessary for him?

A. I sense mental laziness and unbelief in the question. The biggest of *karmayogis* never give up devotional singing and worship. Of course as a general principle it can be said that selfless service itself is worship and those who engage in it do not need any other kind of worship. But in truth *bhajans*, etc., are a help in the work of service and keep the awareness of God ever fresh.

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

How to Remove Untouchability

Q. It is no doubt good to provide education to Harijans, to let them use public wells and visit temples, but really Harijans should not be segregated in *cherries* and the like. Then alone can untouchability be uprooted.

A. It feels good to say that Harijans not having separate quarters will be a sign of the vanishing of untouchability. Even at present, so far as I know, there is no law compelling Harijans to live in locations especially built for them. Only the evil custom segregates them. The custom is going, though rather slowly. It is the duty of all to do away with it. It is a question of moving the hearts of people. Such an enterprise can succeed only with *tapascharya*. Tulsidas says :

Through the power of *tapa* Brahma created the world.
Through the power of *tapa* Vishnu sustains the world.
Tapa, O Parvati, is the basis of all creation.
Go and do *tapa*, knowing this in heart.
The day someone is born who has this power everything will become easy and dharma will be saved.

Is Ramanama the Same as Incantations?

Q. My nephew was ill. The relatives did not give him any medical treatment. They called in medicine-men and resorted to incantations. One cannot say that these did any good. Maybe your mother did the same in your case. Now you talk of Ramanama. Could Ramanama be the same as incantations ?

A. I have, in one form or another, answered this question before. But it is as well to do so again. So far as I can recollect, my mother did give me medical treatment. But she certainly believed in incantations too. I do not. I have a few learned friends who believe in them, but I cannot have this faith. I can therefore categorically say that incantations have no connection whatever with my Ramanama. I have said that to utter Ramanama or any other name of God from the heart is to seek succour from the supreme power. What that Power can do no other power can. The atom bomb is as nothing compared with it. It is the cure for all pains. It must, however, be admitted that it is one thing to talk about uttering Ramanama from the heart, quite another to do it. Nevertheless, however difficult it may be, it is the highest thing in life.

New Delhi, October 5, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

CWMG LXXXV

538. A GOOD WAY[1]

The following is the gist of a correspondent's letter from Dalhousie:[2]

If this story is true, it just shows what a mighty weapon fasting can be in the armoury of the official class.

Harijan, 6-10-1946

539. WELLS THROWN OPEN

Shri Kalyanji Mehta writes[3]:

It is a good thing that the wells were thrown open. But more than that it is a matter of shame that Harijans are still not able to draw water from numerous wells. The burden of shame will be lightened if after having come to know about it, others are inspired to throw open the rest of the wells.

Some went in for inter-dining. While congratulating them one can't help commenting—only so few!

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

[1] The Hindi original of this appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 6-10-1946.

[2] Not reproduced here. It described how in a certain village shops were closed in protest against terrorism by some goondas and how a magistrate had them opened by resorting to a fast. *Vide* pp. 389-90.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in Surat District many wells had been thrown open to the Harijans and a few leading persons had participated in a dinner to which Harijans had been invited.

CWMG - LXXXV

540. THE DANGER OF 'VANASPATI'[1]

In the *Harijan* of 14-4-1946 you have supported Sardar Datar Singh on the question of 'vanaspati'. His article contains several suggestions which, if acted upon, can check the evil. But the evil is spreading. In the Punjab, in Akola, Shegaon and Kurnool, permission has actually been given for starting new factories. At least this should be stopped. In a province like the Punjab the Government has not even ordered the colouring of 'vanaspati'.

The above is the substance of a letter I have received. I have put 'Vanaspati' in quotes. Its full name is 'vanaspati ghee'. Vanaspati, which means flowers, fruits, leaves and so on, is always good. But when it becomes the name of something else, it becomes a poison. Vanaspati is not and never can be ghee. If ever it were to become ghee, I would be the first to loudly proclaim that there is no further need for real ghee. Ghee or butter is the fat drawn from the milk of an animal. Selling vegetable oil in the form, or in the name, of butter or ghee is a great fraud perpetrated on India. It is a betrayal of India. It is the duty of the businessmen of India not to sell any oil or any other product in the name of ghee. Certainly no Government should countenance such sale. The crores of India today get neither milk nor buttermilk, neither ghee nor butter. The result is that people go on dying and becoming more and and more enfeebled. Human body, it would appear, needs meat and milk or milk products, such as curds, buttermilk, ghee and butter. Anyone who deceives people in this regard or countenances deception of them is an enemy of India.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

541. DOLA-PALKI[1]

The Hindus of the Garhwal District are so ignorant that they do not permit Harijan bridegrooms to ride in a *palki* or any conveyance and pass by temples or through public squares or the residential quarters of high caste Hindus. An evil custom like this should not be tolerated any more. A friend has even sent me a draft of a law, the passing of which might make these ignorant people see reason. This should be certainly done. In any case, whenever a Harijan bridal procession is taken out, these unfortunate people should be afforded police protection. The authorities should also distribute notices that no one is to be prevented from riding in a *palki* or using any other conveyance, and that anyone obstructing such a procession will be punished.

NEW DELHI, October 6, 1946
[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 13-10-1946

542. TELEGRAM TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

NEW DELHI,
October 6, 1946

SARALADEVI
CARE BUSINESS
AHMEDABAD

YES CERTAINLY YOU CAN REACH EIGHTH OR WHENEVER YOU WISH.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946.

CWMG - LXXV

543. UNCERTIFIED BUT GENUINE

The above two letters[1] are from blood sisters. That both of them are very sincere is clearly shown by their letters. Some may even recognize them. I have had to delete as much I could to conceal their identity.

I have also received other similar letters. I can also understand the anguish of those who write in English and Hindustani. Even then I have to adhere to my dharma as I understand it. I should therefore like to stick to what I have written. It is possible that my writing is not very clear. In fact no writing is perfect because writing circumscribes the thought of the speaker or the writer. It is impossible to convey the complete thought through speech or writing.

Whether khadi is certified or not, as long as it is khadi ideologically it is superior to mill cloth.[2] Mill cloth should be discarded even if compared to khadi it is cheap, soft and fine.

Those who buy cloth in the name of khadi knowing that it is not khadi are hypocrites. My writings are not meant for them. Genuine khadi even if it is uncertified is preferable to mill cloth.

The lady who, because of the purity of her thought returned empty-handed from a store selling uncertified khadi commands our respect.

There is a saying in English "Buyers Beware". If a buyer is cautious he will never be deceived. He will make sure before buying anything. Such a person will read my articles again and again and till he is thoroughly convinced he will not act on them. A time may come when the Charkha Sangh will stop giving the certificates. What will happen to khadi then? Will not all khadi be uncertified then? Among stores dealing in khadi some would be honest and some dishonest. A buyer will buy khadi from the store he prefers.

A businessman should be honest and should not sell uncertified khadi.

[1] Not translated here. One of the correspondents had said that she had to return empty-handed from an uncertified khadi store because it pricked her conscience. The other had complained about the corruption in the Congress.

[2] *Vide* pp. 304-5.

The other letter deals with the office-bearers of the Congress. It is a sad story. The corruption among us is responsible for the corruption that has crept into khadi. Those who have remained pure in spite of being in the midst of corruption, have to remain so. One needs steadfastness and generosity to cultivate that art. Is not being strict with oneself and generous to others the way to get rid of corruption?

NEW DELHI, October 7, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1946

544. TELEGRAM TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

KUMARAPPA
MAGANWADI
WARDHA

BHANGI COLONY SUITABLE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

545. LETTER TO GENERAL MANAGER, G.I.P. RAILWAY

"VALMIKI MANDIR", READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

THE GENERAL MANAGER
GREAT INDIAN PENINSULA RAILWAY
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter No. 20435-V 395 of 28th ultimo.[1]

My suggestion is that the driver himself should be asked as to what article or articles of use he would want and you or the

[1] The addressee had said that he had received a further sum of Rs. 1200 to be given as a reward to the driver whose vigilance had averted a serious accident to Gandhiji's train and had asked how the reward might be paid. *Vide* also p. 111.

CWMG - LXXXV

Railway Board should decide what should be done. The donors will have no opportunity of coming to a correct decision and it would be improper for them directly to approach the person concerned.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 10531

546. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I have your letter. If only you are patient, the clouds of misfortune that have gathered over you will disperse.

It is surprising that Shanti has still not recovered. Write to Sheth Bachharaj Tribhuvandas at Panchgani. He will at once make some arrangements. Medical and other facilities are available there. And go there when he writes. There is no need to go to Miraj just now. Besides, the place may have no facilities. It must be getting a little cold in Panchgani now, but that is nothing to worry about. Let me know what happens. Bachhrajbhai is known to us and you need not, therefore, go to another place.

Has Pramod stayed on there? I hope he has got well.

I shall have to stay on here for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing a separate letter to Gatulal. Let this be for him also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 1049. Courtesy : Champa R. Mehta

CWMG - LXXXV

547. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. LILY,

You did well in writing to me. Your letter is painful. What is His will He alone knows. We have gone completely mad. Thoughtful men and women should pray to God to save us. By "we" I do not mean you and I but everyone. You and I should ask that we may sacrifice ourselves in this conflagration. But we must also make ourselves fit for that, shouldn't we? Go on doing service.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. LILAVATIBEHN UDESHI
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
LADIES' HOSTEL
PAREL
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C. W. 10247. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

548. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

N[EW] D[ELHI],
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got both your letters. I do not at all like your having fallen ill. Now that your yearning has been satisfied, you should get well soon at least for the sake of the baby that will be born. You will do so not by overeating but by eating moderately, taking sun-baths, living in the open air, drinking clean water, taking fruit juice, eating steamed or boiled vegetables and avoiding sweets and spicy foods. If you take friction-baths and hip-baths, you will get well soon.

Why need you feel ashamed of being pregnant? That is what you were yearning for. Why need one feel ashamed of

CWMG - LXXXV

what one yearns for and of what happens to everybody? You must now overcome your sexual urge for three years at least. And that for the sake of the child.

Yes, Munnalal has reason to be ashamed of himself, for it was his ambition to observe *brahmacharya* though he had no capacity for it at all. I had cautioned him sufficiently. But what could even he do? Could he have helped following whither nature led him? If he humbly admits his weaknesses, they will disappear.

I advise you to have the confinement in Vyara itself. If you wish, you may go to Sevagram for it. But there are difficulties in that. To ensure easy delivery, Munnalal should be told to stay away from you. Moreover, he should now earn enough for a living. Nobody need hesitate to ask for his market-price.

I told Munnalal that, even if you two satisfied your passion, you could continue to do my work. If, therefore, he is ready to take up a regular job, I am prepared to give him one and pay him for it. Whatever may have happened from my point of view, Munnalal has committed no sin. He should, therefore, humbly admit what has happened without feeling guilty about it and take up whatever work is available. He should earn a modest living and do whatever other service is possible in the time he can spare from his duties as a householder. He should do nothing that will heighten sexual craving; he should try to control it. The birth of a baby is a reminder. You may show this letter to everybody without feeling the least embarrassment. Neither of you has committed a sin. If any party is guilty, generally it is the man. For the present I am here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8253. Also C. W. 6977. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

549. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter written to Kanchan. Can the fact of pregnancy be ever concealed? And why need it be concealed? Surely you have committed no sin. And even if you have committed a sin, you should not commit another by hiding it.

Sin is a kind of boil. If we let the poison circulate in the system we shall die, but if we throw it out with the help of natural remedies we shall live. You have committed no sin, but you did cherish great pride. Everybody thought that you were a strong-willed *brahmachari*. If that pride has melted, you have won. I have written to Kanchan at length and explained what she and you should now do. I shall not repeat it here. Generally I keep no copies of the letters I write to you. But copies of my letter to Kanchan and of this one shall be kept. They may also help me in refreshing my memory in future.

You should now, like a householder, earn an adequate living. You can be accommodated in one of our departments. Think over your needs and let me know. Also state what kind of work you would like. It would be better if you reply to this letter after reading my letter to Kanchan. It would be all right even if both of you stay in Vyara. You may go on serving the people while looking after your own affairs. I am of course of the view that during the period of Kanchan's pregnancy and for two years after the birth of the baby you should not cohabit with her. Doctors advise the same thing. It is for this reason that people adopt artificial methods of birth-control. I don't think, however, that your craving for indulgence is so strong as to make that necessary. But even if it is, you should humbly admit the fact. There are numerous men and women who adopt artificial methods. Society does not boycott them; on the contrary, it even commends them. Sin is what we believe to be sin and virtue what we believe to be virtue. There are but few things which are sinful or virtuous in themselves. And in the last analysis even these are so because we think them so. I have written enough now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 8398. Also C. W. 7217. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

550. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. APPA,

I have your postcard. I hope you got my letters. You should leave only after you are fully recovered. Never mind if it takes time. If you are not completely cured and made strong, nature cure and Dr. Bhagawat will be put to shame. Handle from where you are as much Ratnagiri work as you can. Keep me posted with news of your health. You should regard me as free only when I leave this place.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. APPA PATWARDHAN
URULI KANCHAN

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

551. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

NEW DELHI,
Silence Day, October 7, 1946

CHI. GAJANAN,

I am tired of your letters. I shall not get tired if you permit me to show them all to the persons about whom you write.

Many public workers go in for life insurance. How can they be bracketed together? You have to cultivate a liberal attitude.

One reaps as one sows. If we happen to notice someone's shortcomings we should feel alarmed and say to ourselves: "What if I have even more serious ones and others can see them!" This reflection should make us try to see our own shortcomings and to remove them.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GAJANAN NAIK
WARDHA

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

552. LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. AMIN,

I have already sent you the messages. There is certainly nothing wrong in acquiring knowledge. Learn to have calmness of mind, to develop the spirit of service, to free yourself of attachments and aversions and to make your intellect steadfast.

Sushilabehn will write the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

KOLHAPUR

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

553. LETTER TO MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I was no doubt informed about your earlier cheque. Your cheque for Rs. 100 dated October 4, 1946, has reached me safely.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS
BHAGA TALAO
SURAT

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

CWMG - LXXV

554. LETTER TO PRAVINA DIWANJI

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Kishorelal has forwarded to me here in New Delhi the noble gift you sent for me. It is beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. PRAVINABEHN DIWANJI
KHAR

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

555. LETTER TO SATISH D. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. SATISH,

I have your letter. The story about the Chinese is very interesting. I might use it in *Harijanbandhu*.

I was very glad to read that Chandan has acquired faith in Ramanama and following in her footsteps so have you. How nice if [the baby] possesses qualities worthy of the name it has been given and what a great delight it would be for all of you! If Rama came to dwell in Chandan's heart all illness would disappear from her.

To you all,

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. SATISH KALELKAR

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

CWMG - LXXXV

556. LETTER TO DR. ATMARAM K. BHAGAWAT

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

BHAI BHAGAWAT,

Appasaheb should leave the place only when he has recovered fully and regained his strength. If the cure is not within your reach and you need help from someone do take it. It is a human virtue to know one's own limitations.

I hope everything else is going on well. How is Balkrishna? Is milk available?

My blessings to all.

URULI KANCHAN

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

557. LETTER TO CHANDRANI

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

CHI. CHAND,

It is bad that you keep falling ill. What service can you render if you continue to be ill ? The weather there should be good these days. Do you get any sun in the house? Is the bathroom good? Do you get fresh air? I have stayed in Amritsar houses. One cannot say even the houses of the rich are good. Is your diet all right? Air and diet are more efficacious than medicines.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

558. LETTER TO RAJ

October 7, 1946

CHI. RAJ,

Your handwriting is good. I was of course confident that your parents would be pleased with your sacrifice. Keep your pledge and strengthen your spirit of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

559. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 7, 1946

The talks[2] now going on give rise to the hope that the Muslim League will join the Cabinet. I shall pray for it. I ask all of you also to pray that the entente between the Congress and the Muslim League this time may be even more cordial and enduring than in 1916 or during the Khilafat days, that brother may not now abuse or kill brother and all may live in peace.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 8-10-1946

[1] It being a Silence Day, the message was read out at the meeting.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru had met M. A. Jinnah to explore possibilities of the Muslim League accepting the five seats offered to it in the Cabinet, so that the Interim Government could be worked as a Provisional National Government.

560. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

October 8, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I have your letter. I hope you received the message I sent in Behn's[1] letter. When does New Year commence for us? Is not time changing ceaselessly? If we remain steadfast in all these changes, why need we care for a New Year?

But you may have the good wishes.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

And aspire to live for 125 years, doing service till the end.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4992

561. DISCUSSION WITH MEMBERS OF A. I. S. A.[2]

NEW DELHI,
[*October 8, 1946*][3]

A member suggested that the A. I. S. A. might pass a resolution requesting the Government to nationalize all new textile mills and the existing ones also as soon as practicable. Gandhiji demurring to the suggestion explained that they could not ask the Government to nationalize new textile mills when they were telling them that khadi and the erection of new mills could not go together. Shri T. Prakasam, the Premier of Madras, had already made an announcement to the effect that no new textile mills would be erected in the Madras Presidency. They might ask for the nationalization of the existing mills but he himself preferred putting them under strict State control to taking charge of and running them as a State concern. As a believer in non-violence he believed in trusteeship. He wanted a peaceful conversion of mill-owners, so that the mill-owners and their employees would all come under social control voluntarily. That meant that though, for in-

[1] Addressee's mother, Sushila Gandhi

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", 15-10-1946 and 18-10-1946. The annual meeting of the A. I. S. A. was held at the Harijan Colony in Kingsway on the 8th, 9th and 10th October.

[3] From *Indian Annual Register*

stance, X might continue to be the legal owner, he would only take such commission out of the profits for himself as was warranted by his services and sanctioned by the people. The real owners would be the labourers in the mills. In one of the Tata concerns the labourers were reported to have become profit-sharers. Shri J. R. D. Tata's speech in that connection was worthy of perusal. He (Gandhiji) considered such solution to be the best. Several mill-owners had assured him that they were ready to co-operate in any such scheme, if required, and would prevent further expansion of their textile mills. He deprecated the idea of joint control of the mill industry by the Government, the A. I. S. A. and the mill-owners. He said:

> Our job is not to run mills but to ply the little wheel by hand. Why should we spend time in discussing a thing which lies outside our sphere of action. I would not shed a single tear if all the mills were to close. If mills flourish, khadi must die. It might still function as a supplementary occupation for the relief of the poor. But for that you do not need a big organization like the Charkha Sangh.

He would, he concluded, be perfectly satisfied if the State exercised control over the textile mills in consultation with them and so far as possible according to their advice.

"Would it not be advisable," asked Shri Jajuji, "to ask the Government to give those who spin for themselves a subsidy so as to reduce the charges of weaving for self-spinners?" Gandhiji's reply was that they should not ask for subsidy but ask the Government to help in supplying cotton, the necessary implements and the services of teachers and technical experts to those who would take to spinning for their own cloth requirements. He did not want to have it said that the Charkha Sangh was cashing its influence to make the Government squander money on the whims of cranks and faddists. He wanted no favour for the Charkha Sangh which must stand or fall on its merits. He wanted everybody to feel that nothing had been given at the instance of the Charkha Sangh which had not been paid back tenfold.

Another member suggested that the weavers should be required to weave a certain amount of hand-spun yarn and unless they did that the quota of mill yarn should not be given to them. Any kind of compulsion, replied Gandhiji, would only create a revulsion against khadi. It would then cease to be the 'livery of freedom'. He said:

> The spirit of independence is in the air. The weaver might well refuse to be compelled.

"There is control in everything—food, cloth, etc. Why cannot joint control be introduced with regard to weavers?" Gandhiji replied:

I do not like the idea. We do not use compulsion with regard to spinners. We cannot use it for weavers. Let us go to the root of the difficulty. Our initial mistake was that we took to spinning but neglected weaving. If we had adopted universal weaving along with spinning, all these difficulties would not have arisen. The remedy is to improve the yarn so that the weavers have as little difficulty in weaving as possible. We should reason with the weavers and explain to them that dependence on mill yarn must kill their avocation in the end. Mill-owners are no philanthropists. They would draw the noose tight round the handloom weavers' neck the moment they came within effective range of competition with mill cloth.

If we have faith in the charkha, we must forge ahead undismayed by these temporary bottlenecks. The number of handlooms weaving hand-spun will increase in due course. We have got enough artisans and indigenous skill in our country to produce all the cloth that we require for ourselves.

JAJUJI : This means that the work must go on as before at a snail's pace. Our scheme of making 4 lakhs of people self-sufficient in cloth in a short time in this way will not succeed.

GANDHIJI: If it does not, the fault will be ours.

J. That is right in the ultimate sense. But circumstances also count.

G. It is man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstances. Is not conquest of nature the slogan of the age we are living in? If circumstances alone had counted, Germany and Japan would have won the war. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the English people who do not know what it is to admit defeat. We have to cultivate austerity and penance in our life. There is nothing that the power of penance cannot achieve.

"You have taught us to be straight and above board in everything," asked another member. "Is it not dishonest to wear uncertified khadi and be known as a khadiwala when one does not fulfil the conditions of wearing khadi? Is it not better to be honest and use mill cloth instead?"

Gandhiji replied that he did not approve of uncertified khadi, but he was of opinion that khadi, so long as it was genuine stuff, was preferable to mill cloth. All uncertified khadi was not dishonest.

For instance, people who spin for themselves or their family and have their yarn woven do not use certified khadi. Yet such khadi is of the highest merit. Certified khadi carried

the guarantee that the rules of the A. I. S. A. have been observed, as for instance paying to the spinners a certain minimum wage. Khadi, even when the spinners are not paid the standard A. I. S. A. wage, is preferable to mill cloth. The higher wages paid to labourers in the spinning mills are more apparent than real. Mill cloth is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times cheaper than khadi today. Experts have told me that if the mill industry did not receive special privileges and concessions in several ways, which it today enjoys, mill cloth would not sell cheaper than khadi. For instance, we provide cheap transport facilities to the mills to enable raw materials and mass-produced finished goods to be taken from one place to another. Again, enormous sums have been spent on growing long-staple cotton or on starting technical institutes and on research work. No one has bothered to do anything for any of the seven lakhs of India's villages. So the mills are today actually being subsidized in some shape or other. Remove all that and then see whether mill cloth is cheaper than khadi.

He could not possibly encourage uncertified khadi, continued Gandhiji, but mill cloth should be absolutely taboo.

A day might come when the A. I. S. A. might stop issuing certificates. Anybody would then be free to sell khadi. That would be inevitable when khadi became universal. The Charkha Sangh would then function as the custodian of the ethics and the general policy of khadi. Its business activities would cease.

People must become honest by habit and insist upon meticulous honesty on the part of the producers or the dealers in khadi so that only genuine stuff is sold and bought.

I have called khadi and the charkha the symbols of nonviolence. But it is said that there is dishonesty even in certified bhandars. I wish it were not so. But there is no denying the fact that it is true of some.

I have objected to the term vegetable ghee because it is not ghee. It should be labelled as vegetable oil. Similarly, I cannot tolerate that cloth which is not khadi, i. e., is not handspun and hand-woven, should pass as such. The ultimate remedy lies in the buyer's hands. "Buyer beware" is a sound legal maxim for all to remember.

It was suggested that the formulation of khadi policy for each unit of area should be left entirely to local bodies which should be completely independent of the central organization. Gandhiji, while he was entirely in favour of the maximum decentralization of initiative and responsibility, was

opposed to the creation of local committees of untrained men and women to take the place of khadi workers. For organization of khadi work what was needed was a body of technicians and experts, men endowed with business talent and filled with the spirit of service. There was no room in it for personal ambition or power politics. The latter had become the bane of the Congress. To get rid of corruption in the Congress organization he had suggested that it should convert itself into an organization of workers. To introduce an element of democracy into khadi work would be to kill khadi. The Charkha Sangh was not a democratic organization in the sense the Congress was. It was an organization created by the Congress for the building up of democracy. Like the Directorate of the Bank of England, it was a business organization first and last. Only it was motivated by an altruistic, not profit, motive. A business organization of a democratic body could not be bound by the procedure of the democratic vote. He said:

> We want to disperse in the villages. A khadi worker can have no use for any other sanction save such as persuasion and service can command. The moment he seeks to arm himself with any other, he kills khadi.

"To make khadi universal," finally asked a friend, "you need to inspire the co-operation of everybody."

Gandhiji replied that since khadi workers were expected to be full servants of the people, their worth if there was any could create public opinion in their favour. The need was not for a committee of members who might be a hindrance rather than help, whereas if service drew supporters they would be a powerful help.

"What would be the authority of the A. I. S. A. after khadi became decentralized?" was another question.

The answer came quick! The authority of the Sangh would be merely moral and, therefore, more potent than at present. Its function would not be to provide money or material but only to smooth the way for khadi work by the creation of a moral sanction. It would lend the khadi workers the use of its name but not seek to impose its will upon them. Its moral authority would be available to anybody who accepted its policy. Even its present assets would be put at the disposal of any unit that was ready and considered fit to claim autonomy, provided only that it guaranteed the right use of the assets allotted to it and bound itself to return the same after a certain period. The Charkha Sangh would have the right of inspection but even that would be at the will of the autonomous unit.

Harijan, 20-10-1946 and 27-10-1946

562. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 8, 1946

We must all pray from the heart that the talks going on between the Congress and the Muslim League may bear fruit. I cannot give you any news today. I cannot even say what will happen in the future. Maybe it is the will of God that we should undergo yet further suffering. If that be so, we must put up with the suffering.

If we sincerely desire peace and if we have faith in God we should pray for a successful issue of the Congress-League parleys, so that people who are today behaving like savages may be brought back to civilized ways. However people in Europe or other parts of the world may behave, we must never sink to the state of the brute. We must remember that our actions reflect our inner feelings. You who are sitting here before me are but a drop in the vast sea of Indian humanity. If it is the wish of everyone to live at peace with his neighbour the Congress and the Muslim League will have to come to terms. Though it is true that the Viceroy acts under instructions from the British Cabinet, he is nevertheless an autocrat. Our leaders, on the contrary, are representatives of the people and must carry out people's wishes. You should therefore pray that your mind may be cleansed of anger and hate and the leaders may be granted good sense so that the country may become united and free. If we desist from the present strife and mutual slaughter, we shall certainly achieve freedom. There is so much that a free India has to do. We are hungry and naked. Corruption and black-marketing are rampant. All this should go. Then alone can we organize ourselves and bring into being the new order which we want to see established.

[From Hindi]
Hindustan, 9-10-1946

563. ENGLISH-HINDUSTANI DICTIONARY[1]

A friend from the Bhangi Colony, Delhi, asked me the other day why the *Harijan Sevak* had discontinued the above feature. I told him it appeared only in *Harijan*. He was disheartened. I explained to him that it was meant for the English-knowing public and, therefore, was not published in either the *Harijanbandhu* or *Harijan Sevak* and that it was by mistake it had appeared in *Harijan Sevak*. It would have been well to explain this in *Harijanbandhu* and *Harijan Sevak*. Those who are interested in it can remit postage stamps worth 1/6 and have the off-prints of the dictionary. Off-prints from the past issues are also available.

NEW DELHI, October 10, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

564. TELEGRAM TO Y. M. DADOO

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DOCTOR DADOO[2]
DURBAN

GLAD PASSIVE RESISTERS ADHERE NON-VIOLENCE. HOPE NO WEAKENING OR DIVISION AMONG OUR PEOPLE.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

[2] Indian leader; Chairman of the Passive Resistance Council and Democratic Action Committee

CWMG - LXXV

565. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to send me your wishes for my birthday which is synonymous with the rebirth of the spinning-wheel in 1918.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47, p. 217

566. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Three letters I am writing after the morning prayer. The other two are to the Lawrences.

Many thanks to you two for your wishes. I am here only for the work you expect me to do. Heaven help us all.

Hope you are really well and strong.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 218

CWMG - LXXXV

567. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I will not address you in the honorific plural. I cannot help writing to you today. Jehangir's letter has only a line about you. My heart cries out for you. Why should you, an adherent of nature cure, feel distressed? How can your sorrowing alleviate others' sorrow? Hasn't a nature cure practitioner himself said : 'Physician, heal thyself.'[1] If you can get away from there and if you are still depressed, come to me and have the cure for your depression. Never mind if I am in Delhi or Sevagram or anywhere else.

I hope Gulbehn and the children are well. Mother must have now recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

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

568. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. You may come wherever I may be. God is in you. He will give you fortitude. You have ears to listen to His voice, then why bother to hear anything else?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKI DEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SRIRANGAM

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

[1] This is in English.

CWMG - LXXV

569. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is wrong.[1] The really poor are never able to listen to the radio. I am therefore not at all enthusiastic about it.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 325

570. MESSAGE TO STUDENTS OF HARIJAN UDYOGSHALA[2]

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

It is my earnest desire that the students of the Harijan Udyogshala and members of their families should become true Harijans—i. e., men of God.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 11-10-1946

571. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 10, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting in Bhangi Colony on Thursday evening, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had thought that all the jewellery that had been presented to him had been auctioned out. But a ring had just then been given him which he auctioned, as usual, immediately after the prayer. . . . He was, led to recall how over more than 20 years ago he had, during the course of one of his tours, begun collecting money by auction at Ahmednagar. In those days, auctions used to go on by the hour and he used to collect thousands in a day. Now he had not the physical strength to do this.

[1] Someone had suggested to the addressee that he should arrange for Gandhiji to broadcast on the radio, so that the whole country might hear him.

[2] The message was for the convocation of the Udyogshala. Gandhiji was not able to be present.

Among other things, he even used to auction garlands of flowers which were presented to him. Here he confessed that he had never liked garlands of flowers. He had always held it to be cruel or wrong to pick flowers from plants. Flowers should be allowed to fall to the ground in a natural way. They then made a beautiful carpet under the trees and looked just as lovely as when they were in blossom. In his ashram people were expected not to pick flowers from off the trees. Thus was introduced the custom of presenting garlands of hand-spun yarn in the place of flowers.

Gandhiji, however, assured the audience that he did not want them to think that all who bid at the auctions had to pay or indeed bid at all.

The Hindustan Times, 11-10-1946

572. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

CHI. MANUDI,

I have gone through your letter. I gave it to Sushila Pai, Kanu, Sushila (Dr.) and Pyarelal to read. Here I shall tell you only this, that I liked your letter.

Further, I shall be happy if you come over and have a talk with me. I do not wish to put any pressure on you. It is my earnest desire that you should remain a pure virgin till the end of your life and spend your life in service.

I hope Umiya's son is doing well.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

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

CWMG-LXXXV

573. LETTER TO PERIN CAPTAIN

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I wonder what I can do. I shall see what can be done; not much, I fear.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI PERINBEHN CAPTAIN
ORIENT CLUB
BOMBAY

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

574. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is no doubt long. But it does not matter. If your heart prompts you to go to Borkamata, do go. I do not know what order to give you. When we meet we shall talk more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 532

[1] This sentence and the address are in English.

575. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 11, 1946

This[2] is a specimen of the yarn Punjabi women bring to me. The yarn has been given to me for the poor, including the Harijans, who are the most oppressed. The skein has a nice look, but it is difficult to unwind. It had been my experience in the past that unwinding the yarn took a long time and it frequently broke in the process. The result was further delay and more labour. What the spinner should do is to take off the yarn entirely from the spindle and put it on a winder that takes a round of four feet. They should count the rounds for each hank and tie them up. The yarn should be strong and even so that weavers do not find it difficult to handle. Today mill yarn is readily available. But this will not always be so. But why should weavers be dependent on mill yarn? If hand-spun yarn of good quality is available they will not buy mill yarn. If you can spin yarn of good quality you can clothe everybody and put an end to the mills.

I hope all spinners will take the trouble to do as indicated.

[From Hindi]

Hindustan, 12-10-1946

576. HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI

A stranger travelling in Indian trains may well have a painful shock when he hears at railway stations for the first time in his life ridiculous sounds about *pani*, tea and the like being either Hindu or Muslim. It would be repulsive now that the Government at the Centre is wholly national and a well-known Indian in the person of Asaf Ali Saheb is in charge of Transport and Railways. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the last of the shame that is peculiarly Indian. Let no one imagine that Railways being under a Muslim, Hindus

[1] A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter", *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

[2] Here Gandhiji displayed a skein of yarn.

may not get justice. In the Central and Provincial Governments, there is or should be no Hindu, Muslim or any other communal distinctions. All are Indians. Religion is a personal matter. Moreover, the members of the Cabinet have set up a wholesome convention that they should always meet at the end of the day's work and take stock of what each member has done. It is team work in which the members are jointly and severally responsible for one another's work. It is not open to any member to say that a particular thing is not his work because it is no part of his portfolio. We have a right therefore to assume that this unholy practice of having separate everything for every community at railway stations will go. Scrupulous cleanliness is a desideratum for all. If taps are used for all liquids there need be no compunction felt by the most orthodox about helping themselves. A fastidious person may keep his own *lota* and cup and receive his milk, tea, coffee or water through a tap. In this there is no interference with religion. No one is compelled to buy anything at railway stations. As a matter of fact many orthodox persons fast for water and food during travel. Thanks we still breathe the same air, walk on the same mother earth.

All communal cries at least at railway stations should be unlawful.

As I have often said in these columns trains and steamers are the best media for the practical education of the millions of travellers in spotless cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation and camaraderie between the different communities of India. Let us hope that the Cabinet will have the courage to act up to their convictions and may confidently expect the hearty co-operation of the Railway staff and the public in making this much needed reform a thorough success.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946
Harijan, 20-10-1946

577. *REAL INDIA*

If my frequent wanderings throughout India of the villages have not deceived me, it can be confidently asserted that the 700,000 villages get and want no police protection. The solitary Patel to a village is a terrorist lording it over the villages and is designed for helping the petty revenue collector to collect revenue due to the *Ma-Bap*[1]. I am not aware of the policeman having aided the villagers in protecting their goods or cattle against depredations of man and beast. The Police Patel is not to be blamed for what he is. He has been chosen for his task which he does well. He has not been taught to regard himself as the servant of the people. He represents his master the Viceroy. The change at the top has not yet permeated the most distant village. How can it? It has not come from the bottom. The Viceroy still retains legal and military powers to remove and even to imprison his ministers. The latter have no power, legal or other, to imprison the Viceroy. Even the Civil Service is still under his control. It is not suggested that the Viceroy does not mean to shed all power nor that he does not wish the most distant village to realize that he is determined under instructions from Whitehall to shed every vestige of British control in the quickest time possible.

The relevance of all this writing is for showing that we do not yet learn from the village in which India lives that every Indian, man or woman, is his or her own policeman. This he or she can only do when neither harbours mischief against his or her neighbour, no matter what religion he professes or denies. If unfortunately the politically minded will not or cannot go as far as suggested here, he must at least shed all fear and resolutely deny himself all protection whether from the military or the police. I am positive that India will not come into her own unless every home becomes its own castle not in the sense of the ages known as dark but in the very ancient true sense that everyone has learnt the art of dying without ill-will, or even wishing that since he cannot someone else will do away with the would-be assassin. How nice, therefore, it would be if everyone of us had this lesson burnt into

[1] Government

us. There is much proof in support of the lesson, if we will take the trouble to examine the proof.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946
Harijan, 20-10-1946

578. QUESTION BOX

ONENESS OF COSTUME A CURE?

Q. In these last four weeks, I have seen so much bloodshed and firing that it has left a bitter taste in my mouth. Every day since the riots started I have been on duty as a magistrate trying to maintain the peace. Now, more than ever before, I am convinced of the necessity that we should insist on every Indian wearing the same nationalist dress—as you remember I had broached the subject before but at the time you had not approved of the idea. Why is it that none of the stabbings have been of people wearing a shirt and pant? This should be conclusive proof that the dress causes the difference in religion to be accentuated. Your reply to this through the *Harijan* for others like me who think that communal riots would disappear within a short time on our wearing the same kind of dress would be most appreciated.

A. I publish this as from a well-versed, well-meaning friend. These three qualities combined do not necessarily make for clearness of thought. What is wanted is not oneness of costume but oneness of hearts. We have only to look at Europe to demonstrate the emptiness of the idea that oneness of costume will enable us to get out of the mess we are in. Ill-will is like an ill wind. It must go and be replaced by the fresh and bracing wind of goodwill.

THE SMOKING EVIL

Q. While you have all along written very strongly in favour of prohibition, you have not spoken either often enough or with equal emphasis in the matter of smoking. This evil is increasing with alarming rapidity and even children are increasingly getting addicted to it. The crores that are literally burnt by smoking could be so well utilized in wise ways in our poor land.

A. The taunt is true but not new. The reason for want of equal emphasis is to be sought in the fact that smoking has attained alarming respectability. When a vice reaches that state it becomes difficult to eradicate. This admission does not

mean that we should not agitate for abatement of the nuisance. How to do so and when is the question. I am sorry to have to confess my inability to answer it.

The Curse of Dowry

Q. The demand for dowries in the marriage market is growing. None is immune from this injustice. The richer the parent of the prospective bridegroom, the heavier is the demand of the dowry. The problem now is such that many marriageable girls cannot be married and the state of their parents can better be imagined than described. Popular governments should help to check the evil through the law.

A. It is a curious phenomenon the questioner notices. Education not only does not improve the situation but makes it worse. The affected class has to wake up before the curse destroys the class which in its terrible weakness shamelessly betakes to it. Let them ceaselessly and restlessly agitate. I know no other way.

Why This Secrecy?

Q. Can you say why, when mutual slaughter between brother and brother is going on, the names of the respective communities should be withheld?

A. I confess that the question has often occurred to me. There seems to me to be no reason for this hush-hush policy save that it is a legacy from the autocracy which, let us hope, the national Governments have displaced. Those who ought not to know, know who stabs whom. And those who should know are kept in the dark. I am sure there are many Hindus and Muslims and even members of other communities taking pride in being Indians first and last without ceasing to be devoted followers of their own religions and who love to do their best to dissuade blind fanatics from making mischief. I know many such. They have no means of ascertaining facts except through the Press. Let darkness be exposed to light. It will be dispelled quicker.

New Delhi, October 12, 1946

Harijan, 20-10-1946

CWMG PLXXV

579. HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO?[1]

Shri Kanu Gandhi's note[2] deserves consideration. It should be remembered that the charkha is not, nor can ever be, like the various small or big things made in the West. There are millions of watches, all made in the same place. They are sold all over the world. The same story applies to the sewing-machine. These things are symbols of one kind of civilization. The charkha symbolizes an opposite kind of civilization. We do not want to mass-produce charkhas in one place and scatter them all over India. Our ideal is to manufacture charkhas and accessories in the towns or villages where the spinners live. Therein lies the value of the charkha. If anything goes wrong with the charkha the spinners should learn how to put it right. It is for the Charkha Sangh to see to all this. So long as this does not happen khadi can never replace mill cloth.

NEW DELHI, October 12, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 20-10-1946

580. NOTE TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

[*October 12, 1946*][3]

I am too much preoccupied to give due attention to this matter. Jhaverbhai[4] should go. He does not want to take anything from the Government for his feed. This he wants to draw from A. I. V. I. A. You may talk to him and fix up what you think proper. That will save some time. He may see this note and you two may do what is necessary. Meanwhile let him not live on borrowed money. When I come to Sevagram we shall work it out. You may advance what he needs for the time.

From a photostat : G. N. 10184

[1] A translation of this also appeared in *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

[2] Not translated here. The note had enumerated certain steps to be taken by Khadi Bhandars to make the charkha more popular.

[3] The date is in the addressee's hand.

[4] Jhaverbhai Patel

581. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

VALMIKI MANDIR,
READING ROAD, NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have been shown a note[1] on salt circulated to the Members of the Cabinet. You were to have sent me an amendment which you had admitted was necessary. But instead I see the long and argued note without any amendment. It contains also a proposal to retain a portion of the tax and therefore the monopoly also I suppose.

I confess that I have glanced through the note most hurriedly. Rajaji has asked me to send him my amendment which I am now doing. A copy will be sent to you when I am ready [*sic*].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.
MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE
SECRETARIAT, NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 164

582. LETTER TO KALKA PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

BHAI KALKA PRASAD,

Shridharani has just arrived form America. He needs khadi. Give him as much as he wants. Charge the actual price. Assume that the yarn is with me. Charge the price of the yarn also.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C. W. 10418

[1] Not reproduced here. It contained proposals, for which "general approval" of Gandhiji was claimed, envisaging abolition of excise duty on salt but continuation of Government production of salt, control of organized manufacture and retention of existing machinery for exercising such control.

583. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 12, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi began his address by telling the audience that he had been in two minds whether or not to break his silence, which he had taken to for various reasons, in order to address them. Ultimately he decided to break it. He wanted to tell them that while he had not taken a vow of silence he had made up his mind for the time being to speak only on business to those whom he called his jailors. One result of his imposed silence was that he had been able to get through a fair amount of writing for *Harijan*.

Gandhiji went on to say how he felt impelled to tell them of the error committed by him three days ago. He was thoroughly ashamed of it. For him, at his time of life, it was unpardonable. No harm had been done to anyone because of it. It was not possible for him to remember ever having done anything to hurt anyone. His error consisted in being over-hasty. He read a little thing hurriedly, though there was no occasion for hurry, and fancied it was quite right whereas it was not quite that. No public servant had the right to act in this way. He seemed, for the moment, to have lost confidence in himself and the belief that he would live for 125 years.

The first verse of the *Ishopanishad* demanded giving oneself and all possessions to God. If a man fully did that, he could never be hasty. It may be that he was old now and his brain was getting weak. He knew that his memory was not as good as it used to be. It never was extra good. But when a man was guilty of error it was his duty to call God as witness and vow never to commit the mistake again. That was the only true way of repentance to realize the guilt and confess it immediately before the sun went down. Death had got to come to everyone, and who knew when it would come?

Gandhiji said his life was an open book and he hid nothing from the world. They who listened to him were his world for the time. He was telling them of his mistake in order that they may learn a lesson from it and never be hasty or careless in their actions. While his mind had been relieved of a burden by confession, Gandhiji said it would take a long time for him to regain the lost confidence as far as living 125 years was concerned.

The Hindustan Times, 13-10-1946

[1] A slightly different version of this speech also appeared in Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 20-10-1946.

584. RURALIZING UNIVERSITY EDUCATION[1]

There is much truth in what Dr. Kini says. He should put himself in touch with Dr. Zakir Hussain and the Aryanayakums and devote his energies to evolving a workable scheme. I see no difficulty in existing Universities conforming to the requirements of the villagers, who are India, instead of turning out indifferent imitators of the West.

Harijan, 13-10-1946

585. DR. LOHIA AGAIN

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's letter to the Chief Judge of the Goa High Court deserves more than passing attention. I copy it below from the daily Press:

> At the time of my arrest[2], I had not, so far as I know, violated any Goan law. I may have been intent on doing so but that is irrelevant. The police officer at Collem walked into my compartment, asked me no questions and put me straightway under arrest. International law, as it stands today, probably empowers the Portuguese Government to arrest and deport anyone whom they consider an undesirable alien but they are surely not empowered to hold him in prison unless he has actually violated some law. The Portuguese Government have in the past declared me as alien and taken up their stand on a provision in International Law with regard to me. They owe me an apology and damages for illegal imprisonment or else they must give up their attempt to apply International Law as between Goa and the rest of Hindustan. Furthermore, between September 29 and October 2, they kept me in a cell, which has probably as much ventilation as just keeps a man alive. They owe me an added apology and damages for this kind of treatment.
>
> I continue to be held in solitary confinement, although under better conditions and I am not taken out of my cell except for bath and I am held incommunicado. These add to the illegality of my imprisonment.

[1] This was appended to an article by Dr. Kini, Secretary in the Education Department of Mysore; *vide* also pp. 322-3.

[2] On the 29th September

CWMG - LXXV

Let no one laugh at Dr. Lohia's presumption in asking for damages. If he had power behind him, the Goan authorities would quickly apologize and offer to pay damages. It is not an unusual thing for big powers to ask for damages and obtain them for injury or insult done even to insignificant subjects. Dr. Lohia is not a little man. Well, India has a National Government. I am sure they are as sensitive as any can be. I should not be surprised if they have lodged their protest and asked the Goa Government to mend their manners. Anyway, let the force of public opinion be behind the National Government and the injured Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. The injury done to him is injury done to our countrymen in Goa and through them to the whole of India.

NEW DELHI, October, 13, 1946
Harijan, 20-10-1946

586. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

October 14, 1946

Q. Wouldn't it be better to set up a public institution at Bordi for conducting research in the Ayurvedic system of medicine?

A. It would be good to make Bordi a public institution.

Q. The Government Ayurvedic Colleges teach seventy per cent allopathy. Ayurveda should be taught as a separate science. When this question was first discussed you had said that you would arrange for me to meet Dr. Gilder.

A. The Ayurvedic education is something I have been long interested in. The work can certainly be pursued if there are *vaidyas* you know who think like you and who are selfless. Only then would it be useful for you to go to Dr. Gilder.

Q. It is difficult to find *vaidyas* who fully share my views. There are some who are too orthodox to allow any changes or innovations in the Ayurvedic system while others want to turn it into allopathy. In fact Ayurveda is based on theory of *tridosha*[2] and its cure is based on five basic substances.

A. What do you think of Joshi of Poona? If there is no one else, what can you do by yourself? Many doctors have told

[1] The questions, reproduced here only in summary, were asked by Vallabhram Vaidya. Gandhiji gave his answers in writing.

[2] The three humours, viz., wind (*vata*), bile (*pitta*) and phlegm (*kapha*)

me that the treatment based on *tridosha* is a fraud. It is for you to prove that it is not so. It is also for you to train *vaidyas* like you.

What Dr. Gilder has passed has also been prepared by *vaidyas*. Bhadkamkar, Lagu, Gananath Sen and Vishwanath are from among you, are they not?

Q. The doctors do not know anything about the treatment based on *tridosha*. Bhadkamkar and other *vaidyas* are more of doctors than *vaidyas*, and that is why they have approved the scheme.

A. I can arrange a meeting with Dr. Gilder. But I would advise you to see Bhadkamkar and Joshi. Have a little talk with Sushila Nayyar, with Satis Babu, too. He is here at present.

Q. I have gone through the book *Prakritik Chikitsa* which you gave me. It is full of tall talk and is not based on the author's personal experience. He has described properties of medicines without citing authority.

A. I have noted the tall talk in it. Only you can write authoritatively on medicines.

Q. I will prepare the students. But it is obvious that my syllabus will be different from that prescribed by the Government Board. So what shall we do about its registration?

A. Prepare something. Do not worry about registration. First of all train the volunteers. It is not necessary for them to have degrees. If they are good I will accommodate them. I do not care for degrees.

From Gujarati : C. W. 2930. Courtesy : Vallabhram Vaidya

587. MESSAGE TO PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 14, 1946

Man should earnestly desire the well-being of all God's creation and pray that he may have the strength to do so. In desiring the well-being of all, lies his own welfare; he who desires only his own or his community's welfare is selfish and it can never be well with him.

Harijan, 20-10-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". This was a written message read out at the meeting, it being a Silence Day.

CWMG-LXXXV

588. DEADLY EMBRACE

In Bombay a Hindu gave shelter to a Muslim friend the other day. This infuriated a Hindu mob who demanded the head of the Muslim friend. The Hindu would not surrender his friend. So both went down literally in deadly embrace. This was how it was described to me authentically. Nor is this the first instance of chivalry in the midst of frenzy. During the recent blood bath in Calcutta, stories of Muslims having, at the peril of their lives, sheltered their Hindu friends and *vice versa* were recorded. Mankind would die if there were no exhibition any time and anywhere of the divine in man.

Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, has described in glowing terms the instance of two youths rushing to still the wrath of a Muslim mob and meeting what they knew was certain death. They met Death as their true friend. Let no scoffer deny the inestimable value of such sacrifice — sacred deed. It would be mock sacrifice, if every such act ended in success so-called. The certain moral is that, if such instances are sufficiently multiplied, the senseless slaughter on either side in the name of religion will stop. One indispensable condition is that there should be no hypocrisy, no mock heroism. Let us appear as we are.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946
Harijan, 20-10-1946

589. DECENTRALIZATION

At the meeting of the Charkha Sangh at Delhi on the 10th many important subjects were discussed. One of them was decentralization. Decentralization is the soul of khadi. The ambition of the Charkha Sangh is to see that charkhas and looms find a home in the seven lakh villages of India, that crores of Indians wear only khadi and mill cloth is completely wiped out.

The time has come for a province to become self-reliant, if it wants. However, if it does not want to do so or if it cannot do so a district can become self-reliant. If it fails to do that a taluka can become self-reliant. If that is not possible a group

of villages can and if even they can't become self-reliant, a single one can. Ultimately an individual can certainly become self-reliant.

One should not ask how this can be possible. Those who are members of the Charkha Sangh should write to its Secretary in detail, and their problem will be solved. Those who possess the property of the Sangh will have to make some arrangement to return the money. Only he will be bound by the policies of the Sangh who accepts them. No one is obliged to accept them. Discipline is for those who want to observe it. There is no uniform code of conduct. There is one root but there are many branches and each branch has many leaves. Diversity in unity is a wonderful law of the world. Therefore the Charkha Sangh has adopted as its policy the giving of as much encouragement as possible to decentralization. On the other hand the branches of the Sangh should aspire to become independent as soon as possible.

NEW DELHI, October 15, 1946
[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1946

590. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DOCTOR RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI
BELGAUM

YOU HAVE TO RE-ENTER GOA BUT BEFORE DOING SO COME HERE. NO HURRY. WIRE REPLY.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

CWMG - LXXV

591. TELEGRAM TO SIDDHINATH SARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

SIDDHINATH SARMA
GENERAL SECRETARY
GAUHATI

GODS WILL. DOING WHAT IS POSSIBLE.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

592. LETTER TO H. GREENFIELD

BHANGI COLONY, READING ROAD,
NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR MR. GREENFIELD,

I have to thank you for your letters.[1] The maps will be useful. As to the amendments I have spoken to Rajaji. I have, therefore, no copy to send you. You will know all from him. Nevertheless, if there is any difficulty, I trust you will see me again or write. In any case I would like to see the final form before it is published.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. GREENFIELD, ESQ., C.S.I., C.I.E.
MEMBER, CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 166-7

[1] Both dated October 12. The first assured Gandhiji that "provisions relating to the use of structures and to the enclosure of land for salt manufacture" had not been forgotten and the second enclosed maps showing production, consumption and distribution of salt.

CWMG - LXXXV

593. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR LOTUSBORN,

Your two loving letters.

You are doing good and brave work. It will bear fruit. Hope you are keeping well.

Love.

PADMAJA NAIDU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

594. LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

DEAR PRAKASAM,

I have your two letters. Sjt. Kaleswar Rao I understand.

As to khadi, you have a difficult task, I have seen the attack in *Hindu*. Is your Cabinet with you, is the Assembly with you, is the public with you? Then you have nothing to fear. If you are to have success, you should carry the country with you. If it is not, you may drop the scheme. I have stated the conditions of success. I know that the attack is ignorant. You and I should know that often does ignorance rule the public.

I am with you in the scheme on merits. But who am I? Therefore, do not think of me, but think of the public and act.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

CWMG - LXXV

595. LETTER TO ABDUL HAMID

October 15, 1946

DEAR ABDUL HAMID,

I take it you know Gujarati. I await you every day. Your shoes are with me. How much money do you need? Why are you afraid of your parents? They don't want to suppress you. Come and see me. They looked for you at the hotel but could get no news of you.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

MIAN ABDUL HAMID
HOTEL IMPERIAL
NEW DELHI

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

596. LETTER TO KANTILAL N. KAMDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

BHAI KANTILAL,

I referred your letter to a specialist in medicine. He says what you say is right but that there are so many scientific hitches involved that it is better not to go through the process. I therefore do not want to involve myself in the matter.

M. K. GANDHI

KANTILAL NAGARDAS KAMDAR
G. S. MEDICAL COLLEGE
PAREL, BOMBAY 12

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

CWMG - LXXXV

597. A LETTER[1]

October 15, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. I have not had a minute to spare. . .[2] You take a perverted view of all that I say. God is our witness.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

598. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 15, 1946

Addressing the prayer meeting on Tuesday evening in Bhangi Colony, New Delhi, Gandhiji said he was grieved to learn that floods in Assam had taken a heavy toll of life and property. Thousands had been rendered homeless, property worth lakhs had been destroyed, and many persons were reported to have been washed away by the floods. That was an act of Nature.

But what was far worse than the news from Assam was the fact that there was rioting in Noakhali in Eastern Bengal. The papers said that the Hindus, a very small minority there, were being attacked by the Muslims. He did not want to go into the details of the happenings. He knew his doctrine did not count for much among the people today and yet it was his duty to give his advice whether they acted upon it or not. Gandhiji himself had never thought that there was any difference between Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis or others. All were brothers, sons of the same soil. But even brothers fought furiously with each other sometimes and this was what was happening today between Hindus and Muslims.

Ever since he had heard the news of Noakhali, indeed ever since the blood bath of Calcutta, he had been wondering where his duty lay. God would show him the way. But what he wanted to tell them and through

[1] This could have been addressed to Moulvi Abdul Haq; *vide* p. 343.
[2] Blank space in the source

CWMG - LXXXV

them a wider public was that it was the duty of every Hindu not to harbour any thoughts of revenge on Muslims in spite of what they did in Noakhali. That was the creed of the Congress. It had brought them thus far. But was non-violence only an expedient against the British, as some people thought, because the British were so strong?

Such an approach to non-violence was wholly wrong. The Congress had an overwhelming majority of Hindu members but it belonged to all communities. Maulana Saheb had served it for years and through it everybody, irrespective of caste or creed. His name was up again but he was withdrawing it and Gandhiji had supported his withdrawal. He was an ill man today. The new President was Shri Kripalani whom he had first met in Champaran. He was going not only to wear a crown of thorns but also lie on a bed of thorns. It was a much more difficult place than even the Cabinet members were filling.

Shri Kripalani would have to teach people how to die. That was the only way to end this fratricidal war, to learn how to die without killing.

A friend from Ahmedabad had some time ago written and said that people knew how to return blow for blow, they had learnt how to be fearless of going to jail but they had not learnt how to die without killing. It was up to him and others who believed in non-violence to teach people this supreme way by personal act.

Gandhiji said that the Muslim League was, according to Press reports, coming into the Interim Government. He hoped they were coming in to work as brothers. If they did, all would be well. And just as he had exhorted Hindus not to slay Muslims nor harbour ill-will towards them, so he appealed to the Muslim League, even if they wanted to fight for Pakistan, to fight cleanly and in a friendly manner.

Quaid-e-Azam had said how everyone would receive justice in Pakistan. It was as good as Pakistan where they were in the majority and he implored them to treat Hindus as blood brothers and not as enemies. He hoped both Hindus and Muslims would vow not to hurt each other henceforth. Unless they did this he would like to proclaim from the housetops that they had not got and would never get the independence they craved for. No man or people could be free who followed the law of the jungle.

The Hindustan Times, 16-10-1946

599. TALK WITH ASSAM DEPUTATION

[Before *October 16, 1946*]

In the course of his reply to the Deputation,[1] Gandhiji said that Assam need have no fear. Pandit Nehru's broadcast had made no change in the Congress stand as regards the grouping of provinces and Assam would be able to frame its future constitution by itself. Gandhiji added:

The Congress is an institution of the brave, not of cowards. The Congress would certainly help Assam if she marches on with courage.

The Hindu, 16-10-1946

600. TELEGRAM TO NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI

October 16, 1946

NARSEEBHAI DEVSHI
RANAVAV

YOU MAY COME THOUGH BUSY.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

601. TELEGRAM TO JANARDAN PRASAD

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

JANARDAN PRASAD
LAHERIA SARAI

AM GLAD HE[2] IS DELIVERED FROM AGONY. WE SHOULD ALL REJOICE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Deputation, headed by Maulana Tayabulla, President of Assam Provincial Congress Committee, had expressed the "strong attitude" of Assam with regard to Grouping.

[2] Brijkishore Prasad, who had died on October 15, 1946

CWMG - LXXXV

602. TELEGRAM TO YASHMILAP

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

YASHMILAP
LAHORE
INSUFFICIENT DATA FOR JUDGMENT.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

603. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR DR. HOLMES[1],

Your kind letter of 27-9-1946 and the little book came into my hands only yesterday. His goods had to follow Devdas. He could not carry them in his 'plane'.

I am glad Devdas made it a point to see you, no matter how busy he was.

The book I am keeping on my desk, in the fond hope that I shall snatch a few minutes to drink in the wisdom it contains.

The rest you get from the papers.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : C. W. 10967. Courtesy : S. P. K. Gupta. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] American Unitarian clergyman, pastor of the Community Church of New York

CWMG-LXXXV

604. LETTER TO LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

So you are two years ahead of me. You should try as we all should to live the full span of life—125 years. I seem to have lost the equilibrium I thought I would have to entitle me to entertain the wish. May you have what I seem for the moment to miss.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LADY PETHICK-LAWRENCE
11 OLD SQUARE
LINCOLN'S INN
LONDON, W. C. 2

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

605. LETTER TO MADALASA

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. MADU,

I should like you not to violate your resolution.[1] If you are busy, you may write only a post-card.

Thank God Rajat has recovered.

The love of husband and wife should be like that of intimate friends, and perfectly pure. They should share each other's joys and sorrows and must be able to tolerate each other's weaknesses. They should be generous to each other and perfect understanding should prevail between them. They should entertain no suspicions against and keep back nothing from each other.

[1] The addressee had resolved to write to Gandhiji on every Tuesday but for some reason had not been able to write on one of the Tuesdays.

CWMG - LXXV

I think this is enough. For examples of such love ask me when we meet.

Blessings to all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 330

606. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

Two letters of yours are lying in front of me. I started writing a reply as soon as I received the second one, but laid it aside when the people for whose sake I am here came in. I am, therefore, writing the reply today.

I will say nothing about Nuremberg. In barbarity there are no comparisons. Whether it is here or there, it is all "here".

It is not correct to say that I have abandoned constructive work to come here, nor that I have yielded to the temptation of politics. In fact life cannot be divided into compartments. The organs of the body are called by different names, but the body is one. The same is true about life. But since you think that it is an error on my part, you should believe it to be so. One day you will realize your error and see the unity of my life, or reform me. I have never laboured under the delusion that what I believe is true. Yes, what I believe is true for myself, otherwise I would cease to be a satyagrahi. The same rule applies to all.

And now your particular question. I should like the girls to remain unmarried, but they cannot be forced to do so. We must, therefore, help those who wish to get married.

It was, and is, Acharya Bhagawat's duty to plead with you and other co-workers and carry them with him in whatever he did.[1] He made a mistake in doing what he did without consulting you. You also should not tolerate his improper conduct through your desire for gaining something from him. But you did that. In this matter, too, the final decision must be yours.

[1] Acharya Bhagawat had persuaded women workers of the Kasturba Trust to get married and even arranged their marriages.

CWMG - LXXXV

For occasions do arise when one has to swallow such bitter draughts. I have merely explained a general principle to you.

Please understand that I have no time to write more than this.

If Sushila, who is here, has understood the situation better, she will write to you. I am observing silence. It is doing me good. I was afraid that I might break down. More when we meet.

I was not happy that the meeting of the Agents[1] did not take place.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 10449. Also C. W. 6888. Courtesy: Prema Kantak

607. LETTER TO DURGA M. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. DURGA,

Rest assured that I will not go against your wishes and encourage Bablo in any way. I also read the letter from Narahari. I shall not enter into any argument because now there is no question of sending Bablo to Afghanistan.

I think it is right for you to stay wherever Bablo may be living. I also like the idea of [his] working for Nayee Talim. Let us all wish that he may keep good health and grow strong in body, mind and spirit.

My return to Sevagram is again delayed. Everything is in the hands of God.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. DURGABEHN DESAI
ASHRAM, SEVAGRAM

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

[1] Provincial representatives of the Kasturba Trust

CWMG - LXXV

608. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

October 16, 1946

CHI. BABUDI (SHARDA),

I have your letter. Your weight will increase if you eat properly. Shakaribehn should try hip-bath and friction-bath. She should put a cold mud pack on the part of the head affected by migraine. I am held up here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C. W. 100671. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

609. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. As far as I can tell I am here till the 23rd. But you should understand that I live from moment to moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 371

610. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 16, 1946

Gandhiji said that he could not sense any generosity in the nomination of a Harijan[1] by the Muslim League in their quota of five seats especially when he read of what was happening in East Bengal.

A man like himself ought to be glad, they might say, that another seat had been given to a Harijan. But he would be deceiving himself and

[1] Jogendranath Mandal

Mr. Jinnah if he said so. Mr. Jinnah had always been of the opinion that Muslims and Hindus were two nations, that the League was a purely communal organization. How then could they nominate a Harijan to represent them? Gandhiji said he feared that the League's mode of entrance into the Cabinet had not been straight. He was, therefore, forced to wonder whether they had come into the Cabinet also to fight. He hoped, nevertheless, that his fears would be proved wrong and that they would work there as brothers, determined to serve India as a whole. He hoped, too, that the Harijan member would prove a worthy son and servant of India.

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to Babu Brijkishore Prasad of whose death he had learned in the morning. It was a custom to condole with the relatives of the deceased. But Gandhiji had said in his telegram that they should rejoice that Brijkishore Babu had been relieved of his physical suffering. He had first met him at the Lucknow Congress and then when he went to assist the indigo labourers of Champaran, he had realized the sterling worth of Babu Brijkishore from the beginning of his acquaintance. Dr. Rajendra Prasad looked upon him as his chief.

Babu Brijkishore was a man of his word, honest and a true servant not only of Bihar but of the whole of India. Gandhiji became closely associated with Brijkishore Babu, so much so that he sent his daughter, Prabhavati Devi, to Sabarmati Ashram. She became as Gandhiji's own daughter. She married Shri Jayprakash Narayan. Brijkishore Babu had been a star in the firmament of Bihar and his memory would always be cherished.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1946

611. *HAND-SPUN* v. *MILL CLOTH*

The Premier of Madras has fallen foul of the big capitalist interests such as the Chamber of Commerce and even some Congressmen. I have had cuttings sent to me from the Madras Press. I am sorry to say that the criticism seems to me to be interested and ignorant.

My name has been dragged in the controversy. That I sponsored the Premier's scheme should not affect a dispassionate discussion of the very simple problem.

The simple question is merely this: can khadi become universal in Madras if encouragement is given by the Madras Government to new mills being erected or old ones being so expanded as to enable them to double production? Are the villagers expected to be so simple as not to understand that it

CWMG - LXXV

would be merely playing with khadi if mill cloth, heavily aided, is to be dumped down in their midst, probably at a rate cheaper even than cotton required to weave a particular length of calico? This happened when Japan sent her calico to India.

The Madras scheme is undoubtedly meant to utilize a part of the idle hours of the villagers for spinning sufficient yarn to clothe themselves. Is it chimerical to induce and expect the people to utilize their idle hours to do useful, national, honest labour?

It will be time to declaim against the Madras Government when there is a feasible scheme to find useful and more remunerative employment for all who need work. It is hardly an honourable pastime to dismiss from consideration honest servants of the nation by dubbing them idealists, dreamers, fanatics and faddists.

Let not capitalists and other entrenched personages range themselves against the poor villagers and prevent them from bettering their hard lot by dignified labour.

The great flaw about new mills in the Madras scheme was detected by me. It was when the Textile Commissioner was convinced of the absurdity of the two things running side by side and the feasibility of the scheme as envisaged by the A. I. S. A. that he ventured to recommend it to the Madras Government. His reputation will be at stake if it is impracticable or unworkable, not the critics'.

This is work for democracy by a democratic Government.

Hence the scheme must be popular at least where it is to be tried.

It must not be one man's scheme but the whole Government's.

It must have the backing of the Legislature.

In no case may it smack of compulsion.

It must be intrinsically practicable and of benefit to the masses.

These conditions of success are all reduced to writing. The Government has accepted them *in toto* after, I understand, full discussion with experts and among themselves.

Let it be remembered that the existing Madras mills will not be touched at present. That the whole mill industry will be affected if the scheme spreads like wildfire, as I expect some day such a thing must, goes without saying. Let not the largest capitalist rue the day when and if it comes.

The only question then worth considering is whether the Madras Government are honest and competent. If they are not,

everything will go wrong. If they are, the scheme must be blessed by all and must succeed.

NEW DELHI, October 17, 1946
Harijan, 27-10-1946

612. TELEGRAM TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

Express NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DOCTOR LOHIA
RAMNIVAS THALAKWADI
BELGAUM

PROBABLY DELHI SOMEWHAT UNCERTAIN.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

613. TELEGRAM TO MEDH

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

MEDH
CARE MITRAVADAN DHRU, SANKADI SHERY
RUGHNATH BUMB'S POLE, AHMEDABAD

THOUGH MY MOVEMENTS UNCERTAIN YOU CAN COME.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

614. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 17, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

This is a mere love letter, not a news letter. I hope you had a comfortable journey and that the little boil was not too troublesome. I see you had to negotiate stairs. Hope it did no damage.

CWMG - LXXXV

It is after 3 o'clock now and yet the expected wire has not come. But I shall continue to expect it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4178. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7814

615. LETTER TO T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DEAR NAMBIAR,

Why write in English? Not to know the inter-provincial language, Hindustani, of India is worse than praying after sunset or eating during sunset or not smearing the forehead. God can be worshipped at any time and no one is worse off for not smearing the forehead.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

T. R. NARAYAN NAMBIAR, B.A.,B.L.
THUCKALAY, TRAVANCORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

616. LETTER TO LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

DEAR LAXMI KANT,

Your p. c. All eatables are . . .[1] food whether vegetables, fruit, milk, cereals, pulses, eggs or flesh meat.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LAXMI KANT V. PRABHU
C/O CAP. TARNSEJRA
AQUANDA
POST GOA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Illegible in the source

CWMG - LXXXV

617. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. PRABHA,

Yesterday I got the news of your father's[1] demise. I was glad. He was released from pain.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you got my wire.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3586

618. LETTER TO GANGA P. BHATT

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. GANGA,

I had your earlier letter. If you have to follow Purushottam it is no more than your dharma. You ought now to give up your hankering after social service. Purushottam has some kink somewhere but I cannot place it. He ought to withdraw from some field of work or other. He alone can know best whether his body will stand up to it, whether he can do as much as this. If he cannot, you must give up your attachment [for social service], but this too appears difficult. You may therefore go on living as seem best to you. I am held up here.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN PURUSHOTTAM
29 BHAWANI PETH
POONA 2

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

[1] Brijkishore Babu; *Vide* also p. 466.

619. LETTER TO MANILAL B. DESAI

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your long but detailed and interesting letter. I don't get any time to write letters. I am simply stuck here and cannot get away.

It is unfortunate that Gangabehn left. She is such a public-spirited worker. But this is how a woman's life is. A man may desert his wife for any reason; a woman cannot do likewise even for the sake of selfless service. This is a flaw in dharma but it has gone so deep that it cannot be got rid of.[1]

You must have a woman worker with you and if possible you should train one locally. Only intense purity on the part of all of you can bring about this result. Act only after full consideration. Don't be rash. Never mind if you have to carry on without a woman worker. If all of you are absolutely pure you will find one. Maybe Gangabehn will herself come back. We were hoping to have Kanchan but it cannot be thought of for the present. Amtussalaam is a big person. She might have to go to Bengal. Moreover, she will not stay there without me.

I cannot think of anyone else.

What you are doing is good.

It is now 6 o'clock in the morning and I must have my constitutional. So be content with this much.

Blessings to all.

MANILAL
URULI KANCHAN (POONA)

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

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LXXXV

620. LETTER TO K. T. SHAH

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI KHUSHAL SHAH,

I have gone through your statement and made a few changes that I thought were warranted. I have kept the substance intact. A point suggested itself and so I have added a paragraph which you may accommodate at the right place.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI K. T. SHAH
BARODA HOUSE
DELHI

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

621. LETTER TO SUNDARAM

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

CHI. SUNDARAM,

I got your letter in beautiful Tamil handwriting. I could follow the whole of it. Panditji[1], I hope, is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 3178

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya

CWMG - LXXV

622. LETTER TO DATAR

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI DATAR,

When will your work begin? When we work for someone on payment we have to observe a time-limit; the same applies to altruistic work.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DATAR
NIJADHAM
URULI KANCHAN

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

623. LETTER TO S. M. CHITRE

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

BHAI CHITRE,

I have your letter.

Do what you can by your own effort. Why do you write in English?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S. M. CHITRE
HARDIKAR HOUSE
BHANDARA, C. P.

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

CWMG - LXXXV

624. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 17, 1946

Gandhiji referred again to the tragic happenings in Noakhali and Tippera districts in East Bengal.

What hurt him very much more than the killings was the fact that women were being carried away, abducted and converted to Islam. Of course women generally did not carry swords. The Rani of Jhansi had one. All could not be Ranis. But he would remind them of the incomparable power of Sita whom all the physical might of Ravana could not defile. Women must learn how to die before a hair of their head could be injured. He would like to say to the Hindus wherever they were in the minority and *vice versa* to the Muslims not to die helplessly but face death bravely and without a murmur. Then only could the terrible killings now going on in Noakhali and Tippera come to a stop.

Sarat Babu, brother of Subhas Babu, who knew no barriers of caste or creed, will be visiting Bengal in a day or two. He was ill but that was not going to deter him. Shri Kripalani, the President-elect, and his wife were also going to do what they could to stop the slaughter. They were not going there to protect one party but to stop the fratricidal warfare. It was a good beginning for Acharya Kripalani and his wife.

The fair name of Bengal was being tarnished—Bengal which had given them so much, Bengal the home of Gurudev, whose bhajan they had just heard. The hymn asked God to make the devotee pure of heart and fearless. It was with this hymn on their lips that they were going and it was the audience's duty to wish them every success.

Gandhiji referred to two letters he had received today in which the auctions he had been holding had been referred to as gambling and black-marketing. It was man's duty to keep his speech correct but these friends had not weighed their words before writing.

Gambling and black-marketing were indulged in for personal ends. Men even died for their selfish ends and stooped to anything to make money. The money spent at the auctions here was given for the Harijan cause. The articles bought were not for use but to be kept as souvenirs for the children to remember what their parents did to remove untouchability. Of course anyone could misrepresent a pure act as an impure one. Such base misrepresentation could not be helped.

The Hindustan Times, 18-10-1946

625. DISCUSSION WITH CO-WORKERS[1]

[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

In the course of the talk, one of them asked Gandhiji whether he would recommend fasting to check the orgy of communal madness that was spreading in Bengal. Gandhiji's reply was in the negative. He narrated how a valuable colleague from Ahmedabad had invited him to immolate himself. "We believe in the non-violent way but lack the strength. Your example would steady our wavering faith and fortify us."

The logic was perfect and the temptation great.

But I resisted it and said no. There is no inner call. When it comes, nothing will keep me back. I have reasoned with myself too about it. But I need not set forth my reasons. Let people call me a coward if they please. I have faith that when the hour arrives God will give me the strength to face it and I won't be found unready.

Fasting cannot be undertaken mechanically. It is a powerful thing but a dangerous thing if handled amateurishly. It requires complete self-purification, much more than is required in facing death without a thought of retaliation. One such act of perfect sacrifice would suffice for the whole world. Such is held to be Jesus' example.

The idea is that you appropriate to yourself and assimilate the essence of His sacrifice symbolically represented by the bread and wine of the Eucharist. A man who was completely innocent offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act. "It is finished" were the last words of Jesus, and we have the testimony of his four disciples as to its authenticity.

But whether the Jesus tradition is historically true or not I do not care. To me it is truer than history because I hold it to be possible and it enshrines an eternal law—the law of vicarious and innocent suffering taken in its true sense.

A Hindu and a Mussalman braved the fury of the maddened crowd in Bombay and went down together literally

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Travail", 18-10-1946. The interviewers were two co-workers from Bengal who had come to seek Gandhiji's permission to go to Bengal before he himself went.

clasped in a fatal embrace but refused to desert each other. Rajabali and Vasantrao Hegishte similarly fell to the frenzy of a mob in the attempt to quell it. "What came of it?" people might ask, "the fire still continues to rage." I do not think for a moment it has gone in vain. We may not see the effect today. Our non-violence is as yet a mixed affair. It limps. Nevertheless, it is there and it continues to work like leaven in a silent and invisible way, least understood by most. It is the only way.

As a further illustration of his remarks he recalled the history of the Champaran Satyagraha. There had been several bloody risings within half a century preceding it against the infamous compulsory indigo plantation. But each attempt had only resulted in fastening the rivets tighter than ever before. Then came the Champaran Mass Satyagraha, untainted by acts of violence, and a century-old evil was overthrown in less than six months.

Go forth, therefore. I have done. I won't detain you for a day longer. You have my blessings. And I tell you there will be no tears but only joy if tomorrow I get the news that all the three of you are killed.

"It will be pure joy to be so killed," they echoed.

Go, but mark my words. Let there be no foolhardiness about it. You should go because you feel you must and not because I ask you to.

Harijan, 27-10-1946

626. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
[On or before *October 18, 1946*]

Gandhiji remarked at the evening prayer gathering that day that he had received numerous messages from Bengal inviting him to go there and still the raging fury. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity, he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee.[2] But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not hesitate to anticipate the date. His heart was in Bengal.

Harijan, 27-10-1946

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's article "The Travail", 18-10-1946

[2] This was held on the 23rd, 24th and 25th October, under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru.

CWMG-LXXV

How to Combat Unholy Boycott

A correspondent from Mercara (Coorg) writes to say that many youthful reformers do not believe in animal sacrifice offered to the village gods. Therefore, he says, the villagers have threatened to boycott them. What are the reformers to do?

Reformers all over the world have no easy task. The threatened boycott should have no meaning for the reformers. They must be ready and willing to submit to the hardships entailed by the boycott. They should on no account be angry with the villagers who honestly believe in superstitious practices. It is a question of the real education of the people. These village gods have no existence except in the villagers' imagination. Unmindful of the boycott, they should calmly persevere in their reasoning with the villagers, rendering them all the time such services that the villagers may be in need of. Patience and perseverance will overcome the mountains of difficulties that may face the reformers. The reformers may not summon police assistance against the villagers.

Ways of Violence

A straight line is one. Non-violence is a straight line. Lines that are not straight are many. A child who has learnt how to handle a pen can draw as many lines as he wishes. He won't draw a straight line except perhaps by chance. Several readers ask me whether in the violence "permitted" by me several things mentioned by them could be included. Strange to say all the letters received are in English! The writers should reread my article and they will at once know why I cannot answer those questions. I am unfit probably for the simple reason that I have never practised violence. Above all I have never permitted violence. I have simply stated two grades of bravery and cowardice. The only thing lawful is non-violence. Violence can never be lawful in the sense meant here, i. e., not according to man-made law but according to the law made by Nature for man. Though violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence or for the defence of the defenceless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission. The

latter befits neither man nor woman. Under violence, there are many stages and varieties of bravery. Every man must judge this for himself. No other person can or has the right.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

628. ELOQUENT FIGURES

When Shri S. Venkateswaran, the Provincial Textile Commissioner, was in Delhi specially for the purpose of the Madras khadi scheme, I asked him to give me his own figures on the assumption that Madras had no mills and had to clothe the whole Presidency in khadi. Here are the figures[1] which speak for themselves:

Is it extravagant to expect every five persons out of eight to spin one hour per day, say, for love of the country of their birth?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

629. NOTES

FIREWORKS DURING DIWALI DAYS[2]

I have received several letters complaining of the use of fireworks. The complaints are justified. I wrote against this practice in the columns of the *Navajivan*. I do not know whether the writing had any effect. At present when fire surrounds us it is a sin to have fireworks, illuminations with ghee or oil or electric lamps and consume sweets.

WHAT ABOUT DAKORE?[3]

A friend from the Kheda District, who keeps Bhangi men and women in his house as his own brothers and sisters, writes: "Big temples in Madras are being thrown open to Harijans. Is it not strange that the deluded Gujarat should not throw

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

[3] A translation of the original Gujarati published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946, is reproduced here.

CWMG - LXXV

open the Dakore temple?'' If the deluded Gujaratis become sane, Dakore temple can be thrown open today. But if Gujarat must find joy in hugging a shameful custom, who can prevent her?

On the Trustees of the Dakore temple rests a heavy responsibility.

Victims of Duty

I give below an extract[1] from a letter from a Parsee friend. These two gentlemen are certainly worthy of commendation for their sacrifice and bravery. It is really baffling why neither the Congress nor the League said anything in their praise. There must be something at the back of it.

Why these Tears?[2]

In his letter of birthday greetings to me, Professor Satish Kalelkar relates an interesting and instructive Chinese story, which I give below for the benefit of the readers of the *Harijanbandhu*.

> Dr. Wellington Koo, at one of his meetings in London, once narrated a sweet story about a Chinese family. The eldest member of the family was considered, as with us, the head of the family. As such he had the right to use an ancient family stick by way of punishment whenever necessary. Once a hundred-years-old man used the stick on the back of his seventy-five-years-old son. Tears ran down the withered cheeks of the son. The father asked the cause of the tears which he had never before seen him shed on a similar occasion. The son replied, ''Father your stick has lost its original force. Your feebleness hurts me. Hence the tears.''

Kakasaheb was in Delhi with me when the letter was received. I gave it to him to read and he said such things had happened in our country in the past and must be happening even now. He narrated the following incident:

> One day a High Court judge of Madras is said to have gone out with a friend at the end of the day's work instead of going home as usual. When, therefore, he reached home late in the evening he met his mother standing in

[1] Not translated here. The letter described the death of Gazdar and Nawdar of St. John's Ambulance corps during the riots in Bombay while they were engaged in removing the wounded.

[2] A translation of this was also published in *Harijan*, 27-10-1946.

the doorway waiting for him. "Why have you come late?" asked the old lady with a slap on his face. Tears rolled down the son's cheeks.

The friend remarked that it was but natural that a grown-up learned man like him should feel insulted on being slapped like that. It was strange on the mother's part to have slapped him.

"No, there was no insult in that slap," promptly replied the judge. "It is my proud privilege to receive a slap from my revered mother now and then. My eyes became wet only because I missed this time the strength that used to be in her slap. Evidently she has grown old and weak. Should not that hurt a dutiful son?"

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

630. WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR HARIJANS?

A gentleman writes the following pathetic letter[1] :

It is true. The correspondent himself is a Harijan *sevak*. It becomes difficult to bring about any reform when fraud is practised in the name of religion. This we see happening every now and then. Then again we are cowards. I have found only one royal road: namely, that one who has seen Truth should expound it through personal example, be generous towards opponents, never give up patience and remain happily engrossed in his own work.

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had lamented that people had not adopted Gandhiji's programme for eradicating untouchability and asked him what changes he would suggest.

CWMG - LXXV

631. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

The expected wire came after 5 p. m. yesterday. Everybody is anxious to know the result of medical examination there.

I have been incessantly writing for *Harijan*. Have practically or wholly finished. It is now 3 o'clock.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4179. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7815

632. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. KAKA,

I have your two letters but not the article. I received the story, and it is going to the press.

I am engrossed in work. I am observing silence, it is that which is sustaining me. I have not been able to get the peace that I seek. I am striving for it. I will, therefore, reply to your second letter later on.

I am enclosing Vidyalankar's scheme.[1] Please read it. Let Shriman also read it and then give me your opinion.

I see no possibility of my being able to go there in the immediate future. I feel that fate will take me to Bengal. It seems I shall be here till the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 10977

[1] *Vide* p. 488.

CWMG - LXXXV

633. LETTER TO HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. HEMANTKUMAR,

Why talk about prejudice? We should not think of it. You have made much improvement in your Gujarati. Continue to show such good results.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HEMANTKUMAR
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI

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

634. LETTER TO CHANDRAGUPTA VIDYALANKAR

October 18, 1946

BHAI CHANDRAGUPTA,

I have received the scheme. I have gone through it. You have taken great pains. Why have you put languages in two sections? It will be a source of quarrels and so far as I can see no purpose will be served. I have sent the scheme to Kaka-saheb and Shrimanji.[1] They will scrutinize it more thoroughly. More afterwards.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 7209. Also C. W. 4865

[1] *Vide* p. 487.

CWMG - LXXXV

635. LETTER TO JANAKIRAM

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

BHAI JANAKIRAM,

Your case has appeared in the newspapers; there is no need to say anything more.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JANAKIRAM
KADAVUR
VIZAGAPATAM
SOUTH INDIA

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

636. LETTER TO PARWANI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

BHAI PARWANI,

Personally I see nothing wrong in what you are doing.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PARWANI
TEJ
KOTRI, SINDH

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

CWMG - LXXXV

637. LETTER TO RATNAMAYEE DEVI

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

CHI. RATNAMAYEE,

It is well that Dikshitji's[1] wife has left this world.[2] We should learn from such a death.

BAPU

SHRI RATNAMAYEE DEVI
BALIKA ASHRAM
OKHLA

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

638. CHARKHA MANDAL[3]

The Charkha Mandal has evolved out of the three spinning classes held in the Bhangi Colony.[4] How I wish such Mandals would spring up all over the country! Before that can happen a number of Mandals should be opened in Delhi and function regularly. There are so many clubs formed for sports. Why should we not have organizations for useful work?

NEW DELHI, October 18, 1946

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 18-10-1946

[1] Sitacharan Dikshit, who later served as Editor (Hindi) of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*

[2] She had been ailing for a long time.

[3] Kanu Gandhi's outline of the Charkha Mandal, on which this is the comment, is not reproduced here. The Charkha Mandal had been founded to encourage community spinning at fixed times and places.

[4] *Vide* p. 373.

CWMG - LXXV

639. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

NEW DELHI,
October 18, 1946

Gandhiji advised the women in East Bengal to commit suicide by poison or some other means to avoid dishonour. . . . Yesterday he told the women to suffocate themselves or to bite their tongues to end their lives. But two doctors, B. C. Roy of Calcutta and Sushila Nayyar, had informed him that such means of suicide were impossible.

The only way known to medicine for instant self-immolation was a strong dose of poison. If this was so, he, the speaker, would advise everyone running the risk of dishonour to take poison before submission to dishonour. He had, however, heard from those given to yogic practices that it was possible by some yogic practice to end life. He would try to inquire. His was not an idle idea. He meant all he had said.

The very fact of steeling oneself for death before dishonour braced one for the struggle. A woman in our country was brought up to think that her place was with her husband or on the funeral pyre. He held wholly different views. He held that a woman could be as brave as the bravest man. If one half of India's humanity was paralysed, India could never really feel free. He would far rather see India's women trained to wield arms than that they should feel helpless. He knew, however, that arms were a poor weapon when it came to the matter of defending one's honour against odds. Honour knew no surrender to any power on earth.

Gandhiji then referred to a letter received from a Muslim friend to the effect that although he was ready to condemn atrocities by Muslims he preferred to be silent when Hindus committed them. He could only say that the charge was baseless. To him all human beings were like blood brothers.

Lastly, he mentioned messages received from Bengal inviting him to go there and help in restoring law and order. Whilst he did not believe that he had any such capacity he was anxious to go to Bengal. Only he thought it was his duty to wait till Pandit Nehru's return and the meeting of the Working Committee. But he was in God's hands. If he clearly felt that he should wait for nothing, he would not wait.

The Hindustan Times, 19-10-1946

[1] The report has been touched up.

640. THE COMING CONGRESS SESSION[1]

A basketful of letters are before me in connection with the Meerut Congress session to be held shortly. The correspondents complain of the 'lavish' expenditure that is advertised to be incurred in connection with it. I must refuse to sit in judgment upon the doings of the Reception Committee. I have neither the wish nor the required leisure to study the facts. The following, however, I can say without the necessity of studying facts and figures. It may be of some use to the Committee. There should be no *tamashas*. The Congress session is any day a serious business to be tackled seriously. There can be no side-shows. Crowds should not be attracted. The fact of the Congress session being held is by itself enough attraction.

All illuminations should be strictly avoided. Food to be provided should be of the simplest kind requiring little or no fat and sugar in its preparation. Uninvited guests should bring their own provisions or refrain from coming.

Sanitary arrangements should be perfect and serve as a lesson to all comers. Sight-seers should be discouraged.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

Harijan, 27-10-1946

641. I AM DEFEATED

Letters continue to rain down on me regarding uncertified khadi. They are from persons of repute and experience. I do not find any flaw in my argument. My defeat would lie in the fact that though there are large stocks of uncertified khadi it is very difficult to find in it genuine khadi. If this is true then I have to withdraw my words and I do so.

It is necessary to understand in what lies the defeat. I do not have any doubt and indeed no one has any doubt that genuine khadi, even if it is uncertified, is superior to mill cloth. But my friends laugh at me because genuine khadi is always certified and what is available in the market is an imitation only. It is adulterated; there is fraud in it and the

[1] This was published under the heading "Notes".

CWMG - LXXV

desire to cheat. I must accept that such khadi is as good as mill cloth. I have come to know from reliable sources that because of my writings some dishonest traders were able to increase their loot. I therefore hope that from now onwards a khadi buyer will go only to a certified khadi bhandar and buy whatever is available there. He should not even by mistake go to a store where uncertified khadi is sold.

Those who can prove to me that they are unable to spin I will consider as friends and give them the certificate that I have received yarn from them, because I always have yarn accumulated with me.

NEW DELHI, October 19, 1946

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1946

642. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

AMTUSSALAAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

WRITING.[1] SELF MAY GO BENGAL AFTER 23RD.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 534

643. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

I have wired to you. I have no information. What can I tell you? I do not consider myself fit to guide you. Go to Bengal if you want to.

I am myself getting ready to go there. I have said so in the Press also. When God will take me there I do not know.

[1] *Vide* the following item.

CWMG - LXXXV

Tell everybody to give up any hope of my returning to Sevagram for the present. I want to return there but God won't let me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 533

644. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

NEW DELHI,
October 19, 1946

DEAR C. R.,

Here is something on salt for you, Matthai[1] and Greenfield to see. There seems to be much in what the writer says. It has no bearing on the tax which I hope is soon going.

Love.

BAPU

RAJAJI
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

645. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. AMRIT,

Your wire came in last night. So you were still suffering. That did signify subsiding. Let me hope it is better as I am writing this 5.35 p.m.

Here is a letter from V. G. D. You will see amusing remarks about the vocabulary. I must fully share the guilt with you about "architect".[2] It should [have] been नक्शा. We must give a list of amendments. You may return the letter and I shall make notes.

Renuka and her sister were with me last night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C. W. 4180. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G. N. 7816

[1] John Matthai, finance Minister in the Interim Government

[2] The reference presumably is to the meaning of the word given in "Hindustani Dictionary" published in *Harijan*, 13-10-1946, where "architect" was explained as इमारत बनाने वाला

CWMG - LXXV

646. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 20, 1946

CHI. LILY,

I see in your talk the same shallowness as before. It does not seem good. You talk without thinking. You are not to accompany me to Bengal. You must finish your study. After that you may devote yourself to service as much as you wish. I will then gladly accept it. It would be a different matter if you were to lay down your life in Bombay. I don't like your doing no work here. You need not wait to be asked to do something. I am not referring to household chores. You can do some reading or writing or spinning. I see you doing none of that. I wish you would do some fine carding and spinning, repair spinning-wheels which go out of order and learn weaving. You will do all these things only if you feel a spontaneous urge to do them. But it does not seem likely. I shall be satisfied even if you become only a good doctor and do service.

Since it is now time for you to leave for Bombay, what more shall I say? Stop the bleeding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 9603. Also C. W. 6575. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

647. LETTER TO BAPUBHAI VASHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI BAPUBHAI,

I have your letter. Bengal has caught hold of me so completely that I may say I have absolutely no time whatever. You may therefore glean whatever you can from *Harijan*. When you are completely recovered do come to Sevagram if I am there. Write to Pyarelal.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BAPUBHAI VASHI
KAPOL SANATORIUM, BLOCK NO. 6
DEOLALI (G.I. P.)

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

648. LETTER TO BLIND STUDENTS

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BLIND STUDENTS,

Thanks for the gift you have sent through Jayantilal on the occasion of Charkha Jayanti. It will be used in the service of Harijans.

Those who blindly drift along although they can see are truly blind. Those who go along the straight path are not blind.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

CWMG - LXXXV

649. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. HARJIVAN,

You have fallen ill again. Now get well soon. I am held up here for the time being.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. HARJIVAN KOTAK
SHRI LALLUBHAI GORDHANDAS HOSPITAL
MANINAGAR
AHMEDABAD

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

650. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI MANU SUBEDAR,

I am going to make use of matter from your published article.

Have you seen what I have been writing recently on khadi? If you have, do you agree with it? If you have studied the Madras scheme,[1] do you see any flaw in it? Don't hesitate to ask for any information regarding it that you may need.

Do you at all spin? Do you know carding and other processes? As I read your article I could see your faith in khadi and village industries.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 472-4.

651. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SUSHILA,

I am sending you this (Manilalbhai's letter). Nowadays I mostly observe silence. There is a great load of work. God carries it and hence I don't feel it so much. The less one's faith in Him the more one feels the burden. And I am certain there can be no burden where there is perfect faith. I take it that all of you are well. My return to Sevagram has been postponed for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SUSHILA GANDHI
AKOLA

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

652. LETTER TO VACHHRAJ T. DOSHI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI VACHHRAJ,

I got your two letters. I hope you got Champabehn's letter. Please do what is necessary. There is no sign of my going there for the present. You should all do what you can. You can have some additions and alterations made. We had better have Preston Grover in the regular way.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI VACHHRAJ TRIBHUWANDAS DOSHI
PANCHGANI

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

CWMG - LXXV

653. LETTER TO MAHESH DATT MISHRA

October 20, 1946

CHI. MAHESH,

I have gone through your letter. I see that you have not yet recovered. Here you have constipation. For this you must be at fault somewhere. If there is any deficiency in the diet, it should not be so.

I have made up my mind about you. You must work in *Harijan*. Therefore your Hindi and Urdu should be strong. If your English could also improve, it would be still better. I want to put the entire burden of *Harijan Sevak* on you. The Hindustani should be excellent. Today it is not so. If you do not like this work tell me. The English translation should be of good quality. Rajkumari compiles the dictionary. That you should do.

If you have to go home, it would be well if you went now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G. N. 6714. Also C. W. 4458

654. LETTER TO DHIRENDRA

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI DHIRENDRA BABU,

I had your letter. Please forgive me for the delay in replying. You can now take charge of the purse presented to me and spend the amount in accordance with the scheme you have sent to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DHIRENDRA
VIDYA ASHRAM

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

655. LETTER TO ISHWARDAS NATWAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI ISHWARDAS,

I have your two letters. Not a pie should be spent on your son's wedding.

The [desire to] come to me is ignorant attachment. Besides, there is nothing certain about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ISHWARDAS NATWAR
MOHAN ASHRAM
HARDWAR, U. P.

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

656. LETTER TO MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI MAHAVIR PRASAD,

I have your letter. I am writing to Dr. Katju.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD PODDAR
AROGYA MANDIR
GORAKHPUR, U. P.

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

CWMG - LXXV

657. LETTER TO KAILAS NATH KATJU

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

BHAI KAILASNATHJI,

Read the enclosed letter. My suggestion is that the work will be done more quickly if you appoint someone for such jobs.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

658. LETTER TO KALYAN CHOUDHARI

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

SISTER,

I have your letter. I have nothing to give. You should remain there and serve.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KALYAN CHOUDHARI
C/O SHRI JAGDISH CHANDRA DUTT CHOUDHARI
MOHALLA MALIGUNJ
LUDHIANA, PUNJAB

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

CWMG - LXXXV

659. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

Your mental state does not appear to be good. What is it that has appeared in *Jeevan-Sakha*? It contains something about you which is not at all good. It does not suggest humility. Now, what are you going to do? It is not good to hang around here aimlessly. I allowed you to come here because I wanted to know your wishes. It is Sushilabehn who has made you what you are, and if you cannot get on with her how are you going to do the hospital work at Sevagram? Think for yourself and make a determined effort. I cannot talk. It is better for me to observe silence today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN

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

660. LETTER TO SANKARAN

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

If you remember the particular issue of *Jeevan-Sakha*, I shall obtain it from here. Perhaps it cannot be said that you possess scientific knowledge. That you have denied being a doctor is quite proper.

You will gain nothing by going around with me. By all means work in the Talimi Sangh if Aryanayakumji will have you.

What is the need of taking Jajuji into the Trust? He carries on his own activity. I do not find any harm in your working there. He will have assistance and you will add to your experience. My experience is little. You may sleep if you must. It will not be right to retire to a village.

CWMG - LXXV

It will be good to have a talk with Su[shila]behn.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. SANKARAN

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

661. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

NEW DELHI,
October 20, 1946

Mahatma Gandhi devoted his after-prayer discourse on Sunday to answering the question put to him during the previous 24 hours as to what should be done with persons who were forcibly converted or abducted.

He said he had no hesitation in maintaining that forcible conversion was no conversion at all nor abduction a bar to the return to her home of the abducted girl. He held that no purification or penance was necessary in such cases. Hindu society was wrong when it imposed penance on such persons. They had not erred.

Gandhiji said that he had lived for years among Muslims and Christians. They had all assured him that there could be no use of force in religion. Those who resorted to force did not deserve to be called men of religion. In a sense he and his audience who believed that God was one and no other and who believed that Mohammed was one of His messengers were Muslims. But if anyone forced them or him to recite the Kalma, they would flatly refuse to obey and take the consequences.

It was his fervent hope that all good Muslims would stand up against the practices reported from the affected areas in East Bengal.

The Hindustan Times, 21-10-1946

CWMG - LXXXV

662. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 16, 1946

He who loses patience, loses Truth as well as Non-violence.

July 17, 1946

There is no happiness like Truth, no misery like untruth.

July 18, 1946

The wonder is that even though a man knows where true happiness lies, he wastes his life in pursuing untruth!

July 19, 1946

Whatever we do should be done not to please or displease anyone, but only to please God.

July 20, 1946

Even if you have told someone something a hundred times and he has not listened, you must tell him again and again. That is patience.

July 21, 1946

Accepting undesired service, which is not joyfully rendered, is a painful burden.

July 22, 1946

Great caution is necessary when a man represses his nature.

July 23, 1946

If the nature is evil, it needs not repression but casting out.

[1] Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand T. Hingorani at the latter's request, on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, 10-10-1946. These were originally in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alterations.

CWMG - LXXXV

July 24, 1946

He who wishes to save time will never do a single unnecessary thing.

July 25, 1946

He who obeys God's Law will never care for any other law which is opposed to the Divine Law.

July 26, 1946

Is it proper that one should give up a good thing not because one wishes to but for the sake of friends?

July 27, 1946

The first service is latrine-cleaning.

POONA,
July 28, 1946

Inexhaustible patience is needed if Truth is to be brought home to anyone.

July 29, 1946

However great the fury of the storm, the sea does not abandon its calm.

July 30, 1946

Why does a man become restless when he is unable to do his work?

July 31, 1946

There is goodness as well as greatness in simplicity, not in wealth.

URULI,
August 1, 1946

Whatever the crisis, the fire of love will overcome it.

August 2, 1946

Nothing turns out right so long as there is no harmony between body, mind and soul.

Saturday, August 3, 1946

Praise and censure should be alike for a votary of Truth. He will, therefore, neither listen to praise, nor be angered by censure.

August 4, 1946

He who is face to face with God does not speak, cannot speak.

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
Monday, August 5, 1946

Man has two eyes and two ears, but only one tongue; let him, therefore, do half as much talking as seeing, and half as much talking as hearing.

SEVAGRAM,
Tuesday, August 6, 1946

Man's capacity for self-deception is amazing.

Wednesday, August 7, 1946

Give all, gain all.

Thursday, August 8, 1946

Keep all, lose all.

Friday, August 9, 1946

What is 'big' or 'small' in sin? Sin is sin. To believe otherwise is self-deception.

Saturday, August 10, 1946

To destroy something is easy. To build requires great skill and care.

Sunday, August 11, 1946

We shall cease to think only of ourselves when we think of others.

Monday, August 12, 1946

Many things are wrought by patience, even as they are spoilt by impatience.

Tuesday, August 13, 1946

Simplicity cannot be affected, it should be ingrained in one's nature.

Wednesday, August 14, 1946

Man cannot raise himself by searching outside. The scope for growth lies within.

CWMG - LXXXV

Thursday, August 15, 1946

Pure love removes all weariness.

Friday, August 16, 1946

How can one claim to be human if he acts like a beast?

Saturday, August 17, 1946

When Reason and Faith are in conflict, it is better to prefer Faith.

Sunday, August 18, 1946

He who is afraid of people's censure will never be able to do anything worth while.

Monday, August 19, 1946

Everything is right and proper in its place, improper when out of place.

Tuesday, August 20, 1946

It appears that man cannot escape the snare of exaggeration.

Wednesday, August 21, 1946

Insistence (or dogmatism) may be true or false. Falsehood does not shake (or eliminate) it. Truth is not affected (or tainted) by it.

Thursday, August 22, 1946

Do not do anything do not read anything without understanding.

Friday, August 23, 1946

The Ganga flows in man's heart, yet he does not bathe in it, and remains unwashed.

Saturday, August 24, 1946

He alone can offer sacrifice who is pure, fearless and worthy.

ON THE TRAIN TO DELHI,
Sunday, August 25, 1946

Despair corrodes man.

Monday, August 26, 1946

Selfishness and fear must go if one is to realize God.

CWMG - LXXXV

NEW DELHI,
Tuesday, August 27, 1946

To surrender to force is a sign of unmanliness.

Wednesday, August 28, 1946

The real service to the Bhils would be to make them fearless and remove their despair.

Thursday, August 29, 1946

Silence above all.

Friday, August 30, 1946

The light of knowledge can never dawn on the proud.

Saturday, August 31, 1946

To quench one's thirst without the water of the Ganga and to satisfy the soul without God are both equally impossible.

September 1, 1946

Nobody progresses without opposition.

September 2, 1946

Every man should seek for the Source of his being.

September 3, 1946

He who does not know himself is lost.

September 4, 1946

The human body is like a musical instrument. Any note that is desired can be struck on it.

September 5, 1946

Thought pierces even a wall of steel.

September 6, 1946

Die and be saved.

Saturday, September 7, 1946

Faith makes the ship move.

Sunday, September 8, 1946

Why fear death when the threat is ever present?

CWMG - LXXV

Monday, September 9, 1946

We are all mad. Which of us shall call whom mad?

Tuesday, September 10, 1946

When we wipe the slate clean, we see God's signature clearly on it.

Wednesday, September 11, 1946

However lofty the ambition, even those considered the lowliest of creatures should come within its ambit.

Thursday, September 12, 1946

God and Satan cannot both occupy the throne of the heart.

Friday, September 13, 1946

Dying for religion is good; for fanaticism, neither dying nor living.

Saturday, September 14, 1946

Inner strength grows by prayer.

Sunday, September 15, 1946

If you see inner beauty, the outer will seem dull.

Monday, September 16, 1946

Life spent in service is the only fruitful life.

Tuesday, September 17, 1946

It is strange that we toil so much over externals without a care for what lies within.

Wednesday, September 18, 1946

All will be well with us if, even in the hour of our travail, we are able to realize the presence of God within us.

Thursday, September 19, 1946

The greater man's realization of the Self, the greater his progress.

Friday, September 20, 1946

A troubled mind causes more suffering than an ulcer.

Saturday, September 21, 1946

The pain of hunger is said to be severe. If we wish to live as human beings, let us rise above even this pain.

Sunday, September 22, 1946

Only experience makes us realize how hard it is to attain the state of non-attachment.

Monday, September 23, 1946

In egotism lies all trouble.

Tuesday, September 24, 1946

A life without thought is like that of a beast.

Wednesday, September 25, 1946

We have to make ourselves as nearly as possible like Him we want to reach.

Thursday, September 26, 1946

If you must be annoyed, why should it be at other people's lapses, why not at your own?

September 27, 1946

There is a lot of difference between living faith and a mere desire for faith. Man is deceived by not knowing this.

September 28, 1946

Not everyone is destined to acquire material knowledge. But all can acquire spiritual knowledge; it is their duty to do so.

Sunday, September 29, 1946

God is said to have four arms as well as a thousand. It shows that all this is mere imagery.

Monday, September 30, 1946

If we dwell on evil thoughts, they do not disappear; they are likely to become our companions. "*Dhyayato vishayan.*"

Tuesday, October 1, 1946

The simple and one hundred per cent truth is that if we dwell on nothing but Ramanama, all our thoughts and actions will be automatically right.

CWMG - LXXV

Wednesday, October 2, 1946

Man has to do God's work, but how is he to know what that is?

Thursday, October 3, 1946

The way to know what God's work is is heartfelt prayer and corresponding action.

Friday, October 4, 1946

Faith is the sun of life.

Saturday, October 5, 1946

If God keeps you, what does it matter if men reject you?

Sunday, October 6, 1946

If one man can become perfect, it is but fair to assume that all can become so.

Monday, October 7, 1946

What a pity that even though a man knows it, he still prefers to fall!

October 8, 1946

Let us think not of big things but of good things.

October 9, 1946

What does it matter if people look upon us as dreamers?

October 10, 1946

The possibility of living up to 125 years is receding. What right has he to live who has not achieved sufficient mastery over anger and attachment?

A Thought for the Day, pp. 602-88

CWMG - LXXXV

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM LOUIS FISCHER'S REPORT OF INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

PANCHGANI,
July 17, 1946

GANDHIJI : Jaiprakash will have to join me. I will not pit myself against him. In 1942, I said I was sailing out on uncharted waters. I will not do it now. I did not know the people then. I know now what I can do and what I cannot.

LOUIS FISCHER : You did not know in 1942 that there would be violence?

G. Correct.

L. F. So if the Constituent Assembly fails you will not stage a civil disobedience campaign?

G. Not unless the Socialists and the Communists are subdued by that time.

L. F. That is not likely. . . .

G. I cannot think of civil disobedience when there is so much violence in the air in India. Today some caste Hindus are not playing the game by the untouchables.

L. F. By some caste Hindus you mean some Congressmen?

G. Not many Congressmen. But there are some who have not banished untouchability from their hearts. That is the tragedy. . . . The Muslims also feel they are wronged. In an orthodox Hindu house a Muslim will not be permitted to sit on the same carpet with a Hindu and have his meal. That is false religion. India is falsely religious. It must get true religion.

L. F. You have not succeeded with Congress?

G. No, I have not. I have failed. Something, however, has been accomplished. The Harijans are admitted to the temples in Madura and in many other holy places, and the caste Hindus worship in the same temples.

L. F. Some say Hindu-Muslim relations are better and some say they are worse.

G. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders were once members of Congress. They left it because they felt the pinch of Hindu patronizing. In the

[1] *Vide* pp. 7-11 and 16-8.

beginning, the leading Congressmen were Theosophists. Mrs. Annie Besant attracted me very much. Theosophy is the teaching of Madame Blavatsky. It is Hinduism at its best. . . . Cultivated Muslims joined the Theosophists. Later, Congress membership grew and with it the Hindu patronizing attitude. The Muslims are religious fanatics, but fanaticism cannot be answered with fanaticism. Bad manners irritate. Brilliant Muslims in Congress became disgusted. They did not find the brotherhood of man among the Hindus. They say Islam is the brotherhood of man. As a matter of fact, it is the brotherhood of Muslims. Theosophy is the brotherhood of man. Hindu separatism has played a part in creating the rift between Congress and the League. Jinnah is an evil genius. He believes he is a prophet.

L. F. He is a lawyer.

G. You do him an injustice. I give you the testimony of my eighteen days of talks with him in 1944. He really looks upon himself as the saviour of Islam. . . .

L. F. But Jinnah is cold. He is a thin man. He pleads a case, he does not preach a cause.

G. I agree he is a thin man. But I don't consider him a fraud. He has cast a spell over the Muslim, who is a simple-minded man. . . .

L. F. Jinnah told me in 1942 you did not want independence. . . . He said you wanted Hindu rule.

G. He is utterly wrong. That is absurd. I am a Muslim, a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Christian, a Jew, a Parsi. He does not know me when he says I want Hindu rule. He is not speaking the truth. He is speaking like a pettifogging lawyer. Only a maniac resorts to such charges. I believe that the Muslim League will go into the Assembly. But the Sikhs have refused. They are stiff-necked like the Jews. . . .

L. F. What did you learn from your eighteen days with Jinnah?

G. I learned that he was a maniac. A maniac leaves off his mania and becomes reasonable at times. I have never regretted my talks with him. I have never been too stubborn to learn. Every one of my failures has been a stepping-stone. I could not make any headway with Jinnah because he is a maniac, but many Muslims were disgusted with Jinnah for his behaviour during the talks. . . .

July 18, 1946

L. F. I think you are afraid of the spirit of the Indian National Army and Subhas Chandra Bose. It is widespread. He has captured the imagination of the youth and you are aware of it and you fear that mood. The young generation is Indo-centric.

G. He has not captured the imagination of the country. It is too wide a term, but a section of the youth and of the women follow him. . . . The Almighty has reserved mildness for India. "The mild Hindu" is used

as a term of reproach. But I take it as a term of honour, just like Churchill's "Naked Fakir". I appropriated it as a compliment and even wrote about it to Churchill. I told Churchill I would love to be a naked fakir but was not one as yet. . . .

L. F. But you admire Bose. You believe he is alive.

G. I do not encourage the Bose legend. I did not agree with him. I do not now believe he is alive. Instinct made me believe to the contrary at one time, because he had made himself into a legendary Robin Hood.

L. F. My point is this: Bose went to Germany and Japan, both Fascist countries. If he was pro-Fascist you can have no sympathy with him. If he was a patriot and believed that India would be saved by Germany or Japan, especially in 1944, he was stupid and statesmen cannot afford to be stupid.

G. You have a high opinion of statesmen. Most of them are stupid. . . . I have to work against heavy odds. . . . There is an active mood of violence that has to be combated and I am doing it in my own way. . . .

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 472-4

APPENDIX II

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI AND NEHRU[1]

August 27, 1946

I said that I had asked them to come and see me because I had returned from Calcutta. I gave a description of what I had seen in Calcutta; and said that the only way to avoid similar trouble all over India on an even larger scale was by some lessening of communal tension and settlement between Hindu and Muslim. I stressed the importance of coalition Governments, both in Bengal and at the Centre.

1. I said that while I recognized the difficulty in reopening negotiations with the Muslim League, I felt sure that the country expected it as a result of what had happened in Calcutta. The crux of the whole matter lay in the doubt about the Congress interpretation of the Grouping in the Constituent Assembly. I said that I thought I had been quite clear in my mind that Congress had now agreed to abide by the Statement of May the 16th, and to me this had meant the acceptance of the Grouping arrangements. When I made my broadcast a few nights ago, the draft of which I had shown to Nehru, I had been quite convinced that this was the intention

[1] *Vide* pp. 215-6.

and that it was on this understanding that I had said what I did in my broadcast. I said that I thought the only chance of a peaceful transfer of power in India was if the Congress made a categorical statement that they would accept the position that the provinces must remain in their sections, as intended by the Mission, until after the first elections under the new Constitution. I said that I could not undertake the responsibility of calling together the Constituent Assembly until this point was settled. I handed to Gandhi and Nehru the draft of a statement which I asked them to make, as follows:

2. "The Congress are prepared in the interests of communal harmony to accept the intention of the Statement of May 16th that Provinces cannot exercise any option affecting their membership of the Section or of the Groups if formed until the decision contemplated in paragraph 19(viii) of the Statement of the 16th May is taken by the new Legislature after the new constitutional arrangements have come into operation and the first general elections have been held."

3. Gandhi began by saying that he thought it was a matter for the Interim Government. I said that it was a matter for Congress who had challenged the interpretation of the Mission. He then went off into long legalistic arguments about the interpretation of the Mission's statement. I said that I was a plain man and not a lawyer, and that I knew perfectly well what the Mission meant, and that the compulsory Grouping was the whole crux of the Plan.

4. The argument went on for some time, and we did not make much progress. Nehru at one time got very heated and said that this was simple "bullying" by the Muslim League. Gandhi said that if a blood-bath was necessary, it would come about in spite of non-violence. I said that I was very shocked to hear such words from him. In the end they took away the formula, but I do not think there is much hope of their accepting it.

5. The interview lasted about forty minutes.

W(AVELL)
27-8-1946

From a copy : India Office Library & Records, London; also *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VIII, pp. 312-3

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM SUDHIR GHOSH TO GANDHIJI[1]

LONDON,
September 7, 1946

DEAR BAPUJI,

I got your message of the 28th August . . .[2] and I cabled an answer back. I went and saw Pethick-Lawrence as soon as I got the cable. . . .[3] I guessed that you had sent it after your meeting with the Viceroy the previous evening. I therefore knew what it meant and I had no difficulty in interpreting it to Pethick-Lawrence.

I had a long discussion with him but he was rather sticky. He took the line that Congress people were trying to have it both ways; on the one hand they want to get hold of as much power as possible and want the British and their Viceroy to have as little to do with India's affairs as possible and on the other hand they want British to step in and take a retrograde step, viz., to exercise their extraordinary authority in provincial matters and to suppress a constitutionally elected ministry in Bengal. He expanded himself on the subject. I explained to him that there was no desire on the part of Congress to take any retrograde step; all that we were worried about was that we could not afford to have a repetition of the Bengal tragedy. If Mr. Suhrawardy feels that injustice has been done to the Muslim League and he must seek redress by breaking the law of the land he is entitled to do so, and in that case he should go out of the Government, break the law and face the consequences. But if he chooses to be the keeper of the law and the breaker of the law at the same time, the situation becomes intolerable. Pethick-Lawrence pointed out that he had no evidence that Mr. Suhrawardy was implicated in the crime of breaking the peace in Bengal. I told him that I could not produce legal proof but there was enough circumstantial evidence of his guilt and in any case even if he was not implicated in the crime of breaking the peace, it was obvious to the whole world that he had fallen down on the job of maintaining order in the province which is the primary duty of a Government, and it resulted in gruesome tragedy, such as we have never before witnessed in the history of our country; this was sufficient justification for the dismissal of the Ministry in Bengal. Nobody in the Congress would like to take such a step, but how

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 215.
[2]&[3] Omissions as in the source

are they to deal with the numerous big problems that await their attention if they are not in a position to keep the country as a whole in order? Pethick-Lawrence explained that he did not believe that that was the way to keep the country in order. In his view the root of the trouble was the dissatisfaction in the Muslim mind and the only way to remedy it is for the Congress, who are now in a powerful position, to make some further concession which would induce Mr. Jinnah to come into the Government and thus there would be no further trouble from the Muslims. The concession which he thinks would satisfy Mr. Jinnah is that Congress should allow the provinces to go into their respective sections, according to the British plan, when the Constituent Assembly meets, and that they should make an announcement to that effect right now. He suggested that I should make a suggestion to Mr. Gandhi and persuade him to see the reasonableness of it. I had to be rather harsh to him and to tell him that I myself did not see the reasonableness of such a suggestion and therefore I was unable to say anything to Mr. Gandhi about it and in my view such a policy of appeasement would only make things worse. He was rather upset about it. Thus I have made myself somewhat unpopular.

But Attlee showed a great deal more understanding. I went to him two days after I saw Pethick-Lawrence. I showed him the cable and explained to him what it meant. I also showed him the cuttings of the *Statesman* editorial comments on the Calcutta tragedy. He did not try to be diplomatic. He plainly said that if in Gandhi's judgment the situation is such that the Viceroy needs the assistance of a mind abler than his own and if Gandhi thinks that, otherwise, a repetition of the Calcutta tragedy is not only possible or probable but certain, then that is a matter which must be taken seriously. He explained that he was naturally anxious to leave these things to the Secretary of State but he was going to call the Secretary of State and have a talk with him about all this. He told me that your letter to the Viceroy on this subject had been cabled to the British Government and he showed me the copy he had got. He said that all these things would be discussed at the next meeting of the Cabinet and he added that I might go and see him again on Wednesday the 4th. I therefore went to see him again on Wednesday. He said he was happy to hear from the Secretary of State that although the week-end was difficult time at Delhi, things had improved since the Congress leaders actually took office on Monday, the 2nd September and that there is really no need to worry about the progress of things at Delhi. He then talked at some length about the Viceroy and your message. He admitted that there was a good case for a new Viceroy but there was no sense in making a change unless he was in a position to find someone who was obviously better than the present occupant of the post. And it is not easy to find a man from this country who is very much better. Then he went on to remark (he was thinking aloud) that the

kind of assistance which Gandhi thinks the Viceroy needs should now be provided by Nehru—who has a very able mind and legal mind. (Here he joked about legal minds and remarked that although he himself was a barrister he had left the profession early enough!) I said that the Prime Minister had hit the nail on the head; if he would now give instructions to the Viceroy that henceforward the Viceroy, in the exercise of his extra-ordinary authority, must always be guided by the advice given him by his Prime Minister Pandit Nehru, then the whole problem would be solved. The Prime Minister would not commit himself but he said he very much hoped things would work out that way.

Cripps is returning to London tomorrow. But I hear he is not very well in spite of his stay in Switzerland. He therefore will not be able to do much to help us. I have kept him fully informed about developments in India but he really has no very great influence with the British Cabinet. He is a good man but he is not what they call a good "party man" like Pethick-Lawrence is. Cripps's influence therefore is much less than that of Pethick-Lawrence. Attlee, on the whole, is very sensible about India. I am told that he is very different from what he used to be during the Round Table Conference days. My impression is that he is keen to get on with Congress.

Love from
SUDHIR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 370-2

APPENDIX IV

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION ON KASHMIR[1]

September 25, 1946

Recent events in Kashmir have been repeatedly considered by the Working Committee and the Committee have been greatly affected by them. They refrained, however, from expressing any opinion as they hoped that the situation could be handled satisfactorily by friendly mediation. Their approaches, however, to the State authorities had an unfriendly response, and the situation has progressively deteriorated, involving repression of, and suffering for, the people.

Recently, the popular leader of the people and the President of the Kashmir National Conference, Sheikh Abdullah, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. This has added to the gravity of the situation and distressed and angered large numbers of people within and outside the State.

[1] *Vide* p. 375.

When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru went to Kashmir and was arrested there, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then President of the Congress, asked him to come back in order to continue the valuable work he was doing for the Congress in connection with the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission.

Maulana Azad had assured him then, with the consent of the Working Committee, that the Congress would make his cause in Kashmir their own. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru willingly returned, though not without misgivings. The Working Committee regret to find that his misgivings were justified.

From all accounts received by the Committee, repression of an open as well as a subtle type is continuing, and the people connected with the Kashmir [National] Conference are being harassed in many ways.

It is reported that while elections have been announced for the State Assembly, large numbers of names are being struck off the electoral rolls, and many prospective candidates for the election have been disqualified. No attempt is being made to liberalize the Constitution and to make it more democratic and responsible.

In view of these reports, the Working Committee feel it necessary to send a deputation, consisting of persons of unquestioned ability and impartiality, to inquire into the reports of repression and suppression of civil liberties. The Committee, therefore, earnestly recommend to Kashmir State that they should invite such a deputation

Recent events in Kashmir have a large significance affecting the rulers and peoples of all the States in India and Committee trust that the States will welcome the step that they are taking in regard to Kashmir.

While noting with deep regret the sentence passed on Sheikh Abdullah, the Committee would consider his incarceration as a worthy sacrifice if it results in the achievement of the freedom for which he was labouring. The Committee express their sympathy for all those who have suffered or are suffering for the cause of freedom in Kashmir.

Sardar Patel's Correspondence, 1945-50, Vol. I, pp. 23-4

CWMG - LXXV

APPENDIX V

LORD WAVELL'S NOTE ON INTERVIEW WITH GANDHIJI[1]

September 26, 1946

I had also an hour with Mr. Gandhi. He told me that there was no fixed date for his departure, and obviously means to stay as long as the negotiations last.

I outlined to him the result of my discussion with Jinnah and used the same general line of argument as with Nehru. He listened patiently and then said that he had no doubt of the honesty of British intentions, that he entirely agreed that the Muslim League must come in, but that the Nationalist Muslim was a difficult issue. As usual, he then began splitting hairs, saying that if it was merely a Congress "right", they could make concessions on it, but that if it was a "duty", it was a different matter. He said that the proper way of settling the matter would be by a meeting between Jinnah and Nehru.

Gandhi then really disclosed his hand, by saying that he wished to know what we should do if the worst happened and the Muslim League did not come in. His own view was that in that event it would be of no use for the Constituent Assembly to meet, and it would be quite honourable for the British Government to say that their scheme could not be enforced, and that the solution of a Constituent Assembly in which the Muslim League was not represented would not be maintained by British arms.

I then said to him that that was a possible line of argument, but supposing the worst did happen, which I refused to admit and was not going to allow, what was his solution: "Where did he go from there?"

He then said that though the Constituent Assembly should be dropped, the Interim Government should go on, the vacant Muslim seats being filled by other prominent Muslims. This of course has been Gandhi's objective and the objective of the majority of the Congress, I think, from the first: i. e., to establish themselves at the Centre and to suppress, cajole, or buy over the Muslims, and then impose a Constitution at their leisure.

I said quite firmly that I was not prepared to accept his solution; I was not going to allow the present negotiations to fail, but that if they did His Majesty's Government would have to reconsider the whole position.

[1] *Vide* pp. 383-4. Lord Wavell also transmitted the text of the note to the Secretary of State the same day.

He concluded by saying that he hoped I would do something to prevent Kashmir from becoming a major issue.

W(AVELL)
26-9-1946

From a copy : India Office Library and Records, London

CWMG - LXXXV

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CWMG - LXXV

CHRONOLOGY

(*July 16, 1946—October 20, 1946*)

July 16: Gandhiji was at Panchgani.

July 17-18: Gave interview to Louis Fischer.

July 20: Had talks with members of Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Raja of Aundh. Representatives of East Africa called.

July 21: Opened Dharmashala at Panchgani. Nawab of Wai called on Gandhiji.

July 22-27: A. G. Tendulkar, President of Goa Congress Committee called on Gandhiji.

July 28: At Poona. Gandhiji addressed meeting of Deccan Princes.

July 29: Gandhiji addressed Education Ministers' Conference. Muslim League passed Direct Action resolution.

July 31: Gandhiji addressed Industries Ministers' Conference.

August 6: Gandhiji arrived at Sevagram.

August 8: Attended meeting of Congress Working Committee.

August 9-12: At Wardha. Addressed Seksaria College of Commerce. The Working Committee meeting continued.

August 13: At Sevagram. Raja Mahendra Pratap called on Gandhiji.

August 16: Four days rioting started in Calcutta as the consequence of Direct Action call by Muslim League.

August 18: Gandhiji spoke at the meeting of Doctors.

August 21: Gandhiji addressed Hindustani Prachar Trainees.

August 23: Addressed Trainees of Basic Teachers' Camp.

August 25: Left Sevagram for Delhi.

August 26: Arrived in New Delhi.

August 27: In New Delhi. Gandhi, accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru, called on Viceroy. Attended Working Committee meeting.

CWMG - LXXXV

August 28-30: The Working Committee Meeting continued.

September 1: Communal riots broke out in Bombay.

September 2: Interim Government took office. Congress Ministers before taking oath called on Gandhiji.

September 11: Charkha class introduced at Bhangi Colony.

September 16: Gandhiji had talk with Christian Missionary.

September 24: Gandhiji had talks with American and English journalists.

September 25: Attended A. I. C. C. meeting.

September 26: Met Viceroy.

September 29: Had discussion with Hridaya Nath Kunzru, Hindustan Boy Scouts Association and Nawab of Bhopal.

October 2: Had discussion with Nawab of Bhopal.

October 8: Had discussion with members of A. I. S. A. and Nawab of Bhopal.

October 10: Communal violence broke out in Noakhali and Tippera.

October 15: Muslim League announced its decision to join Interim Government.

October 16: Gandhiji had talk with Assam Deputation.

October 18: Had discussion with co-workers.

CWMG - LXXV

About Hindustani, 272-3
About Khadi Bhandars, 354-5
Acknowledgment, 355
Address to : Hindustani Prachar Trainees, 192-3; Trainees of Basic Teachers' Camp, 199-200
Advice to an Ashram Inmate, 205
Agreement between the Congress, the Muslim League and the Nawab of Bhopal, 416
Alternative to Industrialism, 205-6
An Appeal to Correspondents, 322
Answer to Question, 73
Answers to Questions, 363-7, 457-8
Antidote, 234-6
Bloodshed in Ahmedabad, 40-1
Cable to Sudhir Ghosh, 258
Cattle Wealth, 330
Charkha Jayanti, 320-1,—and Hindustani, 265
Charkha Mandal, 490
Cloth Shortage, 65-6
Cochin, 200
Collective Prayer, 318
(The) Coming Congress Session, 492
Compensation for Murder, 140
Confusion about Ramanama, 175-6
Congress Ministers, Not Sahib Log, 344
Congress Ministers and Ahimsa, 266-7
Criminal Waste, 396
(The) Danger of 'Vanaspati', 423
Deadly Embrace, 459
Decentralization, 459-60
Dedication of Hospital, 108
(A) Deed of Mercy, 390
(A) Dharmashala for Panchgani, 42-3
Discontinue it, 311-2
(A) Discussion, 148-9
Discussion with : Co-workers, 481-2 (a) Friend, 170-5; Members of A. I. S. A. 436-40; (Lord) Wavell, 383-4
Disloyalty to Khadi, 181
Doctors Criticized, 122-4
Dola-Palki, 424
Do Not Eliminate Truth and Non-violence, 351-2
Do Not Forget Harijans, 165
Dr. Lohia Again, 456-7
Draft Resolution for the Working Committee, 375
Eleven-Day Charkha Class, 373
Eloquent Figures, 484
English-Hindustani Dictionary, 442
English into Hindustani, 194-5
English Notices, 207
Entry In Diary, 355, —of Munnalal Shah, 58-9
Extracts from Speeches at Prayer Meetings, 30-2
Food Shortage, 349-50
For Readers, 236
Foreword, 81
Goa, 180, 209, 222-3
(A) Good Way, 422
Gujarat—Proud or Insane?, 312-3
Hand-Spinning *v.* Mill-Spinning, 400-1
Hand-Spun *v.* Mill Cloth, 472-4
Harijan Work in Kistna District, 271-2
Harijans and Wells, 263-4
Heal Thyself, 54-5
Hindu Pani and Muslim Pani, 448-9

CWMG - LXXXV

Hindustani Prachar Examinations, 207
Hindustani *v.* Urdu and Hindi, 203-4
His Greatest Characteristic, 151
Horse Racing, 130
How?, 402
How to Make the Wheel Go?, 453
How to Think of God, 145
I am Defeated, 492-3
If I were the Minister, 210-2
Independence, 32-4
Interview to Louis Fischer, 7-11, 16-8
Is God a Person or a Principle?, 136-7
(A) Khadi Lover's Complaint, 127-8
Khadi Workers, 74-5
Karachi Khadi Bhandar, 356
(The) Late Poet Nanalal, 359
Leprosy and Contamination, 296-7
(A) Letter, 464
Letter to : Abdul Hamid, 463; Abdul Haq, 335, 343; Abell, G. E. B., 22-3, 100, 153-4, 177; Abidali Jafarbhai, 48, 82-3, 91, 113, 289-90; Alam, Dr. Sheikh Muhammed, 209; Ali, Syed Raza, 327; Amin, Jatindas, 432; Amrit Kaur, 474-5, 487, 494; Amtussalaam, 44, 137, 218, 242, 284, 356, 408, 411, 447, 493-4; Anantram, 317; Arundale, Rukmini, 333; Asar, Lakshmidas, 301-2, 346-7; Asar, Lilavati, 153, 198, 428, 495; Atmaram, 249; Ayyar, L. N. Gopalaswami, 185; Bajaj, Radhakrishna, 189; Bajaj; Ramkrishna, 169; Bannerji, Sibnath, 283; Barr, F. Mary, 124; Bhagawat, Dr. Atmaram K., 184, 263, 434; Bhansali, J. P., 90, 184, 247-8; Bhatt, Gangabehn, 167, 476; Bhatt, Gokulbhai, 274, 286; Bhatt, Nrisimhaprasad K., 37; Bhatt, Purushottam and Ganga, 262; Bhatt, Shrilal, 250-1; Blind Students, 496; Captain, Perin, 447; Chandiwala, Brijkrishna, 377-8; Chandrani, 290, 362, 434; Chaudhary, Annada Shanker, 325; Chavda, Zohra, A., 353, 417; Chitre, S. M., 479; Chokhawala, Gordhandas, 101; Chokhawala, Sharda G., 337, 357, 471; Choudhari, Kalyan, 501; Chowdhary, Anjana, 348; Cochrane, Dr. R. G., 300; Cousins, James Henry, 333; Cripps, Sir Stafford, 131, 443; Datar, 479; De Silva, M. W. H., 373, 399, 410; Desai, Durga M., 470; Desai, Mrs. Harilal, 286; Desai, Hiralal, 138; Desai, Jayakunvar, 182; Desai, Jivanji D., 248, 278-9, 306-7, 324, 345; Desai, Manilal B., 168, 261, 477; Desai, Morarji, 308; Desai, Kusum, 284; Desai, Pushpa, 247; Deshpande, K. S., 317; Dhirendra, 499; Dikshit, Dhirubhai, 166, 190, 250; Diwakar, R. R., 107-8; Diwanji, Pravina, 433; Doshi, Vachhraj T., 498; Dynowska, Wanda, 68, 101; Gadodia, Lakshminarayan, 220; Gandhi, Arun, 217; Gandhi, Jamnadas, 337-8, 361; Gandhi, Jaisukhlal, 374; Gandhi, Krishnadas, 346; Gandhi, Manilal, 59, 132, 216-7, 233-4, 393-4; Gandhi, Manu, 188, 248-9, 294, 394, 446; Gandhi, Narandas, 75, 258-9, 315-6; Gandhi, Sita, 60, 182-3, 436; Gandhi, Sumitra, 417; Gandhi, Sushila, 121, 217, 241, 303, 389, 498; General Manager, G. I. P. Railway, 111, 426-7; Gharpure, 83; Giri, Satyadevi, 4-5; Giriraj Kishore, 57, 268, 275-6; Goswami, Advait Kumar, 146; (the) Governor-General of Portuguese India, 109-11; Greenfield, H., 376-7,

CWMG - IWWW

387, 454, 461; Gupta, Hargovind, 304; Gupta, Maithilisharan, 382; Hannah, 405-6; Hemant Kumar Nilkanth, 358, 488; Hingorani, Anand T., 57, 242, 339; Hingorani, Ganga A., 338; Hingorani, Mahadev A., 339; Holmes, John Haynes, 467; Hooseinbhai Laljee, 160; Hoshiari, 2, 219, 408; Hunnar, 326; Husseinbhai, 388; Indian Women's Association, Laurenco Marquis, 267-8; Jaju, Shrikrishnadas, 189, 193, 295; Janakiram, 489; Jani, Jagannath, 287; Joshi, D. D., 105-6; Kalelkar, D. B., 201-2, 259, 301, 345, 487; Kalelkar, Satish D., 433; Kalka Prasad, 409, 454; Kalyanidevi, 28-9; Kamdar, Kantilal N., 463; Kantak, Prema, 61, 469-70; Katju, Kailas Nath, 501; Kedar, Dr. T. J., 6; Khaitan, Radhakrishna, 113-4; Khan, Shafaat Ahmed, 156; Kher, B. G., 71; Kosambi, Dharmanand, 325; Kotak, Harjivan, 497; Kothari, Vithaldas, 288; Krishnachandra, 106; Krishnamachari, V. T., 194; Krishnasarma, V. K., 65; Kumarappa, J. C., 208; Madalasa, 201, 233, 300, 334, 356, 468-9; Maganlal, 167-8; Mahtab, Harekrushna, 157, 251; Malkani, N. R., 340; Mangaldas Harkisandas, 432; Mangharam Bhavandas, 179; Mashruwala, Kishorelal G., 104, 316; Mathuradas Trikumji, 303; Matthai, John, 323; Mazumdar, Dhirendra, 1; Mehta, Champa R., 427; Mehta, Chandrakant, 273-4; Mehta, Dinshaw K., 125, 158-9, 444; Mehta, Indravadan, 353; Mehta, Jamshed, 407; Mehta, V. L., 193; Mirabehn, 56, 187; Mirza Ismail, 149-50, 344-5; Mishra, Mahesh Datt, 499; Mittal, Om Prakash, 310; Mody, H. P., 62; Mohammed Yunus, 309; Moonje, Dr. B. S., 139; Mride, 63; Munshi, K. M., 46, 56-7, 94, 198, 230-1, 380; Munshi, Lilavati, 192; Naidu, Padmaja, 159, 462; Naidu, Sarojini, 89; Naik, Gajanan, 285; Nambiar, T. R. Narayan, 475; Nanavati, Amritlal T., 81; Nanavati, Saroj, 406; Nanubhai, 120; Naoroji, Khurshed, 324; Natwar, Ishwardas, 500; Nayyar, Dr. Sushila, 241; Nehru, Jawaharlal, 5-6, 252; Nirmala, 404; Pakvasa, Mangaldas, 145; Pancholi, Vijaya M., 75-6; Panikkar, K. M., 179, 252; Pant, G. B., 225, 291; Parekh, Chimanlal G., 103; Parekh, Madhusoodan C., 154; Parikh, Narahari D., 2-3, 62; Parikh, Vanamala N., 183; Parwani, 489; Patel, Jehangir, 138-9, 178, 227, 314-5; Patel, Jhaverbhai, 240-1; Patel, Manibehn, 103; Patel, Vallabhbhai, 3, 35, 45, 48-9, 69, 82, 93, 102-3, 112, 120, 137; Patwardhan, Pandurang, 412; Patwardhan, S. P., 381, 388, 431; Pethick-Lawrence, Lady, 468, Pethick-Lawrence, Lord, 443; Pheroze, 399; Poddar, Mahavir Prasad, 500; Prabhavati, 476; Prabhu, 289; Prabhu, Laxmi Kant V., 475; Prakasam, T., 94, 462; Pundalik 1; Pyarelal, 188; Qureshi, 121-2; Qureshi, Ghulam Rasool, 4; Raj, 435; Raja of Phaltan, 126-7; Rajagopal, 29;

Rajagopalachari, C., 494; Rajendra Prasad, 44; Ramachandran, G., 16; Ramaswami, D. V., 224-5; Ranchhoddas, 112; Randhir Singh, 311; Ranga, N. G., 162; Ranganayakidevi, 444; Rankin, C. W. B., 43; Ratanbehn, 157; Ratnamayee Devi, 490; Ray, Renuka, 360; Reddy, Govind, 90; Reddy, R. K. Ramlinga, 23; Roy, Motilal, 76, 309-10; Rupani, Mohanlal, 155; Sankaran, 292, 343, 502, 502-3; Sarabhai, Anasuyabehn, 191; Sarabhai, Saraladevi, A., 150, 347, 407; Satyapal, Dr., 208; Savur, Dr. S. R. U., 156; Shah, Chimanlal N., 46, 218; Shah, Devichand, 58; Shah, K. T., 478; Shah, Kanchan, M., 226, 428-9; Shah, Mohanlal M., 155, 262; Shah Munnalal G., 70-1, 202, 226, 429-30; Sharma, H. L., 47, 230, 288, 307, 418, 471; Sharma, Kamala, 219; Sharma, Lakshmi 302; Sharma, Vichitra Narayan, 228, 228-9, 349; Shastri, Dharmadev, 326; Sheela, 396; Shetty, Rama, 29; Shivaji, 292; Shukla, Rasiklal, 36; Shyamlal, 72; Sitaramayya, Dr. Pattabhi, 71, 91; Spiegel, Margarete, 160-1; Sriramulu, Potti, 381, 412; Subedar, Manu, 497; Sundaram, 478; Surendra, 104-5; Syed, Begum Latif, 161; Tejpal, Kisanlal C., 275; Tendulkar, Indumati G., 47, 161-2, 387; Thakkar, Amritlal V., 64, 395; Thakore, Balwantrai K., 159-60; Tirth, Ramanand, 291, 357-8; Tripathi, Ram Naresh, 253; Trivedi, Kashinath, 190-1; Uttimchand Gangaram, 152, 199; Vaidya, Gangabehn, 229-30; Vashi, Bapubhai, 496; Venkatappayya, Konda, 142; Vidyalankar, Chandragupta, 488; Vidyarthi, Prabhu Dayal, 340; Vinodini, 142; Vyas, Ramprasad, 227, 287; Waiz, S. A., 334; Wavell, Lord, 215-6, 376, 385-7, 392-3; Westcott, Dr. Foss, 411; (a) Zamindar, 254; Zutshi, Ladorani, 253

(The) Limit of Insanitation, 99-100

Mass Murder, 165-6

(The) Meaning of Nature Cure, 118-9

Message to : Jamia Millia Islamia, 169; Prayer Meeting, 293, 404-5, 435, 458; Students of Harijan Udyogshala, 445

Move On, 166

Ninth August, 67-8

Not Sentiment But Reason, 354

Note to : Amtussalaam 405; Hingorani, Anand T., 84, 89; Kumarappa, J. C., 453; Patel, Vallabhbhai, 445; Patel, Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Prasad and Jagjivan Ram, 240; Shah, Munnalal G., 49-50, 83

Notes, 88-9, 151-2, 239-40, 256-7, 319-20, 398-9, 483-4, 484-6

(The) Place of Medicine in Nayee Talim, 212-3

Poor or Small Countries, 329-30

Preaching to Emptiness, 164

Prohibition, 270-1

Question Box, 12-3, 51-4, 73-4, 132-4, 264-5, 342-3, 420-1, 451-2

Rama the Son of Dasharatha, 331-2

Ramanama Again, 135

Real India, 450-1

"The Revolutionary Charkha", 14-5

Riding Two Horses, 391

CWMG - LXXV

(The) Rights of Harijans, 384-5
Rowdyism Run Riot, 420
Ruralizing University Education, 456
Sales Tax, 221-2
Scavengers' Lot, 401
"Scheduled Castes", 18-22
South Africa, 92-3, 245-6
Speech at: Education Ministers' Conference, 84-8, Industries Ministers' Conference, 95-8; Meeting of Deccan Princes, 76-81; Meeting of Doctors, 185-6; Prayer Meeting, 30, 37-40, 72-3, 98-9, 108-9, 126, 128-30, 163-4, 202-3, 220, 231-2, 243-5, 255, 260, 268-9, 276-7, 279-80, 327-8, 335-6, 341-2, 362-3, 374-5, 378-9, 382-3, 389-90, 409-10, 413, 414-5, 419, 441, 445-6, 448, 455, 464-5, 471-2, 480, 482, 491, 503; Seksaria College of Commerce, 143-4
Statement to the Press, 50-1, 414, 418
Strikes, 116-7
Talk: (to) Villagers, 114-5; (with) (an) American Journalist, 368-70; Assam Deputation, 466; (a) Christian Missionary, 328-9; (an) English Journalist, 370-2; (a) Friend, 146-8, 370; Members of Harijan Sevak Sangh, 23-8
Telegram to: Amtussalaam, 493; Bhansali, J. P., 261; Dadoo, Y. M., 442; Das Gupta, Satis Chandra, 415; Deshmukh, Baba Anandrao, 380; Deshpande, K. S., 313; Devshi, Narseebhai, 466; Gandhi, Krishnadas, 336; Gilder, Dr. M. D. D., 214; Government Information Bureau, Goa, 214, 232, 294; Handloom Cloth Manufacturers and Merchants Association, 232; Jairamdas Doulatram, 314; Jaju, Shrikrishnadas, 380; Janardan Prasad, 466; Kamta Prasad, 176; Khan, Shafaat Ahmed, 213; Khanna, Mehr Chand, 299; Kumarappa, J. C., 336, 426; Lester, Muriel, 229; Lohia, Ram Manohar, 460, 474; Manager, Sevagram Ashram, 225, 278; Mavalankar, G. V., 403; Medh, 474; Mehta, Dinshaw K., 196, 224; Menon, Kunjukrishna, 176; Nehru, Jawaharlal, 196; Rajagopalachari, C., 197, 224; Sarabhai, Saraladevi, 424; Sarma, Siddhinath, 461; Satyanand, 341, 360; Secretary, Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana, 298; Shah, Chimanlal N., 283; Shyamlal, 392, 403, 410; Tripathi, Ganesh, 299; Trivedi, Kashinath, 197; Venkateswaran, S. V., 379; Viram, Madarnahak, 177; Yashmilap, 467; Zamindari and Malguzari Sabha, 403
Testimonial to: Herbert Fischer, 15; Mukul Chandra De, 150
Tired of Satyagraha?, 297-8
Tractors *v.* Bullocks, 332
(A) Tragic Phenomenon, 13-4
Tribute to Rabindranath Tagore, 132
Thou Too, Bihar!, 396-7
(A) Thought for the Day, 504-11
Uncertified But Genuine, 425-6
Uncertified Khadi *v.* Mill Cloth, 304
Village Industries Exhibition: What It Should Be Like, 236-8
Village University, 322-3
We Are All Indians, 195
Wells Thrown Open, 422
What a Child Can Give, 141
What Can Violence Do?, 186-7
What to Do?, 280-2
What Will You Do for Harijans?, 486
Why Go Abroad?, 238

CWMG LXXXV

ABDUL HAMID, 463
ABDUL HAQ, 343; accuses Gandhiji of being inimical to Urdu, 335
ABDULLA, Sheikh; imprisoned, 375
ABELL, G. E. B., 22, 100, 153, 177
ABIDALI JAFARBHAI, 91, 93, 112, 113; his fast in Congress House, 48, 69, 82-3,—advised to give up, 289-90
ADIM JATI SEVA SANGH, 395*fn*
ADIVASIS, 314; uplift of, 395
ADMINISTRATION; need for decentralization, 88-9
AFGHANISTAN; cloth shortage in, 419
AGA KHAN PALACE, POONA, 130
AGRAWAL, Pratap, 249
AGRAWAL, Umiya, 249, 446
AGRICULTURE; and cattle, 330, 332; mechanization of, 133-4, 332,—opposed, 97
AHIMSA, 14, 34, 50, 78, 92, 298, 371, 465, 504; and communal riots, 55, 235; and Congress, 351-2; and Congressmen, 53; and jail-going, 319-20; and the masses, 205; and self-defence, 281-2, 415; and swaraj, 33, 146, 419; and truth, 55, 342; and use of modern weapons, 133; faith in, 343; of the brave, 281; weapon of the weak, 54-5
AHIMSAK SEVA DAL, 54
AHMEDABAD; communal riots in, 2, 31, 35, 40-1, 45, 54-5, 68, 120, 382-3; floods in, 349
AHURAMAZDA, 315
AKHA BHAGAT (Poet), 247, 286
AKHIL BHARATIYA CHARKHA SANGH, *see* ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
ALAM, Dr. Sheikh Muhammed, 209
ALCOHOL; eschewing of, 147. *See* also PROHIBITION
ALEXANDER, Horace, 164
ALI, Asaf, 416*fn*, 448
ALI BROTHERS, 277
ALI, Syed Raza, 327
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION, 128, 302, 395*fn*, 400, 473; and khadi exhibitions, 295, 346, 349; and the Prabartak Sangh, 309-10; and propagation of khadi, 211, 257; and uncertified khadi, 425-6, 439; annual meeting of, 436-40; finances, 170; its meeting regarding decentralization of khadi work, 459-60
ALL-INDIA STATES PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE, 79; and political reforms in Bikaner State, 252,— and in Hyderabad, 149-50, 344-5
ALL-INDIA VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION, 99, 295, 453; its aims and objects, 95-6; propagation of village crafts through, 211
ALLOPATHY; and Ayurveda, 122-3, 457-8
AMBEDKAR, Bhimarao, 35, 45, 68, 120; differences with Congress on acceptance of British offer, 102
AMIN, Jatindas, 432
AMRIT KAUR, 43, 44, 56, 68, 89, 150, 187, 258, 259, 301, 335, 474, 499

CWMG-INDEX

AMTUSSALAAM, 44, 137, 167, 218, 242, 284, 356, 405, 408, 411, 447, 477
ANANTRAM, 285, 317
ANDREWS, C. F., 92
ANGER; a kind of insanity, 353
ANIMAL(S); kindness to, 256
ANNA, *see* SHARMA, Harihar
ANSARI, 95*fn*
ANSARI, Dr. M. A., 252*fn*
ANSARI, Dr. Shaukatullah, 252
ARJUN, 285
ARUNA, 141
ARUNDALE, Rukmini, 333
ARYA SAMAJ; and incarnations, 331
ARYANAYAKUM, Ashadevi, 16, 71, 106, 212, 323, 456
ARYANAYAKUM, E. W., 106, 138, 186, 323, 456, 502
ASAR, Lakshmidas, 301, 346
ASAR, Lilavati, 153, 198, 428
ASHOKA, Emperor, 223
Ashram Bhajanavali, 345
ASSAM; and question of grouping, 466; floods in, 464
ATMARAM, 249
ATOM BOMB; and ahimsa, 371
ATTLEE, 215*fn*
AUNDH; constitution of, 78; Raja of, 35, 76*fn*, 78
AUSTERITY; need for, 438
AYURVEDA; and Allopathy, 122-4, 457-8
AYYAR, L. N. Gopalaswami, 185
AZAD, Abul Kalam, 3, 6, 18, 19, 344, 375, 465
AZAD HIND FAUJ, *see* INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

BACHHARAJ, *see* DOSHI, Vachhraj T.
BACKWARD CLASSES; uplift of, 391
BAJAJ, Janakidevi, 64, 233, 316
BAJAJ, Kamalnayan, 162, 334
BAJAJ, Radhakrishna, 189
BAJAJ, Ramkrishna, 169
BALASUNDARAM, 379
BALVANTSINHA, 285
BANKER, Shankerlal, 191
BANNERJI Sibnath, 283, 289
BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA (1922), 147
BARLINGA, R. K., 95*fn*
BARR, F. Mary, 124
BESANT, Dr. Annie, 333
BHADKAMKAR, 458
Bhagavad Gita, 163*fn*; quoted, 338
BHAGAWAT, Acharya, 469
BHAGAWAT, Dr. Atmaram, K., 118, 168, 184, 250, 263, 381, 388, 431, 434
BHAGIRATH, 137
BHANGI COLONY; charkha class in, 373, 404-5, 414
BHANGIS, *see* HARIJANS
BHANSALI, J. P., 90, 184, 247, 261
BHARAT NARAYAN, 233, 300
BHARATA (of *Ramayana*), 331
BHARATIBEHN, 162
BHATT, Gangabehn, 167, 168, 262, 476, 477
BHATT, Gokulbhai, 274, 286, 287
BHATT, Nrisimhaprasad K., 37, 58, 75, 249
BHATT, Purushottam, 167, 168, 262, 476
BHATT, Rama, 262
BHATT, Shrilal, 250
BHAVE, Balkrishna, 168, 434
BHAVE, Vinoba, 285
BHILS, 508
BHIMJI, S. A., 48*fn*, 113
BHISE, 227
BHOPAL, Nawab of, *see* HAMIDULLAH
BHOR, Raja of, 76*fn*
BIBLE; quoted, 2
BIHAR; lawlessness in, 396-7; separate jails for leper prisoners in, 296, 300

CWMG - LXXXV

BIKANER STATE; Harijans wearing jewellery in, 179; Maharaja of, 252; political reforms in, 252
BIRLA, G. D., 25, 196, 249
BIRLA, Rameshwardas, 120
BIRTH-CONTROL; through contraceptives, 430
BLAVATSKY, Madame, 136
BOER WAR, 143, 156
BOMBAY; communal riots in, 269, 338, 382-3, 459; devadasi system in, 239; khadi in, 193; postal strike in, 35, 49, 68, 82, 103, 116; Sales Tax Act of, 221-2; teaching of Hindustani in schools, 203-4
(*The*) *Bombay Chronicle*, 22
BOMBAY PROVINCIAL SCHEDULED CASTES FEDERATION, 19
BORDI; Ayurvedic institute in, 457
BOSE, Sarat Chandra, 480
BOSE, Subhas Chandra, 55, 480
BRAHMA, 421
Brahmacharya; in marriage, 70; pursuit of, 429, 430
BRAHMINS, 18; duties of, 254
BREAD LABOUR; as ideal, 362
BRIJKISHORE PRASAD, 397; death of, 466, 476; tribute to, 472
BRIJ NARAIN, Prof., 354
BRITISH CABINET MISSION, 411; and Constituent Assembly, 385-6; and Interim Government, 131; desires peaceful transfer of power, 186; negotiations with Congress, 146-7, 392; statement of, 17-8,— and grouping, 9
BRITISH GOVERNMENT; and separate electorate for Harijans, 26; and States, 77-8; their divide and rule policy, 282
BRITISH LABOUR PARTY; election victory, 149
BUSINESSMEN; and honesty, 12
CACHALIA, 271
CACHALIA, A. M., 276, 394
CALCUTTA; communal riots in, 186-7, 215, 220, 231, 234-6, 309, 360, 382-3, 459, 464
CALICUT; co-operative movement in, 170
CAPTAIN, Perin, 447
CARPENTER, Edward, 97
CASEY, R. G., 171, 172
CASTE SYSTEM; eradication of, 24
CASTES; and Hinduism, 195
CATTLE; and agriculture, 332; slaughter of, 330
CHAMARS; and removal of dead animals, 310
CHANDIWALA, Brijkrishna, 196, 307, 377
CHANDRANI, 241, 249, 290, 362, 434
CHAMPARAN SATYAGRAHA, 472
CHARKHA (S), 34; demand for, 405; manufacture of, 453; models, 315; symbol of freedom and ahimsa, 320, 321, 376, 439
CHARKHA JAYANTI; significance of, 320-1
CHARKHA SANGH, 76
CHAUBE, Baldev, *see* SATYANAND
CHAUDHARY, Annada Shankar, 325
CHAVDA, Akbar, 353
CHAVDA, Zohra A., 167, 249, 353, 417
CHETTIAR, Avinashilingam, 87
CHILDREN; and spinning, 141, 142
CHINA; co-operative movement in, 170
CHITRE, S. M., 479
CHOKHAWALA, Anand, 101, 357
CHOKHAWALA, Gordhandas, 46, 101, 357
CHOKHAWALA, Sharda, 101, 336, 337, 357, 471
CHOUDHARI, Kalyan, 501

CHOUDHARI, Manmohan, 285
CHOWDHARY, Anjana, 348
CHRIST, Jesus, 2, 11, 318, 420
CHRISTIANITY, 31, 420
CHRISTIANS, 18, 464; and conversion, 503
CHUNILAL, 155, 262
CHURCHILL, Winston, 149
CITIES; and villages, 97-8, 129
CLEANLINESS; and scavengers, 260; personal, 263; of staff quarters, 255
CLOTH; shortage of, and khadi, 171-4, 279
COCHIN; Maharaja of, 200; unification of, with Malabar and Travancore, 200
COCHRANE, Dr. R. G., 300; his anti-leprosy work, 296-7
COMMUNAL DISTINCTIONS; in public utilities, 448-9
COMMUNISM; and socialism, 8
COMMUNISTS; and Congress, 366-7
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA; its work for Harijans, 23-4
COMPOST; preparation of, 187
CONGRESSMEN; and ahimsa, 53; and Congress, 365-6; and elections, 363-4; and swaraj, 34
CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY, 324
CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT; in Calicut, 170; in China, 170; in Kerala, 398
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, 17, 130, 198; and Congress, 67-8; and grouping, 5, 215-6; and Kashmir question, 3; and Muslim League, 9, 384, 385-6; and swaraj, 34; applications for candidature, 13-4; status, 7, 9
CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME; and civil disobedience, 147; and leprosy work, 297; and political workers, 319; and swaraj, 147
CONVERSION; forcible, 480, 503
COTTAGE INDUSTRIES; revival of, 205-6
COUSINS, James Henry, 333
COUSINS, Mrs., 333
COW-SLAUGHTER; prevention of, 256
CRIMINALS; reform of, 114-5
CRIPPS, Sir Stafford, 131, 392, 443
CUNHA, Dr. Tristo Braganza; court martial of, 110; deportation of, 151

D. D. T., spraying of, 185
DACCA; communal riots in, 382-3
DADOO, Y. M., 442
DANDI MARCH, 240; women's role, 244
DAS, Chittaranjan, 13
DAS GUPTA, Satis Chandra, 415, 458
DASHARATHA (of *Ramayana*), 331
DATAR, 118, 479
DATAR SINGH, 423
DAVE, Gatulal, 427
Dawn, 335
DE, Mukul Chandra, 150
DE SILVA, M. W. H., 373, 399, 410
DEATH; reflections on, 6, 179, 190, 383, 388, 389
DECCAN STATES; union of, and swaraj, 76-81, 82; meeting of rulers, 98-9, 126. *See* also STATES
DEO, Shankarrao, 35, 61, 76*fn*, 82, 266, 351, 408
DESAI, Bihari, 182, 188
DESAI, Durga M., 130, 470
DESAI, Mahadev, 51, 52, 130, 289, 390; tribute to, 151, 163-4
DESAI, Dr. Harilal, 286
DESAI, (MRS.) Harilal, 286
DESAI, Hiralal, 138
DESAI, Jayakunvar, 182, 188
DESAI, Jivanji D., 248, 278, 306, 324, 326, 345

CWMG - LXXXV

DESAI, Kusum, 284
DESAI, Manilal B., 168, 261, 477
DESAI, Morarji, 308
DESAI, Narayan, 470
DESAI, Pushpa, 247, 284, 337
DESAI, Valji G., 158
DESHMUKH, Baba Anandrao, 380
DESHMUKH, Durgabai, 71
DESHPANDE, K. S., 126, 313, 317
DEVADASI SYSTEM; abolition demanded, 239
DEVANAGARI SCRIPT; learning of, 184
DEVDHAR, 27
DEVSHI, Narseebhai, 466
DHARMADHIKARI, Dada, 316
DHARMAKUMAR, 5
DHIRENDRA, 499
DIAS, Joachim, 22
DIET; and longevity, 51
DIKSHIT, Dhirubhai, 166, 250; fasting by, 190
DISCIPLINE; and swaraj, 143
DISEASE; caused by insanitary living, 213; three kinds of, 119; violation of laws of nature cause of, 264
DIWAKAR, R. R., 107
DIWAN, Manohar; and anti-leprosy work, 107
DIWANJI, Pravina, 433
DOSHI, Vachhraj Tribhovandas, 38, 42, 43, 427, 498
DOWNES; his preaching to empty hall, 164
DOWRY; evil of, 452
DRAUPADI (of *Mahabharata*), 52, 231, 265
DRINKING WATER; for villages, 97
DURBAN; assault on Gandhiji in, 217
DURGA, 5
DUSSEHRA; celebration of, 414
DYNOWSKA, Wanda, 68, 101
EAST BENGAL; communal riots in, 471-2; forcible conversions in, 503
EDUCATION; basic, and self-sufficiency, 84-6; for villages, 456; higher, visiting foreign countries for, 238; modern, and villages, 322
EGO; vanquishing of, 90, 409-10
ELECTION(S); corruption in, 363-4
ENDS; and means, 368
ENGLAND; and exploitation of weaker races, 73, 342; rationing in, 279
ENGLISH; and mother tongue, 88; use of, criticized, 157, 159, 162, 192-3, 207, 252, 254, 273, 399, 412, 475, 479
ENGLISH-HINDI DICTIONARY; need for, 194-5; publication of, 201-2
ENGLISHMEN; sense of cleanliness, 255
EQUIMINDEDNESS, 505
EUCLID, 33

FAITH, 508, 511; and patience, 293; and reason, 52
FAMINE; in India, 355
FASTING; and satyagraha, 147; justification, 422
FAZALBHAI, 175
FEAR; and faith in God, 220
FEDERAL COURT, 6
FISCHER, Herbert, 15
FISCHER, Louis, 6, 7, 16
FOOD SHORTAGE, 120; and import of foodgrains, 166, 279; and manufacture of alcoholic liquor, 270-1; and need for economy, 373, 396; in Mysore and Rayalaseema, 162, 165-6; in Travancore, 349-50
FOODGRAINS; prices of, 365
FRENCH INDIA; compared to Portuguese India, 222-3

FRICTION-BATH, *see* under NATURE CURE
FRUIT; as substitute for cereals, 274

GADODIA, Lakshminarayan; his dispute with Sharma, 46, 220, 288, 307
GADODIA, Saraswati, 220
GAEKWAD, 20
GAJRAJ, 2, 285
GALILEO, 52
GANDHARI (of *Mahabharata*), 64
GANDHI, Abha, 167, 258
GANDHI, Arun, 121, 216, 217, 303, 389
GANDHI ASHRAM, 295, 346, 349; relationship with Charkha Sangh, 228-9
GANDHI, Chhaganlal, 157
GANDHI, Devdas, 217, 345, 394, 405, 467
GANDHI, Ila, 121, 132, 216, 217, 303, 389
GANDHI-IRWIN PACT; and abolition of salt tax, 377
GANDHI, Jaisukhlal, 4, 188, 249, 294, 374, 394, 417
GANDHI, Jamna, 258
GANDHI, Jamnadas, 337, 361
GANDHI, Kanu, 70, 116, 124, 258, 289, 293, 327*fn*, 373, 446, 453
GANDHI, Kashi, 4, 70
GANDHI, Krishnadas, 336, 346
GANDHI, M. K.; and Ayurveda, 457; and cleaning of lavatory, 38-9; and geometry, 152; and machinery, 33-4, 95-6; and mill-owners, 378; and nature cure, 2, 123-4, 212; and non-attachment, 370; and prayer, 231-2; and religion, 328; and socialists, 8-9; arrest (1922), 231; as satyagrahi, 344; assault on, in Durban, 217; confesses error of having been hasty in reading note on salt tax abolition, 455; his diet, 377-8; his idea of Rama, 331; loses temper with workers for feeding Harijans not needy, 355, 363; wishes to live for 125 years, 205, 284, 347, 368, 370, 382, 455, 468
GANDHI, Manilal, 59, 60, 63, 92, 121, 132, 216, 217, 233, 241, 389, 393, 405, 406, 498
GANDHI, Manu, 182, 188, 248, 294, 353, 374, 394, 417, 446
GANDHI, Narandas, 75, 258, 302, 315, 316, 320, 321
GANDHI, Purushottam, 259
GANDHI, Radha, 338
GANDHI, Santok, 338
GANDHI, Sita, 59, 60, 121, 182, 389, 436
GANDHI, Sumitra, 59, 182, 417
GANDHI, Sushila, 59, 121, 132, 216, 217, 233, 234, 241, 303, 389, 393, 394, 436, 498
GANDHI, Tara, 389
GANDHI, Vijaya, 259
GANESH-UTSAVA; and Harijans, 165
GANGARAM, 174
GARHWAL; dola-palki question in, 424
GARUDIS, 119, 125
GERMAN EAST AFRICA; home manufacture of cloth in, 171
GHARPURE, 83
GHOSH, P. C., 137
GHOSH, Sudhir, 258, 411; his visit to England to see Government leaders, 69, 215*fn*
GILDER, Dr. M. D. D., 61, 214, 457, 458
GIRIRAJ KISHORE, 57, 265, 268, 275
GIRI, Satyadevi, 4
Gitai, 106
Gitanjali, 163
GOA; oppression in, 22-3, 45, 50, 109-10, 151-2, 153, 177, 189, 209,

CWMG - LXXXV

413, 456-7; Portuguese administration of, asked to permit interview with Kakodkar, 214,—its refusal to do so, 232
GOANS; as Indians, 195
GOD, 145, 274, 444, 503, 504, 506, 509; as saviour, 309; as truth, 342-3; faith in, 33, 34, 150, 182, 212, 213, 220, 233, 265, 383, 405-6, 428, 498; is law and lawgiver, 52; omnipresence of, 31; realization of, 52, 409-10, 419, 507; supreme power, 12-3, 136-7; the Doer and the Destroyer, 312
GOKHALE, Avantikabai, 408
GOKHALE, G. K., 168
GOKIBEHN, *see* RALIATBEHN
GOMATI, 70
GOPALRAO, 316
GORDON, Rev. E., 270
GOSEVA SANGH, 295
GOSWAMI, Advait Kumar, 146
GOVERNMENT INFORMATION BUREAU, GOA; Gandhiji's apology to, 292, 294
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT 1935; and Harijans, 19
GREENFIELD, H., 376, 387, 454, 461
GRELLET, Stephen; his preaching to empty hall, 164
GROUPING OF PROVINCES, 9; and Constituent Assembly, 215-6
GUJARAT; untouchability in, 312-3
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, 265
GUJARATI SCRIPT; learning of, 184
GUPTA, Hargovind, 304
GUPTA, Maithilisharan, 304, 382
GURUVAYUR; temple-entry in, 398-9

HAMIDULLAH (Nawab of Bhopal), 416
HANDWRITING; need for improving, 182, 184, 275
HANNAH, 405
Harijan, 16, 18, 19, 32, 36, 65, 68, 78, 107, 109, 111, 120, 132, 142, 153, 156, 164, 178, 185, 204, 207, 210, 214, 222, 223, 236, 256, 267, 279, 300, 322, 329, 332, 334, 353, 360, 394, 423, 451, 455, 499; English-Hindustani dictionary in, 94-5, 259, 442,—discontinuation suggested, 311-2
Harijanbandhu, 52, 268, 315, 351, 359, 433, 442; English-Hindustani dictionary in, 306; format of, 306
HARIJANS; and right to burn dead on cremation ground, 312-3; and separate electorates, 9-10, 19-22, 314; and temple-entry, 25, 381, 398-9; and use of public wells, 263-4, 271-2, 422; as part of Hindu society, 18-9; condition of, 260, 269; duty of, 384-5; in Garhwal, rights of, 424; seats in legislatures, 35; temples for, 313, 317; their place in swaraj, 18; uplift of, 27, 239, 244, 363
Harijan Sevak, 57, 442, 499; English-Hindustani dictionary in, 253, 278-9, 306-7; format of, 306
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH, 24, 64, 395*fn*; and removal of untouchability, 20; and temple-entry for Harijans, 25; formation of, 26; its aims and objects, 26; its work in Orissa, 391
HARIJAN UDYOGSHALA, 445
HEGISHTE, Vasantrao; killed in riots, 4, 31, 40, 54, 55
HEMANT KUMAR NILKANTH, 358
HINDI/HINDUSTANI; and Roman script, 156; and Urdu, 203-4, 311-2, 335; teaching of, in schools, 203-4; use of, advocated, 134, 144, 272-3, 308, 475

HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, 335
(*The*) *Hindu*, 200, 296, 462
HINDUISM, 22, 31; and castes, 105; and eradication of untouchability, 254; and untouchability, 9, 26, 53
HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION; and need for police and military, 361
HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY, 240, 254, 286; and swaraj, 275
HINDUS; and eradication of untouchability, 165; and Muslims, 31-2, 366; and Sikhs, 22; and untouchability, 312; and untouchables, 18-9; and uplift of Harijans, 25, 27
HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA, WARDHA; and propagation of Hindi, 272-3; postponement of examinations for, 207
HINDUSTANI TALIMI SANGH, 96, 99, 211, 502
HINGORANI, Anand T., 57, 84, 89, 242, 338, 339
HINGORANI, Ganga, 57, 89, 338
HINGORANI, Mahadev A., 242, 338, 339
HINGORANI, Vidya, 57, 89
HIROSHIMA; nuclear attack on, 371
HIP-BATH, *see* under NATURE CURE
HOLMES, John Haynes, 467
HONESTY; and businessmen, 12
HOOSEINBHAI LALJEE, 160
HORSE RACING; an evil habit, 130
HOSHIARI, 2, 219, 285, 408
HUNGER STRIKES; justification, 389-90
HUNNAR, 278, 326
HUSSEINBHAI, 388
HYDERABAD; political reforms in, criticized, 149-50, 344-5, 357-8

Imitation of Christ, 65*fn*
IMPERIALISM, 19; and violence, 223
INDIA; and self-sufficiency in food, 133-4; anti-white feeling in, 10-1; cotton cultivation in, 86; famine in 355; industrialization of, opposed, 205-6; poverty of, 368; rural character of, 95
INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE; replacement of, 88
INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY, 55
INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS; and Communists, 366-7; and Constituent Assembly, 67-8; and grouping, 5, 215-6, 466; and Harijans, 18-9, 20-1, 24; and Kashmir question, 5-6, 375, 386, 519-20; and Muslims, 24; and Nayee Talim, 99; and strikes, 49, 148; and swaraj, 276; and truth and ahimsa, 266-7, 276, 351-2; and village crafts, 211; agreement with Muslim League regarding Interim Government, 416, 441; constitution of, and khadi clause, 173; corruption in, 426; differences with Muslim League, 243-4, 372, 383-4, 385-6; existence of parties in, 365-6; Gandhiji suggests it should become an organization of workers, 440; its resolution regarding communal riots, 234; khadi exhibition at the session of, 295, 346, 349; loss of popular support, 85; place of minority opinion in, 364; negotiations with Cabinet Mission, 146-7; session of, 363, 472; presidentship of, 414; Working Committee meeting of, 2, 18, 49, 143, 197, 220, 231
Indian Opinion, 233
INDORE; compost making at, 187
INDUSTRIES; and State ownership, 206
INTER-DINING; and eradication of untouchability, 25, 422

INTERIM GOVERNMENT, 322; and Hindu-Muslim Unity, 244; formation of, and Muslim League, 131, 215-6, 231, 244-5, 435, 465; inclusion of Nationalist Muslims in, 383-4, 385-6, 416, 441
INTERMARRIAGE; between Harijans and caste Hindus advocated, 27-8
IQBAL, 41
Ishopanishad, 368, 455
ISLAM, 31; meaning of, 186, 277

JADAVBEHN; death of, 284
JAGADISAN, 296
JAGIRDARS; advised to be servants of people, 311
JAGJIVAN RAM, 240
JAIL-GOING; and satyagraha, 148, 203; and swaraj, 147
JAIPUR; demand for tax exemption for khadi in, 194
JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM, 147, 314
JAJU, Shrikrishnadas, 46, 189, 193, 218, 250, 295, 346, 349, 380, 411, 437, 438, 502
JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA; silver jubilee of, 169
JAMKHANDI, Raja of, 76*fn*
JANARDAN PRASAD, 466
JANI, Jagannath, 286, 287
Jaya-Jayant, 359
JAYANTILAL, 4, 153
JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN, 6, 8, 472; differences with Congress on acceptance of British offer, 67-8
Jeevan-Sakha, 502
JESHANGBHAI, 42
JEWELLERY; wearing of, criticized, 179
JEWS, 18
JHANSI, Rani of, 480
JINNAH, M. A., 6, 69, 269, 383, 385, 392, 416*fn*, 435*fn*, 465; his two-nation theory, 472; violent speeches of, 276
JOSHI, 457
JOSHI, D. D., 105
JOURNALISTS; duty of, 370-1
JUBBULPORE; anti-Christian disturbances in, 420

KABIR, 382
KAJEE, A. I., 245
KAKODKAR, Purushottam; arrest of, 413; fast by, 209, 288, 292, 294; ill-treatment of, in jail, 177*fn*, 180, 214, 223
KALE, Anasuyabai, 364
KALELKAR, Bal D., 241
KALELKAR, Chandan, 301, 433
KALELKAR, D. B., 124, 195, 201, 248, 259, 301, 316, 345, 406
KALELKAR, Satish D., 433
KALKA PRASAD, 409, 454
KALLENBACH, Hermann, 406
KALYANIDEVI, 28, 29
KAMALABEHN, 150
KAMDAR, Kantilal N., 463
KAMTA PRASAD, 176
KANCHANS (tribe), 119
KANTAK, Prema, 61, 469
KANUNGO, Nityanand, 95*fn*
KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR, 340, 354, 356
Karma; and rebirth, 52-3
KASHMIR; Maharaja's position, 35; Maharaja's statement, 3; repression in, 375; Congress Working Committee resolution on, 386
KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL TRUST, 26, 64, 224, 336, 346; appointment of agents for, 71, 72, 353
KATJU, Kailas Nath, 56, 500, 501

KAVI, Nanalal Dalpatram, 358; death of, 359
KEDAR, Dr. T. J., 6
KELAPPAN, 398
KELKAR, N. C., 76*fn*, 80
KERALA; co-operative movement in, 398; formation of, 200
KHADI; and self-sufficiency in cloth, 65-6, 171-4; and swaraj, 15, 210, 257; and villagers, 75-6; as chief village industry, 210-2; in Bombay, 193; Madras scheme of, 378-9, 386; production of, 65-6, 365; progress of, 370; propagation of, 147, 210, 244-5, 251, 472-4; sale of, and yarn condition, 127-8; scarcity, 181; symbol of ahimsa, 265, 439; tax exemption for, 194; uncertified, and mill cloth, 288, 305, 425-6, 438-9; use of, 240, 364
KHADI BHANDARS; and supply of khadi, 354-5
KHADI EXHIBITION; at Congress session, 295, 346, 349
KHADI GRAMODYOG SANGH, 395*fn*
KHADI WORK; decentralization of, 440, 459-60
KHAITAN, Radhakrishna, 112, 113
KHAN, Abdul Ghaffar, 137, 299, 364, 419
KHAN SAHEB, Dr., 242, 299
KHAN, Sir Shafaat Ahmed, 156; assault on, 213, 245, 246; his work for Indians in South Africa, 245-6
KHANNA, Mehr Chand, 299
KHER, B. G., 38, 43, 71, 84*fn*, 117, 314, 459
KHILAFAT MOVEMENT, 277
KHOSLA, Dr., 395
KHUDAI KHIDMATGARS, 364
KHURJA; nature cure work in, 418
KINI, Dr.; his scheme regarding rural education, 322-3, 456
KISAN CONFERENCE, 162
KNOWLEDGE; material and spiritual, 510
KOCHARAB ASHRAM, 202
KORAN, 135,405
KORE, 76*fn*
KOSAMBI, Dharmanand; fast by, 325, 341, 360
KOTAK, Harjivan, 497
KOTHARI, Vithaldas, 250, 288, 304
Krantikari Charkha, 1
KRIPALANI, J. B., 228, 480; as candidate for Congress presidentship, 414, 465
KRIPALANI, Sucheta, 390, 480; resigns from the Kasturba Memorial Trust, 61
KRISHNA, 420
KRISHNACHANDRA, 90, 104, 106, 190, 285
KRISHNAMACHARI, V. T., 194
KRISHNAMAIYA, 4
KRISHNAMURTI, 275
KRISHNASARMA, V. K., 65
KSHATRIYAS, 18; duties of, 254
KUMARAPPA, J. C., 208, 250, 262, 336, 426, 453
KUMI, 75
KURUNDWAD, Raja of, 76*fn*

LABOUR; dignity of, and Nayee Talim, 193; manual, importance of, 199-200
LAGU, 458
LAKHANI, Rajabali; killed in riots, 4*fn*, 31, 40, 54, 55,—question of compensation, 140
LAKSHAMANA (of *Ramayana*), 331
LATIF SYED, Begum, 161
LATIF SYED, Dr., 161

CWMG - LXXXVI

LAVATORIES; cleanliness of, 38-9; septic tanks for, 187
LENIN, 188
LEPROSY; as contagious disease, 296-7, 300
LESTER, Muriel, 229, 258, 299
LOHIA, Ram Manohar, 110, 460, 474; arrest of, in Goa, 413, damages demanded, 456-7
LOVE; strength of, 505, 507

MACDONALD, Ramsay, 26
MACHINERY; and human labour, 95-6; and swaraj, 33; criticized, 95-6; use of, 239-40, —in agriculture, 133-4, 332
MADALASA, 201, 233, 300, 334, 356, 468
MADHU, 285
MADRAS; devadasi system in, 239; prohibition in, 270, 378; self-sufficiency in food, 379; untouchability in, 378
MADRAS KHADI SCHEME, 172, 251, 497; adverse propaganda regarding, 462, 472-4; and textile mills, 436-7
MAGANLAL; his donation for nature cure work, 167, 168
MAHABALESHWAR; insanitation in, 99
Mahabharata, 52
MAHARS, 119
MAHAVIR, 4, 5
MAHENDRA PRATAP, Raja, 146
MAHTAB, Harekrushna, 157, 251
MAHUA; as health resort, 188
MAINE, Sir Henry James Sumner; on Indian villages, 79
MAITRI, 5
MAJID, M. A., 163
MAJMUDAR, Parikshitlal, 312, 316
MALABAR; unification of, with Travancore and Cochin, 200
MALARIA; precaution against, 185-6
MALAVIYA, Madan Mohan, 28, 478
MALKANI, N. R., 340
MANDAL, Jogendranath, 416*fn*; his nomination by Muslim League for Interim Government criticized, 471
MANGALDAS HARKISANDAS, 432
MANGHARAM BHAVANDAS, 179
MANGS, 119
MANIBHAI, 284
MANILA; Indians in, their contribution for famine relief, 355
MARX, Karl, 8
MARRIAGE; between caste Hindus and Harijans, 273, 402; forced, 264-5; ideal, 468; ill-matched, 192
MASHRUWALA, Kishorelal G., 104, 132, 216, 218, 316, 433
MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI, 303
MATTHAI, John, 323
MAVALANKAR, G. V., 145, 316, 403
MAZUMDAR, Dhirendra, 1; his book on charkha, 14
MEANS; purity of, 368
MEDH, Surendra, 59, 394, 474
MEHTA, Champa R., 427, 498
MEHTA, Chandrakant, 273
MEHTA, Dinshaw K., 38, 39, 43, 45, 100, 125, 158, 167, 178, 196, 224, 227, 262, 444; and nature cure, 118
MEHTA, Gulbai, D., 159, 444
MEHTA, Indravadan, 353
MEHTA, Jamshed, 407
MEHTA, Dr. Jivaraj, 303
MEHTA, Kalyanji, 422
MEHTA, V. L., 95*fn*, 193, 221
MENON, Kunjukrishna, 176
MILITARY; use of, for constructive work, 235-6

Mill Cloth; and khadi, 305; and villagers, 75
Mill-owners; and labourers, 436-7
Minakshi Temple; and Harijans, 398
Ministers; advised against special privileges, 73-4; and use of Government cars, 344
Minto, Lord, 10
Mirabai, 382, 419
Mirabehn, 56, 124, 187, 225, 291, 330, 332
Miraj, Raja of, 76*fn*
Mirza Ismail, 149, 159, 344
Mishra, Mahesh Dutt; advised to take up Harijan work, 499
Missionary Medical College for Women, Vellore, 296
Mitra, Haridas; case of, 43
Mittal, Om Prakash, 310
Mody, H. P., 62, 72
Mohammed, Prophet, 503
Mohammed Yunus, 309
Mohanlal, 38
Mohanlal Motichand, 42
Monkeys; nuisance of, 58
Moonje, Dr. B. S., 139
Morarjee, Sumati, 153
Mother Tongue; and English, 88; as medium of instruction, 143
Mride, 63
Municipalities; and sanitation, 401
Munshi, K. M., 3, 5, 49, 56, 198, 220, 380; as arbiter in Sharma-Gadodia dispute, 46, 47, 94, 198, 230-1, 288, 307
Munshi, Lilavati, 69, 192, 198, 337
Murder; compensation for, 140
Murti, 16
Muslim League, 87, 351; and Interim Government, 131, 243-4, 383-4, 385-6, 435, 441, 465; agreement with Congress regarding Nationalist Muslims, 416; as purely communal organization, 472; boycott of Constituent Assembly by, 386, campaign of hatred by, 186, 360; differences with Congress, 243-4, 372, 383-4, 385-6; its Direct Action, 186-7, 244, 360; nomination of Harijan for Interim Government by, 471-2; their demand for Pakistan, 277, 366-7, 465
Muslims; and forcible conversions, 503; and Hindus, 31-2, 366; and separate electorates, 22; and spinning, 86-7
Mysore; food shortage in, 162, 165

Nagadi Sheth, 308, 394
Naidoo, (Mrs.) Thambi; death of, 92-3
Naidu, Padmaja, 150, 159, 462
Naidu, Sarojini, 89, 159, 161, 344
Naik, Gajanan, 285, 431
Nair, Velukutty; advised against fasting, 176
Nalwadi; insanitary condition of dairy in, 189
Nambiar, T. R. Narayan, 475
Nanabhai, *see* bhatt, Nrisimhaprasad
Nanavati, Amritlal, T., 81
Nanavati, Saroj, 406
Nanubhai, 120
Naoroji, Khurshed, 227, 324
Natal Indian Congress; revival of, 245
National Conference; Quit Kashmir movement by, 375*fn*
National Language; Hindustani as, 273
Nature; laws of, 52
Nature Cure, 2, 292, 418; and

allopathic medicines, 105; and Ramanama, 105-6; and swaraj, 109; and treatment of disease, 264; for villages, 125, 212-3; friction-bath, hip-bath and sun-bath, 428, 471; scope of, 118-9
NATURE-CURE CLINIC, URULI KANCHAN affairs of, 118-9, 158; for poor, 118-9; funds for, 126; Trust Deed, 145; trustees of, 167
NATWAR, Ishwardas, 500
NAYEE TALIM, 247, 470; and Congress, 99; and dignity of labour, 193; and nature cure, 212-3; and self-reliance, 85-8; and spinning, 86-7; for villages, 378-9
NAYYAR, Sushila, 2, 89, 124, 185*fn*, 213, 241, 247, 249, 289, 290, 292, 294, 301, 317, 353, 410, 446, 458, 502, 503
NEHRU, Brijlal, 123
NEHRU, Jawaharlal, 9, 48, 67, 79, 80, 126, 149, 160, 196, 215, 231, 243, 252, 253, 255, 260, 268, 279, 358, 383, 386, 387, 392, 393, 413, 416*fn*, 419, 435*fn*, 466; his statement regarding Constituent Assembly, 5-6; his visit to Kashmir, 3, 375
NEHRU, Motilal, 14
NELLORE; temple-entry in, 381
NIMBKAR, Kamalabehn, 258
NIRMALA, 404
NIRMALABEHN, 347, 404
NOAKHALI; communal riots in, 464, 480
NON-ATTACHMENT; attainment of, 370, 382
NON-CO-OPERATION; and swaraj, 14
NON-VIOLENCE, *see* AHIMSA
NUREMBERG; War crimes trials in, 469
NYM WALES, 170
OM PRAKASH, 285
ORISSA; poverty in, 251; Tantis in, 391
OVERSEAS INDIANS; duty of, 275
OWEN, Gladys, 258
PAI, Sushila, 61, 258, 338, 432, 446, 470
PAKVASA, Mangaldas, 117, 145
PALNI TEMPLE; and Harijans, 398
PANCHGANI; home for the poor in, 37-8, 42-3, 73, 108, 155, insanitary conditions in, 38-40, 72, 99-100
PANCHOLI, Vijaya M., 75, 241, 389
PANIKKAR, K. M., 179; advised to learn Hindustani, 252; advised to use Hindi in official work, 308
PANT, Appasaheb, 35, 76*fn*, 88, 89
PANT, G. B., 225, 291
PAN-TANTIS, *see* TANTIS
PARAMANAND, 167, 168, 184
PARAMOUNTCY; and the Princes, 77
PARASRAM, 258
PAREKH, Chimanlal G., 103; death of, 120
PAREKH, Madhusoodan C., 154
PARIKH, Narahari D., 2, 62, 183, 470
PARIKH, Vanamala N., 3, 62, 183
PARSIS, 18, 464
PARVATI, 142
PARVATI (Goddess), 421
PATEL, Jehangir, 118, 138, 159, 167, 178, 225, 227, 314, 444; trustee of nature-cure clinic, 139, 315
PATEL, Jhaverbhai, 208, 240, 285, 453
PATEL, Manibehn, 103, 284
PATEL, Narayanbhai; death of, 389
PATEL, Vallabhbhai, 3, 6, 35, 45, 48, 69, 82, 93, 102, 112, 113, 114, 117, 120, 137, 162, 199, 231, 240, 349, 387, 445
PATIENCE; need for, 504, 506

PATIL, S. K., 38*fn*, 43, 69
PATWARDHAN, Pandurang, 412
PATWARDHAN, S. P., 381, 388, 431, 434
PEGGING ACT (South Africa), 246
PEREIRA (train driver); reward for, 111, 426-7
PERSIAN SCRIPT; learning of, 184
PETHICK-LAWRENCE, Lady, 468
PETHICK-LAWRENCE, Lord, 215*fn*, 392, 443
PHALTAN, Raja of, 76*fn*, 126
PHEROZE, 399
PODDAR, Mahavir Prasad, 500
POLITICS; importance of, 368
POLITICAL PRISONERS; classification of, 147-8
POLITICAL WORKERS; and constructive programme, 319
POONA PACT (1932), 20, 26
PORTUGUESE INDIA; compared to French India, 222-3
POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT; strike in, 35, 49, 68, 82, 103, 116
PRABARTAK SANGH; and A. I. S. A., 309-10; its work for khadi, 76
PRABHAVATI, 472, 476
PRABHU, 289
PRABHU, Laxmi Kant V., 475
PRABHUDAS, 258
PRAKASAM, T., 94, 251, 295, 378, 379, 436, 462
Prakritik Chikitsa, 458
PRAMOD, 427
PRATAP, Maharana; as servant of the people, 311
PRAYER; and meditation, 145; congregational, 318; efficacy of, 31, 420, 509; faith in, 289
PREDESTINATION; reflections on, 12, 369
Prempanth, 81*fn*
PROHIBITION; economic considerations, 270-1; in Central Provinces, 380; in Madras, 378; need for, in India, 270-1
PUNDALIK, 1
PYARELAL, 4, 49, 128, 137, 188, 248, 258, 306, 307, 446

QUAKER SETTLEMENT, 15
QURESHI, 121
QURESHI, Ghulam Rasool, 4

RAJ, 435
RAJAGOPAL, 29
RAJAGOPALACHARI, C., 185, 197, 224, 393, 454, 461
RAJAN, Dr. T. S. S., 28*fn*
RAJAT NARAYAN, 468
RAJBHOJ, 18
RAJENDRA PRASAD, 16, 44, 147, 231, 240, 379, 397, 472; criticized for offering food to Harijans who were not needy, 363
RAJKOT, Thakore Saheb of, 320
RALIATBEHN, 258
RAM, 138
RAMA, Lord, 176, 334, 335, 433; his victory over Ravana, 414-5; undying and all-pervasive, 331-2
RAMACHANDRAN, G., 16
RAMADAS SWAMI, 163
RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA, 51, 52
RAMANAMA, 30, 51, 83, 178, 182, 315, 388, 404, 433; and nature cure, 105-6; and physical ailments, 175-6; and witchcraft, 421; as cure for sleeplessness, 340; efficacy of, 421 510; for eradicating malaria, 139, 175-6; in sickness, 317; meaning of, 135
RAMANLAL, 104
Ramarajya; definition, 135, 143
RAMASWAMI, D. V., 224

CWMG LXXXVI

RAMPUR BUSHAHR, Raja Saheb of, 402
RAMZAN; significance of, 218
RANADE, Ramabai, 29
RANCHHODDAS, 112
RANDHIR SINGH, 311
RANGA, Bharatibehn, 71, 72
RANGA, N. G., 162
RANGANAYAKI DEVI, 444
RANKIN, C. W. B., 43
RAO, G. Ramachandra; his work for Harijans, 271-2
RAO, Hanumantha, 224
RAO, Kaleswar, 462
RASAGULLA, *see* BHARAT NARAYAN
RATANBEHN, 157
RAVANA, 53, 402, 480; his defeat, 414-5
RAVISHANKAR MAHARAJ, 53
RAY, Renuka, 360
RAY, Satyendra Nath, 360
RAYALASEEMA; food shortage in, 162, 165
REBIRTH; and *karma*, 53
REDDY, Govind, 90, 218
REDDY, R. K. Ramalinga, 23
REFORMS; political, in Bikaner State, 252; in Hyderabad, boycott of, 257-8
REGIONAL LANGUAGES; use of, 207
RELIGION(S); and conversion, 503; and State, 328; equality of, 33; teachings of, 276-7; unity of, 31, 254
RIOTS, communal, 2, 120, 215, 231, 282, 309, 338, 360, 382-3, 393, 464, 480; and ahimsa, 55, 234-5; and use of police and army, 41, 186, 266-7, 269; cases of heroism, 390, 459; publishing of casualties in, 452. *See* also under AHMEDABAD, BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, DACCA and NOAKHALI
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, 209
ROMAN CATHOLICS; and casteism, 195
ROMAN SCRIPT; and Hindustani, 156
ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE (1931), 243, 279
ROY, Motilal, 76, 309
ROWDYISM; and students, 181
RUIKAR, R. S., 289
RUPANI, Mohanlal, 155
RUSKIN, John, 96
RUSSIA; as imperialist power, 371

SABARMATI ASHRAM, 346
SACHAR, Bhimsen, 95*fn*
SACRIFICE; definition of, 203
SAHAY, Hardev, 263
SAIYIDAIN, Dr. K. G., 169*fn*
SALES TAX; abolition demanded, 221-2
SALT TAX; abolition demanded, 240, 244, 293, 325, 354, 376-7, 388, 454, 461
SANE GURUJI, 53
SANITATION; Importance of, 99-100; rural, 105
SANKARAN, 278, 292, 348, 411, 501
SARABHAI, Ambalal, 316
SARABHAI, Anasuyabehn, 191
SARABHAI, Mridula, 347
SARABHAI, Saraladevi A., 150, 316, 347, 407, 424
SARMA, Siddhinath, 461
SARVA SEVA SANGH, 395*fn*
SATAWALEKAR, 76*fn*
SATHE, 76*fn*
SATYAGRAHA; against criminals, 115; and fasting, 147; and jail-going, 148, 203; and swaraj, 282
SATYAGRAHIS; ideal of, 232
SATYANAND, 325, 341, 360
SATYAPAL, Dr., 208

CWMG LXXVI

SAVITRI, 334
SAVUR, Dr. S. R. U., 156
SCAVENGING; improving techniques, 401
SCOTT, Rev. Michael, 92
SEKSARIA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE, Wardha, 143
SELF-DEFENCE; and use of force, 235
SELF-REALIZATION, 509
SEN, Gananath, 458
SERVICE; as worship, 420
SEVAGRAM; as a model village, 185
SHAH, Chimanlal N., 46, 106, 218, 283, 285, 292, 316, 336
SHAH, Devichand, 58
SHAH, K. T., 478
SHAH, Kanchan M., 49, 50, 58, 70, 167, 202, 226, 428, 429, 430, 477
SHAH, Mohanlal M., 155, 262
SHAH, Munnalal G., 49, 58, 70, 83, 138, 202, 226, 429, 430
SHAH, Shakaribehn C., 70, 218, 336, 337, 471
SHAKESPEARE; quoted, 372
SHANTI, 427
SHANTILAL, 37, 42, 43, 145, 155
SHARMA, H. L., 418, 471; his dispute with Gadodia, 46, 47, 94, 220, 230, 288, 307
SHARMA, Harihar, 218, 219
SHARMA, Kamala, 218, 219
SHARMA, Lakshmi, 302
SHARMA, Vichitra Narayan, 228, 295, 349
SHASTRI, Dharmadev, 326
SHASTRI, Sitaram, 25
SHEELA, 396
SHETTY, Rama, 29
SHIVAJI, 292
SHRIDHARANI, 454
SHRIMAN NARAYAN, 195, 233, 316, 334
SHUKLA, Chandrashankar, 329
SHUKLA, Rasiklal, 36
SHUKLA, Ravi Shankar, 143*fn*
SHYAMLAL, 24, 72, 150, 392, 403, 410
SIKHS; and Hindus, 22; and separate electorates, 22
SIMLA CONFERENCE, 20
SIMPLICITY; cultivation of, 506
SINHARAJ, 285
SITA (of *Ramayana*), 331, 480
SITARAMAYYA, Dr. Pattabhi, 71, 77, 79, 91
SMOKING; need for agitation against, 451-2
SMUTS, J. C., 246, 329
SOAP; use of, 263
SOCIALISM ; and communism, 8; meaning of, 7-8
SOCIALISTS, 8, 9
SORAB, 63
SOUNDARAM, 16
SOUTH AFRICA; Indians in, their fight for their rights, 11, 92, 151, 245-6, 276, 308, 329, 379, 442,—advised against conflict with Natives, 233-4,—advised not to give up ahimsa, 297-8
SPIEGEL, Margarete, 160
SPINNERS; wages of, 365
SPINNING; and children, 141, 142; and Muslims, 86-7; and realization of God, 409-10, 419; and self-sufficiency, 74-5, 129, 171-4, 341-2, 419; and swaraj, 134, 228, 409-10; as *yajna*, 29; collective, 373; for economic relief, 327-8; propagation of, 182, 280, 335-6, 400; significance of, 374-5
SPIRITUAL FORCE; efficacy of, 175-6
SRI NARAYAN DHARMA PARIPALANA, Ottapalam, 298
SRIRAMULU, Potti, 142, 381, 412
STALIN, 8, 371

CWMG LXXXV

STATE; and need for armed forces, 133; and religion, 328
STRIKES; and students, 369; increasing incidence, significance of, 328-9; justification for, 113-4, 116-7, 148, 149
STUDENTS; and rowdyism, 181; and strikes, 369
SUBEDAR, Manu, 497; his scheme for overcoming cloth shortage, 65-6
SUBHADRA, 348
SUN-BATH, *see* under NATURE CURE
SUNDARAM, 478
SUNDERLAL, 326
SUPERSTITION; and faith, 297
SURAT; use of wells by Harijans in, 422
SURENDRA, 104
SWARAJ, 181, 274; and Congressmen, 34; and discipline, 143; and Hindu-Muslim unity, 275; and jail-going, 147; and khadi, 15, 210, 257; and nature cure, 109; and sacrifice, 231; and spinning, 134, 228, 409-10; and villages, 78-9; of Gandhiji's conception, 32-4; place of foreigners in, 343; place of Harijans in, 18; through ahimsa and truth, 146, 419

TAGORE, Rabindra Nath, 390, 413*fn*, 480; tribute to, 132
TALIMI SANGH, 186, 295, 395*fn*
Talisman, 56
TAMARIND; medicinal uses, 250
TANTIS; work done by Harijan Sevak Sangh for, 391
TAPASE, G. D., 38*fn*, 43
TARACHAND, 301
TARAMANIBEHN, 197
TATA, J. R. D., 395, 437
TAYABULLA, 466*fn*
TEJPAL, Kisanlal C., 275
TEMPLE-ENTRY; for Harijans, 25, 381, 398-9. *See* also under HARIJANS
TEMPLES; for Harijans, 313, 317
TENDULKAR, Dr. A. G., 47, 50
TENDULKAR, G. N., 161
TENDULKAR, Indumati G., 387; advised against foreign trip, 47, 161
TEXTILE MILLS; and cloth shortage, 172; and khadi, 378-9, 472-4; and spinning, 400; nationalization of, and khadi, 436-7; setting up of, opposed, 157, 251, 295
THAKKAR, Amritlal V., 26, 64, 138, 185, 273, 314, 395
THAKORE, Balwantrai, K., 159
THOMAS A KEMPIS, 65
THOMRE, 76*fn*
TILAK, B. G., 165; death anniversary, 84; tribute to, 108-9
TIPPERA; communal riots in, 480
TIRTH, Ramanand, 149, 291, 310, 344, 357
TRACTORS; use of, in agriculture, 332
TRAVANCORE; food shortage in, 280, 349-50; unification of, with Cochin, 200
Tribune, 354
TRIPATHI, Ganesh Dutt; fast by, 299
TRIPATHI, Ram Naresh, 253
TRIVEDI, Kashinath, 190, 197
TRUTH, 504, 505; and ahimsa, 55, 342; and Congress, 351-2; and swaraj, 33, 419; as God, 343; insistence on, 30; ultimate victory of, 330
TUBERCULOSIS, 51
TULSIDAS, 331; quoted, 421
TULSIRAM, 407, 409
TYABJI, Raihana, 406
TYPHOID; causes, 191

CWMG - INDEX

U. N. O.; Indian delegation to, 393
Unto This Last, 96
UNTOUCHABLES, *see* HARIJANS
UNTOUCHABILITY; and Hinduism, 9, 26, 53; and Hindus, 312; eradication of, 24, 147, 165, 239-40, 240, 244, 378, 421, 480, —and inter-dining, 422; evil of, 260
UPANISHADS; quoted, 164
URDU; and Hindi, 311-2
URULI KANCHAN; work for Harijans at, 261
U. S. A.; and exploitation of weaker races, 342; prohibition in, 270
UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM, 152, 199

VAIDYA, Gangabehn, 229
VAIDYA, Kashinath, 149, 344
VAIDYA, Vallabhram, 457*fn*
VAIKUNTHBHAI, *see* MEHTA, V. L.
VAISHYAS, 18
VANASPATI OIL; as substitute of ghee, 423, 439
Varnavyavastha, 24
VEGETABLES; growing of, 193
VENKATAPPAYYA, Konda, 142
VENKATESWARAN, S. V., 379
VIBHISHANA, 414
VICEROY; powers of, in Interim Government, 268-9
VICEROY'S HOUSE; use of, for Harijans, 11
VIDYARTHI, Ganesh Shanker, 55, 304
VIDYARTHI, Prabhu Dayal, 188, 189, 285, 340
VILAS, 249
VILLAGE(S); and cities, 97-8, 129; and mill cloth, 75-6; and police protection, 450-1; and revival of khadi, 251; and self-reliance, 32, 33; and swaraj, 78-9; and technology, 97
Village Communities in the East and West, 79*fn*
VILLAGE INDUSTRIES; revival of, 96, 210-2, 378-9
VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION; aims and objects of, 236-8
VILLAGE UNIVERSITY; for villagers, 322-3
VINODINI, 142
VIRAM, Madarnahak, 177
VISHNU, 421
VISHWANATH, 458
VISHWANATHAN, Dr. 214
VRAJLAL, 155
VYAS, Kanta, 287
VYAS, Ramprasad, 46, 138, 139, 178, 225, 227, 287, 314

WAI, Nawab of, 39
WAIZ, S. A., 334
WAR; impact of, on small countries, 329-30
WARDHA; indisciplined behaviour of crowds in, 143
WAVELL, Lord, 20, 376, 413, 416*fn*; and Muslim League, 385, 392-3; Gandhiji's interview with, 385-7, 392-3; threatens not to call Constituent Assembly unless grouping formula accepted, 215-6
WEAVERS; and mill yarn, 438
WESTCOTT, Foss, 411
WESTERN COUNTRIES; and exploitation of weaker nations, 329-30
WOMEN; backwardness of, 144
WORLD WAR I, 171

YASHMILAP, 467
YOUTH; and violence, 17
YUDHISHTHIRA, 96

CWMG LXXXV

ZAKIR HUSSAIN, Dr., 169, 323, 456
ZAMINDARI; abolition of, 403*fn*
ZAMINDARS; advised to be servants of people, 254, 311
Zend Avesta, 30, 135
ZOROASTRIANISM, 31
ZUTSHI, Ladorani, 253

ERRATA

PAGE		FOR	READ
117	*footnote	Governor	President of Legislative Council
137	Item 140, date-line	August 8	August 16
165	*Item 180, line 3 and last line	insufficient	in sufficient
168	*Item 185, line 4 from bottom	there better	better there
210	*Line 1	Minister	Ministers
249	*Line 12	patient	patience
285	Item 341, last sentence	Prabhudas	Prabhu Dayal
329	*Footnote, last line	appeared	appeared in
349	*Item 440, para 1, line 4 from bottom	sight of relief	sigh of relief
354	*Line 9	all its means	all it means
359	*Line 5	what	that

*Due correction made.

CWMG - LXXXV

