THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LI

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THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

VOLUME FIFTY-ONE



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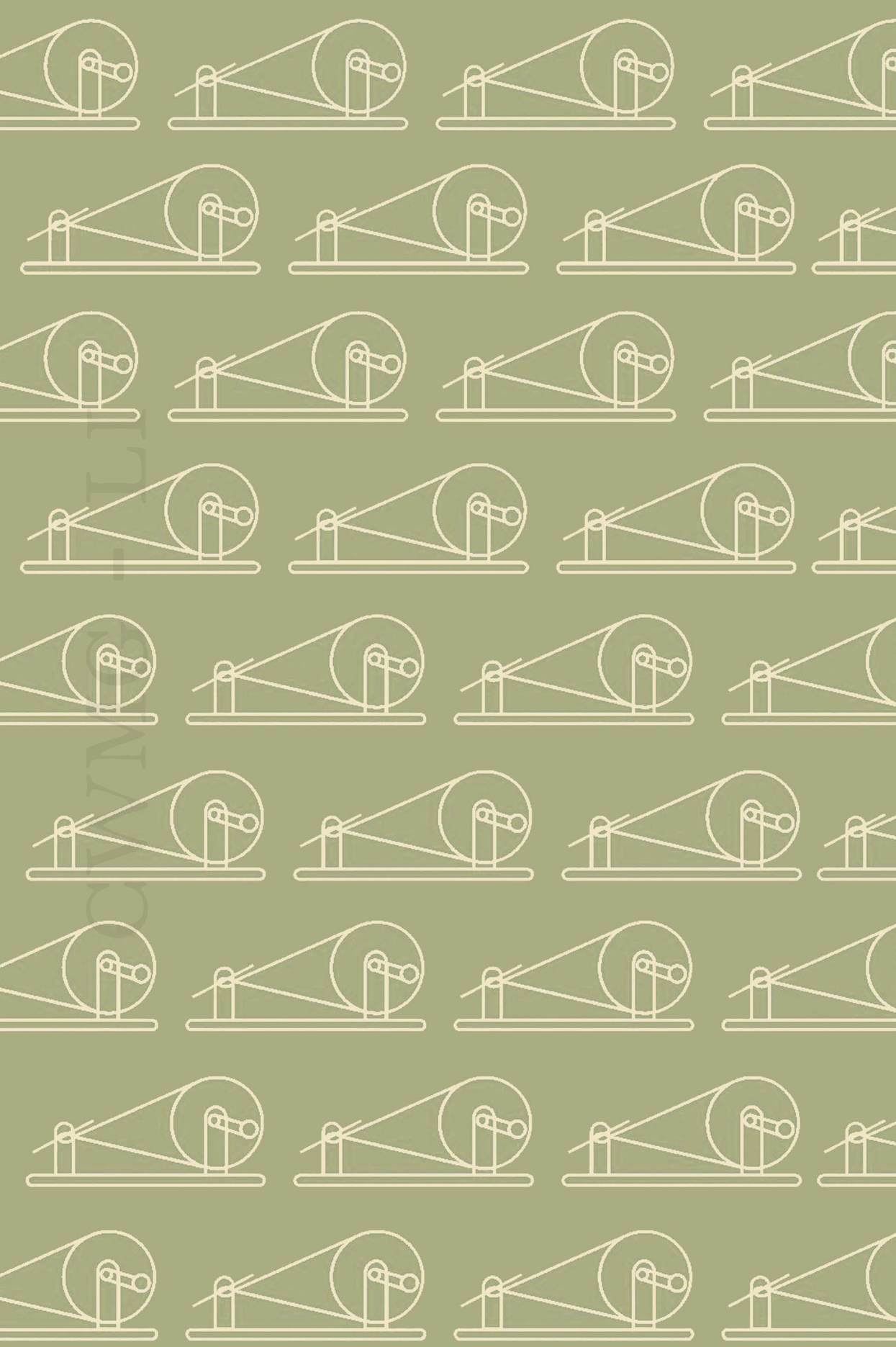
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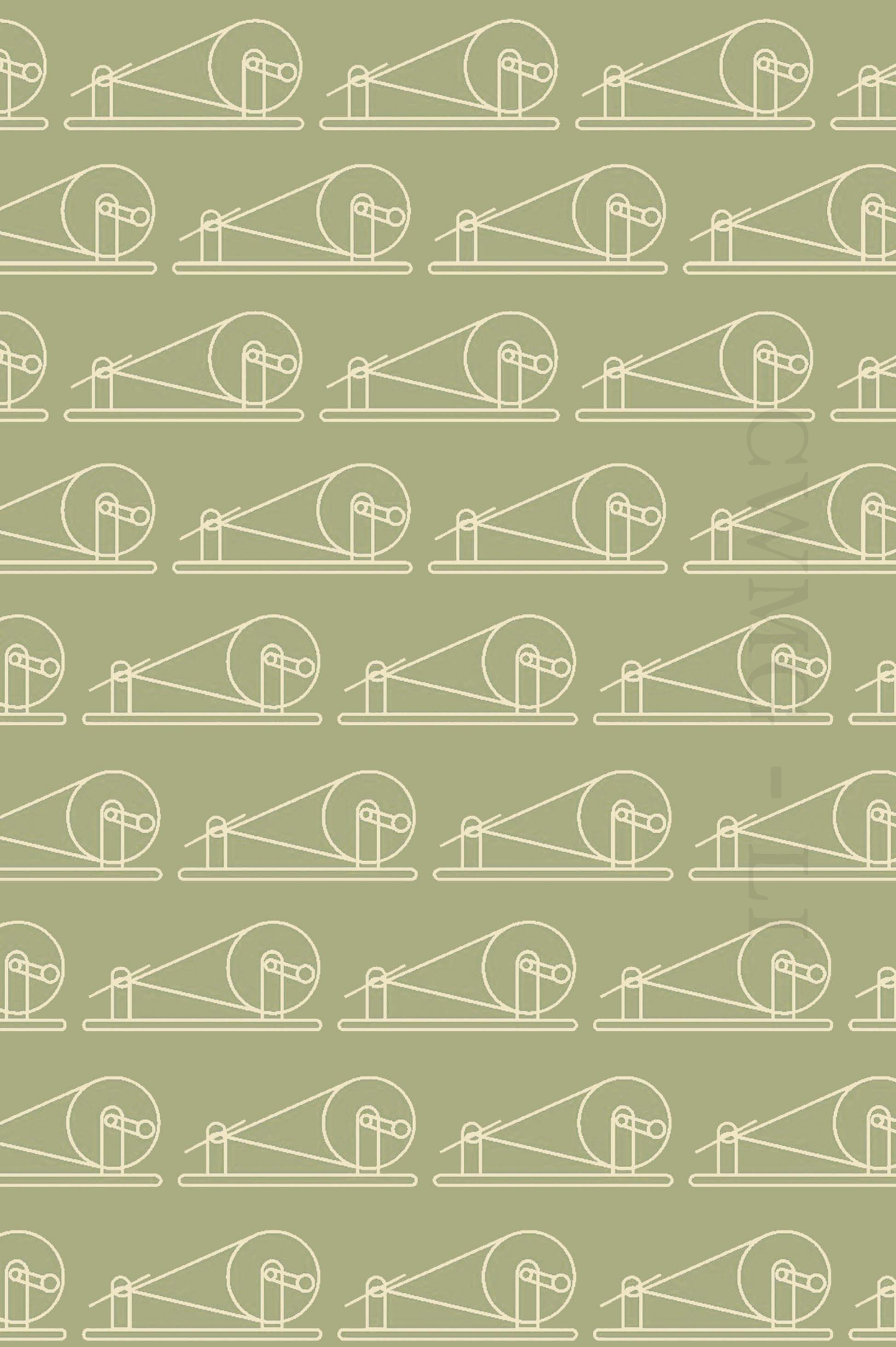
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PREFACE

During the period covered in this volume (September 1 to November 15, 1932) the national movement under Gandhiji's leadership, which in its spirit had always been a movement of self-purification, became more clearly and openly so, following his indefinite fast against the British Government's decision to constitute the depressed classes into a separate electorate for the purposes of the new constitution then under consideration. Gandhiji's aim behind this "final act of satyagraha in the cause of the down-trodden" (p. 55) was "to sting the Hindu conscience into right religious action" (p. 62), and this aim seemed to be amply realized by the instantaneous country-wide awakening which followed the commencement of the fast and led to an agreement, known as the Poona or the Yeravda Pact, between Hindu leaders and representatives of the depressed classes on the constitutional provisions for the Harijans. The agreement was accompanied by a pledge by the Hindu leaders at public conferences in Bombay on September 25 and 30 to secure for the Harijans complete political and social equality and to work for removal of all the disabilities and hardships suffered by them.

Though the immediate aim of the fast was to secure the reversal of the British Government's decision, and it was criticized by many as a form of coercion, for Gandhiji it was a deeply spiritual act, "resolved upon in the name of God for His work and, as I believe in all humility, at His call" (p. 62). The political aspect of the matter was of secondary importance to him. He opposed the British Government's decision because he believed that it would "arrest the marvellous growth" of the Hindu reformers' work for the eradication of untouchability (p. 32). He was convinced that separation of the depressed classes from Hindu society would not serve their real interests and would in any case be impossible. "They are", he said, "part of an indivisible family. . . . There is a subtle something—quite indefinable—in Hinduism which keeps them in it even in spite of themselves" (p. 63). "What I want," he said in a Press interview on the day of commencement of the fast, "what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for, is the eradication of untouchability root and branch" (p. 118), and through the fast he wished to appeal to "the affection of the millions" who used to flock to his meetings (p. 266) and between whom and himself, he believed,

an indissoluble bond existed (p. 386). It was "a whip administered to lethargic love" (p.253) and was aimed against all "those who have faith in me, whether Indians or foreigners" and "those countless Indians . . . who believe that I represent a just cause" (p. 62). "If the Hindu mass mind", he told the people, "is not yet prepared to banish untouchability root and branch, it must sacrifice me without the slightest hesitation" (p. 63). This "conception of giving my life for the untouchables", he said in a letter to Sarojini Naidu, "is not of yesterday. . . . There was no call from within for years. But the Cabinet's decision came like a violent alarm waking me from my slumber and telling me this is the time." And he instinctively seized the psychological moment it provided (p. 71).

Gandhiji looked forward to the fast in a mood of almost exultant joy. He regarded it as "both a privilege and a duty" (p. 56), a "God-given opportunity for a final act of satyagraha in the cause of the downtrodden" (p. 55). It was to him "an expression of, and the last seal on, non-violence" (p. 65), and he "would experience nothing but the profoundest peace" if he had to carry it to its logical end (p. 52). "Only one in millions meets death for which he has prayed" (p. 52), he told Kasturba and asked her to thank God if it was his good fortune to do so. In a touching letter to Khushalchand Gandhi, for whom he felt the deepest reverence, Gandhiji asked him to "rejoice that you had a younger brother whom God had granted the strength to complete such a *yajna*" (p. 91). While, however, Gandhiji rejoiced at the prospect of laying down his life for a cherished cause, he was also humble enough to recognize that he might be mistaken in regard to both his motive and his strength. "If I am wrong," he said in a letter to Narandas Gandhi, "people will judge my step as a sign of false pride and an instance of demoniac self-mortification" (p. 53). In the statement to the Press sent to the Government for publication before the commencement of the fast, Gandhiji went further and said that if his faith was a hallucination, "I must be allowed to do my penance in peace. It will be the lifting of a dead weight on Hinduism" (p. 64). Similarly, asking Mirabehn "to rejoice with me that such an occasion seems to have come to me," he explained, "I say 'seems' for my faith has yet to be tried. No one can dare talk of his own strength in a matter of life and death" (p. 56). The mood of exultant yet humble self-abandonment comes out clearly in a letter to a fellow devotee: "The fast is not mine but that of Rama; the responsibility is His, not mine. If it is unfruitful He will be blamed, not I, and if fruitful He

not being concerned with praises, I, a beggar at his door, will accept it'' (pp. 99-100).

Gandhiji also felt the human cost of the sacrifice. ''As I wrote that first letter conveying my vow,'' he told Mirabehn, ''I thought of you and of Ba. And for a time I became giddy'' (p. 102). But Gandhiji had hardened his heart with the thought, ''No anguish will be too terrible to wash out the sin of untouchability'' (p. 102). ''And have we not deserved'', he asked in a letter to G. K. Devdhar, ''the most terrible chastisement from God for our treatment of the untouchables?'' (pp. 110-1) As a Hindu who was a ''touchable'' by birth but an ''untouchable'' by choice (p. 111), he must atone for this sin. ''This is a wonderful ordeal'', he said in the letter to Devdhar. ''I deserve it all. For I have the Hindu heart'' (p. 110). Human that he was, Gandhiji yearned for the approval of friends like Rabindranath Tagore and Srinivasa Sastri for this act of supreme sacrifice. Writing to the former his first letter in the early morning of the day of the fast, he said: ''I enter the fiery gate at noon. If you can bless the effort, I want it. . . . I am not too proud to make an open confession of my blunder . . . if I find myself in error'' (p. 101). And to Sastri he wrote: ''Perhaps this step of mine has been for you the last straw. Even so I want to have your laceration. . . . At this (maybe) last crisis, you must not cease to strive with me. Send me your curses or your blessings'' (p. 102). And both friends, for a long time uncompromising critics of Gandhiji's philosophy of non-co-operation, sent their unreserved appreciation. ''Our sorrowing hearts'', Tagore said, ''will follow your sublime penance with reverence and love'' (footnote 2, p. 109). Sastri paid tribute to Gandhiji's ''superb service performed in your superb style'', and added, ''the result vindicates and establishes you as indisputably the foremost untouchable and 'unapproachable''' (footnote 2, p. 137).

Tagore and Sastri summed up, by and large, the response of the country. Gandhiji described the wonderful manifestation throughout India as a ''modern miracle'' (p. 137). ''It was travail of new birth'' both to himself and to ''superstitious ignorant Hinduism'' (p. 157). At one blow the foundations of a centuries-old belief and practice seemed to lie in ruins. From a spiritual point of view, too, this was probably the happiest experience in Gandhiji's life. The fast, like a lover's who ''fasts to prevent the loved one from going astray'', was ''the cry of an anguished heart ascending to heaven'' (p. 253). And, Gandhiji confessed, never before had he experienced ''such an immediate response to prayer'', for those days were ''days of basking in the sunshine of

His presence'' (p. 266). ''God was never nearer to me than during the fast,'' he told Horace Alexander (p. 186). And this despite the fact that Gandhiji experienced considerable physical and mental suffering during the days of the fast (p. 174). As he confessed, ''There is a deep unconscious joy felt during such purifying agony'' (p. 157).

Gandhiji realized, however, that this marvellous public awakening to an acknowledged social evil did not mean the immediate end of untouchability. ''The settlement arrived at'', he said in a message to the British people, ''is to me but the beginning of the work of purification'', and added: ''The agony of the soul is not going to end until every trace of untouchability is gone. . . . I shall undergo as many fasts as are necessary in order to purify Hinduism of this unbearable taint'' (pp. 140-1). Likewise he assured the Harijans that, though the British Government had accepted only that part of the Agreement which referred to the British Cabinet's Communal decision, he himself was ''wedded to the whole of that Agreement'' and they could hold his life ''as hostage for its due fulfilment'' (p. 145). By a happy chance, Gandhiji got an opportunity to demonstrate his total commitment to the cause by pledging himself to another fast practically as soon as the fast in the jail had ended. K. Kelappan, a fellow-worker in South India in the cause of Harijan uplift, had embarked on a fast, simultaneously with Gandhiji's, to get the famous temple at Guruvayur thrown open to the Harijans. Discovering a moral flaw in his action from the point of view of the ethics of satyagraha, Gandhiji advised him to suspend the fast and give three months' notice to the Temple authorities and added: ''God helping, I shall bear my share of the burden'' (p. 162).

The Government, not realizing the seriousness of Gandhiji's intention to pursue the reform which his fast had initiated, stopped the special facilities in regard to visitors and correspondence which they had permitted him during the fast week. Gandhiji was very much upset. ''I must confess'', he said in a letter to the Jail Superintendent, ''that I was wholly unprepared for this very sudden and rude reminder that I was but a prisoner . . . I had hoped that at least during the convalescent period I would be saved all unnecessary shock to my nerves'' (p. 152). After waiting for more than three weeks for the Government to clarify its policy, Gandhiji wrote again threatening a gradual fast if he was not given reasonable facilities for carrying on Harijan work. ''I can have no interest in life'', he wrote to the Inspector-General

of Prisons, "if I cannot prosecute, without let or hindrance, work for which the fast was undertaken and suspended" (p. 289). Again he declared, "I cannot live and not work for the removal of untouchability" (p. 322). The Government handsomely admitted that "they had not before fully appreciated" Gandhiji's programme of work and removed "all restrictions on visitors, correspondence and publicity in regard to matters . . . strictly limited to the removal of untouchability" (footnote 1, pp. 336-7).

Gandhiji utilized the freedom granted to him by starting a vigorous campaign of public education through correspondence and a series of statements on untouchability. In the very first of these statements he attacked the religious foundation of the practice by redefining "Hindu dharma". While the orthodox regarded untouchability as an integral part of Hinduism and therefore Gandhiji "as a renegade" who had imbibed "notions from Christianity and Islam", he claimed himself to be a sanatanist. Sanatana dharma, according to him, was "based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them", but the Vedas were, he argued, "as indefinable as God and Hinduism". Hinduism was an ever-growing faith, each generation of seers adding to the "original treasures according to their lights". And "then arose a great and loftly-minded man, the composer of the *Gita*. He gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker". "Whatever is contrary to its main theme", Gandhiji declared, "I reject as un-Hindu." As regards the charge of having come under the influence of other faiths, Gandhiji boldly asserted that his study of other scriptures had "broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism". "I take pride in calling myself a Hindu," he added, "because I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth." He had approached the masses, he said, with this enlightened "message of the *Gita* burnt into my life", and they had listened to him "not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognized me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith". And he was convinced, therefore, that "I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to sanatan dharma, and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death" (pp. 344-5).

The attack on untouchability necessarily raised the question of caste reform. Gandhiji took care to keep the two apart, so as to be able to concentrate his efforts on eradication of untouch-

ability. Caste, he said, was a social evil, whereas untouchability was "a soul-destroying sin" (p. 219). He, therefore, made it repeatedly clear that inter-dining and intermarriage were not a part of the movement against untouchability, though, when mixed dinner parties with Harijans did take place, he welcomed them as a healthy sign (pp. 231, 343). Drawing a distinction between caste and varna, Gandhiji said that the latter meant no more than profession and had "nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarriage" (p. 350). Varna so defined, he admitted, had broken down in modern times and there was only one varna, Shudra, left (pp. 350, 389).

Letters written during this period of great stress afford many intimate glimpses into Gandhiji's understanding of himself and his anxiety to be rightly understood by his ever-widening circle of correspondents. His special concern was for the Ashram inmates. Two days before the fast began he wrote, "I am drawing the soul of the Ashram into myself and pouring my soul into the people there." His self-suffering would be a mortification of the self and a curse on the world, he admitted, "if deep in my heart I harbour ill will or anger against anybody" (p. 84). Again and again (pp. 11, 41, 219, 359 and 371) he insisted on the wisdom of discovering and removing one's own faults instead of dwelling on those of others, of meeting anger with patience and doing good in return for evil. He advised a social reformer not to "judge" the Zamorin but to step into his shoes and look at the position "even from his point of view" (p. 337). The religious attitude of identifying oneself with all creation and "selfless service of every living creature" (p. 372) prevented Gandhiji from isolating politics from religion. "Religion to be true", he wrote to a Christian friend, "must pervade every activity of life. And that activity which cannot be pursued without sacrificing religion is an immoral activity to be shunned at all costs. Politics is not only not such an activity but it is an integral part of civic life" (p. 239). Condemning doctrinal rigidity and all talk of "your God and my God", he argued that God was accessible "through billions of openings" to "those who are humble and pure of heart", and that "there was only one God for the wise and the foolish, saints and sinners" (pp. 21, 253). Opposed as much to occultism as to cultism, he declared, "The book of life is open to the simplest minds and it should be so. There is nothing occult in God's plan. . . . Truth has no secrets and Truth is God" (pp. 315-6).

Commending Mirabehn's way of looking upon trees and ani-

mals as friends, he argued that "personal friends and relations are no greater friends than strangers of the human family and bird, beast and plant" (p. 57). He duly reported to Premabehn Kantak the mad joy and later contentment of his cat companion on their reunion (p. 285) and also conveyed through her his greetings and prayers to the plants and flowers who could give us "beauty and fragrance like theirs", their humility and innocence (p. 318). He held that the best commentary on the *Gita* would be putting into practice each verse in it which applies to one's life, interpretating the central core of the scripture as non-attachment (p. 324). To Ramdas he confided how he cultivated non-attachment easily since "everything I did was spontaneous, that is, arose naturally from my devotion to truth. If one is filled with a desire to serve the whole world, one can easily cultivate non-attachment" (p. 373). A good example of such non-attachment is provided by Gandhiji's references to the body. He assured Andrews, "I do not want to kill brother ass. He is in God's safe keeping" (p. 346). Recommending to the ailing son of a friend proper breathing, proper diet, fresh air and a living faith in God (p. 267), he explained: " . . . you should cease to think the body as yours. It is God's. But God has given it to you for the time being to keep it clean and healthy and use it for His service. You are therefore the trustee, not the owner" (p. 349). He wrote to Esther Menon: "Even as a soldier keeps his arms clean and in order so we must keep our arms (God-given bodies) clean and in perfect order" (p. 400).

Gandhiji wanted the Ashram as an institution to "remain equal towards all religions" and its inmates to offer worship to the formless God in the open prayer ground with the horizons "as its walls and the sky as its roof . . ." (p. 209). This congregational prayer, however, was not as important as individual prayer, its indispensable basis. "What you can experience in seclusion is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to experience in a group" (p. 304).

NOTE TO THE READER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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CWMG - LI

1. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

YERAVDA MANDIR[1],
September 1, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got the letter, written in beautiful handwriting, by your new secretary. I hope that the new office-bearers will discharge their duties well. By assuming responsibilities in this way you will advance very far. Associations like yours can run smoothly only if you are tolerant towards one another. If you learn to do this, you will get in time the ability to run big associations. Keep sending me weekly reports of your work. If any disputes arise, you should write about those too. The best thing, of course, is that there should be no disputes. But in case a dispute does arise, there would be no benefit in keeping it from me. If I know about it, I may be able to guide you. Moreover, the knowledge that you will have to inform me may itself save you from quarrels.

BAPU

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

2. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

September 1, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

I certainly did not wish to stop you asking me questions. After you have thought out in your own mind the answer to a problem, you may certainly ask me to check whether your solution is correct. I may say that intellect has had very little share in shaping my life. I believe that I have a rather poor intellect. I have found it literally true in my case that God shows the means to the man who has faith. I always hold elders and men of spiritual knowledge in high respect and put faith in them. And my deepest faith is

[1] Literally, Yeravda Temple; Yeravda Central Prison, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from January 4, 1932 to May 8, 1933. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent items.

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in truth, and because of that I have always found my path easy even when it is beset with difficulties.

I am happy that your health is improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9168

3. *LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI*

September 1, 1932

CHI. KESHU[1],

You will be able to improve your handwriting if you try hard enough. Man's only true friend is God. One should never eat so much that the stomach is full. The *atman* is none else but *jiva*. Just now, you should read the *Gita* in Gujarati translation and try to understand it. If you do not follow, you should ask somebody to explain. Do not make slivers pointed. If you want to know how many good slivers one can make in an hour, you may ask Abbas-bhai. Memory will improve with study.

You may write to me anything which you wish to.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3280

4. *LETTER TO GULAB*

September 1, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I have your two letters. You say that your speed at spinning is low. What is it exactly? Improve your handwriting. I shall be able to answer you only after you tell me what errors Krishna has committed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1723

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's son

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5. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 1, 1932

CHI. MOHAN[1],

If your handwriting is not good there is no harm in dictating your letter. This does not mean that you may neglect to improve your handwriting. You are now big enough to be able to write a good hand.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9182

6. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 1, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I have your letter. This time your handwriting is better. If you keep up the effort it will gradually improve. You say that you have learnt everything. This cannot be true. There are many things to be learnt. Your Gujarati is still very weak. You have yet to learn Sanskrit. Ginning, carding, weaving, sewing, embroidery, spinning yarn of fine count—all this remains.

You should know arithmetic and also learn nursing. You will learn all this in time.

Speak less, think more. I understand what you say about your dress. At the moment, I cannot think of anything against it.

I wish you to become a very good girl.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2762. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

[1] Son of Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh

7. LETTER TO PADMA

September 1, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. You have given plenty of information in it. It is good that you are eating fruit. There is no harm if you stop spinning when you get tired. You will not get tired if you draw the thread with the right hand and rotate the wheel with the foot. That is what I do. If, however, even that is a strain, then you may stop spinning. If you can, do embroidery or sewing. If you do not get cotton slivers, you may spin wool. Teach Sheela with proper care. Just now, she need not trace and retrace the letters. A lot can be taught orally. For instance, you can teach arithmetic in that manner.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6137. Also C.W. 3489. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

8. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 1, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I am absolutely certain that you would do credit to the post of a secretary. Do not work beyond your capacity. And, do not be deterred by anything that may happen. You should never worry. How is it that your yarn snaps so often on the *takli*? Luck and perseverance contribute in equal measure in every act we do. We can control our efforts, so, let us work to our fullest capacity and leave the result to luck. The *Gita* teaches us this very lesson.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9917. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

9. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 1, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

That there is no one living in the house in Kamatipura and that some property from it was stolen, you should look upon as a test of your faith. Keep repeating to yourself: "It is a blessing that the chains have broken, it will now be easier for me to find Shri Gopal."[1]

Kaka[2] wrote to me, too, about Chapter XVI. At present, however, I have no time for it. Ask Ramibehn[3] to write to me.

I hope your health is now all right. Besides, the hakim[4] is with you. What more do you want? Give my due regards to him.

Has Nathji's[5] eczema been cured?

Write to me regularly.

Lakshmi[6] Jerajani impressed me as a wise and smart girl.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 65. Also C.W. 8794. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

10. A LETTER[7]

September 1, 1932

I had asked Dilip to send me your name. I have ventured to write to you, though I do not remember that we have met

[1] The line is from Premanand's poem on Narasinh Mehta. The original says, "I can now worship Shri Gopal in peace. "Gandhiji later admitted in an article in *Harijan Bandhu*, 2-11-1940, that he had got used to misquoting the line (સહજે મળશે instead of સુખે ભજશું).

[2] D. B. Kalelkar

[3] Ramibehn Kamdar, addressee's sister

[4] Addressee's instructor in Unani medicine

[5] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[6] Niece of Vithaldas Jerajani, a dedicated khadi worker; she was later married to Purushottam D. Saraiya, addressee's grandson.

[7] The addressee was a private tutor employed for Dilip, son of Mathuradas Trikumji.

any time. It has always been my view regarding children's education that we obstruct their intellectual growth and spoil their handwriting by beginning with the alphabet. I am of the opinion that, before teaching the alphabet, we should give them orally a good deal of general knowledge. Beginning with the history and geography of the child's city or village, we should tell him something of the region, the country and the world as also of Nature's beauty, the sky, the trees and plants and teach him orally a little of arithmetic, geometry, and literature, i.e., correct pronunciation, grammar, poems, Sanskrit verses, etc. For doing any one of these, it is absolutely unnecessary first to teach reading and writing. The child should learn to read before he is taught to write. Writing should come last. Before he starts learning the alphabet, he should learn some drawing. After learning thoroughly how to draw straight lines, oblique lines, triangles, etc., the child should begin to draw pictures of the letters of the alphabet. If we follow this method, learning will not be a painful process to the child, he will have acquired a considerable amount of general knowledge through oral instruction and the letters drawn by the child will be like pearls. There is a chapter on the subject of good handwriting in *Dasbodh*[1], which is worth reading and pondering over. The sight of Dilip's handwriting prompted me to write this, from which you may accept whatever appeals to you and forget the rest. My view is supported by my own very bad handwriting. It is the result of a wrong education.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 390-1

11. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

September 1, 1932

CHI. VIMAL KISHORE[2],

We all study the *Gita* because it is for us like a mother to be consulted whenever we have any doubts.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4983. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra. Also G.N. 7506

[1] By Samarth Ramdas Swami

[2] Son of Parasram Mehrotra

12. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

September 2, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA[1],

I have your letter. The story about Hira is good. You have written it well. You copied it from a book, didn't you? Be as brave and loyal as Hira was. You do not tell me why you left the school, but I have received complaints against you from three different persons. I know very well that you have some faults, but I thought that they had become fewer, and that you were trying to improve yourself. You do seem to have improved outwardly. Your handwriting is better and you write well. But your heart should be equally pure and good. You should never tell a lie, nor scheme against anybody. If you have any grievances let me know them. You must obey Panditji at any rate. You do not seem to have kept your vows either. Write to me and tell me everything frankly.

May God make you good.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 297. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

13. LETTER TO YOGA V. KHARE

September 2, 1932

CHI. YOGA[2],

If you cannot read or follow this, request Panditji to read it to you. I hope that you will continue to like the Ashram as much as you do now and that your health will remain as good as it is and even improve. Anybody who is ready to learn will find much to learn in the Ashram. You should slowly learn it all. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 311. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Son of Narayan Moreshwar Khare, music teacher at the Ashram
[2] Niece of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

14. A LETTER

September 2, 1932

However wicked the man you have to face you should have faith that God will give you the strength to resist him. You should not have the slightest fear. If such a thing happens, use all your strength. Such resistance is not violence. A rat can never do violence to a cat. If, however, the rat is determined, the cat cannot eat it alive. Thus, a rat which saves itself from the mouth of a cat does no violence to the cat. Do you understand this? Remember that an immoral man is always a coward. He cannot withstand the power of a pure woman. He trembles when she roars at him.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 391-2

15. A LETTER

September 2, 1932

Our love for a dear one should not be such that in everything he says we may see a sign of his having been hurt. We should have sufficient confidence in ourselves to feel sure that such a person will never be hurt by anything we say or do. If we do not have such confidence, we shall often do injustice to him or her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 392

16. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHARMA

September 2, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. What you have heard or read about nature institutions in the West is a case of distance lending enchantment to the scene. Of the best advertised institution, people of the place knew nothing when a friend enquired about it. This does not

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mean that there is nothing in them. My only point is that the whole of this science is yet in its infancy and that there is no common course adopted by these institutions. They are what they are through the original researches of their authors. We in India have to make our own researches in keeping with our surroundings. Whatever is to be gained from them can be easily learnt through their publications.

As to your own health I simply gathered from your letter that it was not up to much. You cannot afford to go by the cases of orthodox physicians. You are a pioneer and will therefore have to show a record that would stand the most rigorous scrutiny.

I am glad you have given up the idea of going to the West. Do build up your own body. That in itself will lead you to many discoveries. Your progress may be slow but it will be sure, if the foundation is sound. . . .

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 12-3

17. LETTER TO DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

September 3, 1932

MY DEAR SURESH,

I was glad to have your second letter. May your hope be fulfilled. Your extraordinary effort surely deserves to succeed. You will please report your progress from time to time. It was quite like Malaviyaji to have visited you and blessed you.[1]

Have you or the doctors who have been helping you discovered the cause of your illness? Why should you, who were to all appearances so healthy, have been caught by the germs of a dangerous malady? Or is the science of medicine still so hopelessly incomplete that it is unable for certain to trace causes of so many diseases to which all flesh is heir?

Love from us all.

BAPU

Advance, 13-9-1932

[1] The addressee was in Calcutta undergoing treatment for tuberculosis.

18. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

September 3, 1932

PANDITJI,

You did well in writing to me regarding the temple. If you have still something more to say, write to me. I surely don't insist that my view in this matter should prevail. However, my views on this subject are fixed. I have said regarding myself that I am both an image-worshipper and an image-breaker. The God conceived by a human being is bound to be a form, though the image may be only in the mind. In that sense, I am an image-worshipper. But I have never been willing to worship any form or image as God. Towards a form or image, I always feel *neti*, *neti*[1]. Hence I regard myself as image-breaker. This being my attitude, I have always felt that we should not have any temple in the Ashram. And it was for this reason that we decided to have no building even for prayers. We sit in the open, with the sky above as the roof and the horizons on the four sides as the walls. If we wish to maintain an attitude of equality towards all religions, this is how we should live. These days, I am trying to read a little from the Vedas and other sacred books. I see this same thing in them all. There is no mention of image-worship anywhere. But Hinduism has a place for it. We should not, therefore, oppose it. However, image-worship is not obligatory. It is voluntary. I feel, therefore, that it would be better if, as an institution, we kept away from image-worship. If what I have always believed to be a *samadhi* is really a temple, we should not make it a place of public worship. When the owner of the land wished to demolish the structure and carry away the bricks, I paid money to him against the estimated value of the bricks and saved the structure. But I do not wish to turn it into a temple. You may discuss this with others who are likely to understand my attitude, and then write to me again if you wish. Do not have the slightest hesitation in expressing your view.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 233. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] Literally, "not this, not this"; the Vedas thus acknowledged the indescribability of the Absolute.

19. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

September 3, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I have your letter and the questions. You may leave me if you like—that may happen though I do not wish it to happen. I, however, will never leave you, for I still want many services from you. There is a prescription which I always recommend, and you should never forget it. As soon as we feel the slightest anger or aversion against a co-worker or think that he has done us injustice, we should sink into deep meditation and tell ourselves: 'I certainly deserve such treatment. The fault is not my co-worker's but mine. Knowingly or unknowingly, I must have given him some cause to be angry with me or feel aversion against me.' When the mind is so persuaded and has calmed down, you should immediately go to the co-worker and ask him what fault he had seen in you. We should then examine ourselves to see that fault and overcome it. If we follow this method, we shall always enjoy peace, feel generous towards the whole world and never feel offended with anyone.

I am satisfied if the massage has really cured the pain. In such a matter, one should never deceive oneself. Do not be afraid of a surgical operation if it becomes necessary.

Of course there was the hand of Fate in the sinking of that boat, but we can see from it the fear which rules our people. It also shows how great is the fear of death in us. If the people had kept their reason to see that the serpent could not have bitten all of them, any one of them could have picked it up and thrown it into the river or even killed it, if he so wished. But where nobody thinks of others and everybody is seized with fear, the result is bound to be what happened. The only lesson we have to draw from this is that we should never have fear of any kind and we should pray to God to grant us good sense when we unexpectedly find ourselves in such situations.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7507. Also C.W. 4984. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

20. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

September 3, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. [You must] improve your handwriting a good deal. Ask Premabehn to teach you how to do it. If you do not at once go to sleep as soon as you lie down, you should close your eyes and begin repeating Ramanama. You will soon fall asleep.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9432. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

21. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

September 3, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is fairly good. But you should make it still better.

What is your speed at spinning?

Why does Gulab beat you?

Learn everything well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1738

22. LETTER TO SECRETARY, NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA, BANARAS[1]

September 3, 1932

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter. Although I am not personally acquainted with Acharya Mahavir Prasadji I am not unaware of his services to Hindi literature. I consider it most fitting that he

[1] The block-print of this letter appeared in the commemoration volume presented to Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi on his birthday.

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should be honoured by the lovers of Hindi on his entering his seventieth year.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI PRADHAN MANTRIJI
NAGARI PRACHARINI SABHA
BANARAS CITY

From Hindi: C.W. 9663. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

23. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 3/4, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on Tuesday. I got the usual letter about Kana[1], too, posted separately. I convey the information to Ramdas as and when I think fit. I had expected a postcard today, but there was none. Pyare Ali[2] had sent me a wire about Qureshi's[3] operation. I have also had a letter from him. I hope Champa[4] got the postcard I wrote to her. Please make whatever arrangements are possible for the education of the new girls who join. I constantly feel that you should get more free time to think about and plan things such as this. We have done much for Liladhar[5]. If he does not understand his place or his self-interest, how can we help him? Do only what seems proper to you. Indu[6] yearns for parental love. Try to understand his heart. Read my letter to Kusum[7]. If she takes careful measures, she will be completely all right. If, however, she takes rest and employs other remedies just to please you, she will lose her life altogether or else will become an invalid and then weep. I intend to devote the weekly article this time to Narayanappa's case. It will contain some thoughts which may seem novel. Try to understand them and then explain them to the girls.

My chief reason for resuming milk from Wednesday was to see whether *bajri* would be effective, in spite of the milk, in preventing

[1] Ramdas Gandhi's son
[2] A business man from Bombay
[3] Gulam Rasool Qureshi
[4] Wife of Ratilal Mehta, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son
[5] A shopkeeper of Vadaj, a village near the Ashram; when his wife was ill in 1931, the addressee had brought him and his family to the Ashram.
[6] Indu Parekh, a student of the Ashram school
[7] Kusum Gandhi, a student of the Ashram school, daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

constipation. Today is Saturday. There has been no ill-effect till now and in other respects my health has been quite good. So far *bajri* and bananas have not disagreed with me.

What you say about Parasram is correct. Though he is extremely unmethodical, he has seemed to me a useful man. His motives are good. Sometimes he exhibits great capacity for work.

Shankarbhai's hand should be completely cured by now. Is the bone-setter a man trained in the indigenous method or has he been qualified in Allopathy?

Vinoba's plan is indeed excellent. If we have the right type of men, there is plenty of work which they can do. I received today Chhakkaddas's and Keshu's slivers. I now want the thinnest spindle you can get. Only if I get it, can I carry on my experiment here properly. I got the books too. How far they tally with the ones I had asked you to send, I shall perhaps let you know after I have checked them.

Do we get money for Kaka's milk and ghee? We should, for he was supplied these items in Belgaum by the Government. If they don't supply these to him there we must do so. But we should not act like the woman who ignorantly gives away the butter along with the whey, and is called a fool into the bargain. If necessary, go and see the Superintendent and talk the matter over with him.

I have suggested in a letter to Maganbhai[1] a title for the discourses[2]. But on second thoughts it seems to me that we need not be in a hurry to print them. I have written them in great haste. You and other people there may correct my mistakes as you read the discourses, and even if you did not understand some point I would not worry much. I would not mind even if you found that a few sentences here and there were not sufficiently clear. It is not always possible for me to revise the discourses after writing them. Hence, if they are to be published I should certainly like to read them from that point of view before they are published. I would, therefore, suggest that, if you have not incurred any expense so far, you should postpone their publication. If, however, Maganbhai, Panditji, Chhaganlal—if he is there—and you feel no doubt about the meaning of any sentence and if, whenever the language was not clear, you have been able to make it clear, you may certainly

[1] Maganbhai Desai

[2] On subjects of special interest to Ashram inmates which Gandhiji sent with letters to Narandas Gandhi during the period from February 29, 1932, to September 11, 1932. They appear under their dates of writing beginning with Vol. XLIX, p. 169.

print them. You have suggested *Mangal Prabhat–II* as the title, but it does not seem to me appropriate, for the discourses on this occasion were written from a somewhat different point of view. That is, I had in mind mostly the inmates of the Ashram when writing them. That is why I have suggested the title *Ashramvasi Pratye*[1], so that readers may know the limitations of the discourses and those of them who look upon themselves as among the inmates, though they do not live in the Ashram, may understand that they are addressed to them too. But I don't insist on this title being accepted. You may choose any other that may appeal to all of you.

Think about Manjula's[2] dilemma. If her disease can be cured with cod-liver oil, it would perhaps be the right thing to give it to her. I don't think she can think for herself. She will probably depend on Kashi's[3] advice in which case she should follow it. And[4] if Kashi does not want to give her that, it should not be given. But if Manjula, though only a child, understands things a little and would like to take it I think we should respect her wish. You may now do what you think best.

While writing the history of the Ashram, a thought occurred to me. I have a faint recollection that I wrote to you about it once. I don't know if we have a list of the persons who came and stayed in the Ashram temporarily from the time of its establishment to the present day. If we don't have such a list, we should try to remember the names and write them down. They should be noted in a register, which should contain the full name of every such person, his place of residence, age, occupation, education, marital status and similar information; also what he learnt in the Ashram, when he left it and where he is at present. Whenever anybody comes to the Ashram in future, his name should be entered in the register, so that all this information will be avail-

[1] "To the Ashram Inmates". The discourses were published under this title, but subsequently the title was changed to *Ashram Jivan*, "The Ashram Way of Life".

[2] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

[3] Widow of Vrajlal Gandhi

[4] What follows here in the sources does not seem to belong to this letter. From the contents it appears that two sheets of the letter dated September [7]/11, 1932 got mixed up with this letter; *vide* footnote 3 on p. 46.

The portion of the letter from here onwards has been taken from the letter to Narandas Gandhi placed, under July 4, 1932, in *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, which evidently is an error. The reference to the article "What Women Should Do in a Difficult Situation", 4-9-1932, confirms this.

able to us in one place. My only aim just now in asking for this information is to know how many persons came to and stayed in the Ashram temporarily, how each of them was trained and where he is settled now. If we have kept no such record till now, as time passes it will become increasingly more difficult to prepare one.

The pieces of leather for repairing the soles of sandals which you sent a second time have also been used up. These pieces are of such poor quality that, though I use the sandals very sparingly, the repaired soles hardly give service for a month. Like a miser, I also send small bits of leather for repair of soles. But we must make do with whatever quality of leather of dead cattle we can get. Please, therefore, send one or two pieces again.

[*September*] *4, 1932*[1]

Hemprabhadevi[2] used to write to me regularly. Of late I have had no letter from her except for a postcard once. Do you hear from her ? If you do, give me news of her health. And write her a letter or postcard. And tell her that I complain about absence of letters from her, and that I should get her letters regularly. If she has been writing and if she has preserved the dates of the letters, she should let me have them. Probably she has been writing. Sometimes letters get lost in transit. Her letters are not likely to have been lost here, but it is possible that they did not reach this place at all.

I hope you have dispatched the postal acknowledgment for the registration of the Anantpur report.[3] I enclose a photograph sent by Devdas. Show it to Ba too.

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had written the above, I sat down to write the article for the women. I have just finished it. I think it is very important. But probably they will find it difficult to understand the article. If you do not understand it fully, do not show it to the new group. Write to me about it. If you are convinced of its truth and can see ahimsa in that slap, you may certainly read it to them solving each difficulty that may be raised as you proceed. This is what I would suggest. If, after reading the article, you feel that you have understood it, give it to Panditji and other senior persons to read. Prema also should read it. If these persons understand

[1] The source has "4-7-1932".
[2] Wife of Satis Chandra Das Gupta
[3] *Vide* Vol. XLIX, p. 416.

it, show it to all others, and particularly to women, for it is primarily meant for them. Of course this article should not be published. It can be easily misunderstood. Those who have the spirit of ahimsa in them would understand it without difficulty. In any case, they would not misunderstand it. An article like this may be published only when I am outside. For the present, it will be enough if all of you understand it. If my reasoning is correct and if I am right about my experience, I am sure that most people who try to follow those ideas in practice are bound to realize their truth.

BAPU

[PPS.]

In all there are 48 letters, 39 tied with a string along with 8 loose and a photograph.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I and *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 463-7

24. *WHAT WOMEN SHOULD DO IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION*

[*September 4, 1932*][1]

Touching upon non-violence, if some maniac should try to assault a woman, and if another man should happen to be present, should he not protect her honour with the use of a weapon? Should not women train themselves in the use of weapons and learn to protect themselves? I have given my opinion. Use of weapons would certainly imply violence but I have never permitted anyone to draw from this the inference that a man or woman who happens to be present should not run to the rescue of the woman and should tolerate an outrage on her modesty. On the contrary, I have said that the man who allows the modesty of a woman to be thus outraged will be regarded as a coward. He will be a partner in violence because violence is implicit in cowardice. It is my firm opinion that heroic violence is less sinful than cowardly violence. A heroic man or woman can learn the lesson of non-violence, it is pretty nearly impossible for a coward to learn it. I have not begun this article in order to repeat all this. One will find these ideas in many other places in my writings.

But there is one thing which I think I have not remarked upon anywhere else which I wish to put down. I have dissuaded the

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, pp. 394-5

Ashram women from learning the tricks of *jamaiya*[1], etc. The woman who depends on a *jamaiya* or a *gothi*[2] to guard her honour may some day fail to do so. When someone snatches away the *jamaiya* or the *gothi* from her, she will become defenceless, so that there is a possibility of her falling into the hands of a maniac. . . .[3] Sita had no weapons. But she had soul-force. Hence her consent was necessary before Ravana could so much as touch her. Our sisters should have self-confidence of this kind. Hence we have introduced Draupadi's prayer specially for women. But we were discussing an ideal. When a woman is faced by a maniac, what is she to do ? If she truly has courage in her and also compassion, instead of becoming panicky she will melt him with the radiance of her compassion. But if that emotion has not arisen in her, she will certainly become enraged. In her rage she will slap him and raise such a row that he will run away from the scene. Or he will fall at her feet then and there. That is to say, the woman will use all her physical strength. Will that not constitute violence ? If that is to be so, why not carry a weapon ? My opinion is that there is violence in carrying and learning to use a weapon. But in a situation like the above, slapping or scratching, if the occasion demands it, does not constitute violence. If there is violence in a mouse biting a cat, the conduct of a woman in such a situation would also constitute violence. The trust of a woman who slaps is not in the slap, her trust is in God. Only compassion has not awakened her, while anyone can become enraged. Her rage will indicate her opposition. When a lecherous man approaches a woman, he does so in the belief that he will be able to subdue her, that is to say, that desire will also ultimately possess her. How is the woman to show that this cannot happen? Either by calm but immense compassion or by shouting and struggling. Slapping and so on is like the struggling of a mouse against a cat. The woman's slap certainly cannot cause any injury to the lecher. This will be evident, if we go deeper into it. Here I do not have in mind women of a giant's strength. Such a woman will be blinded by the consciousness of her strength. She may be faced by a man of greater strength and she may then surrender herself to him. Here I have in mind Ashram girls or women without physical strength who repose their trust in soul-force. Their slap is not an expression of violence, only of their opposition. Their cry will render that lustful man meek, because

[1] Dagger-like weapon
[2] Name of a weapon
[3] Some words are illegible here.

crime itself has no strength and he who has come to commit an offence knows it. This belief of mine implies that the woman will not even till death surrender herself to the man. Her anger, her alarm, proclaims for herself as well as for the man her preparedness to die. For what I have pictured may not happen and the maniac instead of becoming meek at the woman's anger, may hit her and determine to throw her on the ground. If at that time the woman is defeated, if she does not think of God, if she loses her self-confidence, she will be trembling, so that it will not occur to her to die. Even if it occurs to her to die, she will not know how to die. Fear, . . .[1] self-confidence become utterly weak. And enthusiasm in her. . . .[2] This is merely to warn women. It is quite possible for her to be in a state where she may think: 'I do not have such faith in God that I shall be able to get rid of the maniac by my purity alone. Bapu has said that one must not use a weapon; for that will be violence. One may then not use even one's hands. What, O God, am I to do! Oh! I am dying.' Such a thought is intolerable to me. This instruction of mine is not meant only for one man or woman. There is no question of my instruction rendering anyone weak. If anyone becomes so, it will be due to their own misunderstanding. The above suggestion is to clarify my thought. Women should just forget that they are the weaker sex. She who has the desire and the strength to die can never be regarded as weak. There is danger to the body, not to the soul. The soul which has attenuated its relation to the body, has made it absolutely insignificant like a blade of grass, cannot be harassed or defeated even by all the maniacs of the world. This lesson should be learnt by every boy and girl who is of an age to understand it. It is to impart this lesson that I have made the above observation. Instead of feeling helpless and scared, she should say to herself: 'I shall offer up my body and life, but shall not become a coward.' Her slap or scratching indicates this resolve. It is in itself an act of non-violence. She has no strength to cause harm. Hence her act is not violence; but it has power to move a lecherous mind and to awaken the woman who administers the slap.

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

[1] & [2] Illegible in the source

25. LETTER TO SETH GOVINDDAS

September 3/4, 1932

BROTHER GOVINDDAS,

I have received your letter as well as the deed of renunciation.[1] I have received them only today as they have been going round from one Government office to another. I learn from the newspapers that the letters I wrote before this have been duly received.

Your letter of renunciation is very touching, so is your father's letter. I am sure he could not have acted differently. It is no ordinary matter to give up attachment. We cannot expect from the older people the same spirit of renunciation that has been awakened in the youth of this era. I have no doubt that your total renunciation is all to the good. I had forgotten that episode of 1921 but now I can recollect it. I am confident that the affection between you two will now become deeper. It is quite likely that your father will now make some sacrifice or other. It is a good thing that you are as devoted to him as before. Did you have the support from Bindanidevi[2] in this matter? Is she educated? I hope that her health will gradually improve. May your purity of heart increase. Sardar and Mahadev too thank you. I had read about your letter of renunciation but I did not feel it proper to write upon it from here. I can now write this because your letter has been allowed to reach me. But I would advise you to refrain from sending this to the newspapers.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

After writing this I have received an acknowledgment of my postcard. I hope that Bindanidevi is improving in health.[3]

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] The addressee had renounced his claim to his ancestral property.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] The postscript was written on September 4.

26. LETTER TO SATYAVATI CHIDAMBER

September 4, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Why do you think that the truth lies only in believing in Jesus as you do? Again why do you think that an orthodox Hindu cannot follow out the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount? Are you sure of your knowledge of an orthodox Hindu? And then are you sure again that you know Jesus and His teachings? I admire your zeal but I cannot congratulate you upon your wisdom. My forty-five years of prayer and meditation have not only left me without the assurance of the type you credit yourself with, but have left me humbler than ever. The answer to my prayer is clear and emphatic that God is not encased in a safe to be approached only through a little hole bored in it, but that He is open to be approached through billions of openings by those who are humble and pure of heart. I invite you to step down from your pinnacle where you have left room for none but yourself.

With love and prayer,

Yours,
M. K. G.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 395-6

27. LETTER TO GULAB

September 4, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I am glad that you wrote to me a detailed letter. It is good that your health has improved.

Meet Mirabehn as often as you can and keep me informed about her health. She also writes to me from time to time.

It is only from you that I learn that Bhai Tilakam does not live there now. I will write to him today and ask him why. He seems to me a very straightforward young man.

How far has Indira's pregnancy advanced? Do you see Nargisbehn or Jamnabehn any time?

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5048. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri

28. LETTER TO TILAKAM

September 4, 1932

MY DEAR TILAK,

How extraordinary! I did not know that you had left Mani Bhavan. Where are you staying now and what are you doing? Do give me a full account of your doings please. I hope you are keeping very good health now. Did you get my previous letter?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9553

29. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 4, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

There was no letter from you in this week's post. It rarely happens that the week's post contains no letter from you, and, therefore, when there is none, I miss it. I read in Narandas's letter that you had gone to bring Dhiru[1] to the Ashram. Let me know how he is.

I had sent to you, when you were [in the Camp Jail] here, a book named *Flowers of St. Francis*. Have you or anybody else taken it away? Mohanlal[2] writes to tell me that he cannot find it among the books with him. And it has not been returned to me. Please look for it. Its special value lies in the fact that it was received as a gift from a lady in Europe and contained her good wishes. A few passages in it are also marked. Don't mind if you cannot recollect where it is.

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Mohanlal M. Bhatt, sometime manager of the Navajivan Press. At this time he was in Yeravda Camp Jail.

If you have met Nanabhai, let me know how he is. I hope you have preserved your health. Ordinarily Vasumati would not neglect to write to me, but this time, though I had written to her and asked her to write to me after she was released, I have not heard from her. There are many other women, too, who have not written to me. But their conduct doesn't appear as strange as Vasumati's for they were not regular correspondents. Inquire about Vasumati. And remind the other women too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5507

30. LETTER TO MANILAL R. JHAVERI

September 4, 1932

CHI. MANILAL[1],

I have your letter. A whole pile of opinion has accumulated with me against Khimchand. There is now a wire from him, saying that Chhaganlal's[2] four letters were drafted by him. I am awaiting his letter. It seems that he had to leave Rangoon after all. Your advice to Maganlal[3] is perfectly right. Let us hope that the two brothers will create an atmosphere of harmony in the family and keep the good name of the Doctor untarnished.

Please communicate to me anything which you may hear or any suggestion which may occur to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5044. Courtesy: Dhirubhai Jhaveri

31. A LETTER

September 4, 1932

I do not despair, as you do, but hope, with God's grace, to melt the stoniest heart and I continue to strive to that end.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, p. 396

[1] Son of Revashanker Jhaveri
[2] Eldest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[3] Youngest son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

32. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 4, 1932

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You have corrected my mistakes in a very good hand. Keep this up. Instruct me if you know the rules regarding the proper usage of ص, س, ہ, ح. Tell me when you would have an English letter from me and I shall write one with pleasure. My sole wish is for your peace and health. Dr. Sharma has given my letter for publication in the newspapers. This was not good. I shall be writing to him. You will read that letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 256

33. DISCUSSION WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

September 4, 1932

It then seems you have not understood my article.[2] I have actually pointed out that a slap rouses oneself, makes oneself fearless and above all, gives oneself the strength to die. A wicked person is not prepared for such, in his eyes senseless, resistance. In all probability, therefore, he would run away. But I attach less importance to that. The strength which is aroused in that woman enables her to end her life. By the time that the maniac has overpowered her, the woman has already sought protection in death; for she struggles prepared for death and has no thought of hitting the man. All that she has to do is to go on repeating Ramanama. I suggest this remedy for all circumstances, and only for those women who are pure and who want to defend themselves against attack non-violently. This article is based on my own experience. When I held on to that bar,[3] I was mentally prepared for death. I could not have inflicted any serious in-

[1] Since it was Gandhiji's Silence Day, he expressed his views in writing.
[2] *Vide* pp. 17-9.
[3] When Gandhiji was attacked at Pardekoph; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 95-6.

jury on my assailant. If, however, I had lost hold of the bar, I would have struggled on, would perhaps have slapped or bitten the man and would have resisted till death. I would not have committed violence by fighting in this manner. For, I could not have inflicted any injury upon him, nor was it my intention. I only wished to die and to avoid the necessity of sitting at the opponent's feet. This is the real test of non-violence. One's aim should not be to inflict pain nor should pain be the result.

M. D. I understand, but the purest of girls cannot subdue a hooligan with one slap and is helpless if she has to face a number of them.

GANDHIJI: Not only I but medical jurisprudence holds it impossible for a woman to be outraged so long as she does not relax. A woman who is not ready to die relaxes, may be reluctantly, and submits to the hooligan. A desperate animal breaks its bonds or else breaks itself, and every animal is capable of exerting so much strength. The fact is that love of life is too strong for one to hold fast till death. A woman who puts forth the utmost strength will have herself torn to bits and her ribs broken in fighting the assailant.

M. D. To a woman of such purity it is not necessary to suggest slapping or anything of that kind. She will herself think out some plan or other.

GANDHIJI: I may explain it all only after I break the silence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. I, pp. 394-5

34. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

September 5, 1932

Your mention of that magnificent story of the Buddha brings to my mind many sacred things. Yes, I do dream many dreams. All may not be airy nothings. Or I would be crushed under the weight of the love I appropriate from people of all sorts and conditions—men, women, boys and girls.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 6

35. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

September 5, 1932

BHAI NANALAL,

I had been awaiting your letter and was relieved when it came. I have already written to Mayashankar[1]; I hope he got the letter. I have been restraining Champa. I had also dissuaded Manjula[2]. I think Maganlal would welcome this. She seems to me a very wise girl.

Do you find any difficulty in selling the emeralds? Or is it because of obstruction by somebody that you have not been able to sell them?

It is certainly worthy of you not to wish to withdraw the money deposited in your name by the Doctor. The daughters, however, should get the money set apart for them, but at present I see no possibility of their being able to withdraw any part of it. Hence, the time has not yet come for thinking about your share. Everything can be settled if the train gets on the rails. We will see about it provided the family does not break up and the bitterness disappears.

Please write to me regularly.

If you act as Chhaganlal advises, everything will end well.

I know that you will go on doing your duty irrespective of whether they love you or slight you and, therefore, I do not worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9470a

36. A LETTER

September 5, 1932

You are either cunning or foolish. Do you really not know what '*vikar*' means? The *vikar* resulting from eating pulses and that resulting from physical touch, are both signs of something wrong in us. Both disturb the equilibrium. The first kind of *vikar* results

[1] Mayashankar Vrajlal Desai, business partner of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta
[2] Wife of Maganlal Mehta

from swallowing some external substance; the second is a change of mental state resulting from the sight of some external object. A *vikar* that can shake one's whole being may prove harmful. If a woman feels *vikar* towards a man, society does not always hold her guilty; that is, when it springs from a desire to marry that person and such marriage is not forbidden, the matter is not kept secret from one's people and one is free to marry. According to me, you are not yet fit to marry, for you are studying and are still a minor. Your having such relations with . . .[1] is improper, as he was your teacher and was, moreover, like a brother to you. Call your feeling what you like, whether *vikar* or desire for marriage, you kept it secret and, therefore, it is blameworthy.

You do not understand the meaning of independence also. When you show the letters to your elders of your own free will, you do not lose your independence but seek your safety. If somebody posts himself at our door-step, he is like a Government bailiff depriving us of our freedom; but if we station a watchman at the gate, we do not lose our freedom but protect it. In the same way, if you in your adolescent state regard your elders as guardians of your interests, open your heart to them and show your letters to them. You do not lose your independence but seek protection for it. I earnestly wish that you should become independent. It was for protecting your independence that I advised you to show your letters, etc., to your parents. If, however, you cannot reconcile yourself to this and feel it an irksome restraint, you may keep your letters private. I do not want to put pressure on you in any way, as that would crush your individuality. I only wish that you should become a brave girl and a spirited servant of the people. And I shall be extremely pained if you stop writing to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 6-7

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

37. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM

[Before *September 6, 1932*][1]

It is my conviction that your husband[2] will come round. I have received the doctor's letter which has kept me informed of his health. Your letter has given me further information regarding his health. Please keep unbroken correspondence with me and convey Sardar Patel's, Mahadev Desai's and my good wishes to the doctor. Through the grace of God we are all well here, and hope you will not find any difficulty in reading this letter which is written in broken Urdu.

Advance, 7-9-1932

38. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 7, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

May you live long. Be good and serve the country. Keep the vow which you have taken, namely, that during the year in which you are entering you will learn by heart four chapters[3]. And also make an effort to understand their meaning.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9183

39. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

September 7, 1932

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have your letter. Chhaganlal and Lilavati[4] write to me and I feel satisfied with their letters. I also receive complaints against both of them which I immediately pass on to them. Lila-

[1] The report in the source is dated September 6.

[2] Dr. Mohammad Alam, who was a prisoner in Lahore Central Jail and had been ailing.

[3] Of the *Gita*

[4] Addressee's daughter, and Chhaganlal's wife

vati wrote about her health to me too. If Chhaganlal willingly permits her to go, I think it would be good to call her there for some time. Her health at any rate would improve. Manekbehn[1] seems to be very much displeased with her. Lilavati says that she has done nothing but I do not believe she is so completely innocent. For one thing, her tongue is very sharp. And, moreover, Manekbehn is a simple-minded woman and anybody can easily deceive her. I had observed in Rangoon and also when Lilavati was at Sabarmati, that she could not tolerate any criticism. But how can even you change her nature? You have been exercising upon her whatever good influence you can as her father.

Maganlal wrote to me a letter with which I was quite satisfied. Manjula seems to me to be a girl who has not yet felt the evil influence of the ways of the world. If necessary, I will request you to go to Rangoon. Let us hope that the two brothers will settle everything peacefully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7168. Also C.W. 4662. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

40. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 8, 1932

For exercise, *pranayama* done slowly and standing has wonderful effect. It should be done slowly and methodically. You have to keep time in *pranayama* as you have to in music. The breathing must be rhythmic. Once you have learnt to do this by practice, your lungs will have to do much less work and at the same time they will be able to inhale more oxygen. As they inhale more oxygen, they exhale more carbon dioxide. You can gradually increase the time of this exercise. If it is done correctly, its beneficial effects will be felt immediately. You will feel less tired, your appetite will improve, the mind will remain calm and, if the body is cold, it will become warm.

Yes, it is true that my reason does not accept the necessity of sex-pleasure, and my view is confirmed by experience. The dangerous thing about artificial means of birth-control is that their

[1] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's widow

acceptance implies the acceptance of the necessity of sex-pleasure. If the principle is universally adopted, that *brahmacharya* is desirable in all conditions, nobody would use artificial means of birth-control. As thefts will continue, though stealing is an anti-social activity, so also it is likely that artificial means of birth-control will continue to be used. But it is necessary to create a climate of opinion in which they are regarded as undesirable. Anybody who indulges in sex-pleasure must accept the responsibility of progeny. The hardships resulting from the birth of children must be borne. It is only thus that one can learn the lesson of complete self-control.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 12

41. A LETTER

September 8, 1932

I find in your letter here and there traces of deceit. If my impression is wrong, please correct me. If, on the contrary, my suspicion is correct, you should overcome this defect in you. This will be your *shraddha* to Doctor. May God grant you wisdom. If I am doing you an injustice, please save me from that sin.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 12

42. LETTER TO VIMAL KISHORE MEHROTRA

September 8, 1932

CHI. VIMAL,

I have your letter. You must improve your hand. You must not run away from the prayer meeting, it is discourtesy to God.

BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4985. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

CWMG - LI

43. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI[1]

September 9, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Will you please come?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5122

44. LETTER TO RAMSAY MACDONALD

September 9, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for your frank and full letter telegraphed and received this day. I am sorry, however, that you put upon the contemplated step[2] an interpretation that never crossed my mind. I have claimed to speak on behalf of the very class to sacrifice whose interests you impute to me a desire to fast myself to death. I had hoped that extreme step itself would effectively prevent any such selfish interpretation. Without arguing I affirm that for me this matter is one of pure religion. The mere fact of "Depressed" Classes having double votes does not protect them or Hindu society in general from being disrupted. In establishment of a separate electorate at all for "Depressed" Classes I sense the injection of a poison that is calculated to destroy Hinduism and do no good whatsoever to "Depressed" Classes. You will please permit me to say that no matter how sympathetic you may be you cannot come to a correct decision on a matter of such vital and religious importance to the parties concerned. I should not be against even over-representation of "Depressed" Classes. What I am against is their statutory separation, even in a limited form, from Hindu fold, so long as they choose to belong to it. Do you not realize that if your decision stands and constitution comes

[1] Superintendent of the Yeravda Central Prison

[2] Gandhiji had announced his intention to begin an indefinite fast from September 20 in protest against Government's announcement providing for separate electorates for the Depressed Classes.

into being, you arrest the marvellous growth of work of Hindu reformers who have dedicated themselves to the uplift of their suppressed brethren in every walk of life?

I have therefore been compelled reluctantly to adhere to the decision conveyed to you.

As your letter may give rise to a misunderstanding, I wish to state that the fact of my having isolated for special treatment the "Depressed" Classes question from other parts of your decision does not in any way mean I approve of or am reconciled to other parts of decision. In my opinion many other parts are open to very grave objection. Only I do not consider them to be any warrant for calling from me such self-immolation as my conscience has prompted me to in the matter of "Depressed" Classes.

I remain,
Your faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/113/32 Pol.
Courtesy: National Archives of India

45. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Please let me have the following information as soon as possible:

1. How much fuel is consumed in making *rotlis* and how much in making bread from the same quantity of flour?
2. The method of making bread.
   (a) How is the leaven prepared?
   (b) In addition to leaven, do we mix salt, jaggery or sugar with the flour?
   (c) The various steps of the process;
   (d) How long is the dough left over?
   (e) How long is the loaf kept in the oven?

In short, the description should be so written out that, after reading it, we can try the method here. I want this information so that I may compare our method with the method followed here. How much quantity of flour do you use these days for making bread? What does the flour cost? How many persons would have to work for making *rotlis* and for making bread from the same quantity of flour?

I hope the boy is in fine health and spirits and that Shankarbhai's hand is now free from its prison.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8249. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

46. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

September 9, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Do not brood over the deeper meaning of the *Gita*. As you try to put into practice its teaching about non-attachment, its deeper meaning will automatically reveal itself to you, and, when you understand it, you will be perfectly satisfied. Meanwhile, you should have faith in the meaning explained by Vinoba. Mostly my explanations are his. Wherever you find a difference between us, you should tentatively accept the meaning which appeals to you. There is no doubt at all that if you can spin with ease with a bamboo *takli*, it is most suitable for the purpose. You should also learn how to make such a *takli*. If you have not tried enema for constipation, you should do so. Sometimes it seems to help very much. I get a little news about Wardha, but you also should give me in your letters whatever news you get there. Do not lose hope about overcoming your constipation.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6736. Also C.W. 4479. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

47. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 9, 1932

CHI. GANGABEHN,

This time you wrote to me a long and beautiful letter.

I know, of course, that to you Hakimji is not merely a physician but is a brother, one of your family, a friend, a counsellor and a respected elder too. It is, therefore, quite right that you take as much help from him as he can give. You did well in visiting the homes of Muslims. Such work will bear fruit in

[1] Shankarbhai Patel had his arm in plaster; *vide* Vol. L, p. 372.

future. If our hearts are pure and filled with love, we shall succeed in getting rid of all prejudices.

The Inspector-General gave me news about Kakasaheb. He is in good health. I had also a letter from him. Though it is true that he has lost weight, he is not suffering from any disease. There is, therefore, no cause for worry.

Lakshmi, it seems, is enjoying the benefit of good company.

It was good that you paid a visit to Noorbanu[1]. Look after Qureshi as long as you are there. I am happy that Ramibehn is still with you.

If you feel comfortable staying with Shamalbhai[2] you may certainly do so. Do what keeps you cheerful. My mind is at rest since Nath is there always to help you.

My advice regarding Babu[3] is that, for the present, he should study, that is, he should become proficient in Gujarati, Sanskrit, Hindi, arithmetic, history, geography, all the processes through which cotton passes till it is woven into khadi, and carpentry, and learn a little music. He will then know what line to take up. His intellect must blossom and his heart must expand.

Sardar and Mahadev of course read your letters. All of us often think of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 65-6. Also C.W. 8795. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Wife of Pyare Ali

[2] Shamalbhai Behcharbhai Patel, a worker from Borsad taluka. He was Kakasaheb's fellow-prisoner during his first internment in Sabarmati Jail in 1930.

[3] Addressee's grandson and Purushottamdas D. Saraiya's younger brother

48. LETTER TO MATHURI N. KHARE

September 10, 1932

CHI. MATHURI[1],

This time your handwriting was bad. There were quite a few mistakes in the language too. You should try and avoid such mistakes as far as you can. And one can always improve one's handwriting if one takes sufficient care.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 268. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

49. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

September 10, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

I got your letter. Once you have decided that it is good to do a certain thing, you should not wait for even one second. For death may come at any time and, therefore, delay in beginning a good thing may result in our inability to do it at all. For when the soul leaves the body, it takes with it its deeds. Its intentions which are not acted upon are merely credited to its account. Suppose I decide to take five rupees with me when going on a journey by train, but through carelessness, forget to take the money. In the train, I cannot cash my intention and the fact will make me uneasy and torment me. Any person who does not join in *bhajans*, etc., though attending the prayer, is guilty of untruth. We may or may not be at fault if somebody deceives us into giving him what he wants.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9448

[1] Daughter of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

50. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 10, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

Indeed! You could barely find time to write to me! What indolence! And the letter also is as good as no letter. What about your experiences during all these months?

I hope you will go and see Qureshi. Did you see Pyare Ali's Ashram?

Did you visit Amina's children?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 577. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

51. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 10, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

You may go on hoping to receive a long letter from me even at the risk of being called greedy. One day I may think of writing such a letter to you.

Your Gujarati is not good. You should get your letters corrected by someone. But do not bother if that cannot be done. In any case, you should continue to write to me whatever you wish to.

I should like you to learn in time everything that is worth learning in the Ashram.

Who teaches you Gujarati? What other languages are you learning?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2763. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

52. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

September 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I got your letter and *bhajan*. The *bhajan* is very good. I do not have time to write much today. I hope all of you approve of my decision to fast. Father, at any rate, should have no difficulty in understanding my step. I have taken it in God's name and for His work and He will bring me to the goal. I seek blessings from both Father and Mother. What will you send? You should indeed dance with joy that God has given me an opportunity to offer such a holy sacrifice. When is Hamida[1] arriving? Is Bhaiji still there? Convey my *vande-mataram* to him. All of us are well here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9670

53. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

September 11, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I have your letter. As you could easily save many hours in doing the work in the store-room and cleaning, so also, with some thought, you can save time in other work as well. For that, sincerity and co-operation on the part of everybody are required. If all of you work as a team, each doing his best, a lot more work can be done.

This holds true for all living creatures. If you watch the ants and other insects, you will learn the same lesson from their activities.

BAPU

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

[1] Addressee's sister

54. LETTER TO GULAB

September 11, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

With practice, you can increase your speed at spinning. What is it at present? The slivers must be good and the spindle straight.

There is much scope for improvement in your handwriting. If possible, you should practise writing with a reed-pen with model letters of the alphabet in front of you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1724

55. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 11, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

Though I am not sure you will get this letter, I am writing it. I would have been glad if you had written to me giving me your impressions about the Ashram. If you get this letter, you may write to me even now. I must know everything, though of course there is nothing I can do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5508

56. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 11, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

If you have patience and faith, all the pages of the "book of nature" will be open to you. It is the promise of the God of Truth that "to those who worship Me (Truth) with love, I grant the yoga of understanding."[1] Meditation on this verse opens up to me all the pages of my nature. When the book is lying

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, x, 10

CWMG - LI

before you, whose fault is it if you cannot read it or do not take the trouble to read it? But I think I have said too much. In any case, I have explained to you the method of reading that book. You will say that you knew it. If you do, would it not prove me right in describing you as omniscient?

I can have no objection at all to your sending all my letters to . . .[1]. The last letter was about her and, therefore, I particularly wished that you should send it to her. You may now write and tell me how the matter stands. . . .[2] says that I could not find the correct remedy for . . . [3], and she is right, but only partly. I have discovered the remedy, but I am not in a position to apply it. How can I help that? The remedy which he needs is a woman—either a woman whom he could love and would marry, or one who would be more than a sister to him. I had my eyes on . . . ever since I saw her and . . . 's affection for her and hers for him. I have always believed in the innocence of their love. But how could I burden . . . with a responsibility till an opportunity arose? Your letter gave me the required opportunity. I do not know whether my diagnosis is correct and whether . . . is the remedy for him. Perhaps . . . herself does not know it. We can discover the truth only if we try the remedy which I have suggested. All that I desire is . . . 's peace of mind. In the absence of such peace, his abilities remain unused and his health is wasting away. He does not even know whether he feels interested in the work which he does.

You seem to have collected from somewhere a good many stories about my childhood.

Do you know that Ramabehn is ill? You should at least go and talk to her. In actual fact there is often no cause for the fear which we entertain in our imagination. The saying, "A ghost is the projection of our fancies and a witch of our fears" is literally true. It is a hundred per cent true.

I hope you are properly looking after the new arrivals among women. You may reduce your other work, but attend to this carefully.

I read about Kisan[4] in the paper. Dhurandhar has been doing fine work. But he should take care and make his body strong. What is his weight?

What did I write about you in my letter to Anandi[5]? What did I tell Lilavati[6]? I don't remember. I have no doubt at all

[1],[2]&[3] The names have been omitted.
[4] Addressee's friend, Kisan Ghumatkar
[5]&[6] Daughters of Lakshmidas P. Asar

about your observing *brahmacharya* at present. I don't know what may happen in the future. If you can tell, you know more than Narad and Rama did. However, I have always admired your resolution. I don't believe that anyone can easily tempt you. But I have seen women as determined as you get married. How can anyone blame them for that? Hence, at present I can only wish that you will remain faithful to your resolution, and bless you that you may. I may help you as much as I can, and give you blows as often as necessary. The result lies in God's hands.

I want your letters to be in no way different from what they are. If you cease to be natural, I will take no interest in you. You are full of complexes. I can try to remove them only as and when I observe them. However, who am I to remove them? It does not lie in man's power to do so. I should like to be an instrument in removing them to the extent that He permits me to be so. It is in my interest to do this, since I hope to take much work from you. If I believed that what I was trying to inculcate in you would bear no fruit, do you think I would take the trouble to write these long letters?

I do not know any instance of the cause of an individual's or society's fall having been discovered. Many guesses, of course, have been made. The immediate cause is sometimes discovered, but in all cases there is not one such cause only. Generally speaking, however, it may be said that a fall can be traced to lack of dharma. Political subjection can never be the root cause, for it is itself the result of other causes, other weaknesses.

One's duty as a neighbour is always to help a neighbour in a manner consistent with dharma.

The seed of ego is destroyed only when one feels oneself to be a cipher. If anyone looks inward and ponders deeply over the matter, he cannot but realize his total insignificance. As we count an insect insignificant relatively to the earth, so is man insignificant in relation to this universe which is millions of times vaster than the earth. That he is endowed with reason makes no difference to this fact. His greatness lies in realizing his insignificance, for, simultaneously with such realization, he realizes that, insignificant in himself, he is an insignificant aspect of God and that, when he merges in Him, he becomes God, that this microscopic atom which he is contains the infinite power of God.

I believe in the theory of *maya* in my own way. In the cycle of Time this universe is *maya*, but, during the moment of time it exists, it is real enough. I believe in the theory of the many-sidedness of truth.

If there is anything in this world which faces man as a certainty, it is death. And yet we fear that inescapable certainty; that is the greatest wonder of life, that is real attachment and that is atheism. It is possible only for man to rise above it.

One's good and evil deeds do accompany the soul after the death of the body. The soul, as soul, suffers their consequences, whether in another physical body or in a subtle body.

Isn't this enough?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10302. Also C.W. 5753. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

57. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

It is our actions which count. Thoughts, however good in themselves, are like false pearls unless they are translated into action.

We should always see our neighbour's virtues and our own defects. A man like Tulsidas described himself as a crooked man despite all his goodness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 15

58. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

You say that you are mentally disturbed and that, therefore, you will not write to me. This too is a sign of *vikar*. It is necessary to understand the exact meaning of this word. Even being angry is *vikar*. To feel all kinds of desires is also *vikar*. To think of wearing this or that, eating or not eating this or that is *vikar*. Similarly, to wish to marry, or, even without wishing to marry, to feel pleasure in the company of boys of one's own age, in talking with a boy in private and in touching him, or in unbecoming joking with him, that also is *vikar*. This last is looked upon as a very serious *vikar*. So long as a woman is subject to any of these *vikars*, she will be subject to menstruation. In the case of man it is not menstruation, but something else. In this sense

even Mirabehn cannot be considered to be free from *vikar*. So she still has menstruation. She does not sin in this. She has indeed risen very high. She is continually striving to overcome all her *vikars*. The *vikar* of desire for man has completely disappeared from within her. But she still has anger and attachment, and desires. All these too she strives to control. If a woman attains a state free from *vikars*, such as I have described, she will not get monthly periods. I would be happy if all of you girls were to strive to attain such a state. Even if you do not succeed in your present life, what does it matter? The first lesson for you to learn is to keep nothing secret. You should have no secret relations with anyone. You should cling to the vow of truth.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 17-8

59. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 11, 1932

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. Your letters from Banaras and Delhi have not reached me. You have not acknowledged the letters I addressed to Deolali. It is good that you have now given me detailed news.

First of all about your health. The benefit Mira has derived from salt is largely psychological. It cannot all be attributed to salt; salt does not possess all that virtue. No article of diet or medicine can affect *brahmacharya* to that extent because ultimately *brahmacharya* is a state of mind; a disturbed mind affects the body. As long as the mind is not firm and rid of passions how can diet alone help? Admittedly, improper or excessive food can be harmful. Salt, taken in small quantities, can do no harm. In the same way, it does not appear that you have lost much by giving up salt. Salt does not have enough strength to affect one either way. I have written to you earlier regarding a suitable diet for you. Ultimately you must find out by experiment what food suits you. Go to Deolali if you have found the climate there agreeable. It may also be a good thing otherwise, for you will be of help to Radha and Damodardas. True, there are only a few days left if they are to leave Deolali at the end of the month. But however short the period it will benefit you to go there.

And even if they have to vacate the sanatorium there is nothing wrong in your staying on at Deolali for your health's sake. It ought to be easy to find another place. What happened to your plan of going to Kuvalayanand? What did Dr. Talwalkar say? You must build up your health.

Now for the Ashram. It is true that the Ashram inmates are not what they ought to be, they are full of short-comings. That is why the public have the right to criticize and condemn the Ashram inmates who must not only tolerate the criticism but take a lesson from it. I am not surprised to learn that you too have been similarly affected because that is the truth. But in spite of all that the total result is not bad; that is my belief. People residing in the Ashram have certainly changed for the better. The fact is that much remains to be done while little has been accomplished, but that was to be expected. And who can be defined as Ashram inmates? If you have not discussed this matter with Narandas, open your heart to him and listen to what he has to say. I have no hope of finding a more steadfast, wise, sensible and conscientious man than Narandas and I consider it God's grace that it was granted me to have him. It is also true that Ashram people are not free from diseases but they do not really catch illness in the Ashram; the malady is already with them. In short we try to bring about fulfilment amid deficiency. God has ordained that we go on making efforts till we die but has reserved unto Himself the fruit. Thus I shall be content if it can be said that there is no tardiness of effort in our Ashram. I shall even admit that there is scope for improvement in the effort.

Is anybody doing something for Pandit Jagatram[1]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2394

[1] A Political prisoner connected with terrorist activities incarcerated then in the Multan Jail

60. *WORKING AND THINKING*[1]

September 11, 1932

I wrote some time ago about fully using our power of thinking when doing any work.[2] I said something towards the end in that article, which it is necessary to explain further. I suggested there that our thinking may be either conducive to or destructive of the general good, that, in other words, it may be either divine or demoniac in nature. One person, as he spins daily, may think and try to invent improvements which would benefit the millions of spinners and make their work easier. Another person may think how fine it would be if he alone could spin on his wheel as much yarn as ten million persons and get rich. The thinking of the former is divine in nature, it is conducive to the good of society. The thinking of the second person is demoniac, it is opposed to the good of society. Thus, it is not enough that we should think when doing any work. Our thinking should aim at the good of all, and not at satisfying our own selfish desires. Indeed he who tries to serve only his selfish interests not only harms the good of others but in the end does not serve even his own good.

If everybody keeps this point of view before him and thinks about the work he is doing, and so works intelligently, he would get the best education, would find his work interesting, develop his intellect, enlarge and purify his heart, acquire efficiency in his work and make inventions and improvements which would benefit the world. As the work has become more interesting it gives him joy; he feels no fatigue in doing it and the work becomes artistic—whether it is cleaning lavatories or roads, shredding vegetables, anything connected with the dairy, writing accounts or something else. A person who learns to look at everything from the point of view of public good finds no work low or uninteresting. He will see God in any work which comes to his share and feel that he was serving Him through it. His interest in work does not depend on the nature or type of the work. It springs from within, from his sense of devotion to duty. Anybody who

[1] This was presumably sent along with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", [7]/11-9-1932; *vide* the following item.

[2] *Vide* Vol. L, pp. 436-7.

wants to understand and practice *Anasaktiyoga* should do all work in this spirit.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U/II. Also C.W. 8248. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

61. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September [*7*][1]*/11, 1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is the morning of Wednesday, and the goats are being milked, singing to us the while. I duly got your mail last evening. I send you my plentiful blessings. Why should I not? You are fulfilling all my hopes and, by your incomparable and intelligent service, fill all three of us with wonder. God seems to have gifted you with the strength to face every kind of ordeal. May you live long and realize the God of Truth through the goddess of ahimsa and help others to do the same.

I got your two postcards about Baba, but each late by a day. The reason is that they did not reach the post-office in time. The words "detained—late fee not paid" are stamped on both. And so find out from the post-office the time of the clearance. Your bigger packet of mail posted on Monday and the postcard posted on Sunday reached me on the same day.

September 10, 1932

I have had no special letter from you till today from which I infer that Kanji Sheth is out of danger. Not only that, he must also have regained strength. I hope Dahibehn[2] is all right. I read in the newspapers that you had very good rains there. Mahadev has been able to go up to 105 counts with Keshu's slivers. I see that if he gets a straight and thin spindle, he will reach 150 counts without difficulty. Though I have asked you to send a thin spindle, we are trying to make one here. We must discover the reason why the cotton grown in the Ashram is not of good quality. The fact that it is attacked by insects shows that the manure is either too little or too much, or that it is not of the right kind. You should ask somebody who knows the secret, or read

[1] Gandhiji began writing this letter on Wednesday, which fell on September 7.

[2] Wife of Raojibhai N. Patel

the descriptions of different types of manures and soils in a book on cotton cultivation available in the market, and experiment accordingly. Agricultural experts now believe that, within certain limits, any crop can be grown in any type of soil. With the help of the new methods they grow in France crops which were formerly thought impossible, and earn profits from them. If anybody there can spare the time, he should study this problem. I think that Maganlal had collected some books on agriculture. We have a copy of the report of the Cotton Committee. You may find some information even in that. If you write to Prof. Higginbottom at Allahabad, perhaps he may help you. He has inspected the soil in the Ashram fields.

If the Gandiva spinning-wheel is placed on one side at right angles to our body, instead of in front, one can stretch one's legs if one wishes to do so. If one wishes to spin sitting on a stool, one can do that, too, with ease. The spinning-wheel can be placed on a box or board on a level with the stool.

I did not follow your explanation about the Anantpur Report. If it was sent by registered post, the post-office must have a copy of the acknowledgement. It will serve. You can inquire in the post-office and ascertain who has signed it. If you are required to pay any fee for inspecting the record, you may do so. If you have called for a fresh copy of the report, it means that this is the third copy he will be sending. How can we put him to such trouble?

What you say about Padma is correct. Read what I have written[1] to Panditji in regard to the temple. I understood that the image of Ganapati would not be kept in the gymnasium permanently. I have already written to you about Manjula and cod-liver oil.[2] Pay attention to Indu's condition. If there is a danger of his losing his reason, the condition is likely to become extreme.[3] But before that happens you should take steps to avert the possibility.

The number in the Ashram is quite good. It is very good indeed that Jamna[4] has stayed on in Rajkot. I hope Devbhabhi[5] has fully recovered now. Where is Virmati[6] kept? Amtulbehn

[1] *Vide* p. 10.

[2] *Vide* p. 15.

[3] The portion of the letter from here onwards is placed in *Bapuna Patro –9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, under September 3. This evidently is an error; *vide* footnote 4 on p. 15.

[4] Addressee's wife

[5] Addressee's mother

[6] Wife of Madhavlal Shah

tells me in her letter that she liked my addressing her by her full name Amtussalaam in Urdu. I am writing[1] to her to ask her why, but please know from her why she likes the full name and, if that is the right thing, all of you should address her by that name. It is possible that there is no such name as "Amtul", and that "Amtussalaam" is one single word—just as we cannot say "Ibra" instead of "Ibrahim" or "Brij" instead of "Brijkrishna".

September 11, 1932

Dr. Sharma seems to want to come to the Ashram for a temporary stay. Send him the list of the Ashram rules. If he can observe them while he stays there, I see no objection to informing him that he may come. However, do what you think best.

Read my letter[2] to Brijkrishna. He is a man of pure heart. Discuss the matter with him. If it is possible to remove his suspicion, try to do so.

You must have got the postcard[3] which I wrote on Saturday asking you to send me information about how bread is made there. I have asked for details of the method. I have started taking interest in the preparation of the bread here, and I, too, eat it. The bread is excellent. Perhaps ours is not better.

Read my letter to Sharda. We have to think over the problem of the girls. I think I can now guess the reason for their bad health. We wish to train all these women who have had very little education, and it is for you to think how that can be done.

There are 52 letters in all, 37 in a bundle and 15 loose.

[PS.]

You will find my Will lying in some place there. Send me a copy of it. If it is sealed in a cover, break open the seal. If you wish to make any suggestion about it, send it to me. I suppose it will be necessary now to revise the names of the trustees. Imam Saheb is no more. I do not remember all the names.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8250 and 8248. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* p. 49.
[2] *Vide* pp. 42-3.
[3] *Vide* pp. 32-3.

62. A LETTER

September 11, 1932

God and Nature are one. The various gods are the individual manifestations of God. One can reach God by worshipping Him. In depicting the importance of action Tulsidasji has extolled Divine justice. God condones the sins of the devotee. In the language of the Shastra the devotee is purified when he becomes one with God. Purification means removal of sins, like alloys from gold.

A saint living in seclusion can perform service by thought alone; there is only one such man in a million.

The very existence of body stands in the way of total ahimsa. And without complete ahimsa one is unable to see Truth. But one who has rid himself of passions comes very near to Truth. We should be content with this.

Up to now by punishment I have understood corporal punishment. Abstaining from food has not been beyond my thought. I would not call that a punishment. No one in any institution has an absolute right to food; it is a question of arriving at an arrangement. There is on the one hand the condition that rules are to be observed and on the other hand that food is to be supplied. Money is no payment for the food we receive in an institution. Rules have to be observed in exchange.

Fear and truth are mutually contradictory terms. But to conceal something which does not contain any element of fear may be not only in conformity with truth but also necessary. A physician may certainly, in the interest of the patient's health, conceal from him the gravity of his illness. It may even be his duty.

A perfect *brahmachari* is one who has all the senses under his control. This state is possible even in this body. Regulating diet is necessary but it does not play an important part in the observance of *brahmacharya*. Lack of self-control is certainly detrimental. I feel that milk and ghee taken by way of medicine are not harmful.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 15-6

63. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 11, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Explain to me why I should not call you only 'Amtul'[1]. It is well if you receive the money you are expecting but you should be content even if it is not forthcoming. Your letters are quite good, only you must write more legibly. Anyway, after I have read a few of your letters I shall be able to follow everything. It is astonishing to learn that there is no arrangement in Bombay for the education of girls; I had an idea that the Anjuman had pretty good provision. Consult Narandas about Dr. Sharma I think there is no harm in his coming to the Ashram if he conforms to its rules.

I understand about Kudsia[2]. How nice it would be if the girl gained her health in the Ashram! As for you rest is the most important consideration.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 257

64. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[Before *September 13, 1932*]

I was waiting for your letter and it came today. I can understand the feelings of the survivors. But you should inculcate in them the fearlessness of death and its advent as that of a friend. We, who should be most indifferent about death, somehow or other fear it more than other religious bodies. Mussalmans appear to fear it the least. Next come the Christians. I believe the Chinese too regard death as a most ordinary event in life which it really is. We, on the other hand, remain in a state

[1] In some previous letters, Gandhiji had addressed her as 'Amtul' to which she seems to have objected; *vide* pp. 46-7. Her full name consisted of two words 'Amtul', meaning 'servant', and 'salaam' meaning 'peace'.

[2] Addressee's niece

of collapse for a long time after an important death and never wholly cease to mourn it.

My love to all of you. Vallabhbhai's and Mahadev's good wishes are with you.

Yours,
BAPU

Advance, 13-9-1932

65. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*September 13, 1932*][1]

CHARLIE ANDREWS
112 GOWER STREET
LONDON

RECEIVED. REGARD FASTING GOD'S CALL. ONLY CERTAIN PROSPECT OF WITHDRAWAL SEPARATE ELECTORATE FOR DEPRESSED CAN WARRANT POSTPONEMENT.[2] IN MY OPINION YOUR PRESENCE MORE USEFUL THERE. VALLABHBHAI MAHADEV AGREE. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 20

66. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

September 13, 1932

I believe that that is my supreme dharma. Hence, neither Ramdas nor any of you should feel unhappy. On the contrary, you should rejoice and thank God for His kindness that one of your co-workers has been inspired to take the ultimate step in dharma and has got an opportunity to do that. I hope all of you understand that nobody should imitate me. Everybody is not fit to undertake an indefinite fast. And the *tapas* performed by a person who is not fit for it is not in accord with the Shastra and is therefore demoniac. His only reward for such *tapas* is physical suffering. Your duty, therefore, is to do your work with

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

[2] C. F. Andrews had cabled: "Please postpone fasting till I come. Starting immediately."

CWMG II

greater devotion, to become purer and to remain more vigilant, without thinking or worrying about my fast. . . .[1] Nobody should get excited there. Have no doubt that, for those who live in the Ashram, there is no other duty but what I have explained.[2]

Rebirth means transformation of the body—not of the *atman* which dwells in the body. Hence belief in rebirth differs from a scientific concept. The *atman* does not undergo transformation, it only changes its abode. One who does not regard himself as the doer will never kill anybody. This is not a matter of intellectual conviction, it concerns the heart. It is, therefore, incorrect to speak of "without thinking of oneself as the doer" or "dedicating a thing to the Lord". These phrases signify intellectual attitudes whereas the advice in the *Gita* and other scriptures to dedicate everything to the Lord has no reference to the intellect. Our activities are in perfect accord with Vedanta as I understand it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 21-2

67. *LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

September 13, 1932

The country now knows about my intention to go on an indefinite fast. I assume that the news has not upset you in the slightest degree. One does not get such a unique opportunity by seeking it. It comes rarely, and only to a fortunate man. I believe that such an opportunity has come to me, and anybody who believes that he has got a unique opportunity would welcome it heartily. Hence you need not feel agitated. If you meet Ghanshyamdas in Calcutta, explain this to him. It will not be necessary to explain to Malaviyaji. I believe that he must be shedding tears of joy at the news and that every moment his heart must be blessing me. Tell him this. If other friends feel sad or depressed, you should show courage and persuade them not to give way to such thoughts. It will be the duty of those who appreciate my step to address themselves more earnestly to the task, to awaken the people to the evil of untouchability

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] After this the source has introduced a letter to Devdas Gandhi (the following item) and it is not clear whether any portion between this and the following paragraph has been omitted.

and to organize public opinion. If a strong public opinion is organized and expressed peacefully, I may not even have to carry the fast to its logical end. So far as I know myself at present, I would experience nothing but the profoundest peace if I do have to carry the fast to its logical end. If, on the contrary, that does not happen and I remain alive to serve the country still more, I will welcome that too. Either result will be good if my resolution endures till the end.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 22

68. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

September 13, 1932

I have your letter. You have probably heard about my fast. Do not get frightened in the slightest degree by the news and also do not let the other women get frightened. Indeed, you should rejoice that God has granted me an opportunity to go through such an ordeal for the sake of dharma. I also hope that you have understood the meaning of this fast. I shall not have to start the fast if my demands regarding the *Antyajas* are accepted, and even if I have started it I can end it. If, however, I have to carry it on till the end, you should indeed thank God. Only one in millions meets death for which he has prayed. What a good fortune it would be if I met such a death! And if I do not die, it is clear as daylight that it would then be my moral duty to purify myself still further and to devote myself more to service. I think that after having lived with me for fifty years you will be able clearly to understand this simple thing and willingly follow me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 22-3

CWMG - LI

69. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

September 13, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have read in the papers the news about my indefinite fast. I assume that it has not created a panic among the inmates of the Ashram. If they see the matter in the proper light, this should be for them an occasion for rejoicing. A total fast is the ultimate and the highest ideal of the Ashram, but very few persons ever become worthy of the privilege of undertaking it. Such a fast is not an everyday occurrence. Only a rare person on a rare occasion is entitled to undertake it; I believe that I am on this occasion. If I am wrong, people will judge my step as a sign of false pride and an instance of demoniac self-mortification. I claim nearly half a century of ceaseless effort to purify my mind completely so that I may be able to hear the voice within. I believe that as a result I can now hear it with some distinctness. I have taken the present step in obedience to that voice. The 20th is still a little way away. At present the decision to fast is only a resolve. I am writing this letter to explain that resolve, and to tell all of you that nobody there should get panicky, but that the news should make everybody more devoted to his or her work, purer and more awake. I am sure you yourself do realize that nobody should follow my example and undertake a similar fast. Explain that to the others, too. I hope nobody there will wonder why I kept my intention to fast to myself and did not let it become known beyond our circle of three. It is a rule for prisoners that they must not make public the fact of such correspondence. If I even wish in my heart to make it public indirectly, I would disgrace my satyagraha and there would be a blot on the purity of my vow of truth. The value of that vow lies in the perfect purity in its observance. I got your weekly packet. I believe that this time at least I shall be able to send the replies. I am slightly doubtful because during the days which remain the work is likely to be heavier. If there is any development about which I can write to you, I will do so. You can show this letter to all persons who have connections with the Ashram.

Tell Anandi that I intend to write a long letter to her. I liked hers very much. She should have no fear. You should teach all

girls to be fearless. If people there are in the habit of whispering among themselves about any girl, it is a bad habit. What is fated to happen to us and the girls will happen. We should not feel suspicious about them all the time and fill them with fear. When we see cause for cautioning any of them, we may do so and then should not think about the matter further. The girls should never feel that they are being suppressed in any way. Any restraints which are put on them should be explained to them and should be imposed in such a manner that they willingly accept them.

Personally, I think you have done the right thing in permitting Hariyomal to return. I hope Baba has completely recovered now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8251. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

70. A LETTER

[After *September 13, 1932*][1]

DEAR SISTER,

You and the other sisters may come and meet me—not that it is necessary. To do work for which the penance is being done is better than seeing this dwindling mass of flesh.

BAPU

The Epic Fast, p. 128

71. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

September 14, 1932

DEAR KAMAKOTI,

I have your very touching and tender letter. There need be no grief over the ordeal that I have set before me at conscience' call. It is a privilege that rarely comes to one. Having identified myself with our suppressed brethren for fifty years, I saw no escape from it. If however God wants more service from me through this body, He will make the way clear for me.

[1] According to the source this was in answer to one of the many letters that Gandhiji received following the publication on September 13 of Gandhiji's correspondence with the Government.

And why no faith in prayer? Faith is either derived or revealed from within. You should derive it from the testimony without exception of all the teachers and seers of all climes, countries and times. A true prayer is not a mere lip expression. It need never be. Selfless service is prayer. You must not say, 'I have no faith in prayer'.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 24

72. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

Express *September* [*15*][1], *1932*

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA PARK
BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

RECEIVED. NO CAUSE BEING UPSET. EVERY CAUSE FOR REJOICING THAT GOD GIVEN OPPORTUNITY HAS COME TO ME FOR OFFERING FINAL SACRIFICE FOR MOST DOWNTRODDEN. AM QUITE CERTAIN FAST MUST NOT BE POSTPONED. UTTERLY INCAPABLE SEND HELPFUL INSTRUCTIONS FROM HERE OR FORESEE FUTURE ACTION.[2]

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *The Hindu*, 17-9-1932

73. MESSAGE TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[*September 15, 1932*][3]

No cause for distress. On the contrary, I expect you to rejoice that a comrade of yours has had this God-given opportunity for a final act of satyagraha in the cause of the downtrodden. The date of the fast is not open to reconsideration. Can see you if you get permission.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-9-1932

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", p. 76; in the source, however, the date is September 16, 1932.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", p. 68.

[3] The source does not mention the date. It would appear, however, that this was one of the messages sent to M. G. Bhandari for transmission. *Vide* the following item.

74. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 15, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Thanks for promptly sending the two important telegrams. If you have authority to pass replies I would like you to send accompanying replies by express message. You will see in my reply to Rajagopalachari that I have said that he could come whenever he chooses.[1] This I have done in the belief that the fact of your sending me a telegram asking for interview presupposes authority for you to grant it. In case you want to see the original telegrams I enclose them herewith and you will please return them to me tomorrow morning.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5127

75. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 15, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I had been waiting for your letter. It arrived today. I am glad you have understood the reason for the fast. There was no escape from it. It is both a privilege and a duty. It comes rarely to someone in a generation or generations. In non-violence it is the crowning act, if it is saturated with that spirit and the cause has no trace of self. I ask you, therefore, to rejoice with me that such an occasion seems to have come to me. I say 'seems' for my faith has yet to be tried. No one can dare talk of his own strength in a matter of life and death. The question, therefore, is whether I am found worthy of the needed strength and also whether the cause is of the required purity and thirdly, whether in truth I am free of every trace of violence in undertaking the vow. When I say that I feel like all that, I merely state my

[1] The message as reported, *vide* the preceding item, says "if you get permission" instead of "whenever you choose".

belief. Judgment can be pronounced only upon the completed act. I want you to watch the progress of the event without the slightest perturbation. Nor may you at any stage fast in sympathy. Yours is to be buried in your own task which is to go through your term in full resignation, making the best use possible of every moment at your disposal.

I do not mind the drop in your weight if you are otherwise well and fit. The weight will come gradually as you become acclimatized there and the weather improves, which it will not do for yet another month.

For me, I am as fit as a fiddle. Just now my food is brown bread, milk, a vegetable, local dates (not bad) and *musambis*.

I am glad Kisen is with you. You must be a fair size family now. I know that you had naturally the art of looking upon trees and animals as friends. I wanted you to extend the idea so as not to feel the want of friends from outside. Hence my mention of strangers in the same category. That is to say, there should be a definite realization that personal friends and relations are no greater friends than strangers of the human family and bird, beast and plant. They are all one, and they are all an expression of God if we would but realize the fact. Such definite realization assuages all craving for seeing outside friends when we are inside prison walls.

The news you have from England about the family is cheering. Send my love to them all when you write.

Our cat family, or some of them, have a fancy for the *mal* of the wheel. One of them destroyed it the other day. They begin musical operations at meal times and stop only after Vallabhbhai has served them. The mother has a fancy for vegetarian dishes. She enjoys dal and rice and especially vegetables. We have an addition to the family, did I tell you? There was a human touch about the mother whilst she was in pain and two or three days after delivery. She would caress us and insist on being caressed. It was a pathetic sight. The care she bestows on the 'baby' is very wonderful.

Love from us all to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Ramayana is being read regularly just now by Parasram to all.

From the original: C.W. 6237. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9703

76. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH

September 15, 1932

I think Satyavan's[1] problem is simple. No person can go beyond his or her limits. You cannot force anyone to be chaste. He or she must have the inner conviction. You can give him the fullest freedom to separate himself from you and get a divorce decree if necessary. He must be at liberty to marry some other woman of his choice. It is most dangerous to have a carnal mind constantly brooding over satisfaction of animal passion. You must surround him with all the affection you can give him and not judge him harshly. It is to his credit that he has striven all these years to control himself. Of course if you have the slightest desire to satisfy his craving, you should regard yourself at liberty to do so. For you both came to a joint conclusion about self-control. If now one party wishes to revise the agreement, the other may also, if there is the desire. Whereas if you are satisfied that you have no craving at all, you must resist every entreaty from Satyavan as lovingly as possible, but with the utmost firmness. Let him read this letter. Let him think over it and pray to God for light. And if he finds that he cannot bring his passion under subjection, he must take another wife if you have no wish to surrender. You should part as friends. If you have to part, what happens to you is a matter of little concern. If you have the strength, as I know you have, you will earn your bread by your own labour.

May God help you and bless you both.

With deep love,

Yours,
BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 26

[1] Frederic Standenath, addressee's husband

77. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

September 16, 1932

SATISBABU
KHADIPRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

WIRE RECEIVED. YOU HAVE ACCURATELY READ MY HEART. WIRE YOUR HEALTH HEMPRABHA'S ARUN'S[1]. RECEIVED NO LETTER FROM HER LONG TIME. WROTE SEVERAL MYSELF. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

78. TELEGRAM TO JAMSHED MEHTA

September 16, 1932

JAMSHED MEHTA
KARACHI

PRAY DO NOT ASK ME ALTER DECISION TAKEN GOD'S NAME AND HIS CALL. IF HE WILLS IT HE WILL KEEP ME ALIVE NOTWITHSTANDING FAST TILL SETTLEMENT REACHED. HOW IS KIKIBEHN[2]? LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *The Hindu*, 17-9-1932

[1] Addressee's youngest son
[2] Kikibehn Lalwani, sister of J. B. Kripalani

79. TELEGRAM TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

September 16, 1932

SIR TEJBAHADUR SAPRU
ALLAHABAD

THANKS WIRE[1]. YOU WILL NOT ASK OR EXPECT ME TO ALTER DECISION TAKEN GOD'S NAME. IT WAS JUST MY HELPLESSNESS THAT PROMPTED DECISION. IF GOD WILLS IT BODY WILL HOLD OUT AGAINST FAST LONG ENOUGH FOR SETTLEMENT WHICH YOU AND OTHER FRIENDS OUTSIDE CAN ALONE NEGOTIATE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 18-9-1932

80. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

September 16, 1932

P.S.V.
SIMLA

HAVE JUST READ WITH CONSIDERABLE PAIN ANNOUNCEMENT GOVERNMENT DECISION REMOVE ME ON COMMENCEMENT CONTEMPLATED FAST TO UNKNOWN PRIVATE RESIDENCE UNDER CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS. TO AVOID UNNECESSARY TROUBLE AND UNNECESSARY PUBLIC EXPENSE ALSO UNNECESSARY WORRY TO MYSELF I WOULD ASK GOVERNMENT NOT TO DISTURB ME FOR I WILL BE UNABLE TO CONFORM TO ANY CONDITIONS AS TO MOVEMENT FROM PLACE TO PLACE OR OTHERWISE THAT MAY BE ATTACHED TO FORESHADOWED RELEASE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3859

[1] It read: "Earnestly appeal to you to refrain from fasting until you have once again tried to settle the 'depressed' classes question. If you fail, no one else can succeed in this matter. You must live to remove this blot from the Hindu society."

81. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

Urgent Please *September 16,1932*

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

The enclosed is a message[1] which I should like very much now to go if it is at all possible, and there might be no difficulty or delay seeing that it is addressed to the Government of India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3858

82. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

September 16, 1932

You have been sending your lovely cards. This is just to send you and Shervani our love and prayer that both of you may soon be restored to perfect health and soon return home.

You have no doubt read all about the step I have taken. It was a peremptory call from God which I could not resist. I hope you had no difficulty in appreciating the step. The future is in His hands.

The situation is moving so fast that it is difficult to say what will have happened when this reaches you.

Supposing that this proves my last letter to you, let me tell you that my faith in Hindu-Muslim unity is as green as ever and that I feel the richer for having many Muslim friends who are as blood-brothers to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 28-9

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

83. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 16, 1932[1]

The fast which I am approaching was resolved upon in the name of God for His work and, as I believe in all humility, at His call. Friends have urged me to postpone the date for the sake of giving the public a chance to organize itself. I am sorry it is not open to me to change even the hour, except for the reason stated in my letter to the Prime Minister.[2]

The impending fast is against those who have faith in me, whether Indians or foreigners, and for those who have it not. Therefore it is not against the English official world, but it is against those Englishmen and women who, in spite of the contrary teaching of the official world, believe in me and the justice of the cause I represent. Nor is it against those of my countrymen who have no faith in me, whether they be Hindus or others; but it is against those countless Indians (no matter to what persuasion they belong) who believe that I represent a just cause. Above all, it is intended to sting the Hindu conscience into right religious action.

The contemplated fast is no appeal to mere emotion. By the fast I want to throw the whole of my weight (such as it is) in the scales of justice pure and simple. Therefore, there need be no undue haste or feverish anxiety to save my life. I implicitly believe in the truth of the saying that not a blade of grass moves but by His will. He will save it if He needs it for further service in this body. None can save it against His will. Humanly speaking, I believe it will stand the strain for some time.

[1] According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-9-1932, and *The Epic Fast*, the statement was sent to the Government of Bombay on September 15 for being released to the Press. However, the statement signed by Gandhiji bears the date "16-9-32" in his own handwriting. *Vide* also the following item.

[2] The reason stated was: "The fast will cease if during its progress, the British Government of its own motion or under pressure of public opinion revise their decision and withdraw their scheme of communal electorates for the 'depressed' classes, whose representatives should be elected by the general electorate under the common franchise no matter how wide it is." *Vide* Vol. L, pp. 383-4. For Gandhiji's further views on the Communal Award and Untouchability, *vide* Appendix I.

The separate electorate is merely the last straw. No patched-up agreement between caste Hindu leaders and rival "depressed" class leaders will answer the purpose. The agreement to be valid has got to be real. If the Hindu mass mind is not yet prepared to banish untouchability root and branch, it must sacrifice me without the slightest hesitation.

There should be no coercion of those who are opposed to joint electorates. I have no difficulty in understanding their bitter opposition. They have every right to distrust me. Do I not belong to that Hindu section miscalled a superior class, or caste Hindus, who have ground down to powder the so-called untouchables? The marvel is that the latter have remained nevertheless in the Hindu fold.

But whilst I can justify this opposition, I believe that they are in error. They will, if they can, separate the "depressed" class entirely from the Hindu society and form them into a separate class—a standing and living reproach to Hinduism. I should not mind if thereby their interest could be really served.

But my intimate acquaintance with every shade of untouchability convinces me that their lives, such as they are, are so intimately mixed with those of the caste Hindus in whose midst and for whom they live, that it is impossible to separate them. They are part of an indivisible family.

Their revolt against the Hindus with whom they live and their apostasy from Hinduism I should understand. But this so far as I can see they will not do. There is a subtle something—quite indefinable—in Hinduism which keeps them in it even in spite of themselves.

And this fact makes it imperative for a man like me, with a living experience of it, to resist the contemplated separation even though the effort should cost life itself.

The implications of this resistance are tremendous. No compromise which does not ensure the fullest freedom for the "depressed classes" inside the Hindu fold can be an adequate substitute for the contemplated separation. Any betrayal of the trust can merely postpone the day of immolation for me and henceforth for those who think with me. The problem before responsible Hindus is to consider whether in the event of social, civic or political persecution of the "depressed" classes they are prepared to face satyagraha in the shape of perpetual fast, not of one reformer like me, but an increasing army of reformers whom I believe to exist today in India and who will count their lives of no cost to achieve the liberation of these classes and therethrough [rid] Hinduism of an age-long superstition.

Let fellow-reformers who have worked with me also appreciate the implications of the fast.

It is either a hallucination of mine or an illumination. If it is the former, I must be allowed to do my penance in peace. It will be the lifting of a dead weight on Hinduism. If it is an illumination, may my agony purify Hinduism and even melt the hearts of those who are at present disposed to distrust me.

Since there appears to be a misunderstanding as to the application of my fast, I may repeat that it is aimed at a statutory separate electorate, in any shape or form, for the "depressed" classes. Immediately that threat is removed once for all, my fast will end. I hold strong views about reservation of seats, as also about the most proper method of dealing with the whole question. But I consider myself unfit as a prisoner to set forth my proposals. I should however abide by an agreement on the basis of joint electorate that may be arrived at between the responsible leaders of caste Hindus and the "depressed" classes and which has been accepted by mass meetings of all Hindus.

One thing I must make clear. The satisfactory ending to the "depressed" classes question, if it is to come, should in no way mean that I would be committed to the acceptance of His Majesty's Government's decision on the other parts of the communal question. I am personally opposed to many other parts of it, which to my mind make the working of any free and democratic constitution well-nigh impossible, nor would a satisfactory solution of this question in any way bind me to accept the constitution that may be framed. These are political questions for the National Congress to consider and determine. They are utterly outside my province in my individual capacity. Nor may I as a prisoner air my individual views on these questions. My fast has a narrow application. The "depressed" classes question being predominantly a religious matter, I regard it as specially my own by reason of my lifelong concentration on it. It is a sacred personal trust which I may not shirk.

The fasting for light and penance is a hoary institution. I have observed it in Christianity and Islam. Hinduism is replete with instances of fasting for purification and penance. But it is a privilege, if it is also a duty. Moreover, to the best of my light, I have reduced it to a science. As an expert, therefore, I would warn friends and sympathizers against copying me blindly or out of false or hysterical sympathy. Let all such qualify themselves by hard work and selfless service of the "untouchables" and they would have independent light if their time for fasting has come.

Lastly, in so far as I know myself this fast is being undertaken with the purest of motives and without malice or anger to any single soul. For me it is an expression of, and the last seal on, non-violence. Those, therefore, who would use violence in this controversy against those whom they may consider to be inimical to me or the cause I represent will simply hasten my end. Perfect courtesy and consideration towards opponents is an absolute essential of success in this case[1] at least if not in all cases.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3857

84. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 16, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I would like the enclosed statement[2] [to be sent] to the Associated Press for publication forthwith, if the Government approve of the course.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3857

85. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

September 16, 1932

No cause for sorrow; every cause for rejoicing that a member of the family has been given by God the opportunity of offering the supreme sacrifice for the purest cause that could be thought of. There should be no imitation of the fast even partially. For you all it is a time for greater devotion to work and self-purification. You are going to brace up everyone who is at all disposed to give way to grief.

Love to you all including the caged birds.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 27-8

[1] Up to this the statement is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting. What follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

86. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

[*September 16, 1932*][1]

MY DEAR VERRIER,

You had, I hope, no difficulty in understanding the step I am about to take. This is therefore just to tell you that all my English friends were before my mind's eye when I penned my letters[2] to the Prime Minister. May God bring good out of this.

My love to you all in which Sardar and Mahadev join.

We sing the hymn this evening (Friday).

BAPU

The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin, p. 83

87. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 16, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I had your letter. Well, you know all about the step I am about to take. This is therefore just to send you my love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1455

88. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

September 16, 1932

MY DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

I had your letter. On the eve of the step I am about to take this is just to send you both my love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8793

[1] The letter was written on a Friday. The Friday before September 20, when the fast was to begin, fell on this date.

[2] *Vide* pp. 31-2 and Vol. L, pp. 383-4.

CWMG - LI

89. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

September 16, 1932

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

On the eve of taking the momentous step in my life I would like to tell you how I prize those days I had with you and your great, good and devoted sister. Mahadev Desai is with me. We often think of you.

I wonder how you have felt over the contemplated step. I can only say that it was decided upon in obedience to the imperative voice of conscience.

With love to you both.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 29

90. LETTER TO SARALA DEVI CHOWDHARANI

September 16, 1932

I have your letter overflowing with love. That the children also have joined you in expressing their love made the letter as dear to me as a sacred gift. I took this step only when I was convinced that it was my duty to do so. I have taken it in God's name and for His work. I have faith in Him that He will protect my honour and, therefore, do not worry. All of you should rejoice that one of your own family has got such a holy opportunity.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 28

CWMG LI

91. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

September 16, 1932

I can see from here the misery on your faces—Shankerlal's and yours—and hear it in your voices. But please regard it as the result of ignorant human attachment. You ought to feel unmixed joy. It is a holy opportunity which God has sent me unasked. The duty of you all is to cultivate greater devotion to your work and become purer.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 28

92. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 17, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

My wire[1] to Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla which appears in the Bombay papers of today omits two key-words, viz., "from here" after the words "helpful instructions". I see also that the omission has given rise to a misinterpretation of my meaning. Could you therefore please send a message to the Associated Press asking them to circulate the necessary correction[2]?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] *Vide* p. 55.
[2] *Vide* also p. 76.

CWMG - LI

93. LETTER TO BHIMARAO[1]

September 17, 1932

I have your touching wire. The fast is to be undertaken in God's name, at His will. It would be wrong and cowardly now to desist. Let us hope that He will give me strength to go through it. After all no life can live without His permitting. If He has any further use for it He knows best how to keep it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 34

94. LETTER TO GOSIBEHN CAPTAIN

September 17, 1932

Do you know that the thought that many sisters are with me in this travail sustains me? I have no time to write separately to Kamala. Let her write. My love to you all. Let God's will be done, not ours.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 32

95. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

September 17, 1932

Continue to write as if nothing is to happen. But it may be that this will be my last letter to you. In that case bear in mind that I expect you some day to gravitate to the Ashram and realize all my hopes of you. As for the coming fast, I hope you have understood that it is a rare privilege God has provided for me. It is therefore a matter for rejoicing rather than sorrow. At the same time it is not meant to be copied by anyone else. It can be taken up when there is the clearest possible call from within.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 34-5

[1] Secretary, Bangalore Cantonment Congress Committee

96. LETTER TO S. M. MATE

September 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire and letter both received at the same time. I may not as a prisoner answer individual questions. But I have sent to the authorities a general statement[1] for publication. If they allow its publication, you will see your point covered by it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. M. MATE, M.A.
TILAK ROAD
POONA 2

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 181

97. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

September 17, 1932

DEAR MOTHER, SINGER AND GUARDIAN OF MY SOUL,

Your lovely letter was preceded by one lovelier—if possible—from Padmaja. The decision was taken after much prayer, in the name of God and at His call. I have no power therefore to postpone the hour of execution.

You have every right to call upon me to revise my decisions and actions and it is my duty to respond, if I discover the error. And I claim unquestioned 'obedience' if I cannot with all the prayerful effort discover any error. You have 'manfully' asserted the right and woman-like offered obedience.

The motherly affection has blinded the poetic vision and prompted you to appeal to my pride to retrace my steps so as to make me cling to life.

[1] *Vide* pp. 62-5.

But I know you have not missed the woman in me. I have therefore chosen the way of life through suffering unto death. I must therefore find my courage in my weakness.

This is how your vision has failed you. The communal decision was the last straw. The conception of giving my life for the untouchables is not of yesterday. It is very old. There was no call from within for years. But the Cabinet's decision came like a violent alarm waking me from my slumber and telling me this is the time. It therefore provided the psychological moment and I instinctively seized it. The necessarily restricted wording of my official letter covers in their implications the very things you would have me to die for and to live for—one and the same thing in essence. She who sees life in death and death in life is the real Poetess and Seeress. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. You will soon test it and prove it for yourself. Meanwhile pray that God may give me strength enough to walk steadily through the vale. If Hinduism is to live, untouchability must die.

It may be that this is my last letter to you. I have always known and treasured your love. I think that I understood you when I first saw you and heard you at the Criterion in 1914. If I die I shall die in the faith that comrades like you, with whom God has blessed me, will continue the work of the country which is also fully the work of humanity in the same spirit in which it was begun. If the interests of the country are to be one with those of humanity, if the good of one faith is to be the good of all faiths, it will come only by the strictest adherence to truth and non-violence in thought, word and deed.

And now for a little lesson in recognizing one's limitations. You may be a good confectioner, but you need not therefore presume to be a good baker or a judge of good bread. Well, my brown bread is really superior to your 'good white bread'. And there is an interesting, instructive history behind it, which you should get Major Bhandari to relate to you, if he will. Anyway there was to be a choice between my delicious and digestible brown bread and leathery chapati. Those who were doomed to these chapatis have chosen the brown loaf. I accept your apology in anticipation.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 38-40

98. LETTER TO NARAYANRAO DESAI

September 17, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your wire. It is not open to me to postpone the fast without a settlement. As for your question, I have sent to the Government a statement[1] for publication. If it is allowed, you will see your point covered in it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NARAYAN RAO DESAI TOPIWALA
PRESIDENT
DECCAN MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION
BOMBAY

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 181

99. LETTER TO BARJORJI F. BHARUCHA

September 17, 1932

BHAI BARJORJI,

I was not surprised to get your wire. But the truth is that no person can resolve on an indefinite fast relying on his own strength, and that if he does so he must be an ignorant man. For myself at any rate I can say that I did not take the vow, but that God inspired me to take it. The date too was fixed by Him, and so also the conditions under which the date could be changed. Your appeal is not covered by those conditions. What can I do now?

Another simple thing is this: a prisoner cannot himself communicate anything to the world outside. Hence, it would have been a sin for me, a satyagrahi, to convey indirectly to the nation even the slightest hint of what I had in my mind. A satyagrahi prisoner voluntarily obeys prison rules and, if it becomes necessary for him to disobey any of them, he can only do so openly.

[1] *Vide* pp. 62-5.

Thus, the notice given by me as a prisoner to the Government should be regarded as a notice given to the people also. That is, it was for the Government to decide whether it would inform the public about my intention. If the people did not know of it earlier, we should interpret the fact only to mean that God did not intend the people to know it earlier. How can I postpone the date of the fast in order to give time to the people? Why should not those who have faith in God rather think that if it is His will that I should serve more yet, He would in spite of the fast spare my life for as long as may be necessary? And you certainly have faith in God. You should, therefore, try to understand what I have said in this letter and explain it to the men and women who get agitated over my decision and give them courage. My co-workers' duty at present is to go on vigorously with the work that now faces us. The result is in God's hands.

Remember this, that my fast cannot be, and certainly is not, intended for putting pressure on any party. Its purpose is only to see that what is in the best interests of the *Antyajas* themselves is done. If what seems proper to me does not appear so to others, they should indeed continue their opposition. Such pure fast for a public cause should aim at bringing about an awakening in the nation and should not, at any rate, be used ignorantly to lead the people on a wrong path. If, in my ignorance, I try through a fast to make the nation agree to an improper demand, I am sure that the nation ought not to yield to such a demand merely for sparing my life, no matter how much it is convinced of my services to it in the past. Not only the good of the nation, but my own good too, lies in its not yielding to an improper demand by me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 33-4

100. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

September 17, 1932

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I hope you two are not upset. There is no reason to be. On the contrary, you should be happy that God has given a golden opportunity to a co-worker to take the ultimate step in non-violence. Everybody should pray to God only that He may give me strength to carry the step, which has been taken in His

name and at His call, to its logical end. Read the enclosed letter[1] and send it to Bhai Barjorji Bharucha. I am not very sure about his address.

I apply your ointment daily to the arm. The pain in the elbow has not increased; but it has not decreased either. However, I am not at all worried on that account.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7552. Also C.W. 5027. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

101. LETTER TO DARBARI SADHU

September 17, 1932

I am afraid we shall not be able to meet now. Still, do write to me and ask me if you can come. I will see if I can let you. If, however, that is not possible, then think that nothing is gained by meeting an image of clay. It is the minds and the hearts that meet and they have the power to meet in a second even when the bodies dwell farthest away from each other. Even if the bodies are very close to each other, they are as distant from each other as the North Pole is from the South if the minds and the hearts do not meet. Therefore the nearness of the bodies has little meaning. It is only because there is a soul living in the body that we wish to meet each other. This, indeed, is the strongest infatuation and till we are free from it we are held in chains even stronger than steel. But it is not enough to understand this with our intellect. The knowledge should sink into the heart. If that happens, one has attained everything worth attaining. But one has to struggle during many lives to acquire this knowledge, and even then only a few succeed in acquiring it. Hence the *Gita* teaches, by implication, that one should wear away one's body doing one's duty. It is only in this way that one can learn non-attachment or become free from infatuation.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 35

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

102. A LETTER

September 17, 1932

CHI.,

Your letter is absurd. On the one hand, you talk about undertaking a fast and, on the other, about marrying. You are too young, and not yet fit, to undertake a fast.

So long as you are not married you may certainly write innocent letters to the young man to whom you are betrothed, after obtaining your parents' consent. I have deliberately used the word 'innocent'. It is a sin to nurse a desire which is not going to be fulfilled in the present. One's mental strength is unnecessarily wasted by doing that. It is not at all wise to waste it in such a manner. I do not know your age. If you have really come of age, and if you are a prey to passion, I would prefer that you should get married immediately. If you are not yet of marriageable age, then you should control your passion and should not be eager to write letters to your future husband. I think this will solve all your problems.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 32-3

103. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

[On or before *September 18, 1932*][1]

MY DEAR MARY,

I am working against time. Hence this card only. The story in the Mysore magazine seems to me to be unbelievable. If I survive the ordeal, you must remind me and I shall inquire. My introduction[2] to the *Gita* appears in an issue of *Young India*. I hope you are able to understand the ordeal. For me it is a

[1] From the postmark

[2] The English translation of the preface to *Anasaktiyoga*; *vide* Vol. XLI, pp. 90-101.

matter of pure joy. You shall read Ch. IX and XII of the *Gita*. But the *Guide to Health*[1] you must ask again.

Love.

BAPU

MISS F. MARY BARR
KARIMNAGAR
H.E.H. NIZAM'S DOMINIONS

From a photostat: G.N. 5983. Also C.W. 3311. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

104. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

September 18, 1932

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
BIRLA HOUSE
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

FROM MY WIRE[2] TO YOU OF FIFTEENTH REPRODUCED BOMBAY PRESS TWO IMPORTANT WORDS "FROM HERE" WERE OMITTED AFTER "HELPFUL INSTRUCTIONS". PLEASE RECTIFY MISTAKE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

105. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL P. MEHTA

[*September 18, 1932*][3]

CHHAGANLAL
CARE ARYA
RANGOON

DO COME IF YOU FIND NECESSARY. HOPE MOTHER PEACEFUL.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] An English version, published in India, of Gandhiji's Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health which appeared in *Indian Opinion*; *vide* Vols. XI and XII.

[2] *Vide* p. 55.

[3] From the placing of the item in the source

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106. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 18, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

I am sorry. I took silence at 1 p.m. so as to be free earlier tomorrow. Now the only thing possible is to see those who are coming and listen to what they say. I can reply by writing my answers.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5126

107. LETTER TO DR. MUTHU

September 18, 1932

I was much touched by your and your wife's very kind and loving letter. If the people need me in the present body and God wills it, I shall live till the people secure an honourable settlement. That will mean real freedom for our suppressed brethren. I need your and Mrs. Muthu's prayers to sustain me through the ordeal in front of me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 45

108. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR C. R.,

My heart goes out to you in your distress. I have no doubt about the truth of the Inner Voice. Nor have I any doubt that you will soon see the light out of the darkness.

Love and yet more love.

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 44

109. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

September 18, 1932

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have had no letter at all from you for some time. I hope you have not become panicky because of my indefinite fast. If I pass away, fulfil my hopes. If you can give an emphatic reply to this soon, do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1847

110. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI GANDHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI,

It is night and the time is much too short for all the letters which I wish to write. What shall I write to you? Please look upon the days of my fast as a time of rejoicing. Prabhudas[1], I forbid you to get agitated. Use all your wisdom to cultivate the utmost devotion to service. God will surely help you.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 47

111. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have been constantly thinking about both of you. But I believe you have patience and courage and I take heart from that thought. I am sure you wish to run up here. But please control your desire. Fulfil all my hopes about you. You know what they

[1] Addressees' son

CWMG - LI

are. Augment the legacy which I may leave you. God will surely prosper you.

I do not have time to write a separate letter and give my blessings to Pragji[1] and Parvati. Today is Sunday. I have commenced the silence. I wish to write yet many more letters.

As you already know, I had a cable from Kallenbach.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4795

112. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 18, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I am certain that some of your letters have been held back. I hope you have fully grasped the significance of my fast unto death. Be brave and do not lose heart. You must not slacken in your labour. What do we gain by clinging to the body? We daily recite in the Ashram verses which tell us to give up attachment to the body. We have got this opportunity to demonstrate that we have assimilated the lesson of the verses which we daily recite. All of you should pray that I may have the strength to go through the test. It is easy (relatively) to jump into the water, but who can be sure that one will be able to reach the other shore? Hence, people need not get elated till the test has ended. But I have embarked on it with God's name on my lips and I am confident, therefore, that He will help me to go through it.

Face the situation in a manner worthy of yourself and of the cause.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5509

[1] Pragji Khandubhai Desai, Gandhiji's co-worker in South Africa. He contributed regularly in the Gujarati Section of *Indian Opinion*.

113. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNABEHN KAPADIA

September 18, 1932

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

I got the letters from you both. Do not be perturbed in the slightest degree by my decision to fast. It is really a matter for rejoicing. Such an opportunity comes rarely to anyone. I hope that the effect of the fast on you both will be to increase your self-control and your devotion to service. Do not let yourself be made unhappy by your financial difficulties. Resign yourself to the misfortune. God will protect my body if He wants to take more work from it, otherwise He will let it perish. Either way it will be good. Fix the thought in your mind that not a blade of grass moves without God's will.

I have written this letter after commencing the silence.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

114. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

September 18, 1932

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I have undertaken the fast as sacrifice to the Lord and, therefore, He will protect the body if He wants it to be an instrument of further service; otherwise He will let it perish. Either result will be the same to me. Please do not be unhappy but be glad that a co-worker has got such a great opportunity unsought.

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

SHRI NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA (C.P.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6686. Also C.W. 4331. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

115. LETTER TO TARAMATI M. TRIKUMJI[1]

September 18, 1932

I have your letter. Do not feel unhappy because of my fast. Instead, rejoice that God has inspired me to offer such a sacrifice. Sooner or later, one has got to give up the body. But what could be more blessed than that it should be given up for the sake of the oppressed? Man, however well-fed, must die. If God desires to take more work from me, then He will create favourable circumstances and I shall be saved. If, however, my time is up, nothing can save me.

Quote the foregoing paragraph in your letter when you write to Mathuradas. Whatever happens to me, I am confident that Mathuradas will carry on my work worthily. You should help him in that.

I am not writing a separate letter to Dilip, as I have to write many other letters.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 116

116. LETTER TO HANSA MEHTA[2]

September 18, 1932

You or the Doctor need not be agitated by my decision to fast. On the contrary, you should rejoice that God has granted to a co-worker a holy opportunity like this. Such an opportunity comes rarely to anybody. Moreover, God will keep me alive if He wants this body to do more service still. If, on the contrary, my time is up, I shall not live even though I may be eating as usual.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 47-8

[1] Wife of Mathuradas Trikumji

[2] Wife of Dr. Jivraj Mehta and a former Vice-Chancellor of M. S. University, Baroda

117. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

September 18, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

So at last I got a long letter from you. But I am sure you do not expect from me a long reply now. Look, do not let my fast make you unhappy. Cultivate greater devotion to service. I have always known that you have the strength to sacrifice your life. God will grant you all strength.

Never lose heart.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9333. Also C.W. 579. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

118. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 18/19, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

It is two o'clock now. I am observing silence. I got your letter about bread. I also got your weekly mail. As you say, God's ways are indeed inscrutable. I believe that I am dancing as a puppet in His hands. Hence I feel no burden on my mind. If only I could pass the final test in this same manner! I will live as He wills. I wish everybody there to remain cheerful to the very end, to do his daily work with greater devotion and not be agitated. None should feel anxious what news he may hear the following day. Everybody should be ready for anything that may happen. The best way of maintaining such a state of mind is to be completely absorbed in the work which one may be doing at any moment. I do not know what will happen on Tuesday.

Nirmala[1] has written to me from Rajkot. She says in her letter that, when Aunt[2] had got herself operated upon for cataract of the eye, the expenses were paid by you. I suppose you

[1] Daughter-in-law of Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister
[2] Raliatbehn

did that from the Ashram funds. She has again to get herself operated upon. Look into this matter and do what is necessary.

I have been looking after many things regarding Champa and Ratilal. If, however, the whole burden falls on you, I know that God has given you the strength to shoulder it. I suppose you know that a sum of Rs. 25,000 is deposited in Champa's name with Revashankerbhai[1]. Most probably the receipt for that sum is with Champa. The Doctor's last draft of his Will is unsigned. I will see that you get it. If I forget, please get it. According to it, they two should get Rs. 50,000 each, and the red bungalow is for them both. The Doctor has left a list of the names of trustees, but Chhaganlal has suggested other names and I approve of them. But no matter who are appointed, this burden will fall on the Ashram.

A gift of Rs. 6,500 has been made to the Ashram in memory of the Doctor. Chhaganlal wrote some time ago requesting that the sum be paid, but had added that it might be done only after the arrangements about the property left by the Doctor had been completed. Besides Chhaganlal, Nanalal knows all this. You may consult him whenever you cannot understand something.

8.30 p.m.

I had a letter from Kasumba[2] in which she has poured out her grief. She wants the girls to be sent back to her. The girls, too, have written to me. They say that they do not feel happy in the Ashram. Have a frank talk with them and, if you find that they really wish to go to their mother, I think they should be permitted to go. Discuss the matter with Jaisukhlal and do what you think proper. Go through my letters to him.

4.15 a.m., Silence Day [*September 19, 1932*]

After doing the morning prayer and walking for some time, I am now writing letters to the Ashram. The more letters I write, the more I discover those that remain to be written. I will write as many as I can. Nobody should feel disappointed if he or she does not get a letter. A person with a large family is happy beyond measure but he also becomes miserable. Anybody who does not get a letter should not envy somebody who gets one; a

[1] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's brother
[2] Jaisukhlal Gandhi's wife

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letter received by one has been received by all of them. Only those who see no difference between themselves and others even in such small matters will succeed ultimately in forgetting it completely. Anybody who cannot count one, cannot do sums involving millions. I am trying to write as many letters as I can and thereby feel one in my heart with the inmates of the Ashram. I am drawing the soul of the Ashram into myself and pouring my soul into the people there. I will send with this almost all the letters which I shall write this time. Read all the letters. Do not let the routine of the Ashram work be broken even for a minute. Nobody should get confused in mind or feel unhappy. Everybody should strive ceaselessly to make himself worthy of complete fulfilment of the aim of the fast. My own worthiness in that regard still remains to be proved. Solon spoke the perfect truth when he said: "Call no man happy or good till he be dead." Who can say that my self-suffering is not a demoniac mortification of the self? It must be counted so if deep in my heart I harbour ill will or anger against anybody or there is an element of selfishness in my motive. If so, my self-suffering will be a curse on the world. I am sure all of you will be ready to testify for me and say that, if my vow was prompted by ill will or any such unworthy motive, I was altogether unconscious of the fact and that I had taken the vow knowing it to be perfectly pure. All this that I am writing may even prove to be unnecessary. It is possible that the efforts of the nation may bear fruit and that my fast may not have to be continued to the logical end. If these efforts succeed, we should welcome the result. But I cannot assume while writing this letter that that will be so. I must write it assuming that this body will perish.

I got a very forceful letter from Rambhau. Read my reply[1] to him. I see from his letter that, if we can remove the layers of dirt which cover his heart, he is likely to reveal himself a real jewel. It is a difficult task. But since you have taken him in hand, he may be able to reveal the worth which lies hidden in him at present.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8252. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* p. 85.

119. TELEGRAM TO RAJA MAHENDRARANJAN

[*September 19, 1932*][1]

THANKS LONG WIRE. VOW TAKEN IN OBEDIENCE TO PEREMPTORY CALL FROM WITHIN. CANNOT BE RETRACTED WITHOUT ANOTHER CALL TO CONTRARY. GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

The Hindu, 21-9-1932

120. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

Silence Day Morning, September 19, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

I liked your letter very much. You have used all your ability in writing it. The handwriting is beautiful, and the language also is equally good. You seem to have an excellent gift for writing. There is plenty of humour in what you write and you can make it very biting.

I can see even from here the faults you have pointed out in Premabehn. But you cannot see your own faults or maybe you are hiding them from me. A virtuous and non-violent *brahmachari* who appreciates virtue instead of seeing the faults of others, admires their goodness while magnifying his own smallest short-comings. Tulsidas, Surdas, Tukaram saw their own faults and described them. Besides, whatever Premabehn is, she is your teacher. How strange it is that you could not see any virtue in her! I observe many good qualities in her. I have not told you that in one of her letters to me Premabehn had actually praised you. Look, many people know about your idle nature and your habit of telling lies. You yourself are aware of them. But you have not so much as mentioned that bad habit. I insist that you make good use of your great ability and bring credit to your parents, the Ashram and me. May God protect you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 298. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

[1] This was published under the date-line "September 20"; *vide*, however, "Diary, 1932", entry under September 19.

121. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF CHRIST SEVA SANGH

September 19, 1932

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF CHRIST SEVA SANGH,

Without your gift of flowers I knew that I had your hearts and prayers with me. All the same I treasure this physical token.

My love.

BAPU

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 52

122. LETTER TO VELANBEHN L. ASAR[1]

September 19, 1932

You have shown admirable patience. Do not have the slightest worry about Anandi, nor about me. If this earthly frame is to perish, let it perish. If it perishes in a holy cause, what can be better? I am always there with you. For whom, then, should you weep? Be worthy of the Ashram. Take care of your health and use it for the service of others.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 49-50

[1] Wife of Lakshmidas P. Asar

CWMG - LI

123. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

September 19, 1932[1]

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

What is that freedom which you got before and which you do not get now? If what you say is true, you should take a deputation to Narandas. You may take three minutes of his time in telling him what you wish and leave him two minutes to reply to you. After that[2] you may write to me if I am alive then, lying enfeebled in bed. And if I pass away into the final sleep, dance with joy and take a pledge that you will complete my work. What great fun and joy that work will be! All of you should acquire the strength for that ordeal.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II and *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 53

124. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

September 19, 1932

CHI. JANAKIMAIYA,

It is because women like you fear that they would starve to death if they had to live on the diet of 'C' class prisoners, that I have decided to embrace the way of living without eating. You will see from tomorrow how I do that. Everybody in the world eats and still dies. Let us see how long you live eating the food of 'A' class prisoners. Is it not a great art to survive an indefinite fast? There is one condition, of course, for this to be made possible. All women will have to come out of their homes as dedicated workers and eradicate the practice of untouchability, and so prove their claim to be incarnations of God's powers. Do that, and go on eating the food of 'A' class prisoners all your life. If, however, you do not get 'A' class food on some occasion, you should be satisfied with 'C' class food.

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

[2] The remaining portion of the microfilm is indecipherable. Hence what follows is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*.

Suppose, however, that the efforts of the women workers bear no fruit. In that case, let this earthly frame perish right now. Even then, I shall live for ever. As long as even one woman carries on my mission, can anybody say that I am dead? We may leave aside the *Gita*'s philosophy about the immortality of the *atman*. But the immortality which I have explained can be witnessed with our ordinary eyes. You must not, therefore, fall into panic. Act in a manner which will do honour to yourself and to the cause. Surrender yourself and all that you possess to God, and be happy and ever remain so. I have no time today to write to the mischievous Om and the wise Madalasa.

Treat this letter as meant for all of you.

May you enjoy the blessed state of wifehood to the end of your life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2901

125. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

September 19, 1932

KRITAYUGI[1] VINOBA,

We need not envy you for living in the *Kritayuga*, for we, too, have with us the *Kritayugi* Sardar and, therefore, rise at least a few inches higher than you. Do you know that the Sardar keeps walking for most of the time? He would, if he could, even eat walking and spin walking. Even though an old man, he tries to learn the *Gita* by heart while walking. For improving his pronunciation he should be sent to you, and you given a cane to correct him. But you are not likely to have that good fortune in the immediate future.

You seem to have mastered the art of holding out false assurances to the poor! When a poor man like me had been pining for a letter from you, you did not write at all; and now when I am getting ready to lie down on my death-bed, you write to say, "Now that I have started writing I will write regularly." But maybe I am destined to survive this ordeal, since the vows of *Kritayugis* are not known to remain unfulfilled. If I do leave this bed I will expect to hear regularly from you.

[1] Vinoba Bhave in his letter had quoted the text saying that while *Kaliyuga* slept, *Kritayuga* walked, and suggested that one should be a *Kritayugi*.

Through this bit of jesting, I have diverted my mind for a while from the letters I have been writing on serious matters and also suggested that your activities call for no criticism. Keep me informed about them.

If I come out unscathed in body and soul through this ordeal and if there is something to write about, I will write to you. I will preserve your letter.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 51-2

126. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI[1]

September 19, 1932

There was only one Arjuna to put questions to Krishna. No wonder, then, that he could reply to all sorts of questions. Moreover, Krishna had spiritual knowledge. My knowledge is limited; and what a great number of Arjunas who ask me questions! Try and count them. If I give a little of my knowledge to every one of them, how long would that *Gita* be? Arjuna put questions to Krishna on only one occasion, whereas so many Arjunas ask me questions every week.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 54

127. LETTER TO NIRMALA H. DESAI

September 19, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA[2] (AUNT),

Yes, worship of a photograph also is image-worship. However, there is certainly a difference between meditating on a photograph on special days and building a temple and installing an image in it. We should not introduce image-worship in the Ashram. The Ashram should have place equally for all religions.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9465

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Stepsister of Mahadev Desai

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128. LETTER TO VALJI AND DUDHIBEHN DESAI

September 19, 1932

CHI. VALJI AND DUDHIBEHN,

You know my boundless faith in you. May God grant you the strength to justify it in full. Take as much care as you can of your health so that you may be able to join in the great *yajna*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7437. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

129. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

September 19, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

It is indeed good that you are required to stay in Rajkot to look after the elders. Improve your health. Do not feel unhappy because of my *yajna*[1], but rejoice at it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 850. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

130. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

September 19, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

Ink blots cannot be erased. You should let them remain or should take another sheet.

We should act with humility even towards a person who is rude to us, but should not submit to him.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3281

[1] The proposed fast against separate electorate for the depressed classes

CWMG - LI

131. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI[1]

September 19, 1932

I am sure you will welcome the *yajna* which begins tomorrow. If you approve of it as holy, I request you both to send me your sincere blessings. If I leave this world before you, please do not grieve, but rejoice that you had a younger brother whom God had granted the strength to complete such a *yajna*. You have ever been more than a brother to me. I hope my sister-in-law[2] is all right now.

At this hour of dawn, your younger brother bows in *pranam* to you both.

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 48-9

132. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI

September 19, 1932

Please do not get agitated in the slightest degree. I have entrusted a brave and good man like Ramdas to your charge. Why, then, should you be agitated? How long would you keep me? And if you would I am always with you all. The body is but inert matter. What will you do with it? I spent two hours with Ramdas on Friday. He did not show the slightest agitation. I felt proud of him as both his father and teacher. You also should be like him. Look after the children properly. Keep up ghee and milk in your diet.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

[1] Gandhiji's cousin and father of Narandas Gandhi

[2] Devkunvar, addressee's wife

133. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

September 19, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN[1],

I do hear about you from time to time. It does not matter if none else turns up to receive lessons. It is all right if Dhiru prepares himself.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 308. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

134. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

September 19, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Rambhau's letter was both very good and very disappointing. I have replied[2] to him. But I will not give up hope for such an intelligent boy.

Kaka had told me Sundarbehn's story when I left for England. From that I had concluded that Sundarbehn had never had marital relations. Her husband despised her from the beginning as he did not consider her beautiful, that is, fair-skinned. Now there is no moral reason to look upon a woman, whom her husband never accepted as wife, as a married woman. In such cases, when the legal position has no moral basis, we should ignore law and uphold morality. It would have been excellent if Sundarbehn could have remained unmarried;[3] but when she was unable to do that, the only moral course open to her was to find a suitable husband. In doing this she ran the risk of being convicted but she accepted it. I see no religious objection against such a marriage. All laws regarding marriage have their origin in custom. They should be weighed in the scales

[1] Nephew of Narayan M. Khare

[2] *Vide* p. 85.

[3] That is, after separation from her first husband. She married P. G. Deshpande.

of self-control for examining their validity. A course which on the whole promotes self-control should be preferred even if it is opposed to custom.

As regards the Ashram women, if you ask me specific questions I will explain my views further.

Lakshmibehn's aching tooth will certainly continue to ache if it has not been properly filled. If necessary, take her to Dhargalkar in Bombay. If you mention my name, he will give proper attention to her and will not charge any fee. His fee otherwise is exorbitant.

I am not writing anything about the fast in this letter.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 234. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

135. LETTER TO KUSUM

September 19, 1932

You should not be upset by my decision to fast. Your duty is to take sufficient rest and build up a strong body. I need not say anything more about this. Those who advised that girls, when they are ill, should immediately be married off are ignorant men. The number of married women who remain ill is far greater in proportion to that of sickly maidens everywhere. You are also right in contrasting people's attitude towards girls with their attitude towards boys who fall ill. However, you should take the implied charge against girls in the right sense and take care never to fall ill. Some general knowledge about health, such as I have tried to give in my booklet, is necessary for preventing illness. The bodies of unmarried girls should be as strong as steel, and so should be the bodies of unmarried boys. But we find both sickly, and they are generally more so after marriage. Look at Umiya, Rukhi, and Hari-ichchha. It did seem for a while that marriage had done Rukhi good but before long she was ill again. From this, however, the girls should not rush to the conclusion that all who marry lose their health after marriage. It is true, however, that unmarried girls who burn with passion and desire will find their deliverance only in marriage, since their passion is secretly eating them. But this also means that such a girl feels before marriage as a married woman does and that she is, therefore, immoral. Any

person, whether a woman or a man, who yields to passion even though only inwardly, is immoral.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 52-3

136. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS P. ASAR

September 19, 1932

You may be too old to be my son, but I have always regarded you as a wise son ever since you first met me in Amritsar. I, therefore, assume that you have fully understood the meaning of my fast, and also that, if I pass away, you will prove yourself a worthy heir. It is because I have this faith in you that I do not write to you except when necessary.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 49

137. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

September 19, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

Why do you say that you cannot think of something to write to me every week? You should give me a report of the new things which you have learnt and the pranks you played in the course of the week.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9184

CWMG - II

138. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

September 19, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. If you have patience, your defects will disappear. You should not worry. Go on doing what Narandas advises you to do.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2764. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

139. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 19, 1932

CHI. BABUDI (SHARDA),

What fine questions you have asked! One who is determined to die can always end her life by biting off her tongue, by pressing the hands tightly against her throat and, if she has been bound, by breaking her bones trying to loosen herself. And a very holy woman can end her life even by a sheer act of will. This will, no doubt, be suicide but in certain circumstances suicide becomes one's dharma. When a wicked man tries to rape a woman, suicide becomes necessary if there is no other way of saving her honour.[1]

I expect that you will stick to the post of Secretary, for you are truthful and steadfast.

The students will cease quarrelling among themselves not out of false shame in my presence, but because they will realize their error and feel ashamed of it. Nobody should feel false shame before me.

You must make your body as strong as steel.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9956. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] *Vide* "What Women Should Do in a Difficult Situation", pp. 17-9.

140. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

September 19, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Why does Gulab harass you? Tell Premabehn about it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1739

141. LETTER TO NANIBEHN JHAVERI

September 19, 1932

CHI. NANIBEHN JHAVERI,

I ought not to forgive you for keeping me without a letter for such a long time. But a *yajna* bears fruit only if one forgives one's bitterest enemy before commencing it. If, therefore, I did not forgive my daughters like you, would I not perish utterly?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

142. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[*September 19, 1932*][1]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Nowadays you have been writing fairly regularly. Do not at all be alarmed or upset by the *yajna* I have in mind. I am going to have you all undertake similar sacrifices. I will leave this body—if I have to—with the faith that you will be able to do it. This is the only way to atone for the sins accumulated through generations.

Such a vow is not to be imitated. It can be fulfilled only if there is a spontaneous urge. If the urge is felt while the mind is not yet pure, the fast is likely to be demoniacal. Hence such

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

CWMG LI

a *yajna* should be undertaken only if there has been a prior cleansing of the heart. The Ashram has come into existence to help people attain such purity.

But you say that one hears much criticism of the Ashram. You should bear with the criticism. The cause for it, if found to be just, should be examined and corrected. We should be indifferent to what is not true. People have a right to say what they feel. And some may find fault simply out of spite. Is not such criticism beneath consideration?

There is some truth in what we have been hearing about . . .[1]. And whatever little there is deserves to be overlooked. My little experience of . . .[2] is very good. He is a simple man. . . .[3] has not been enjoying herself there. . . .[4] needed a change of climate. Since it could be easily had she availed herself of it. . . .[5] 's relations [with her] are absolutely pure. . . .[6] has not been living there in an unbecoming way. Her letter has given me the impression that she has continued to make such efforts as she can to purify her *atman*. But now . . .[7] has fallen. I have therefore suggested to him to lead Ashram life.

Now about your loss of peace. There are two reasons for it. First, you are not satisfied with your own performance. You aspire to do much more than you can. Your desire would be commendable if it were within limits. When it crosses the limits the result is grief. A greater reason for the loss of your peace is your intolerance. You are irked when others fail to work as much as you can or do not agree with you. The remedy for it is simple. You should rest content with whatever work you can do after applying your body and mind to it and continue to make such progress as you can. You should realize that one who does scavenging has as much right to go to heaven as one who learns the Vedas. But if a scholar of the Vedas is a mere reciter of the text or a hypocrite he will go to hell however learned he may be and a scavenger who daily cleans latrines in a spirit of service and dedicating his services unto God would certainly rise high although he may not know the word Brahman. This contentment is one remedy. The other is a liberal attitude. We should not take it amiss if others do not work as much as we ourselves do or want them to do. Only in this way can we maintain peace in the community in spite of living close to one another. Read this letter over and over again and think over it

[1] to [7] The names are omitted in the source.

with the help of Nath. Please accommodate . . .[1] behn. What more can I wish than that you will shine out if it is God's will?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 73-5. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 50-1

143. A LETTER

September 19, 1932

All of us were delighted to read your extremely beautiful letter. You have attained a lofty height. Rise higher still. God will certainly give you the strength to do so. I know I should write a long reply to your letter, but cannot spare so much time just now. I will preserve your letter, however, and will write to you again if I have sufficient strength and get time to do so. But please do not mind if I cannot write. I hope none of you has got perturbed by this *yajna* of my fast. God has inspired me to undertake it and may He carry it successfully to its end. None knows how many such *yajnas* we shall have to perform in order to eradicate this evil of untouchability. Get ready to perform such a *yajna* yourself. Readiness means self-purification. Self-purification necessarily includes efficiency in work.

It is true that fine yarn would be costly. But we should have the ability to revive the manufacture of Dacca muslin. While trying to do so, we shall incidentally make many small inventions. In the past, the kings forced workers to spin such yarn and weave it. Now, let us spin and weave it by way of *yajna*. Then the question of its being costly will not arise at all and, moreover, the prestige of hand-spinning also will increase. God willing, I will explain this further in another letter.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 49

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

144. A LETTER

September 19, 1932

Do your work well. Sita was not Rama's property. She was the apple of his eye. By banishing her to a forest, he banished himself, for his heart followed Sita. But an ordinary man cannot act towards his wife in this manner, for we do not see in any man such divine love that he regards himself and his wife as one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 55

145. LETTER TO KANHAIYALAL

September 19, 1932

A poor man is one who has not a drop of true love. And a rich man is one who has enough love to encompass an insect as well as a mad elephant. The atheist does not recognize the all-pervasive spirit present beyond his own physical self. The believer sees everywhere nothing but the spirit.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 54

146. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 19, 1932

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

You must not torment Gangadevi[1]. She does not pester you or view all your actions with a hypercritical eye ; so you must reciprocate her conduct.

Rama is happy with Vinoba. Let him remain there.

You ought to dance on hearing about my *yajna* and have more faith in Ramanama. Let us see what He does. The fast is not mine but that of Rama; the responsibility is His, not

[1] Addressee's wife

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mine. If it is unfruitful He will be blamed, not I, and if fruitful He not being concerned with praises, I, a beggar at his door, will accept it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 176

147. LETTER TO LAKSHMI[1]

September 19, 1932

Who knows what God has willed. You should not be worried on account of the *yajna*. See what a beautiful letter Devdas has published in the newspaper. He has not given way to panic; he is full of joy and that is how it should be. It is rarely that one gets an opportunity to sacrifice one's life for the sake of duty.

God will prosper you all and if He wills I shall rise from the death-bed.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 51

148. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 19, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I am tired out today writing letters. Moreover, it is time for the post. I can, therefore, write only a short letter. More in the next. We have got a new cat, which is a 'smart little lady'. In memory of your college days, we have named it Prema. It will now be tested how 'smart' you are.

Do you think you will pass the test?

More in the next letter, if I get time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10303. Also C.W. 6742. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Daughter of C. Rajagopalachari

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149. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

September 20, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

This is early morning 3 o'clock of Tuesday. I enter the fiery gate at noon. If you can bless the effort, I want it. You have been to me a true friend because you have been a candid friend often speaking your thoughts aloud. I had looked forward to a firm opinion from you one way or the other. But you have refused to criticize. Though it can now only be during my fast I will yet prize your criticism, if your heart condemns my action. I am not too proud to make an open confession of my blunder, whatever the cost of the confession, if I find myself in error. If your heart approves of the action I want your blessing. It will sustain me. I hope I have made myself clear.

My love.

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.] *10.30 a.m.*

Just as I was handing this to the Superintendent, I got your loving and magnificent wire. It will sustain me in the midst of the storm I am about to enter. I am sending you a wire[1]. Thank you.

M.K.G.

From a photostat: G.N. 4634

150. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

September 20, 1932

MY DEAREST FRIEND AND BROTHER,

This is early morning of Tuesday just a little after 3 o'clock. I have just finished a brief letter[2] to Gurudev.

You have been ever present before me during these days of anguish. I have perhaps read your thoughts. You know my regard for you. Though we are as poles asunder, or seem to be, in mental outlook at so many points, our hearts are one.

[1] *Vide* p. 109.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

Wherever therefore I have been able to agree with you, it has been a matter of pure joy. Perhaps this step of mine has been for you the last straw. Even so I want to have your laceration. For I do not want you to cease to strive with me—I remained in banishment from my eldest brother for, I think, fourteen years. Year after year he sent me curses by registered post. I rejoiced in his curses. His curses were so many sparks of love— I won him. Six months before his death he saw that I was in the right.[1] One of the reasons for his wrath was this very question of untouchability. In our case, I do not know who is in error. But I do know that you are as blood-brother to me. At this (maybe) last crisis, you must not cease to strive with me. Send me your curses or your blessings. You may open my eyes, where others have failed, if you think I am in error. You know me too well not to know that I have the God-given capacity of owning mistakes, if the conviction comes to me. Do write or wire to me.

I wrote to you a month ago inquiring about your health. I never got a reply. I wonder if you ever got my postcard.

Deep love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 234

151. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 20, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got up at 2.30 today to write to Gurudev, then to Sastri and then to you. I have your tearing letter. At first I thought I would send it to the Governor. But I rejected the thought as soon as it came. You have chosen to enter the furnace. You must remain in it. My society is no easy job as you have seen all these years. Drink then the poison to the last dregs.

As I wrote that first letter conveying my vow, I thought of you and of Ba. And for a time I became giddy. How would you two bear the thing? But the voice within said, 'If you will enter in, you must give up thought of all attachment.' And the letter went. No anguish will be too terrible to wash out the sin of untouchability. You must therefore rejoice in this suffering and bear it bravely. I know how difficult all this is to do. Yet

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 212-3.

that is exactly what you have to try to do. Just think and realize that there is no meaning in having the last look. The spirit which you love is always with you. The body through which you learnt to love the spirit is no longer necessary for sustaining that love. It is well that it lasts whilst there is use for it. It is equally well that it perishes when there is no use for it. And since we don't know when it will outlast its use, we conclude that death through whatever cause means that there was no longer any use for it. If it is any comfort, know that Vallabhbhai, Mahadev, Ramdas, Surendra, Devdas, whom I have met are all bearing the thing wonderfully well. Love to your companions. I am glad Kisen is with you. She is a good and brave girl. May God sustain you.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI (SLADE)
ARTHUR ROAD PRISON
BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 9509. Courtesy: Mirabehn

152. CABLE TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

HORACE ALEXANDER
FRIENDS' HOUSE
EUSTON, LONDON

HOW SHALL I DISOBEY WHAT IS TO ME GOD'S COMMAND. LET HIM PREVAIL. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932"

153. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

AGATHA HARRISON
DARLE KALOPH LONDON

UNDERSTAND YOUR STRUGGLE. GOD WILL GUIDE YOUR STEP.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1457

154. TELEGRAM TO MEHMUDJI ALLIJI

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

MEHMUDJI ALLIJI
AHMEDABAD

THANKS OFFER BUT YOU SEE AM STILL PRISONER.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

155. TELEGRAM TO ASHUTOSH CHAUDHARI

September 20, 1932

ASHUTOSH CHAUDHARI
6 LYALL ROAD
ALLAHABAD

PLEASE TELL APARNA NOT TO FAST AT ALL. ALL SHOULD REJOICE AND DO UTMOST BEST REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932". The addressee's cable dated September 17 read: "Should value advice you care to give me at this moment."

[2] From the placing of the item in the source

CWMG - LI

156. TELEGRAM TO BALWANTRAI DESAI

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

BALWANTRAI DESAI VAKIL
PALACE ROAD
BARODA

MY STATEMENT[2] PERHAPS PRESS ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

157. TELEGRAM TO RAMNIKLAL DESAI

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

RAMNIKLAL DESAI
GOKULDAS TEJPAL COMPOUND
VILLE PARLE
BOMBAY

PRAY AWAIT EVENTS.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

158. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS

[*September 20, 1932*][4]

JAMNADAS DWARKADAS
WALKESHWAR ROAD
BOMBAY

CONDOLENCES TO YOU AND FAMILY FROM US ALL. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1]&[4] From the placing of the item in the source
[2] *Vide* pp. 62-5.
[3] From "Diary, 1932"

CWMG - LII

159. TELEGRAM TO DAHYABHAI GINWALA

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

DAHYABHAI GINWALA
CARE SERVINDIA
BOMBAY

THANKS. DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO HAPPEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

160. TELEGRAM TO HARIBUKSH SINGH

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

HARIBUKSH SINGH
CARE ROSE
SIALKOT

IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR YOU FAST IN SYMPATHY BUT DO WHAT YOU CAN BLOT OUT CURSE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

161. TELEGRAM TO A. J. DODDAMATI JAKKILI

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

A. J. DODDAMATI JAKKILI
KARNATAK BANDHU OFFICE
GADAG

YOUR WORK IS GOOD BUT BETTER IS SOME TANGIBLE SERVICE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From "Diary, 1932"
[2] & [3] From the placing of the item in the source

162. TELEGRAM TO KASHI KRISHNACHARYA

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

KASHI KRISHNACHARYA
ALL-INDIA SANATAN DHARMA VAIDIK MAHASABHA
GUNTOOR

AM SORRY. BEYOND MY POWER SUSPEND FAST.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

163. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNADAS

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

KRISHNADAS
CARE MOTI
CALCUTTA

REMAIN THERE SERVE MOTHER.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

164. CABLE TO INDIANS OF TAIPING, PERAK

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

INDIANS
TAIPING
PERAK

LET GOD PREVAIL.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1], [2] & [3] From "Diary, 1932"

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165. TELEGRAM TO DR. B. C. ROY

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

PRAY TELL URMILADEVI YOUR HEART-RENDING WIRE NEVER RECEIVED. LETTERS YOU MENTION I WROTE SOME IN DESPAIR. COULD GET NO ANSWER. DO WRITE. I KNOW YOU WILL BRAVELY BEAR PRESENT ANGUISH. MAHADEV JOINS SENDING LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

166. TELEGRAM TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

[*September 20, 1932*][2]

SETH AMBALAL SARABHAI
SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

OF COURSE YOUR HOME MY REFUGE. DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO HAPPEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

167. TELEGRAM TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

[*September 20, 1932*][3]

AMBALAL SARABHAI
SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

LEARN BHARATI HAD FALL FROM HORSE. WIRE CORRECT STATE. YOU CAN ALL SEE ME WHEN YOU WISH. LOVE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] & [3] From the placing of the item in the source
[2] From "Diary, 1932"

168. A TELEGRAM

[*September 20, 1932*][1]

MEHD [*sic*]
CARE BHADRAJI DHRU MAHARAJ MANSIONS
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

THANKS OFFER. YOU SEE NOW THERE IS NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

169. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[2]

September 20, 1932

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN

HAVE ALWAYS EXPERIENCED GOD'S MERCY. VERY EARLY THIS MORNING I WROTE[3] SEEKING YOUR BLESSING IF YOU COULD APPROVE ACTION AND BEHOLD I HAVE IT IN ABUNDANCE IN YOUR MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED. THANK YOU.

GANDHI

Visvabharati News, p. 25

[1] From the placing of the item in the source

[2] This was in reply to Tagore's telegram of September 19, 1932, which read: "It is worth sacrificing precious life for the sake of India's unity and her social integrity. Though we cannot anticipate what effect it may have upon our rulers who may not understand its immense importance for our people we feel certain that the supreme appeal of such self-offering to the conscience of our own countrymen will not be in vain. I fervently hope that we will not callously allow such national tragedy to reach its extreme length. Our sorrowing hearts will follow your sublime penance with reverence and love."

[3] *Vide* p. 101.

170. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 20, 1932

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
B CLASS PRISONER
PRISON BELGAUM

YOU SHOULD BE BRAVE. DO NOT SEEK RELEASE UNDER PAROLE. WHERE HEARTS MEET WHAT USE PHYSICAL MEETING. LET GOD'S WILL BE DONE. LOVE.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

171. NOTE TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 20, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

Thank you for your note. I think I ought to see Reuter's representative now, if you do not mind.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5125

172. LETTER TO G. K. DEVDHAR

September 20, 1932

MY DEAR DEVDHAR,

Of course the Society's home is my home.[1] I have lived in exile by choice. When God wills it, He will send me back home.

I have not the slightest notion where the fast will be taken. This is a wonderful ordeal. I deserve it all. For I have the Hindu heart. And have we not deserved the most terrible

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to stay at the Servants of India Society's Home at Poona during the fast.

CWMG - LL

chastisement from God for our treatment of the untouchables? And so He is trying me through and through before admitting me to the untouchable fold. It has been an effort for the past 50 years. Please send the enclosed[1] to Sastri.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 57-8

173. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

September 20, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I got your letter only yesterday whilst I was talking to the friends who came to see me. I am now replying to it at the earliest opportunity. I thank you for your letter.

My position is this: My fast has reference only to separate electorate. As soon as that is withdrawn the letter of the vow will be satisfied and I would be bound to call off the fast. But a very heavy responsibility will then lie upon me of having a substitute that is infinitely superior to separate electorate.

If you will not resent my saying it, I would like to say that as I am a "touchable" by birth, I am an "untouchable" by choice. And it was in this dual capacity that I wrote to Sir Samuel Hoare and then the Prime Minister. It is that dual capacity that has compelled the fast. Looking at the matter in this light I must say that I am not in love with the idea of statutory reservation. Whilst it is not open to the same objection that separate electorate is, I have not a shadow of a doubt that it will prevent the natural growth of the suppressed classes and will remove the incentive to honourable amends from the suppressors. What I am aiming at is a heart understanding between the two, the greatest opportunity of repentance and reparation on the part, of the suppressors. I am certain that the moment is ripe for the change of heart among them. I would therefore favour widest possible franchise for the suppressed and establish a convention between the two sections for securing proper election of representatives of the suppressed. I have drafted a rough tentative scheme which I handed to the friends and which I explained fully yesterday to my son Devdas. But to me this is not the largest but it is the least part of the reform I want.

Nothing will satisfy me till the last vestige of untouchability is gone. I would therefore insist on a statutory declaration that all

[1] *Vide* pp. 101-2.

public places of worship, wells, schools, etc., should be open to the suppressed precisely on the same terms as the suppressors. This is roughly my idea. If, however, the representatives of suppressed classes will not look at my idea, they are at liberty to have statutory reservation of seats. I should not fast against it but you will not expect me to bless any such scheme. Nor is my blessing essential to its acceptance by the Government. If I get the opportunity, I should certainly try to create public opinion among the suppressed against statutory reservation.

If my position is not clear or satisfactory, I would be delighted to meet you and other friends including R. B. Raja and Dr. Ambedkar by appointment. As you are aware this has become possible only now.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 783. Also *The Epic Fast*, pp. 168-9

174. LETTER TO VITHAL R. SHINDE[1]

September 20, 1932

I have your touching letter. I have absolutely no notion as to how I am to be disposed of. Therefore it is too early to say anything. I certainly begin the fast here at 12. God alone knows where, when and how it will end. All the same, pray accept my thanks for your sympathy and offer.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 58

175. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

September 20, 1932

CHI. KAKA,

I got your letter yesterday. On September 19 . . .[2] There will be no harm at all if you rest a little from reading and writing just as you have been resting from spinning. Only you cannot afford to stop your daily walks, as we found from our experience

[1] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to Ahalya Ashram, a students' hostel he had been running at Poona.

[2] One sentence was censored by the jail authorities.

in Yeravda earlier. Take long walks. Be careful first about exercise, food and rest and then read and write as much as you can get time for. I have three books by Sir James Jeans[1] which I am sending to you. I liked them very much, though I find that there are people who disagree with his views. I think I should read those books twice or thrice. There are in them several things which are not clear to me. However, I have become very much interested in the subject. In a sense, you are not wrong in describing Galileo and others as *rishis*. In a sense, because the *rishis* relied on intuition, and the word *rishi* denotes one who does that. This is not to run down the work of Galileo and others. Only it seems necessary to keep in view the fact that the fields of the two types of men are different. Try to find another term if you can.

You must have heard of my ordeal[2] and rejoiced at the news. There can be no reason at all to be unhappy about it. Fasting and eating mean the same thing[3], just as birth and death mean the same thing. In any case, if a co-worker gives up his life for the sake of his dharma, it cannot be a cause for grief. Such an opportunity comes very rarely to anybody, and when it comes it should be gladly welcomed. Instead of being perturbed you should, therefore, be more vigilant and cultivate greater devotion to duty. Leave the jail with improved health. The filth of untouchability will be removed only after a great many sacrifices have been made.

We are all happy.

Shankar[4] is doing well. I saw him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9489. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

[1] English physicist and astronomer

[2] & [3] These portions, censored by the jail authorities, are restored from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 61.

[4] Satish Kalelkar, addressee's son

176. LETTER TO KEDARNATH KULKARNI

September 20, 1932

I was indeed waiting for your letter. I got it only last evening. I would have liked a talk with you. If, while the fast is in progress, I become convinced about its being contrary to dharma, I will immediately give it up without any false sense of shame. I am ashamed of only one thing in the world—untruth —in thought, speech and action.

My step has not been dictated by reason; it was inspired by my inner voice. My reason, however, told me: 'Hundreds of persons like you will probably have to die in order to remove the blot of untouchability.' Fasting is a very common practice in Hinduism. I have always loved it. My decision is the cry of my heart. The Prime Minister's decision was only the immediate cause. It provided me with an opportunity to undertake the fast. However, the aim of my fast is not merely to get the decision changed but to bring about the awakening and self-purification which are bound to result from the effort to get the decision changed. In other words this was an opportunity to strike at the very root of untouchability.

It is true that we cannot positively say that the step was right because it had brought about the desired result. Everyone should judge for himself whether or not it is right. And if one is unable to do so, one should accept the opinion of an elder. To me the step seems not only right but even imperative. Think over this and write to me again. Please do not be disappointed about me. I hope your eczema is cured.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 60

CWMG II

177. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI[1]

September 20, 1932

I got your lines full of love. I know your love. God does not live somewhere in the sky. For me pure love like yours is God, and it is such love that gives me the strength to undertake *yajnas* like the present one.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 62

178. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

4.45 p.m., September 20, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet. You must have seen the orders which have been issued. It seems that we remain where we were. That is the position today. What will happen tomorrow, God alone knows. As things are, you can write daily if you wish. The post will be despatched daily from here. But do not expect many letters from me. I wish to conserve my strength as much as possible. There will be plenty of other work for me. If anybody wishes to come and see me, he may. But nobody should be eager to come at any cost. Tell this to Anasuyabehn, Shankerlal and Rama. Inform Saraladevi too. I would, however, advise that only those who cannot restrain their desire to come may come. Everybody should devote himself or herself as much as possible to the service of the *Antyajas*.

If I can reply to any of the other letters which I get, I will do so. If someone does not get reply, he or she should understand that I could not write because of pressure of other work.

At prayer-time this morning, we sang "*Vaishnava Jana*". Mahadev read the *Gita* from 6.30 to 8. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are fasting today. When the fast commenced at noon, the following *bhajan* which Raihanabehn often sings was sung:

[1] Of Poona Agriculture College

Awake, O traveller, it is morning now,
It is no longer night, that you still sleep;
He who sleeps will lose,
He who is awake will gain.

If you have got the complete *bhajan* there, Panditji should sing it to you all. If you have not got it, I will send it from here.

I feel a little worried on account of Kusum. Does she take complete rest? She may give up even spinning.

You must have got the large packet of letters I despatched yesterday. Today only this letter. No, I forget. I could not write to Punjabhai yesterday. I am enclosing a slip for him today.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8253. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

179. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

September 20, 1932

For the first time in nine months journalists were permitted to see Mahatma Gandhi in Yeravda Jail this evening at 5.30 when they were treated to one of the most easily delivered and seriously thoughtful interviews to which it has ever been my fortune to listen. No journalist could see Mahatma Gandhi today and discuss the position with him five hours after he had commenced "a fast unto death" without being immensely impressed . . . .

When asked if he was hopeful about a happy ending to the affair, he said:

I am an irrepressible optimist. Unless God has forsaken me, I hope that it will not be a fast unto death.

Mahatma Gandhi said that he had had many telegrams from people who had decided or wished to enter upon a fast in sympathy with him.

I urge everybody not to fast in sympathy. I have undertaken it at God's call, and, therefore, unless there is a similar definite call to these people they have no business to fast. For one day, for the sake of purification or identification with the cause, it is a good thing; but that is all. Such a fast is both a

[1] This report of the interview first appeared in *The Times of India*, 21-9-1932.

privilege and a duty, and the privilege accrues only to those who have disciplined themselves for it.

The interview then turned to the question of the day, the representation of the Depressed Classes, or as Mahatma Gandhi calls them, the Suppressed Classes.

First of all he expressed surprise that the statement[1] given to the Government of Bombay had not been released. That had been given five days ago. Had he to redraft it today it would be rather different in the light of happenings since then, and he said at the end of the interview that his new statement was supplementary to the other, but not dependent on it. He said:

My cards are on the table, but, so far as the present instance is concerned, I could say nothing from behind prison bars. Now that the restrictions are removed, I have answered the first call of the Press. My fast is only against separate electorates, and not against statutory reservation of seats. To say that I am damaging the cause by uncompromising opposition to statutory reservation of seats is only partly true. Opposed I was, and am even now, but there was never put before me for any acceptance or rejection a scheme for statutory reservation of seats. Therefore, there is no question of my having to decide upon that point. When I developed my own idea about that point, I certainly expressed disappointment, and in my humble opinion, such statutory reservation, short of doing service, may do harm in the sense that it will stop natural evolution. Statutory reservation is like a support to a man. Relying on such support to any extent he weakens himself.

If people won't laugh at me, I would gently put forward a claim, which I have always asserted, that I am a 'touchable' by birth but an untouchable by choice; and I have endeavoured to qualify myself to represent, not the upper ten even among the untouchables, because be it said to their shame there are castes and classes among them, but my ambition is to represent and identify myself with, as far as possible, the lowest strata of untouchables, namely, the 'invisibles' and the 'unapproachables', whom I have always before my mind's eye wherever I go; for they have indeed drunk deep of the poisoned cup. I have met them in Malabar and in Orissa, and am convinced that if they are ever to rise, it will not be by reservation of seats but will be by the strenuous work of Hindu reformers in their midst, and it is because I feel that this separation would have killed all pros-

[1] *Vide* pp. 62-5.

pect of reform that my whole soul has rebelled against it; and, let me make it plain, that the withdrawal of separate electorates will satisfy the letter of my vow but will never satisfy the spirit behind it, and in my capacity of being a self-chosen untouchable, I am not going to rest content with a patched-up pact between the 'touchables' and the untouchables.

What I want, what I am living for, and what I should delight in dying for, is the eradication of untouchability root and branch. I want, therefore, a living pact whose life-giving effect should be felt not in the distant tomorrow but today, and, therefore, that pact should be sealed by an all-India demonstration of 'touchables' and untouchables meeting together, not by way of a theatrical show, but in real brotherly embrace. It is in order to achieve this, the dream of my life for the past fifty years, that I have entered today the fiery gates. The British Government's decision was the last straw. It was a decisive symptom, and with the unerring eye of the physician that I claim to be in such matters, I detected the symptom. Therefore, for me the abolition of separate electorates would be but the beginning of the end, and I would warn all those leaders assembled at Bombay and others against coming to any hasty decision.

My life I count of no consequence. One hundred lives given for this noble cause would, in my opinion, be poor penance done by Hindus for the atrocious wrongs they have heaped upon helpless men and women of their own faith. I, therefore, would urge them not to swerve an inch from the path of strictest justice. My fast I want to throw in the scales of justice, and if it wakes up caste Hindus from their slumber, and if they are roused to a sense of their duty, it will have served its purpose. Whereas, if out of blind affection for me, they would somehow or other come to a rough and ready agreement so as to secure the abrogation and then go off to sleep, they will commit a grievous blunder and will have made my life a misery. For, while the abrogation of separate electorates would result in my breaking the fast, it would be living death for me if the vital pact for which I am striving is not arrived at. It would simply mean that, as soon as I called off the fast, I would have to give notice of another in order to achieve the spirit of the vow to the fullest extent.

This may look childish to the onlooker but not so to me. If I had anything more to give, I would throw that in also to remove this curse, but I have nothing more than my life.

I believe that if untouchability is really rooted out, it will not only purge Hinduism of a terrible blot but its repercussions

will be world-wide. My fight against untouchability is a fight against the impure in humanity, and, therefore, when I penned my letter[1] to Sir Samuel Hoare I did so in the full faith that the very best in human family will come to my assistance if I have embarked on this thing with a heart, so far as it is possible for a human being to achieve, free of impurity, free of all malice and all anger. You will, therefore, see that my fast is based first of all in the cause of faith in the Hindu community, faith in human nature itself, and faith even in the official world.

In attacking untouchability I have gone to the very root of the matter, and, therefore, it is an issue of transcendental value, far surpassing swaraj in terms of political constitutions, and I would say that such a constitution would be a dead weight if it was not backed by a moral basis, in the shape of the present hope engendered in the breasts of the downtrodden millions that that weight is going to be lifted from their shoulders. It is only because the English officials cannot possibly see this living side of the picture that in their ignorance and self-satisfaction they dare to sit as judges upon questions that affect the fundamental being of millions of people, and here I mean both caste Hindus and untouchables, that is, the suppressor and the suppressed; and it was in order to wake up even officialdom from its gross ignorance, if I may make use of such an expression without being guilty of offence, that I felt impelled by a voice from within to offer resistance with the whole of my being.

He stated that he had made definite suggestions to the deputation from the Emergency Committee whom he received yesterday and he presumed that these would have been communicated to the Press today in Bombay.

Referring to a possible photograph Mahatma Gandhi made a jocular remark concerning his funeral rites whereupon I asked him if he had made any preparations for such rites when visited by his son Devdas yesterday if the very worst happened, and I received a dramatic reply.

I have asked my son to say in my name at the Bombay Conference that he as his father's son was prepared to forfeit his father's life rather than see any injury being done to the Suppressed Classes in mad haste.

What did he really think about the possibilities of his fast lasting? He replied:

I am as anxious as anyone to live. Water has an infinite capacity for prolonging life, and I will take water whenever I

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLIX, pp. 190-3.

feel I require it. You can depend upon me to make a supreme effort to hold myself together so that the Hindu conscience may be quickened as also the British conscience and this agony may end. My cry will rise to the throne of the Almighty God.

The Epic Fast, pp. 118-23

180. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

[*September 21, 1932*][2]

KALOPH[3]
ESTRAND
LONDON

PUBLIC STATEMENT EXPLAINING MY POSITION REGARDING FAST AND MATTERS THEREANENT WAS SENT TO GOVERNMENT WITH REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION ON FIFTEENTH.[4] AM TOLD IT WILL BE PUBLISHED NOW.[5] LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18534. Also Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

181. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

September 21, 1932

I know how you must be feeling over this penance. But you are brave enough to perceive that this is no occasion for sorrow but for joy. Many of us may have to die before this monster of untouchability is finally destroyed. You should be filled with joy that a comrade has entered the fiery gate. It is well if I come out unhurt; it is equally well, if not better, if the fire consumes me. God has guided my step. This will be done to the very end.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 67

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on September 20, 1932, which read: "*Times* correspondent reports you complained Government not released document setting out terms you gave Government. Does this refer Depressed Classes question? Informed India Office no knowledge document."

[2] From "Diary, 1932"

[3] Telegraphic address of H.S.L. Polak

[4] *Vide* "Letter to M. G. Bhandari", p. 65.

[5] It was published in *The Hindu* on September 21, 1932.

182. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

September 21[1]*, 1932*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope you do not worry. On the contrary, you should dance with joy that the person whom you have adopted as your father is to make the supreme sacrifice for the cause which you hold dear. For you, this should be an occasion to celebrate.

I have been having a bit of good-humoured jesting with Janakimaiya. Sardar and Mahadev send you their regards.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 94-5

183. LETTER TO MANILAL V. KOTHARI

September 21, 1932

Sardar says that I must write a separate letter to my chief disciple. If I say that Manilal is included in Jamnalalji, Sardar turns red eyes on me and says, Jamnalalji and all others can be included in Manilal but Manilal can never be included in anybody, I tell him I do not agree with him. Manilal, being a votary of non-violence, can be included in all, but he would never want anybody to be included in him. Now you alone can settle this dispute which has arisen in our cell. See that you do justice. Who is right, Sardar or I? And while such arguments take place, why should I worry at all about my indefinite fast, a practice which is so beloved of Jains ?

Judge from this letter how happily Sardar and I pass the time. Weeping is strictly forbidden.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 68

[1] The source has September 27. *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 68, however, has 21, which is confirmed from a letter of the addressee to Madalsa of the same date reproduced in *Bapu Sansmaran*, p. 274.

184. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

September 21, 1932

I am naturally eager to know whether you consider my step moral or not. Nath is a little doubtful about it. I have replied[1] to his letter. If you have thought about the matter, write to me. If you feel that my step is in accord with dharma, then it must have also been clear to you that this is an occasion for rejoicing.

There is no ground for the fear which you entertain on account of Vallabhbhai's learning Sanskrit. Nothing can make him forget his farmer's Gujarati. On the contrary, Sanskrit will increase his fluency in his native tongue. What we should welcome is the determined effort which he is making this time. It is bound to have a good effect on the students. Sanskrit is like the river Ganga for our languages. I always feel that if it were to dry up, the regional languages also would lose their vitality and power. It seems to me that an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit is essential.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 67

185. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

September 21, 1932

You should not be perturbed about the fast. God has sent me unsought an opportunity for which I was pining. We ought not to feel unhappy when our desire is granted. All three of us are happy and, as we watch God's sport, dance with as much delight as we can. But we have not yet learnt how to dance well. I have obtained permission for people to write to me. You may, therefore, write to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 66

[1] *Vide* p. 114.

186. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

September 21, 1932

CHI. MANI,

Need I try to give you courage? I forbid you to shed a single tear. It is only rarely that a man is blessed with such good fortune as has come to me. You should, therefore, rejoice and not shed tears. You and others like you should not start fasting, but should devote yourselves heart and soul to your work. I have obtained permission for everybody to write to me whenever they wish. Therefore do write to me.

I hope you will get this letter without delay.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER
CENTRAL PRISON, BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 87

187. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH

September 21, 1932

BHAI FULCHAND,

All of you should exult at the news of my fast, and not shed tears. It is only rarely that a man gets a noble opportunity like this. Nobody should copy my example and fast. Everybody may sacrifice his life when his opportunity comes. If anybody holds back then, he would not be a man. Just now, however, all of you should become more earnest and devoted to your work and strive harder to make yourselves sufficiently pure for such a sacrifice.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 68. Also C.W. 9472. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

CWMG-III

188. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 21, 1932

I can see your agitation from your wire. I hope you got mine.[1] I have imagined you to be a wise man. I hope you will prove me right. If you doubt the rightness of my step from a moral point of view, let me know. I have seen to it that this letter is sent to you soon and that you are permitted to write back to me. You know that I look upon you as a custodian of the moral correctness of my actions. Exercise that right and do that duty of yours vigilantly. If you have approved of my step, it should also have been clear to you that this is an occasion for rejoicing. Write to me a long and frank letter. I am writing to Taramati and asking her and the children to come and see me.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 115-6

189. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

September 21, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

As per our conversation I send you eight letters. I hope you will send them to the respective prisoners with instructions that they may be delivered at once and that the addressees are free to write to me in reply.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] *Vide* p. 110.

190. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 21, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is strange that you do not receive my letters as I do not receive yours. On receipt of this letter wire to me that you understand my fast, and if you do, you will sing, not weep. Your duty is to remain immersed in your work. We are all in the hands of God and He will act as He wills.

Tell Arun to write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1688

191. INTERVIEW TO S. M. MATE, P. N. RAJBHOJ AND LIMAYE[1]

September 21, 1932

If I had my way I would insist on temple-entry and the like being included in any pact that may be concluded and I would invite all reformers and untouchables to do so. I am aware that temple-entry is a difficult thing to accomplish in the very limited time that my life can hold out against the fast, but all the parties to the pact should pledge themselves to realize this elementary right of human beings at the earliest opportunity. At the same time I do not want this fast to be used for coercing orthodoxy. The fast is certainly intended to sting even orthodoxy into thinking. But if they cannot get on to this elementary truth about human rights we must have patience. But temples and the like are the property not of orthodoxy but of all Hindus. Therefore this idea of excluding a section of Hindus from the use of public utilities is itself a species of violence, and, therefore, the support of legislation has got to be invoked in order to protect this fundamental right. I recognize, however, that if the majority of the Hindus are against the exercise of this right by the so-called un-

[1] According to the source, what follows is the substance of Gandhiji's talk.

touchables, mere legislation will be wholly ineffective. But my opinion is that the mind of the majority is for this reform if it comes stealthily. Therefore, reformers should prepare the ground now ceaselessly and vigilantly to convert the passive attitude towards the reform into active approval thereof. This rising tide of opinion in favour of the reform will convince orthodoxy that it is inevitable. The work, therefore, must be free of all violence, even mental.

Legislation in a free State always represents the will of the majority. All legislation in advance of general opinion argues bankruptcy of missionary effort. My reliance, therefore, always has been on missionary enterprise. Therefore, for the pact to be a living pact, it is absolutely necessary that it should be a condition precedent to an acceptance of the political part of it, that the caste Hindus party to the pact will not only endorse it but actively move in the matter. My own opinion is quite clear. I would accept any pact that has not a tinge of separate electorate about it. I would, with the utmost reluctance, tolerate reservation of seats under a joint electorate scheme. But I should insist upon what is to me the vital part of the pact, the social and religious reform. And, therefore, whilst if a settlement is arrived at on the joint electorate scheme and separate electorate is withdrawn by the British Government, I will break my fast, I will immediately give notice to the millions of Hindus, who have flocked round me at the innumerable meetings from one end of India to the other, that if within, say, six months the social reform is not demonstrably achieved, the fast will be taken up again. For, if I do not do so I would be guilty of betraying God in whose name I have taken this great fast and the interest of untouchables for whose sake it has been taken.

I have not yet approved of the Nasik Satyagraha about Kalaram temple for the simple reason that I have smelt a trace of violence in that satyagraha, and satyagraha is inconsistent with the slightest violence. I understand also that with reference to temples like Parvati temple there is a difficulty about the trust. The trust-deed itself lays an obligation on the trustees to prohibit the entry of untouchables into the temple. Where such a disability exists, I would be able to understand the powerlessness of the trustees. Any satyagraha in reference to such temples would be pure violence. I would hold that at this time of the day such a condition in any trust should be considered against public morals and, therefore, of no effect. And if such a judgment can be obtained, clearly legislation must step in and render such a clause

invalid. Sjt. Rajbhoj fears that if Dr. Ambedkar accepts a reasonable compromise, Government may call another leader into being who will declare his opposition, and if that fear is realized there would be eternal opposition by the Government to any pact, and, therefore, my fast must end in my death, and that, therefore, I should give up the fast. Granting that Mr. Rajbhoj's fear is justified I cannot undo a pledge taken with God as witness. We are not able to forecast all future events. We can, therefore, only control our acts, and it is well with us and our cause if we unflinchingly act on the square in spite of the heaviest odds. Our final trust must rest upon the assured victory of truth. Such correct action has without exception confounded the opponents and brought out the intended result, granting of course that the cause is as just as the action is correct. I must not, therefore, on any account, suspend the fast unless its terms are fulfilled.

The Epic Fast, pp. 165-7

192. LETTER TO VIDYA R. PATEL

September 22, 1932

CHI. VIDYA,

We can form any habit about eating and sleeping that we desire. If you rise early and do not sleep during the day time, you are bound to form the habit of going to bed early.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9433. Courtesy: Ravindra R. Patel

193. CABLE TO WILLIAM SHIRER[1]

[On or before *September 23, 1932*][2]

WILLIAM SHIRER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE
VIENNA (AUSTRIA)

THANK YOU. NOT SURPRISED AMERICAN BEWILDERMENT. IT HAS BEEN MY MISFORTUNE OR GOOD FORTUNE TO TAKE WORLD BY SURPRISE. NEW EXPERIMENTS OR OLD EXPERIMENTS IN NEW STYLE MUST SOMETIMES ENGENDER MISUNDERSTANDING. LAWS OF DECORUM IMPOSE ON ME RIGOROUS RESTRAINT IN LETTERS TO GOVERNMENT. LAWS OF JAIL ADMINISTRATION PROHIBITED CORRESPONDENCE WITH OUTSIDE WORLD. THESE I OBSERVED IN LETTER AND SPIRIT. PACT NOW IN PROCESS OF FORMATION WILL PROVIDE FAR BETTER AND LARGER REPRESENTATION THAN BRITISH DECISION. WERE I NOT SURE OF DEPRESSED MASS OPINION BEHIND ME AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THAT OF LEADERS I COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN FAST IN MANNER I HAVE DONE. AND EVEN AMONG DEPRESSED LEADERS SO FAR AS I KNOW VAST MAJORITY BEHIND ME. I WOULD COMPROMISE WITH LATTER TO FURTHERMOST EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH PARAMOUNT INTEREST DEPRESSED CLASSES. YOU MUST NOT BE STARTLED BY MY PRESUMPTION IN CLAIMING TO KNOW DEPRESSED INTERESTS MORE THAN LEADERS. THOUGH I AM TOUCHABLE BY BIRTH PAST FIFTY YEARS I HAVE BECOME UNTOUCHABLE BY CHOICE. AMERICANS SHOULD KNOW THAT MY POLITICS ARE DERIVED FROM MY RELIGION. IF GOD HAS ORDAINED DEATH BY STARVATION I KNOW THAT IT WILL SET LAST SEAL ON MY POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. NATIONALISM WILL BE THE STRONGER FOR SACRIFICIAL DEATH. VAST MAJORITY OF INDIAN COMMUNITY HAS INSTINCTIVELY REALIZED CORRECTNESS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS FAST. AM CONVINCED THAT REAL SELF-GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ADVANCED BY THIS PENANCE AND IF

[1] The cable was in reply to one from the addressee, an American journalist, sent from Vienna, saying that American opinion was "profoundly befuddled" by Gandhiji's fast and could not understand his wilfully throwing away his "undisputed political leadership of Indian nationalism by starving to death".

[2] The cable was published in *The Bombay Chronicle* under the date-line: "Poona, September 23, 1932".

GOD GIVES ME STRENGTH TO SEE THIS FAST THROUGH WITHOUT MIND OR BODY WAVERING ADVANCEMENT WILL BE STILL GREATER. HENCE EVERY DAY WELL PASSED IN EQUILIBRIUM BRINGS SWARAJ NEARER AS IT CAN BY NO OTHER STEPS. THIS PREPARATION FOR DEATH FOR UNTOUCHABILITY IS VERITABLE PREPARATION FOR DEATH FOR WHOLE OF INDIA. FOR ME REMOVAL UNTOUCHABILITY IS INTEGRAL PART OF SWARAJ. I WOULD REJECT SWARAJ THAT EXCLUDED MEANEST SINFULLEST INDIANS FROM ITS HEALTH-GIVING BALM. FOR ME RELIGION IS ONE IN ESSENCE BUT IT HAS MANY BRANCHES AND IF I THE HINDU BRANCH FAIL IN MY DUTY TO THE PARENT TRUNK I AM UNWORTHY FOLLOWER OF THAT ONE INDIVISIBLE RELIGION. ACCORDING TO THIS REASONING MY SACRIFICE PROMOTES DELIVERANCE OF HUMANITY FROM UNTOUCHABILITY IN EVERY SHAPE OR FORM AND THEREFORE IT SERVED ALL RELIGIOUS GROUPS. IF THEN AMERICA WHICH HAS SENT ME THROUGH HER KNOWN AND UNKNOWN SYMPATHIZERS SO MUCH SYMPATHY IN MY DISTRESS NOW UNDERSTANDS THE INWARDNESS OF THIS SACRIFICE I EXPECT HER TO MOBILIZE WORLD OPINION IN FAVOUR OF THE SACRIFICE. THOUGH APPARENTLY CONCEIVED TO APPLY A CORNER OF THIS WORLD IT IS REALLY INTENDED TO COVER THE WHOLE WORLD. THOSE WHO HAVE AT ALL FOLLOWED MY HUMBLE CAREER EVEN SUPERFICIALLY CANNOT HAVE FAILED TO OBSERVE THAT NOT SINGLE ACT OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN DONE TO INJURY TO ANY INDIVIDUAL OR NATION. MY NATIONALISM AS MY RELIGION IS NOT EXCLUSIVE BUT INCLUSIVE AND THEY MUST BE SO CONSISTENTLY WITH WELFARE OF ALL LIFE. I CLAIM NO INFALLIBILITY. I AM CONSCIOUS OF HAVING MADE HIMALAYAN BLUNDERS BUT AM NOT CONSCIOUS OF HAVING MADE THEM INTENTIONALLY OR HAVING EVER HARBOURED ENMITY TOWARDS ANY PERSON OR NATION OR ANY LIFE HUMAN OR SUBHUMAN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

194. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 23, 1932

HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. YOU HAD BETTER COME. FAST GOING WELL. KEEPING UP STRENGTH. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1621

195. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 23, 1932

NARANDAS
ASHRAM
SABARMATI

YOU MAY COME WITH ALL OTHERS WHO DESIRE CONSISTENTLY WITH WORKING ASHRAM. AM QUITE WELL. SATISBABU REACHING SABARMATI TOMORROW MORNING SEE YOU.

BAPU

From a microfilm M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8254. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

196. TELEGRAM TO MAGANLAL V. MEHTA

[*September 23, 1932*][1]

MAGANLAL VELJI MEHTA
114 CHINCHPOKLI
BOMBAY

YOU MUST NOT TAKE FAST WITH OR WITHOUT WATER IF YOU HAVE FAITH ME.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

[1] From the placing of the item in the source

197. TELEGRAM TO SHRI KRISHNADAS MOR

[*September 23, 1932*][1]

SHRI KISEN MOR
VENKATESWARA STEAM PRESS
7 KHETWADI
BOMBAY

IF YOU HAVE FAITH IN ME YOU MUST NOT FAST.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

198. TELEGRAM TO C. KRISHNA NAIR

[*September 23, 1932*][2]

KRISHNA NAIR
SWADESHI LEAGUE
CHANDNI CHOWK
DELHI

YOU MUST NOT FAST. YOU ARE UNDER DISCIPLINE AND BOUND TAKE PREVIOUS SANCTION FOR SUCH STEP. YOUR TIME JUST NOW FOR LABORIOUS WORK. GOD WILL APPOINT HIS OWN TIME FOR YOUR FASTING.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

199. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 23, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

The thought of you corrodes me. I wish you could be at peace. Do write daily and wire tomorrow your condition. I am taking the fast very well. I am writing this whilst I am

[1] & [2] From the placing of the item in the source

CWMG - LI

lying down after the enema as before. Be steady and strong. Have faith in God. Shall send you daily report through Mahadev. May not be able myself to write.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9510. Courtesy: Mirabehn

200. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

September 23, 1932

Though weakness must naturally creep on from day to day, compared to my previous fasts, I am taking this much more easily. I find myself also at perfect peace and hitherto I have found no difficulty in carrying on the prolonged and sustained conversations on the untouchability question with various deputations. Though this has required tremendous concentration, I have not felt any difficulty. I know however that I cannot carry on like this much longer. I am quite optimistic with regard to this afternoon's conference.[2] My optimism may be perfectly stupid; for, if you were to ask me to give my reasons, I have none, save that I have much faith in this fast as a God-ordained thing and I have an equal faith in the cause.

My message to British and American people is that they must not mistake this for a political move. It is a deep spiritual effort, a result of fifty years' constant application to an ideal. It is a penance, and, seeing that the ideal is nothing less than the deliverance of several million human beings from horrible religious serfdom, success cannot but have its repercussions on the whole of humanity. It is because, rightly or wrongly, I believe the British decision imposing separate electorates threatens to put a huge obstacle in the way of reform, which has been for the past ten years moving on in geometrical progression, that I have staked my life to resist it.

After three days, my conviction is stronger that the step I have taken is absolutely correct and, if my presentation is true,

[1] The statement was "in response to an invitation to reply to one or two questions" and was taken down by Mahadev Desai.

[2] An entry in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, under this date says: "The whole Committee along with Dr. Ambedkar was expected at 4 p.m."

this cause demands the mobilization of world opinion, so as to compel right conduct by the British Government.

The Times of India, 24-9-1932

201. TELEGRAM TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 24, 1932

HEMPRABHADEVI
KHADISTHAN
CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU. UNNECESSARY COME. DOING WELL. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1622

202. CABLE TO SAFIA ZAGHLOUL PASHA[1]

September 24, 1932

THANK YOU FOR LOVING INSPIRING MESSAGE. GOD'S WILL BE DONE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 355

[1] Widow of Egyptian nationalist leader Zaghloul Pasha. On hearing of Gandhiji's fast she had cabled on September 23 the following message: "Egyptian people, men and women, who have been following with brotherly sympathy heroic struggle India and her great chief Mahatma Gandhi for liberty are now watching with beating hearts Mahatma's sublime act of self-sacrifice for sake of India's unity and freedom. As one who had shared with my late husband joy of working for and obtaining sacred unity of Egyptian Christians, Mahomedans, Copts and also other communities of whatever religion or denomination, may I express my sincere hope that India's people inspired by Gandhi's sublime act of self-abrogation would unite in one great mass of brothers and patriots to save India's liberation and save life of her great son whose life and work are patrimony of East and humanity at large."

203. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

September 24, 1932

MY DEAREST CHILD,

You are not to break. You must be seeing God's grace pouring in abundance as perhaps never before.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6238. Courtesy : Mirabehn

204. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 24, 1932

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
JAIL DEHRADUN

DURING ALL THESE DAYS OF AGONY YOU HAVE BEEN BEFORE MINDS' EYE. I AM MOST ANXIOUS TO KNOW YOUR OPINION.[2] YOU KNOW HOW I VALUE YOUR OPINION. SAW INDU[3], SARUP'S[4] CHILDREN[5]. INDU LOOKED HAPPY AND IN POSSESSION OF MORE FLESH. DOING VERY WELL. WIRE REPLY. LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1932. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This was scribbled by Gandhiji at the top of a letter Mahadev Desai wrote to Mirabehn informing her about Gandhiji's condition on the fifth day of his fast.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru in his telegram, received on September 26, said: "Your telegram and brief news that some settlement reached filled me relief joy. First news your decision fast caused mental agony confusion but ultimately optimism triumphed regained peace mind. No sacrifice too great for suppressed down-trodden classes. Freedom must be judged by freedom of lowest but feel danger other issues obscuring only goal. Am unable judge from religious view-point. Danger your methods being exploited by others but how can I presume advise magician. Love."

[3] Indira Nehru

[4] Vijayalakshmi Pandit

[5] Chandralekha and Nayantara

205. *INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"*

September 24, 1932

Yes, I shall certainly fast again, should the necessity arise, as I firmly believe that by this means one can convince the world of the sincerity of one's view.

So said Mr. Gandhi to me in answer to one of my questions when I had the pleasure of having a long talk with him on the fifth day of his fast in Yeravda Jail. . . .

I certainly did not expect when I set off from Poona station before seven in the morning that I would be able to see Mr. Gandhi so early. . . . What a pleasant surprise it was when I received word from the jail authorities that the time was opportune. The great doors of Yeravda swung open, and I walked in. . . .

My escort led me through a courtyard, then through another little door which led on to a small compound roughly 150 feet by 40 feet wide, on one side of which were a few cells intended for State prisoners, but they all appeared to be unoccupied. At one end of the compound under the shade of a small mango tree was Mr. Gandhi lying on a cot covered with a prison blanket.

At his head was one of his faithful followers fanning him gently with a towel to keep off pestering flies. Seated round him were Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Mahadev Desai. Introductions over, Mr. Gandhi soon fell to asking me what particular question I wanted to ask him. But to see him looking so frail and weak and obviously ill—well, it seemed too much to start interviewing.

But his eyes flashed when he answered my question. He then appeared to recede into his shell, only raising himself up on his elbows to take a drink of water from a bottle at his side.

He said:

Very nasty, you know. At times I try to change it by putting in a pinch of salt, but through it all my stomach is in an intense state of nausea.

Mr. Gandhi said that he would be delighted to go to London for the third Conference if his demands would be met, but not otherwise.

Then I asked him what I thought was a pertinent question and certainly did not expect an answer, but the ailing man had always a ready reply, and here is what he said:

You ask, 'Suppose all Indian leaders decided to practise this method of gaining their own ends, no matter for what cause?' Well, I admit, there is a lot of risk in the method. But it is like every great power in the world. Misuse creates mischief. Let us take the illustration of a well-known poison—arsenic. It is a most powerful medicinal drug, but should not on that account be blotted out of existence, although we know that many people make harmful use of it. Therefore, if a thing is inherently good, and it is used at the proper time and in the proper measure, it is calculated to do universal good on an extensive scale almost bordering on the miraculous. One must make use of that power irrespective of the fact that others are likely to make harmful use of it.

Further, in a case of fasting of this nature, there is not much scope for it to thrive or become popular for the simple reason that it is such an agonizing process that ordinary human nature shudders at the very thought of having to undergo it.

So you see, the danger is not so very great. It is only by training the body that one can do without food for any length of time. The undisciplined and weak would soon give up the idea.

At the end of this long statement Mr. Gandhi leant back, weak from exhaustion, onto his bed. Immediately two of the jail doctors were at his side to render what help they could. But Mr. Gandhi seemed to derive most comfort from Mrs. Gandhi, who, although obviously suffering, seemed delighted to have the opportunity of altering his pillow, rubbing his forehead with olive oil, and quietly talking to him.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gandhi's disciples were receiving other political visitors and soon the compound was a scene of bustle and excitement.

From his secretary I gathered that Mr. Gandhi rose during his fast every morning at four; prayers were said from then to about half-past four or five; then a shave by his prison barber, his breakfast—a drink of water—and, perhaps, an hour's sleep. But this was constantly interrupted by special cables from all over the world. . . .

The Epic Fast, pp. 138-41

206. TELEGRAM TO SUNDERSING AND SONS[1]

[On or after *September 24, 1932*]

CONGRATULATIONS. HOPE YOUR EXAMPLE WILL BE INFECTIOUS.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18551

207. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 25, 1932

THE WONDERFUL MANIFESTATION THROUGHOUT INDIA IS A MODERN MIRACLE. GURUDEV HAS BEEN A TOWER OF STRENGTH. DEEP LOVE ALL FRIENDS. AT PERFECT PEACE. NO CONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE SETTLEMENT WILL WARRANT MY BREAKING THE FAST.

The Epic Fast, p. 134

208. TELEGRAM TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[2]

[*September 25, 1932*][3]

WAS DAILY HANKERING AFTER YOUR MESSAGE. IT HAS GIVEN ME FRESH COURAGE AND HOPE. I HOPE YOU ARE WELL. LOVE.

GANDHI

The Epic Fast, pp. 196-7

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram of September 24 which read: "Obedience your commands throwing open our famous sherbet-house untouchables first time last twenty years risking orthodox customers. Ramdayal M.L.C. shoemaker formally opening Tuesday. Awaiting your parental blessings."

[2] This was in answer to Sastri's telegram which read: "Millions of homes rejoice and bless your superb service performed in your superb style. I confess I trembled in doubt but the result vindicates and establishes you as indisputably the foremost untouchable and 'unapproachable'."

[3] From *Mahadevbhaini Dairy*, Vol. II, p. 82

CWMG - LI

209. TELEGRAM TO PANDURANG M. BAPAT[1]

September 25, 1932

YOUR REASON FOR FAST IS TOUCHING BUT I WOULD LIKE YOU RECONSIDER YOUR DECISION ON STRENGTH OF CONTRARY OPINION OF AN EXPERT LIKE ME IN SUCH MATTERS. I FEEL CONVINCED THAT YOUR FAST HAS NO RELIGIOUS SANCTION. SINCE YOU FEEL FOR ME YOU SHOULD NOT DIE WITH ME BUT LIVE TO CARRY ON MY WORK. THINK OF CONSEQUENCES IF ALL CO-WORKERS WERE TO DIE WITH ME. WILL THAT ACT NOT BE CRIMINAL? PLEASE LISTEN. GOD BLESS YOU.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 82-3

210. CABLE TO LAWRENCE HOUSEMAN[2]

September 25, 1932

LAWRENCE HOUSMAN
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON

THANKS YOUR CABLE. MY FAST IS APPEAL NOT MERELY TO HINDUS OR INDIA IN GENERAL BUT BRITISH CONSCIENCE, INDEED TO WHOLE WORLD. THIS DISTRUST MISREPRESENTATION OF MAN WHO LOVES BRITISH PEOPLE IS ENIGMA TO ME SINCE MY DEEPEST FAITH FORBIDS RESORT PHYSICAL FORCES. I AM PRAYING GOD DISCOVER TO ME SUCH FINAL WAY CORPORATE SELF-SUFFERING EXTREME KIND AND GIVE STRENGTH UNDERGO IT. WHEN IF REQUIRED SUCH TIME COMES I KNOW IT WILL PENETRATE EVERY BRITISH HOME. I HAD HOPED THAT APPEAL FROM THIS FIERY BED WOULD SOMEWHAT WAKE UP BRITISH PUBLIC AS IT SEEMS TO HAVE MARVELLOUSLY AROUSED INDIA. BUT GOD'S WILL WAS PERHAPS OTHERWISE. WANTING AS I DO BRITISH SYMPATHY AND HELP I WILL VALUE ANYTHING YOUR MEETING MAY DO. I KNOW I HAVE

[1] A revolutionary, popularly known as Senapati Bapat

[2] The addressee had asked for a message for a special meeting of the Friends of India to be held on September 27, 1932, to explain the significance of Gandhiji's fast.

SILENT SYMPATHY AND PRAYER OF THOUSANDS OF BRITISH MEN AND WOMEN.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 83-4

211. TELEGRAM TO DR. NILARANJAN RAY AND DR. B. C. ROY

September 25, 1932

YOUR ADVICE AS DOCTORS IS PERFECT. ITS HUMAN VALUE IS NEXT TO NOTHING. YOU WILL NOT HAVE A FELLOW BEING DENY HIS FAITH. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. FAST GOING WELL.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 84

212. RESOLUTION AT THE HINDU LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

September 25, 1932

This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth and those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same rights as the other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public roads and other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity and shall be one of the earliest acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

It is further agreed that it shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, an early removal of all social disabilities now imposed by custom upon the so-called untouchable classes including the bar in respect of admission to temples.

Mahatma, Vol. III, p. 213

[1] This resolution was drafted by Gandhiji.

213. MESSAGE TO GREAT BRITAIN[1]

September 25, 1932

Every day of the fast seems to me conclusive evidence of the hand of God in it. Even I with my boundless faith in God and His mercy was not prepared for this great wave of awakening against untouchability. That some of the great temples should have spontaneously admitted the untouchables without restriction is to me a modern miracle. They have only now admitted God. Hitherto, the images which the custodians, falsely and in their pride, thought had God within were Godless.

The Cabinet decision was to me a timely warning from God that I was asleep when He was knocking at the door and waking me up. The settlement[2] arrived at is to me but the beginning of the work of purification. The agony of the soul is not going to end until every trace of untouchability is gone. I do not want the British Cabinet to come to any hasty decision. I do not want them for saving my life or for appearing to be right with the world to accept it in a niggardly spirit. If they have not realized the true inwardness of the Agreement, they must summarily reject it, but if they have, they will not alter one word or comma of it, but they will implement every condition that is implied in the great settlement which the so-called untouchables and the so-called touchables have arrived at with all their heart and with God as their witness.

I hope that they and the world will realize that this settlement is, if I may say so in all humility, far superior to the Cabinet decision. There is no pride about it. The Cabinet composed of foreigners, knowing nothing first hand of the Indian conditions or what untouchability could mean, were labouring under a heavy handicap, and even though some Indians had referred this matter to them, they should have declined the responsibility to which they were wholly unequal.

I am not saying this from my penitential bed in any carping spirit or spirit of irritation.

[1] The message was given in an interview to Ellen Wilkinson and V. K. Krishna Menon of the India League and was first published in *The Daily Herald* of London.

[2] For the text of the settlement, signed on September 24, *vide* Appendix II.

I claim to be a true friend of the British nation and also of the Cabinet, and I would be untrue to them, to myself and to my call, if at this moment I suppressed my relevant opinion. I would like finally to assure Britain that so long as life lasts in me, I shall undergo as many fasts as are necessary in order to purify Hinduism of this unbearable taint. Thank God there is not only one man in this movement but, I believe, there are several thousands who will lay down their life in order to achieve this reform in its fulness.

The Epic Fast, pp. 136-7

214. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 25, 1932

If the Premier accepts the settlement *in toto* I would be bound to break the fast. The settlement, as far as the political part of it is concerned, merely removes the tremendous obstacle that the Cabinet's decision put in the way of reform. The real part of the settlement is now to come and whilst, if the Premier accepts *in toto* the settlement cabled to him, my fast must end, the real struggle for me only begins. As a matter of fact if the Cabinet had published the correspondence in time I would have been in honour bound to insist on the due fulfilment of the duty that lies on the so-called caste Hindus.

I should be guilty of betrayal of trust if I did not ensure that, but as they had no notice worth the name of my intention to fast, I could not expect them all of a sudden to revolutionize Hindu thought. They must, therefore, have breathing time for work, and so I have told fellow-workers that if this fast is broken in virtue of the Cabinet's satisfactory answer it would be put in suspension, but sure as fate, it will be taken up again if the part to be performed by the caste Hindus is not well played during the coming months.

The tremendous awakening that has taken place in the country during the five days fills me with hope that orthodoxy will surpass itself and rid Hinduism of the canker of untouchability which is eating into its vitals.

I suppose the future plan is in the hands of Government.

The Epic Fast, p. 135

215. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIA

September 25, 1932

It has been a matter of increasing joy, day by day, to find great ancient temples being opened to the so-called "untouchables" and thus becoming purified. This one fact, among many others, has been a great sustaining force during these days of agony of body, mind and soul. But the joy about the opening of the temples has not been unmixed with sorrow, in that the South, where my work on a larger scale amongst "untouchables" began, though in South Africa, has not been as prompt and generous in throwing open the gates of the temples to outcastes. Speaking as a Hindu, striving to find and to live up to the very essence of it, I say, without the slightest hesitation, that God will be installed in the idols of the temples only if they are thrown open unreservedly to outcastes. Today, with human outcastes, God Himself is an outcaste.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 26-9-1932

216. CABLE TO MUSTAFA NAHAS PASHA[1]

September 26, 1932

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR MESSAGE. MAY THIS PURIFICATORY FAST TOUCH ALL FAITHS; BRING THEM AND US TOGETHER IN A LIVING BOND. EGYPTIAN BLANKET PRESENTED TO ME DURING LAST VOYAGE COVERS ME DURING THIS STRUGGLE WITH ALLAH WHO IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL.

GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 85

[1] This was in answer to Nahas Pasha's Cable of September 24 which read: "Your resolve to sacrifice your own life, rather than tolerate any measure promoting disunion or caste prejudices amongst Indians has deeply stirred the heart of Egypt, which has, since the last decade, been linked with India by the holy bond of suffering for the same ideal of national self-expression and liberty. Egyptians of all sects and religions, united in love of the Fatherland, are confident that the great Indian people will unite in preserving Mahatma's

217. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

September 26, 1932

MIRABEHN
ARTHUR ROAD JAIL

NO LETTER SENT TODAY. THANK GOD FAST BROKEN 5.15 PRESENCE GURUDEV OTHER LOVING FRIENDS. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6239. Courtesy: Mirabehn

218. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 26, 1932

The fast undertaken in the name of God was broken in the presence of Gurudev, and Parachure Shastri, the leper prisoner and a learned pandit, seated opposite each other, and in the company of loving and loved ones who had gathered round me. The breaking was preceded by the Poet singing one of his Bengali hymns, then *mantras* from the Upanishads by Parachure Shastri, and then my favourite hymn "*Vaishnava Jana*".

The hand of God has been visible in the glorious manifestation throughout the length and breadth of India during the past seven days. The cables received from many parts of the world blessing the fast have sustained me through the agony of body and soul that I passed through during the seven days, but the cause was worth going through that agony.

The sacrificial fire, once lit, shall not be put out as long as there is the slightest trace of untouchability still left in Hinduism. If it is God's will that it does not end with my life, I have the confidence that there are several thousands of earnest reformers who will lay down their lives in order to purify Hinduism of this awful curse.

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life by redeeming their sacred unity. All struggling nations of the East look up to India for fulfilling the noble ideal for which Gandhiji is giving up his life. In the name of Egypt and her people, I send you and the Indian people our brotherly love and heartfelt wishes for realization of ideals of truth, freedom and equality as embodied in the great example you are setting before the world." *The Epic Fast.*

The settlement arrived at is, so far as I can see, a generous gesture on all sides. It is a meeting of hearts, and my Hindu gratitude is due to Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Srinivasan and their party on the one hand and Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja on the other. They could have taken up an uncompromising and defiant attitude by way of punishment to the so-called caste Hindus for the sins of generations. If they had done so, I at least could not have resented their attitude and my death would have been but a trifling price exacted for the tortures that the outcastes of Hinduism have been going through for unknown generations. But they chose a nobler path and have thus shown that they have followed the precept of forgiveness enjoined by all religions. Let me hope that the caste Hindus will prove themselves worthy of this forgiveness and carry out to the letter and spirit every clause of the settlement with all its implications.

The settlement is but the beginning of the end. The political part of it, very important though it no doubt is, occupies but a small space in the vast field of reform that has to be tackled by caste Hindus during the coming days, namely, the complete removal of social and religious disabilities under which a large part of the Hindu population has been groaning. I should be guilty of a breach of trust if I did not warn fellow reformers and caste Hindus in general that the breaking of the fast carried with it a sure promise of a resumption of it if this reform is not relentlessly pursued and achieved within a measurable period. I had thought of laying down a period, but I feel that I may not do so without a definite call from within.

The message of freedom shall penetrate every untouchable home and that can only happen if reformers will cover every village. Yet, in the wave of enthusiasm and in an inordinate desire to spare me a repetition of the agony, there should be no coercion. We must, by patient toil and self-suffering, convert the ignorant and the superstitious but never seek to compel them by force.

I wish, too, that the almost ideal solution that has been arrived at may be followed by the other communities, and that we might see the dawn of a new era of mutual trust, mutual give and take, and a recognition of the fundamental unity of all communities. I would here single out the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh question. I am the same to the Mussalman today that I was in 1920-22. I should be just as prepared to lay down my life as I was in Delhi[1] to achieve organic unity and permanent peace

[1] In September 1924; *vide* Vol. XXV.

between them. I hope and pray that there will be, as a result of this upheaval, a spontaneous move in this direction and then, surely, the other communities can no longer stand out.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Government and the jail staff and the medical men appointed by the Government to look after me. Extreme care and attention was bestowed upon me. Nothing was left undone. The jail staff worked under terrible pressures, and I observed that they did not grudge this labour. I thank them all from high to low.

I thank the British Cabinet for hastening the decision on the settlement. The terms of the decision sent to me I have not approached without misgivings. It accepts, I suppose very naturally, only that part of the Agreement that refers to the British Cabinet's communal decision. I expect that they had a constitutional difficulty in now announcing their acceptance of the whole Agreement. But I would like to assure my Harijan friends, as I would like henceforth to name them, that so far as I am concerned, I am wedded to the whole of that Agreement, and that they may hold my life as hostage for its due fulfilment, unless we ourselves arrive at any other and better settlement of our own free will.

The Hindu, 27-9-1932, and *The Epic Fast*, pp. 142-5

219. TELEGRAM TO M. KRISHNAN NAIR[1]

[On or before *September 27, 1932*][2]

YOU KNOW THAT KELAPPAN IS ONE OF THE BEST KERALA WORKERS, MOST DEVOTED TO THE UNTOUCHABLES' CAUSE. IF NECESSARY YOU AND OTHER INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE SHOULD PROCEED TO THE SCENE OF THE SACRIFICE AND SAVE KELAPPAN[3] BY HAVING THE TEMPLE OPEN TO HARIJANS.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-9-1932

[1] The addressee was the Law Member of Madras.

[2] The newspaper report is dated September 27.

[3] Kelappan had been fasting since September 20; *vide* p. 147.

[4] The addressee thought the temple being private property, it would not be proper either for him or the Government to interfere.

220. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

[On or before *September 27, 1932*][2]

Thank you for your congratulations. None would be more delighted than I would be to endorse any worthy suggestion for co-operation by the Congress with the Government and the Round Table Conference. I would only emphasize and underline the adjective "worthy". Despite my repeated declarations it is not generally recognized that by instinct I am a co-operator. My very non-co-operation is intended to purge co-operation not worth the name. Therefore, as far as I am personally concerned, when the proper time comes, I should throw the whole of my weight in favour of co-operation.

The Hindu, 28-9-1932

221. TELEGRAM TO M. R. JAYAKAR

September 27, 1932

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

THANKS. WIRE EXPECT YOU CONTINUE UNABATED EFFORT UNTIL UNTOUCHABILITY WHOLLY REMOVED.

GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers: Correspondence File No. 421, p. 46. Courtesy: National Archives of India

222. TELEGRAM TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 27, 1932

RAMESHWAR SETH
DHULIA

RAPIDLY RECOVERING. NO ANXIETY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 740

[1] This was in response to a message of congratulations from Press representatives who had also enquired about the chances of Congress co-operation in the work of the Round Table Conference.

[2] The newspaper report is dated September 27.

223. TELEGRAM TO MAHARAJA OF TRAVANCORE

September 27, 1932

THE LIFE OF ONE OF KERALA'S GREAT SERVANTS, KELAPPAN, HANGS IN THE BALANCE FOR OPENING GURUVAYUR. SEEING THAT THE UNEXAMPLED WAVE OF AWAKENING PASSING THROUGHOUT THE LAND FAVOURS OPENING ALL TEMPLES. WILL YOU NOT EXERT YOUR GREAT INFLUENCE SECURING OPENING GURUVAYUR AND, IF POSSIBLE, OTHER TEMPLES? YOU KNOW PERHAPS THAT KELAPPAN HAS BEEN FASTING SINCE 20TH OPENING TEMPLE.[1]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 1-10-1932

224. TELEGRAM TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 27, 1932

ABBAS SAHEB TYABJI
CARE DOCTOR SHAH
WADHWAN CITY

YOUR NERVOUSNESS BETRAYS WANT OF FAITH. AM FLOURISHING ON ORANGES GRAPES. ALLAHO AKBAR.

BHRRR[2]

From a photostat: S.N. 9579

[1] In reply to a similar telegram from Purushottamdas, the Dewan of Travancore said: "His Highness's Government is surprised at statement that Maharaja's approval necessary to throwing open Guruvayur temple. Government unaware of any authority or privilege over Guruvayur. . . . Kindly communicate Mr. Gandhi."

[2] The source has 'burry' which seems to be a slip for 'Bhrrr', which Gandhiji and the addressee used for each other in their correspondence.

CWMG - LI

225. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

September 27, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

The substance of what I said to you yesterday before breaking my fast was this. I was breaking the fast not without misgivings in that the British Government's acceptance of the settlement related only to the part that was included in the British Government's communal decision. This was perhaps natural. But I was bound to make my position clear—that I would be in honour bound to secure a due fulfilment of the whole of the settlement. The second thing that I drew your attention to was that I would expect Government to continue the facilities given to me since 20th for seeing friends and sending messages in the matter of the untouchability question. The British acceptance has reference only to the political part of the settlement, but the most vital part for the whole of the Hindu community is that relating to social and religious reform. In order to set it on a firm footing it is necessary for me to be in touch with the workers for some time to come. In order to avoid any misunderstanding therefore I mentioned this very important thing to you before breaking the fast.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3860. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 141

226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 27, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

God is great and compassionate. He would not try His servants beyond endurance. And so the Government reply came in time to enable me to break the fast yesterday at 5 p.m. The Poet led the prayer and he was followed by the leper prisoner Parachure Shastri who was for some time at the Ashram.

This is enough for today.

Love. BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6240. Courtesy: Mirabehn

227. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 28, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I had two letters from you yesterday. I wrote a brief note[1] myself which I hope you got. Something has gone to you daily from here and the I.G. assured me that my letters would be given to you at once. So I cannot understand this absence of delivery of my letters.

However, all is over now. I am taking plenty of oranges and grapes and am gaining strength. Sleep is good. There is therefore now no cause for anxiety.

The Orissa scene you describe and two others in Malabar have haunted me during these days and made the pangs bearable. Gurudev's coming was and still is a great solace. He has been unstinting in his support.

I hope you are cheerful now. Remember me to your companions.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6241. Courtesy: Mirabehn

228. NOTE TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

September 28, 1932

I have already made my appeal to the caste Hindus as to their duty, but as a self-chosen Harijan I would like to say a word to them also. They have to perform their part during this period of purification. Owing to suppression they have been deprived of ways and means of observing, and the incentive to the observation of, the ordinary laws of cleanliness and the like, but let us hope that a new era has dawned upon us. I hope that Harijans will understand this and in so far as possible they will observe the laws of cleanliness, abstain from intoxicating liquors and drugs and make a mighty effort to get rid of all social evils.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 790

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

229. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

September 29, 1932

THE ZAMORIN WIRES ASKING ME TO APPEAL TO YOU TO SUSPEND FAST FOR SOME MONTHS. HE SAYS PRESENT ENTRY OF UNTOUCHABLES WOULD WOUND ORTHODOX CONSCIENCE AND SUCH WOUNDING WOULD AMOUNT TO COERCION. ASK YOURSELF WHETHER THERE IS ANY ROOM FOR YOU ON THIS RELEVANT GROUND TO POSTPONE THE FAST AND WHETHER IN TERMS OF THE ZAMORIN'S TELEGRAM YOU HAD GIVEN SUFFICIENT NOTICE OF THE EXTREME STEP.[1]

GANDHI

The Hindu, 30-9-1932

230. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*September 29, 1932*][2]

YOUR LETTER WAS JUST RECEIVED. I HAD A CONFERENCE EARLY THIS MORNING WITH PT. MALAVIYA, MR. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR AND OTHERS ABOUT THE PROPRIETY OF MALAVIYAJI'S PROCEEDING THERE. I HAVE BEEN IN TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH OTHERS ALSO. THEY ALL PRESS ME TO ORDER YOU TO STOP THE FAST. I WAS HESITATING. YOUR LETTER HOWEVER MAKES MY WAY CLEAR. EMPHATICALLY I THINK YOU MADE TWO MISTAKES. THOUGH YOU WERE BOUND TO CONSULT ME YOU FAILED TO DO SO NO MATTER FOR WHAT CAUSE. SECONDLY YOU WERE BOUND TO GIVE REASONABLE NOTICE OF THE INTENTION TO FAST. MY STRONG ADVICE THEREFORE IS YOU SHOULD SUSPEND THE FAST ON THE STRENGTH OF THIS TELEGRAM AND GIVE FROM THE DATE OF SUSPENSION THREE CLEAR MONTHS' NOTICE. IF IN THE MEANWHILE THE TEMPLE IS NOT OPENED TO HARIJANS AND SUBJECT TO MY CON-

[1] Kelappan's reply to this read: "The Zamorin may not complain insufficiency of notice. One or two people will always be found who will oppose any reform to the end of time, but the question of wounding the hearts and self-respect of thousands of depressed brethren is more real and important than the alleged wounding of the orthodox conscience."

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 89

SENT YOU WILL RESUME THE FAST. MEANWHILE CONCENTRATED EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO HAVE THE TEMPLE OPENED AND IF NECESSARY MALAVIYAJI WILL PROCEED THERE. YOU WILL GREATLY RELIEVE MY ANXIETY BY TELLING ME THAT YOU HAVE FOLLOWED MY ADVICE.[1]

The Hindu, 3-10-1932

231. TELEGRAM TO RAMASWAMI IYER GOPALA NAIR

[*September 29, 1932*][2]

RAMASWAMIER GOPALANAIR
CHOWGHAT

LYING SIMILAR SITUATION MYSELF I DARE NOT INTERFERE KELAPPAN'S CONSCIENCE. SHAME WILL BE YOURS AND THOSE NEAR THERE IF SUCH A SELFLESS SPLENDID WORKER IS LOST. I HAVE ASSUMED THAT KELAPPAN'S FAST HAS NO CONNECTION WITH MINE. HOWEVER IN ORDER TO MAKE ASSURANCE DOUBLY SURE I HAVE SENT LONG TELEGRAM JUST NOW TO KELAPPAN TO BREAK FAST IF IT IS IN IMITATION OF MINE.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-IX

232. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

September 29, 1932 (1.45 p.m.)

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

The orders you verbally conveyed to me at 12.30 this morning I interpret as follows: I am not to be allowed to see from this date any visitors regarding untouchability or any other public work, except Sjts. Ghanshyamdas Birla and Mathuradas Vasanji. Secondly Mrs. Gandhi should be forthwith removed to the Female Yard; all other visits to be regulated as before the fast, under

[1] Kelappan's reply was: "Neither the Zamorin nor the public can plead insufficiency of notice. Ten months' satyagraha notice was sufficient. Volunteers are standing in sun and rain—a more moving sight than my fast. . . . I believe, my fast has roused the public and if continued will shortly bring the fight to victory. In my opinion, my stopping the fast would set back the movement. . . ."

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

the general instructions that were conveyed to me soon after my admission and amended thereafter. This means that I shall not have the privilege of seeing Shrimati Sarojinidevi, whose presence during my illnesses has produced a soothing effect on me, nor of my son Devdas and his intended wife, nor of the Ashram inmates who have been in attendance upon me during this crisis. I must confess that I was wholly unprepared for this very sudden and rude reminder that I was but a prisoner whose body was entirely at the mercy of the Government. I would like, however, the Government to know that I am still considered to be convalescent and under orders not even to move from my bed. I had hoped that at least during the convalescent period I would be saved all unnecessary shock to my nerves. However, this need not be a matter of moment to the Government and ought not to worry me overmuch, if at all. Indeed I am thankful for the medical attendance that the Government provided for me and the free attendance of visitors and friends during the fast. But what I cannot understand is this sudden stopping of all visits, even in connection with untouchability work, save those of Sjts. Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas. The Government cannot be unaware of the phenomenal awakening that has taken place in the country, nor of the repercussions of the fast whose limitations have been but little understood and which is being blindly imitated by enthusiastic young men. I therefore hold it absolutely necessary that I should be left entirely free to see whomsoever I consider necessary regarding untouchability. The Government have not yet seemed to have revised their instructions regarding correspondence. Needless to say what applied to visitors regarding untouchability applies equally to correspondence. Nor need I add that I should not have the slightest objection to Government officials and interpreters attending any interviews I might have with visitors and my correspondence being scrutinized. As this is a matter of the greatest urgency, I hope that the Government will favour me with their decision at the earliest possible moment.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3861. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 191

233. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 29, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

This is the third letter after the breaking of the fast and written just after the first fruit meal consisting of oranges and grape juice. And that has been my principal food. Yesterday I took thin soup made of *turai*[1]. Today I propose to take milk.

Your letters have come in regularly. I cannot understand why mine have not been received by you. I am inquiring.

Strength is rapidly coming. There was yesterday already a gain of 1½ lb., i.e., 95 lb.

I did write to Romain Rolland.[2] There was a cable from him on the break of the fast.

I read your message to Gurudev yesterday and I touched his feet for you, as Mahadev, poet-like, had forgotten to do so.

Ba, of course, forgot all her misery as soon as she came here. She seems to have borne it all very bravely indeed.

I hope you are all quite composed now. The fast was really nothing compared to the miseries that the outcastes have undergone for ages.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6242. Courtesy: Mirabehn

234. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 29, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am becoming impatient to write to everybody. I hope to be strong enough to write in two or three days. This morning, after eating some fruit I wrote four or five letters which seemed urgent to me.

[1] Ridge gourd

[2] This letter is not available.

CWMG - II

I suppose you have heard the news of Trivedi's[1] sister-in-law having died in an accident.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8257. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

235. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

September 30, 1932

Your very first wire showed what my fast meant to you. For me it was the clearest call from God. Events have converted even the scoffers. I did expect a mighty response from the orthodox, but I was unprepared for the sudden manifestation that took place. But I shall not be deceived. It remains to be seen whether the temples opened remain open and the various other things done persist. This breaking of the fast is therefore but a suspension. However, I am not worrying. The fast and its breaking were God's doing. And so will the resumption be, if it is to come.

Gurudev's visit was a blessing. We have come nearer each other than ever before. I do not know if Mahadev had time to tell you how my letter[2] written to him on the eve of the fast and his wire to me blessing it crossed each other. And then later on came Sastri's most loving wire.

But this is all history now. I am daily gathering strength. No anxiety please.

[PS.]

As I have been writing the European love letters your cable also signed by Verrier comes to me. God be thanked. I know you are labouring.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 90-1

[1] J. P. Trivedi of Poona Agricultural College
[2] *Vide* p. 101.

236. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I am expending my energy today in sending love letters to friends in England. I have written so much already that I am not going to say anything to you beyond sending my love to you, Olive and all the brothers and sisters of the Settlement. During the fast the English friends were ever near my heart.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1414

237. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

September 30, 1932

DEAR MARY,

This is just to send you my love. I had your delicious oranges. The extract you have sent from Bunyan is very good. I am making steady progress. Every moment I mutter, God is great and merciful.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5984. Also C.W. 3312. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

238. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

September 30, 1932

God was my guide and sustainer during those days of triple agony.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

239. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

September 30, 1932

It required my fast, among many other things also, to bring me in physical touch with members of the Sangh[1]. I had loving chats with Father Winslow. I was glad to know these brethren. Shyamrao was also with them.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 92

240. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I could read your agony through your cable and your letter. But it was all well worth it. I was glad you had Charlie Andrews by your side. I had fullest faith in your doing all you could. Nothing more could be expected of anyone. As you would perhaps be reading one another's letters, I am not saying more in this brief love note.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1458

241. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

September 30, 1932

All is over and the much advertised fast is a thing of the past. It was an experience well worth having, if only for the sake of the love it evoked from all parts of the world and the wave of reform that passed from one end of India to the other.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 92

[1] Christ Seva Sangh of Poona

CWMG - LI

242. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

Even from this distance I could realize your agony. But God never comes to us except through the way of fire. There is a deep unconscious joy felt during such purifying agony. I hope that you were partaker of such joy during the trial. I saw or rather heard your name together with those of Horace Alexander and Andrews among the senders of a loving message from England. I am growing stronger day by day.

You won't expect a long letter from me today. I am expending what energy I have in writing love notes to friends in England.

Love to you. Kisses to children.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 93

243. LETTER TO H. S. L. AND MILLIE POLAK

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE, OR MILLIE AND HENRY, IF YOU LIKE,

Your wires and telepathic messages have told me what you must have felt, and done during all these days of joyous pangs. It was travail of new birth, which it has been undoubtedly to me, as I think it has been to superstitious ignorant Hinduism. The great manifestation was worth fasting for. Tokens of love from outside India, from England, have been also many and true. The threefold agony was much eased by the knowledge of all these things.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 93

CWMG

244. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

You need no written sign of love from me. But as I am writing to the English friends, I send this superfluous word of love to you.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4542. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

245. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND AND MADELEINE ROLLAND

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

I had your loving message. You were ever present to me during the travail. God's mercy was bountiful and traceable during the whole of the great drama. As I was finishing this, I had Mira's letter. Hers has been an agony without felt joy. But she has chosen the spiked bed and she is bravely lying on it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 93

246. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

September 30, 1932

DEAREST BROTHER AND FRIEND,

Your wire[1] and your letter are my treasure and my food. I shall not misunderstand you. Under better auspices I anticipate no difficulty in rendering a full and intelligible account of my doings in London. But that is a matter of small account. I want our love to stand the severest ordeal.

I am flourishing.

With deep love,

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

[1] *Vide* p. 137.

CWMG - LI

247. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR BHRRR,

Your faith was indeed great and events have justified it. It was so vital that you needed no effort to restrain yourselves from running to me as so many friends did. Yes, the prophecy or presentiment of Mrs. Abbas has come true. My warm congratulations to her.

I am flourishing on milk and fruit.

Love from us all.

Yours,
BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9580

248. LETTER TO ADA WEST

September 30, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

I know what it must have meant to you to hear of my fast. But it was God's will. Could you not trace it in everything that followed ?

Love.

BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4434. Courtesy: A. H. West

CWMG-LI

249. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL AND MOTIBEHN CHOKSHI

September 30, 1932

CHI. NAJUKLAL AND MOTI,

I had got your postcard. God has given me a new life. He will now lead me where He wills.

I hope all three of you are well. I am now regaining strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12151

250. LETTER TO DR. HIRALAL SHAH

September 30, 1932

I suffered much physically during this fast. As atonement for our sins against the *Antyajas*, that suffering was certainly worth it. The body, however, is a shirker. It wants to avoid as much pain as it can. I do not know how many more fasts are ordained for me. But I wish to keep myself ready. Why do Jains take *ambar*[1] when they fast? How much of it do they take? Does it prevent the flow of saliva in the mouth? Does it enable one to drink water? What is its source? Some take even musk. If you can get any information on these points from a reliable person, please send it on to me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

[1] Ambergris

CWMG - LI

251. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 30, 1932

I feel love flowing from every line in your letter. Is it not my good fortune that I should get a daughter like you? I have readily accepted the position of father which you and others have bestowed on me. And I have done so with God as witness. May He make me worthy of it and protect my honour. I am rapidly regaining strength.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 94

252. LETTER TO SETH GOVINDDAS

September 30, 1932

I never had any doubts about the love of the untouchables. God has done everything for good. We must now hope that the newly-born zeal will be permanent and that untouchability will be totally rooted out.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 95

253. CABLE TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

[*October 1, 1932*][1]

M. A. ANSARI
PARIS

ANTICIPATED YOU BY ISSUING APPEAL HINDU-MUSLIM-SIKH UNITY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 265

[1] Although the source mentions this cable under October 5, it is listed in "Diary, 1932" under this date.

CWMG - LII

254. TELEGRAM TO GANESAN[1]

October 1, 1932

FASTS LIKE SHANKAR'S PREMATURE, IF NOT IMPROPER. ASK HIM TO ABANDON HIS FAST.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 97

255. TELEGRAM TO K. KELAPPAN

[*October 1, 1932*][2]

YOUR WIRE. IMMEDIATE PROSPECTIVE RESULT MUST NOT AFFECT THE DECISION ON PURE ETHICS. I MUST REITERATE THE OPINION THAT YOU SHOULD SUSPEND FAST GIVING NOTICE AS PER MY TELEGRAM.[3] GOD HELPING I SHALL BEAR MY SHARE OF THE BURDEN. WIRE COMPLIANCE.[4]

The Hindu, 3-10-1932

256. TELEGRAM TO DR. MOHANLAL[5]

October 1, 1932

DR. MOHANLAL
ALIGARH

SUCH CLEANING BY CASTE HINDUS SIDE BY SIDE WITH REAL SWEEPERS LIKELY TO BE GOOD IF ABSOLUTELY SINCERE AND TRUE SPIRIT UNDERSTOOD BY SWEEPER BROTHERS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18562. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 98

[1] This was in answer to a telegram from Ganesan saying that Shankar Parthasarathi had been fasting for getting a temple opened to Harijans.

[2] The date is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 97.

[3] *Vide* pp. 150-1.

[4] Kelappan broke his fast at 8 a.m. on October 2.

[5] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram saying that caste Hindus had started "demonstrative latrine-cleaning".

CWMG-LI

257. LETTER TO ABDUL RAHIM

October 1, 1932

I quite agree with you that the other communal questions should also be settled in a spirit of mutual give and take. I hope efforts will be made in that direction.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

258. LETTER TO CRESSWELL

October 1, 1932

Yes; God has been good and merciful to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

259. MESSAGE TO PHILIP KINGSLEY

October 1, 1932

I wish America could trace the Big Finger of God in all the happenings during the past few days in India. It was not man's doing; it was without doubt God's grace.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 95

260. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*October 1*][1], *1932*

CHI. MIRA,

As you were not getting my letters regularly I purposely refrained from writing to you yesterday. This I am writing early morning just after taking oranges and grape juice. I am flourishing, my weight showed 99¾ yesterday against 93½ which was the weight on Monday. This is a wonderful improvement. In a day or two, I shall be walking a little. The bowels require the

[1] The source has September 31, obviously a slip. *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 96, mentions the letter under this date.

CWMG - LI

enema still but I expect them to be normal soon. Food is oranges eight, grapes, glucose powder four tea spoons, milk 1¼ lb., clear vegetable soup marrow and tomatoes. Of these I take something on an average every 2½ hours. I spun yesterday 235 rounds without feeling much tired. The spinning was done in two periods. Wrote a number of letters for the English mail and to correspondents here. With intervals for meals and rest, etc., I worked till 8 p.m. yesterday and now feel none the worse for it. All this is very good progress. And so I continue to hum, 'God is great and merciful.' The fast was nothing compared to what it brought forth. It was not man's achievement. It was God's doing. All this must remove your sadness.

You must have seen from the papers that as to interviews, etc., the pre-fast restrictions are practically in force. Ba can see me during the day.

Love to you and Kisen.

BAPU

[PS.]

I understand you have now no other companion.

From the original: C.W. 6243. Courtesy: Mirabehn

261. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

October 1, 1932

To me, my experiences are a realization of God. I do not know what more there can be in other experiences of realization.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

262. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI

[*October 1*][1], *1932*

BHAI MANMOHANDAS,

I have your letter. I am now regaining strength.

Do take an *Antyaja* child or adult in your family and serve the cause directly.

[1] From "Diary, 1932". In the letter itself the date is given as "31-9-1932", which is evidently a slip.

I am glad that your book[1] has been translated.

Since you have the same name as I, you are bound occasionally to get letters intended for me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 16

263. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA

October 1, 1932

Consider how much evil is done in God's name. If He tolerates all that, then the misuse of great powers which may follow an attempt to use them rightly should also be tolerated. However, as you suggest we should make every effort to prevent such misuse. You may rest assured that I will not neglect to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 96

264. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

[*October 1*][2], *1932*

BHAISHRI MUNSHI,

I had got your letter overflowing with love. I am using the strength which I am regaining to reply to such letters. The outcome of the fast was not man's achievement. I do not even feel that 'I' have done something. The *Gita* says: "Do everything as My instrument, and offer it to Me as sacrifice." I feel thus every moment and experience the intensest joy. When you write to Lilavati, tell her that I often think of both of you.

Sardar and Mahadev are very well. Convey our *vandemataram* to all friends there.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7517. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1] *Pardeshi Kapadni same Harifai kem Karavi*; under English title: *How to Compete with Foreign Cloth*

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II. The source has "31-9-32", which is evidently a slip.

265. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 1, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

This is the first Urdu letter I am writing after the fast. Your *bhajans* are very good. What does it matter if the *bhajan* which was sung when I commenced the fast was not yours? After all, it was a fine *bhajan* which you yourself had sent. Of course I would have felt much happier if it had been yours. But never mind. When God grants me another opportunity for undertaking a fast, I should like to have a *bhajan* composed by you. Compose one right now. The rest from my letter[1] to Father.

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9686

266. TELEGRAM TO RAMASESHAN

[On or after *October 1, 1932*][2]

CONCENTRATE ON REMOVAL UNTOUCHABILITY INVISIBILITY UNAPPROACHABILITY.

From a microfilm: S.N. 18568

267. TELEGRAM TO RALIATBEHN VRINDAVANLAL[3]

October 2, 1932

BLOOMING LIKE FLOWER BY GOD'S GRACE. BUT HAVE YOU PUT YOURSELF RIGHT ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 102

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", p. 159.

[2] The addressee's telegram seeking a message for the people of Cochin on the eve of Gandhiji's birthday is dated October 1.

[3] The addressee, Gandhiji's elder sister, had wired her good wishes on the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday.

268. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL ROY[1]

[*October 2, 1932*][2]

YOUR WIRE. FAST WEEK MANIFESTATION WAS SURE SIGN GOD'S HAND IN IT. LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 18566

269. LETTER TO S. M. MATE

October 2, 1932

I can understand your reasoning.[3] Only my fast is not intended to coerce anybody. It is meant to quicken into life sluggish conscience. That it may coerce some is unfortunately true. But such coercion can neither be prolonged nor extensive. A religious reformer does not attempt to dominate the mind. He stirs up people and makes them think and act.

I must not purchase my release at the sacrifice of my principles. Removal of untouchability is a vital part of my life's programme, but it is not the sole part of it.[4] My life is in God's hands. He will shape it as He wills. Do you not think I am in safe hands?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 100

[1] This was in reply to a telegram dated September 30, from the addressee saying he was writing a book about Gandhiji's life mission with special reference to the historic fast and seeking Gandhiji's blessings.

[2] In "Diary, 1932" Gandhiji, in the entry under October 3, mentions having sent a telegram to the addressee the previous day. Presumably this is the telegram.

[3] The addressee had advised Gandhiji that instead of seeking to coerce through fasting he should use the method of peaceful persuasion.

[4] The addressee had further said that if he were to declare that he would only work for the removal of untouchability for a year he might be released.

270. LETTER TO PURATAN BUCH

October 2, 1932

CHI. PURATAN,

You have asked a good question. Arjuna did not know what to do and he asked [Krishna][1] to guide him. No such doubt had arisen in my mind, but Krishna himself roused me and urged me not to miss this opportunity. An indefinite fast may be the highest expression of ahimsa and it may even be folly. I believe that my fast was the former. The outcome also seems to indicate that it was so. Fasting has a place, and an important one, in the *tapascharya* enjoined in Hindu dharma. Thus there is a difference between Arjuna's case and [mine][2]. I don't wish to suggest by this that I have more knowledge than Arjuna. I only wish to point out that in this instance it was not a question of ignorance in me. Is this clear? You must have read in the newspapers that visitors are no longer permitted to see me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9169

271. LETTER TO LAKSHMI D. DAFDA

October 2, 1932

CHI. LAKSHMI,

What did you do in Bombay? How do you spend the day now? Did I write and tell you that my fast has increased your responsibility? I hope you understand how that is so.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 7755. Courtesy: Maganbhai Desai

[1] & [2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 103

272. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

October 2, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I had got your letter. The fast is an old story now. We should go on doing our duty.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 860. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

273. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 2, 1932

There is no doubt that the vow which you contemplate is excellent. If you have arrived at the decision independently on your own, there is no need to discuss the matter with Nimu for the present. Your peace of mind is bound to have its effect on her. That is the beauty of *brahmacharya*. The need for mutual discussion arises when both are equally weak in mind, but equally eager to practise self-control also; for, then, the resolution of one partner helps the other. When one partner has made up his or her mind, he or she will not discuss the matter with the other, as his or her self-control will of itself work on the other. This is only to tell you my own experience in the matter, and you are free to act as you think best. In such matters other people's wisdom does not avail one much. In such a holy resolution you can of course take my blessings for granted, but take the vow only after you are released from prison. Many have given up the vows they made while in prison. The two environments are different. They are two entirely different worlds.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 99

274. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 2, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

Do not expect a long letter for some time yet. I have started writing letters to the Ashram and intend to write to as many persons as I can. You exercised good self-control in not coming to see me. If you had come, I would have certainly welcomed you and not found fault with you. But I admire you the better for not coming. The get-up of *Ashramvasi Pratye* is beautiful indeed. As for the contents, I have yet to look into them.

I know that anti-untouchability work in villages is very difficult. Only workers like you can judge how far the awakening witnessed during the week of the fast has spread among the villages. I think the fast should have been longer for that to have happened. But this is merely how the matter appears to human reason. I fasted as long as it was God's will that I should. Who knows how many more fasts He will make me undertake in future? We should thus be content to live as He wills, and be ready to dance with joy even if He throws us into a pan of boiling oil. Has He not given His word that He will give us the strength to do so?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5510

CWMG - II

275. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

October 2, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

You have paid good attention to handwriting, but in the end spoilt the letter with blots of ink on the sheet. The lesson to be drawn from this is that neatness cannot be learnt in a short time. One should make a long and systematic effort to learn it. Remember that you have taken a vow to shed your lethargy. Keep your vow. Write your address in every letter; I cannot keep a complete list of addresses here. I hope the children are better now.

Do you see Raihanabehn sometimes?

I have written letters to the girls and enclosed them in the Ashram packet.

I don't say anything about my fast, since it is an old story now. I am regaining my strength. I had lost it considerably. Convey my blessings to Rasik[1]. when you write to him. I do of course get news of him.

Sardar and Mahadevbhai are happy here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7471. Also C.W. 4917. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

276. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 2, 1932

CHI. PREMA

I cannot write you a long letter today. Who is afraid of your biting? Our cat often bites its kittens, but the more she does that the more they cling to her. When she lifts Soma[2] with her teeth, he does not cry but, on the contrary, feels more secure. Your biting must be like the cat's.

[1] Addressee's brother
[2] One of the kittens

You have quoted fine verses indeed. I admire your self-control, too. But neither you nor the other inmates of the Ashram need feel elated. Old man Abbas, Raihana and others danced with joy when they knew the cause of my fast. They did not even express a wish to come and see me. They trusted that I was under God's care and went on with their tasks. Others, too, acted in the same manner. Tell me, now, how much weight did you gain during my fast?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10304. Also C.W. 6743. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

277. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

October 2, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

You should not expect a long letter from me today. I feel that I have had a new life. God's will be done. Lakshmibehn should take care of her teeth and have them fully attended to.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 235. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

278. LETTER TO MOHAN N. PARIKH

October 2, 1932

CHI. MOHAN,

Yours was a novel fast—eating bananas and drinking milk! I would not call that even a semi-fast with a fruit diet. Who said that milk was fruit?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9185

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279. LETTER TO PADMA

October 2, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. Father came and saw me. You should learn how to keep accounts. It is very easy. Every time you spend something, you should note down the particulars immediately. It is not necessary to make a fair copy of the notes. You can send the same sheet to Narandas. If there is a swelling on your arm, you should stop even spinning. You must take care and see that you never get tired. The fast was a wonderful experience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6138. Also C.W. 3490. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

280. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 2, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

My fast has become a thing of the past. Similarly, cannot your fever become a matter of the past?

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9918. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

281. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 2, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. You have done no wrong in starting wearing bangles. The mistake lay in your resolution not to wear them, and so I think that you have now made amends for the mistake by wearing them to please the elders in the family. Let

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this be a lesson to you that all resolutions should be made after careful thinking, and that once you have made a resolution you should not give it up for anybody's sake. Do not brood over what has happened.

Live on milk, vegetables and fruit if *rotli* does not agree. Milk of course includes curds and buttermilk. Aren't the children still in a condition to live in the Ashram? Pay a visit to the Ashram and see how things are there at present. If you cannot do that, don't shift them from Calcutta but be satisfied with what you can do for them there. Ultimately their place is in the Ashram, and, to accustom them to the Ashram you should live there for a short time, if necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6821

282. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

8 p.m. [*October 2, 1932*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

The accompanying letters will give you an indication of my strength. I have now regained a good deal of it. I became weaker than I had thought, but I am recovering rapidly. On the Sunday during my fast, my weight was 93½ pounds. Today, which is again a Sunday, it stands at 100 pounds. This is good improvement. My diet at present is a pound and a half of milk, eight to ten oranges, pomegranate or grape juice, soup of gourd and tomatoes, honey and lemon juice. I hope that I shall be able to increase the quantity of milk by a little. I don't expect I shall make any other change for some time. I walked a little yesterday and today. The quantity of stool has increased today in the natural course. I sleep fairly well. Ba spends the whole day with me. In the evening, she goes to Lady Vithaldas's place.

I suffered much during the fast but enjoyed boundless peace. God tested me fairly severely. Yet on the whole the test was light. A seven days' fast means nothing to me. But the physical and mental suffering during this short period was considerable. I

[1] Although in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, this letter is mentioned under October 3, from the contents it appears to have been written on October 2, which was a Sunday.

cannot say how the experience of God-realization must be different from the experience which I have had. I don't mean that that experience is a state of perfect knowledge. It is an experience which cannot be explained in words. Even perfect knowledge is not an experience of perfect realization.

I was happy that you and the others who came and saw me did so. Those who did not come must be said to have exercised great self-control. I think both those who came and those who did not, did right. May this *yajna* inspire us to strive for greater self-purification and lead us to greater awakening.

Resume the former practice of despatching the mail on a fixed day. If necessary, you may for the present write more than once during a week.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8258. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

283. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 2, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. Now I have regained proper strength. I am taking milk, fruit and one vegetable. My weight has risen to 100 lb. There is, therefore, no cause for worry. Your health must improve. How is Kshitishbabu? Give me news of Arun.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HEMPRABHA DEVI
KHADI PRATISTHAN
SODEPUR
VIA CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1689

284. LETTER TO MAITHILISHARAN GUPTA

October 2, 1932

BHAI MAITHILISHARANJI,

Your messages[1] keep pouring in. God is most kind.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9461. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

285. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

October 2, 1932

BHAI MOHANLAL[2],

You cannot undertake a fast in such haste. Your job now is to start a peaceful agitation.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI MOHANLAL SHARMA
HINDU SABHA KARYALAYA
PUSHKAR
NEAR AJMER
RAJPUTANA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2825

286. A LETTER

October 2, 1932

Physical contact, temple-entry, etc., are in my opinion an integral part of eradication of untouchability. Inter-dining is optional.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 100

[1] The addressee had sent poems of appreciation during and after Gandhiji's fast.

[2] Mahadev Desai gives the correct name in his letter to him dated October 3, 1932 (G.N. 2826); also Vol. LII, *vide* "Letter to Sohanlal Sharma", 19-12-1932.

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287. TELEGRAM TO A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR

October 3, 1932

ON STRENGTH MY ADVICE AND ASSURANCE KELAPPAN HAS BROKEN FAST ONLY TO BE RESUMED IF DURING NEXT THREE MONTHS TEMPLE NOT OPENED EXPECT YOU AND FRIENDS CONCENTRATE ON OPENING TEMPLE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 265

288. TELEGRAM TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

October 3, 1932

I RECOGNIZED THAT KELAPPAN BEING UNDER DISCIPLINE WAS BOUND RECEIVE MY CONSENT PREVIOUS TO FAST AND WAS BOUND ANY CASE GIVE FAIR NOTICE OF INTENTION FAST THESE DEFECTS BEING POINTED OUT HE HAS BRAVELY RESPONDED AND BROKEN FAST WHICH WILL BE RESUMED IF DURING NEXT THREE MONTHS AFTER SECOND INSTANT TEMPLE NOT OPENED. KELAPPAN'S ACCEPTANCE MY ADVICE THROWS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY MY SHOULDERS PERHAPS EVEN EXTENT OF SHARING HIS FAST IF TEMPLE NOT OPENED TO AVARNA HINDUS DURING PERIOD OF SUSPENSION. MAY I EXPECT YOU CARRY OUT YOUR ASSURANCE AND OVERCOME ALL DIFFICULTIES LEGAL OR OTHERWISE IN WAY OF LONG DEFERRED REFORM.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 265

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289. LETTER TO PERCY W. BARTLETT

October 3, 1932

DEAR MR. BARTLETT[1],

I thank you for your letter enclosing copies of your letter to the Poet and the response from the Fellowship. I am quite sure that the Fellowship is exerting itself in the cause of peace.

Yours sincerely,

PERCY W. BARTLETT, ESQ.
17 RED LION SQUARE
LONDON, W.C. 1

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 201

290. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I have your touching letter. I can enter into your heart. We can but do the best that is possible for us to do. The result is in His hands. Therefore "be careful for nothing". Did I tell you that I was able to see Father Winslow and other members of the Sangh?[2] It was a joy to see them.

I have been writing so many letters that I do not remember them or their contents.

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

Sardar and Mahadev send their love to you, Mother and Eldyth.

From a copy: C.W. 9698. Courtesy: Eldyth Elwin

[1] A Quaker and General Secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation
[2] *Vide* p. 156.

291. LETTER TO SAMUEL FRANCIS

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR SAMUEL,

I was glad to hear from you. I do not know what I, a prisoner, can do for you. But if your children will take to the Indian life, it is possible that they may be admitted to the Ashram at Sabarmati.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SAMUEL FRANCIS, ESQ.
C/O J. T. CHRISTIAN, ESQ.
8 MART LANE, EAST LONDON
SOUTH AFRICA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 201

292. LETTER TO S. K. GEORGE

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR GEORGE[1],

I was glad you were in the Ashram. I hope your fever has left you. For the time being only this note. Yes, *Ramarajya* is possible even with this mixture, if the workers are true. This does not exclude me. If I am true, there must be true co-workers; if false, co-workers also false. Do write whenever you feel like it.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity, p. 89

[1] Teacher in charge of Deenabandhu Bhavan, Santiniketan

293. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

October 3, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

I am glad you have given me a brief description of your visits to Tolstoy's home. I wish you had also told me something of your impressions of modern Russia.

I am quickly regaining lost strength of body. I need say nothing more about the fast as it is now past history. This I may say. God was most merciful to me during those days.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4506. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

294. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

October 3, 1932

I was delighted to read your letter. Your sannyasa will shine only when you return to the Ashram with true understanding and devote yourself to service in a spirit of non-attachment. A stone cave or a cremation ground are not the real cave or the cremation ground. These are to be found in the heart. One may be truly said to have embraced sannyasa only when one lives in that cave and reduces to ashes all impure thoughts and feelings in oneself. It is this sannyasa which the *Gita* has extolled. This is still what my inner self tells me.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 103

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295. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

October 3, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

You asked me about *rotlo*. But my *rotlo* has dried up. God has snatched it away from me. I am now regaining strength with milk and fruit.

I hope all of you are all right. Ask Valji to write to me. How was his health [in jail]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7438. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

296. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

October 3, 1932

CHI. MANU,

Try and improve your handwriting. It is bad to smile during prayers because that is not the time for playing. It is a time for praying to God.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 7439. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

297. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

October 3, 1932

CHI. MAITRI,

I got your letter after a long interval. Write to me and describe what you learnt there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6237

298. LETTER TO GULAB

October 3, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

Carding is very easy. With a little more effort, you will pick it up well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1725

299. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI H. SHAH

October 3, 1932

I tried to race with you, but for the present I have lost. I don't mind, however. "Life or death, I value neither more than the other." This is a new life for me. God's will be done. He has preserved my honour. He has let me off with a light test. I feel His grace every moment of my life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 102

300. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

October 3, 1932

CHI. RAMBHAU,

The continuing dialogue between us also is interesting. But this time your handwriting was bad. I have already explained to you what is wrong in all this. Why should we laugh at or despise elders even inwardly? And I have explained, too, how the indifference towards our own weaknesses implied in such contempt is harmful.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 299. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

301. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 3, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

I had got your letter of the 13th. I am slowly regaining strength. I had got the proofs of *Gitamanthan*[1]. I had also received Babukaka's[2] letter.

The pain in the elbow seems to have disappeared since I undertook the fast. But I don't know if it will come back when there is more flesh on the body. Ask Surendra to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NIRMALABEHN
C/O SHRI BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA'S BUNGALOW
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2887. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

302. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 3, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I cannot today write a long letter to you.

If you persevere, you will certainly succeed in time in cultivating non-attachment. There is no harm if you remain attached to truth, etc. The world is both real and not real. Hence the sense of its reality will not disappear completely. For relief from constipation, you may consult Gangabehn. Let me know the effect on you of the latest changes in food.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6737. Also C.W. 4480. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] By Kishorelal G. Mashruwala
[2] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala

303. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

October 3, 1932

CHI. SHANTA[1],

You are becoming careless about your handwriting. The letter also is as bad as the handwriting. I hope now you are all right. Don't mind Sardar's jokes. You may write what you wish to.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4066. Also C.W. 17. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

304. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 3, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

I must write a long reply to your letter, but I do not have that much time or energy. You should take hip-bath in cold water.

But it should be taken before menstruation, not during it. Then there is friction-bath, about which Premabehn will probably know. Santok is likely to know about it too. You must take complete rest during the period. It is bad to have white discharge. This too can be cured by hip-bath and friction-bath. If you are after it and take the treatment I am suggesting, you are sure to get well.

There are natural differences between males and females. Hence, their functions too are somewhat different. This being the case, if a man tries to perform the functions of a woman or a woman that of a man, there is bound to be trouble. But they can overcome most of the difficulties. Such a situation can be reached only when an atmosphere of physical and psychological purity is created. You may find this point difficult to grasp. Read the letter twice or thrice. If you still do not catch the point, consult Chimanlal[2] or Narandas or Premabehn and then let me know what you have understood.

[1] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel
[2] Addressee's father

CWMG - LI

We feel shy to talk about these things and feel less shy writing about them because we do not have to face and hear the other person. It is easy to write sitting far away but we feel shy when two pairs of eyes meet. But this shyness decreases as we become increasingly pure.

Trying to be your mother,

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9957. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

305. A LETTER[1]

October 3, 1932

I cannot express my opinion without knowing your relations with that shopkeeper. You should seek the advice of Nanabhai[2] there. Again, you have written to me for advice after having already taken the step. This is not correct. An indefinite fast is not likely to change the opponent's nature immediately.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 104

306. LETTER TO ZOHRA BANU ANSARI

October 3, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA[3],

I have both your letters. By the grace of God my health is improving. God ordained my fast and now He has vouchsafed me food. Let us all now pray to God also to bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims. I can never rest in peace until that is accomplished.

I too receive letters from Father.

Now you must become my teacher. Your letters take the place of lessons for me. Quite a few people send me letters in Urdu but no one has as beautiful a hand as you. I am in-

[1] The correspondent, a young man, had started an indefinite fast in protest against the shopkeeper having broken his promise to let "untouchables" buy from his shop.

[2] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt

[3] Daughter of Dr. M. A. Ansari

clined to read your letters over and over again on account of your handwriting. Yes, at present Ba is with me for the whole day. Sardar and Mahadev are of course with me. Please convey salaams from us all to Father. Heaps of blessings for you.

GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Urdu in *Mahatma*, Vol. II, facing p. 304

307. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

October 4, 1932

MY DEAR HORACE,

I have your letter. I have written so much to so many friends about the fast that I do not feel like saying anything in this letter. No doubt you will see some of the letters that are going by this week's mail. This however I will say. God was never nearer to me than during the fast, and I felt the love of you all although I had not then any letter from England. My love to you and Olive.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1415

308. LETTER TO SCOTT HENDERSON[1]

October 4, 1932

If I say God inspired my fast and you say He did not, who will be the judge? Can you show me why I should prefer your opinion to the Inner Voice in me? Do you not think that I am safer in God's hands than men's?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

[1] A Christian missionary

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309. LETTER TO ESSOP[1]

October 4, 1932

I thank you for your touching appeal. The matter is over for the time being. But I suggest to you that such matters are too deep for argument. They must be left to God and His creature.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

310. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

October 4, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your long letter of 4th September. That is a bygone age.

After the fast is like a new birth to me. I am rapidly gathering strength. The lost weight has almost come back. The lost strength will take a little time. The days of agony were also days of inner joy. It was a little penance for the great sin of untouchability committed by millions against their fellow beings. But you know all about it by now.

You must try to get rid of your rheumatism by steam baths and a diet free of much starch and proteids and full of fresh fruit.

I wish you could persuade Nan and Tangai to go to a public school and live down the prejudice, i.e., if the teachers welcome the idea of their going there.

I had a birthday greeting cable from Denmark. The name of the sender was not given.

No more today.

Love from us and kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 114. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 94

[1] The addressee had written to say that fast unto death was tantamount to suicide.

311. MESSAGE WITH AN AUTOGRAPH[1]

October 4, 1932

May you recover soon.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

312. A LETTER[2]

October 4, 1932

I thank you for your letter. Misunderstanding about the life and motive of a public man will always arise. Your confession does you credit.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

313. A STATEMENT[3]

October 4, 1932

Removal of untouchability does not include inter-dining unless untouchables are excluded on the ground of their being born so, when others are not.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, was an American youth suffering from tuberculosis whose mother had written to Gandhiji explaining her helplessness and saying that her son was paying for his treatment by selling autographs of important people.

[2] The addressee, not identified in the source, had been hostile to Hindu religion and Gandhiji. After Gandhiji's fast he was convinced of Gandhiji's sincerity and as a penance had decided to observe silence and eat only one meal a day for forty days.

[3] It is not clear to whom the statement was made.

CWMG - LI

314. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

October 4, 1932

If you little children start calling yourselves "bhais" and "behns", what shall I call myself? Who started calling Upendra "Upendrabhai" and Bhadrika "Bhadrikabehn"? If I visit your Bal Mandir, I will not address any of you as "bhai" or "behn". Would you accept this condition? I will mention the other conditions afterwards.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 105

315. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 4, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. Anyone who wishes to get some publicity for himself by writing a foreword, should be qualified to write it. Ask Narandas how one may become so qualified.

I am certainly getting rest. Six days of fast are nothing unusual in my life. I have almost regained my normal strength. I experience no difficulty in attending to my correspondence.

I do not at all like that people in the Ashram should fall ill. There is some carelessness behind these illnesses. During this month when people generally fall ill, you should be very careful about food. The root cause of most illnesses is impaired digestion.

Vali[1] was thought to be among the strong and healthy girls in the Ashram. Even she has fallen ill! I see that some of the girls are a problem on your hands. I cannot guide you from here about Shanta without knowing more about her. Discuss the matter with Narandas and do what you think best. . . .'s[2] case also requires careful thinking. Menstruation in a girl of ten years is quite a serious matter. Get more facts about her from . . . [3]. She is likely to have picked up some bad practice when she used to go to school.

[1] A student of the Ashram school who later married Prithuraj, son of Lakshmidas Asar

[2] & [3] The names have been omitted.

We have been separated from our Premi[1] for we have been shifted to another cell. We do feel the separation, but can do nothing about it. Isn't life a series of separations?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10305. Also C.W. 6744. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

316. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR N. PANDYA

October 4, 1932

The whole world may change, but you will not. Some persons are wedded to their disease. You don't care if, in doing so, you are violating your dharma as a husband. And there is no possibility of your wife getting a divorce.

I am fast regaining my strength. Sardar does not stop ordering people about like a *sardar*[2] even here. If we suggest that to him, he replies by saying that he would do so when the Kathi[3] gives up his opium. To whom may I complain about this?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

317. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

October 4, 1932

You did right in giving me in your letter the heart-rending description of Taragouri's[4] death. Does anybody know when death, who ever stalks us like a shadow, will catch us by the throat? I know that Manu will be shocked, but he is a brave boy and will bear the blow. If, by way of *shraddha* for Taragouri, you banish the primus stove from your family, that will not be too great a sacrifice, and probably it will save other women from this monster.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 106

[1] Gandhiji's cat
[2] Leader
[3] Member of community of that name in Saurashtra
[4] Addressee's brother's wife

CWMG-II

318. LETTER TO RAMESHWARLAL BAZAJ

October 4, 1932

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Chi. Purnachandra has sent envelopes with your address. My fast is an old story now. My strength is returning, you need have no anxiety.

Have you got any returns from the new enterprise? Do write to me all details.

My earlier letter must have reached you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9448. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

319. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*October 5, 1932*][1]

I hope your nerves are somewhat at rest. Anyway you must have been sustained by the fact of Gurudev's closest association in this matter. Mahadev has translated and read to me one of his sermons on the very first day of the fast. It is a stirring thing. But the tokens of God's love were many in those days. I never had any doubt about God's guidance throughout.

But of course the largest part of the work still remains. And your place I have no doubt is still there.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 111

[1] The source gives this letter under the date October 6, but it appears to have been written on October 5; *vide* the following item.

320. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter. I know I gave you all a most anxious time. It was inevitable. It was all God's doing. I could trace His hand in everything that happened during those days.

Love in which Mahadev joins.

BAPU

[PS.]

Herewith a letter for Charlie.

From a photostat: G.N. 1459

321. LETTER TO PREMI JAIRAMDAS

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR PREMI,

Yes, I had all you sent me. You will now tell Father I had his love letter and that I am getting on well.

You must be quick and begin to write in Hindi.

Love to you all from us all.

BAPU

KUMARI SHRI PREMI JAIRAMDAS
PREM BHAVAN
HYDERABAD, SINDH

From a photostat: C.W. 9242. Courtesy: Jairamdas Doulatram

322. LETTER TO THE LARKS OF ST. FRANCIS[1]

October 5, 1932

Your loving letter of the 2nd September has duly reached me. I had also that beautiful cable during my holy fast. Tokens such as yours were food for me sent by God.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 108

[1] From "Diary, 1932". The source merely states that this was written to the nuns of an Italian convent named after St. Francis.

CWMG - LI

323. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

October 5, 1932

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Many thanks for the basket of fruit. I have no letter for you. I hope you are better and that your domestic troubles are eased if not over. How I wish that the untouchables solution could lead to further unity! May your efforts fructify. My salaams to Maulana Saheb.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5073

324. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October [*5*][1], *1932*

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in today (Wednesday). My writing was with the right hand. You found it clear because owing to the weakness of the body I had to trace my letters slowly. The left elbow was at fault. Up to yesterday there was no pain at all. But today I have a feeling that it would return with the filling in of the flesh. If it does return, it need not cause any anxiety. Of course I am spinning the full quota, i.e., 200 rounds at least. Keshu brought a new Gandiva. It works extremely well. I do not think I take more than one and a half hours. My weight stands at 99 lb. Now that I take some exercise, the weight cannot and must not increase by leaps. I have taken two pounds of milk today and for the first time, 20 dates. Ba is with me during the day, feeding and nursing me. I have to give much time to correspondence as the volume has increased enormously.

I wrote a note to Kisen. I wonder if she received it.

Narandas has got the permission to see you, if you would care to see him. Do you get all the letters collected during the week or only one per week?

[1] The source has "6", but Wednesday, on which Gandhiji wrote the letter, was October 5.

So you see that you cannot build a theory on a few days' or even months' observation. Do not now try to fix the quantity of salt mechanically. The quantity will adjust itself. An occasional drop will always help. If you are melting and can stand cold water, you should take two or three quick cold baths. And you should try deep breathing. It cools the body at once. This is done through the mouth as when you are whistling. Try in the open air to breathe in the air and you will instantaneously find the cooling effect. And do not stint yourself for fresh fruit. Take as many oranges as you like, and raw tomatoes (ripe of course).

Mahadev had forgotten to give your message to Gurudev and touch his feet on your behalf. So, having your letter by me, I read the portion to him and, much to his embarrassment, touched his feet on your behalf. He sat speechless, expressing gratefulness through his expression.

I am glad you and Kisen are working at making perfect slivers. They are the key to fine spinning. I am just now spinning 45 counts quite easily. Probably the count is finer. It will be tested tomorrow.

Horace, Esther, Muriel and many other friends who write to me always mention you and want me to send you their love. I am so very bad at conveying these messages. I must not omit the Italian sisters who have been sending beautiful letters.

Love to both of you.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6244. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9710

325. LETTER TO VIRENDRA PRAKASH[1]

October 5, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot imagine a more effective method of honouring the memory of the great Swami Dayanand than by every Arya Samajist devoting his best energies to the cause of the Harijans during this wave of reform.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 145. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 109

[1] Full name is from "Diary, 1932". The G.N. source merely says "Virendra".

326. LETTER TO FRANCISCA STANDENATH[1]

October 5, 1932

My saying that in Europe people could not live without some compromise was surely not meant to apply to a man like Satyavan. But you and I must not judge him. After all even the strongest have to compromise to an extent. No one can lay down the law for the other.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

327. LETTER TO ADA WEST

October 5, 1932

MY DEAR DEVI,

So you fasted! Just like you. I am regaining my lost strength rapidly. It was all a rich experience. I have gone through many and more prolonged fasts. But none was so joy-giving.

It seems that the work there is too trying for you. Of course you must not work beyond your strength.

Ba and Devdas I see frequently nowadays. Manilal must be reaching Bombay in a day or two. Poor boy! He is coming to see me dying. He will have the disappointment of his life. Ba has aged.

Love.

BHAI

From a photostat: C.W. 4435. Courtesy: A. H. West

[1] The source does not mention the addressee, but in "Diary, 1932", under the date October 5 Standenath is listed among those to whom Gandhiji wrote letters. Satyavan, mentioned in the letter was addressee's husband, Frederic Standenath.

CWMG - LI

328. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

I prize the weather from Mr. Lloyd George's garden charged as it is with his love.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

329. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

Now that the fast is a thing of the past and has perhaps justified itself, George Lancaster would not want me to argue all its ethics. After all things that come from God are hardly capable of being fully reasoned out.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 107

330. A LETTER

October 5, 1932

Yes, these have been days of marvel. I only hope that the enthusiasm will not wane.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 109

331. LETTER TO BADRIDUTT PANDE

October 5, 1932

Your grief[1] is beyond words. But joy and sorrow are alike gifts of God. So we must accept both with tranquillity and in the same spirit. And why the fear of death? That is in store for all. Those who are gone are not truly gone, those living are

[1] The addressee had suffered a double bereavement: a son had died of drowning and then a daughter had died from the shock of her brother's death.

CWMG - LI

not truly with us. Both exist but at different places. So much for philosophy. May God grant both of you peace and fortitude.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 109

332. LETTER TO KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUANI

October 6, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter and khadi piece and socks. I thank you for them. I shall use them as may be required. The fine piece you sent in April was also received. It still covers me daily. I did acknowledge it on 15th April[1]. I am surprised you did not get my postcard.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SMT. KHAGENDRA PRIYA BARUA
NOWGONG
ASSAM

From a photostat: C.W. 9552

333. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

October 6, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I am still anxiously waiting for Government's reply to my letter of the 29th ult.[2] addressed to Major Bhandari, and forwarded by you, I understand, to the Government. Meanwhile arising out of Sjt. Kelappan's fast in South India I had to send a long telegram[3] to the Zamorin, Calicut, which was referred to the Government and which so far as I am aware, has not still gone to the Zamorin. Now that matter is one of life and death and though Sjt. Kelappan's fast has been suspended at my instance, he is by no means yet out of the wood. And now I am necessarily dragged into it because of my successful intervention. The Zamorin of

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLIX, p. 307.
[2] The source has "inst.". For the text of the letter, *vide* pp. 151-2.
[3] *Vide* p. 177.

Calicut is the central figure in this controversy. Sjt. Kelappan's fast is suspended only for three months. There is not therefore much time to be wasted. I should therefore like to know when this telegram will be sent to the Zamorin and whether I am free to carry on correspondence in connection with untouchability. Delay is a matter of great danger and vexation.

It is also highly necessary for me to see some co-workers in this connection. I would therefore like you please to secure early decision from Government in this matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 257. Also G.N. 3862

334. LETTER TO MRS. LINDSAY

October 6, 1932

Thanks for your sweet letter. Yes, it would be tragic if God was accessible only to the learned. My feeling coincides with your washerwoman's. There was once a scientific expedition in search of God. The scientists are reported to have come to India and to have found God not in the homes of Brahmins, nor in the palaces of kings, but they found Him in a hut of an untouchable. Hence my cry to God to admit me to the untouchable fold. After fifty years of trial they found me worthy to be so admitted. And I rejoice over the event.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 112

335. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

October 6, 1932

I miss your presence. The flower-pots are a constant reminder. But then it is a prisoner's privilege to miss the presence of dear ones.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

CWMG - LI

336. LETTER TO PATANKAR[1]

October 6, 1932

I thank you for your letter and the *prasadam*. Please thank all the merchants for the *Akhand Saptah*. I have no doubt that all such spiritual effort helped the great manifestation of the fast week.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 112

337. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

October 6, 1932

Let this suffice as a brief answer to your questions.

Inter-dining and intermarriage are not an essential part of removal of untouchability root and branch. These two form a separate reform and must come one day for all sections of Hinduism.

Nothing can be or should be done by compulsion. Fasting and the like are not designed to compel people to act against their wills, they are designed to make people think and act. If untouchables are no longer untouchable what are they in Hindu society? My own opinion is that the varna system has just now broken down. There is no true Brahmin or true Kshatriya or Vaishya. We are all Shudras, i.e., one varna. If this position is accepted, then the thing becomes easy. If this does not satisfy our vanity, then we are all Brahmins. Removal of untouchability does mean root-and-branch destruction of the idea of superiority and inferiority. He who says, 'I am more than my fellow' debases himself; he who says, 'I am the least among my fellows' raises himself. My fast was intended not to deal with the question superficially but to make us true.

I wish I could mechanically fix the time limit. Who am I to do so? But this I can say from my past, there will be no fast in this matter if the reform is progressing steadily and there is no humbug or make-believe behind it. Real progress is self-

[1] The addressee is not identified in the source. But "Diary, 1932" gives his name as Patankar of Belgaum.

demonstrated. The Harijans will feel its glow in unmistakable terms. I would beseech you therefore not to worry about the time limit.

We all believe in idols and images of some sort. I do. The ordinary temple has no attraction for me personally. But it has a tremendous spiritual value. Therefore it must be open to Harijans. Reform of temples, not their destruction, is necessary.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 109-10

338. LETTER TO V. RAMJEE RAO

October 6, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do hope that Andhradesh will not lag behind the rest of the country in the matter of removal of untouchability.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. RAMJEE RAO
"DEENABANDHU" OFFICE
MASULIPATAM

From a photostat: G.N. 4578

339. A LETTER

October 6, 1932

A thief does not steal in accordance with God's wish but even his stealing cannot be but by His permission.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

CWMG - LI

340. TELEGRAM TO SHAUKAT ALI[1]

October 7, 1932[2]

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI
KHILAFAT OFFICE
BOMBAY

I AM DELIGHTED YOU HAVE POSTPONED YOUR AMERICAN VISIT. IT WILL BE GLORIOUS DAY WHEN SOLID HINDU-MUSLIM-SIKH UNITY IS ACHIEVED. REST WILL FOLLOW AS DAY FOLLOWS NIGHT. IF YOU WILL SEARCH DILIGENTLY YOU WILL STILL FIND ME IN YOUR POCKET. LOVE.

GANDHI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 115. Also Government of India, Home Department, Political File No. 31/95/32. Courtesy: National Archives of India

341. A LETTER[3]

October 7, 1932

In my opinion all selfless service leads to self-purification. Economic and moral development should go hand in hand. *Atman* is that which animates the body. Realization comes through purification. Prayer is necessary for all, if food is.

Liberty should be taken away in lunacy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

[1] The telegram was withheld by the Government; *vide* "Letter to Home Secretary, Government of India", 7-11-1932.

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*

[3] The addressee, not identified by name in the source, was from Dharwar and had written to Gandhiji a long letter.

342. A LETTER

October 7, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

My inner being tells me that spiritual unity can only be attained by resisting with our whole soul the modern false life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9684. Courtesy: Vishvabharati Museum and Library, Santiniketan. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 117

343. LETTER TO KAHAN C. GANDHI

October 7, 1932

I got your loving letter. But your love is accompanied with the demand that I should give up my conviction and labour of 50 years. How can I yield even to your love and do that?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

344. LETTER TO MANISHANKAR GANPATRAM

October 7, 1932

Inter-dining and intermarrying with *Antyajas* are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability. There can be no coercion in these matters. Nor should anybody be prevented from having such relations with untouchables if he wishes, just as nobody is prevented from having them with members of other communities. Eradication of untouchability has nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarrying.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

CWMG - LL

345. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 7, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

You must have got my postcards[1]. All who go to Nasik or write to a prisoner there should remember what I have explained. Anybody who goes to Thana or writes to someone there may also make use of it.

I got two letters from Kishorelal and one from Gomati.

I need not say anything about the propriety or otherwise of the fast. There was certainly some defect in it, but the fast was absolutely necessary. It may be regarded as the ultimate step in non-violence. I am now gradually regaining my strength. In fact I have regained most of it. The weight, which had gone down to 93.5 lb has now risen to 99. Before the fast it was 101. I am sure that on the whole the fast will benefit my health. My daily food consists of 2 lb. of milk, nine oranges or *mosambis* juice of pomegranates or grapes, and gourd or tomato soup once a day. I walk in the morning and in the evening for a total of an hour and a half without getting tired, write quite a large number of letters, and spin at least 200 rounds, going up to as far as 40 counts. Ba is allowed to stay with me during the day. Devdas is permitted to come and see me.

It is necessary that we should spin as fine yarn as we can. I also admit the moral blemish in wearing clothes of fine yarn, but fine cloth has also some benefits. It is very necessary from an artistic point of view. In the attempt to spin fine yarn, one makes many discoveries. It makes for deftness of the hand. In the past the people were forced to spin fine yarn. Even as atonement for that, some of us ought to spin fine yarn as part of the *yajna* of spinning, so that the yarn spun by them might be available whenever fine cloth is found to be absolutely necessary. If we have to pay the full labour charges for fine yarn, the cost of such cloth would be exceedingly high.

It was not proper for Kishorelal to have insisted on spinning a thousand rounds during the week of the fast. He should have recognized his limitations in this matter. One learns real humi-

[1] For one of these, *vide* p. 183.

lity by doing so. One may, if one wishes, do labour which is easier even than spinning. But those who cannot do any manual work can also serve through their thoughts and writings. He is a thief who has hands but does not use them to do any work.

I like the verse as amended: "I wish I could always employ my all in relieving some creatures' pain."[1]

Kishorelal knows that Nath had some doubt about the moral propriety of my fast. At my request, Nath came and discussed the matter a little with me during the fast. I do not know whether he was finally convinced.

Rabindranath went the furthest he could this time. We have come very close to each other. I don't think I have left out anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2888. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

346. LETTER TO LILY H. SHAH[2]

October 7, 1932

Do you realize what you are suggesting when you ask that you should be permitted to offer me the first meal to end my fast? Should I fast again in order that you may do that?

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 114

347. LETTER TO SARUPRANI NEHRU[3]

October 7, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter.

You should not hesitate to send for a doctor when your health warrants it. You are taking sufficient fruit, I hope. May God make you well soon.

[1] The original Sanskrit verse means: "I desire the end of the suffering of all creatures that suffer."

[2] Hiralal Shah's daughter, now Lily Anand Pandya

[3] Motilal Nehru's widow

CWMG - LI

I am delighted with your decision to remain here till I have given a final answer. The children will, of course, be pleased at it. Give my blessings to them.

Your gift has been received but do we need this kind of courtesy between us? Premlilabehn and Ramanarayan's wife anyway send me fruits in plenty.

Write to Sarup[1] and Krishna[2] and tell them that I know their feelings even without a wire from them.

I can see what services you are rendering to the Harijans here. Ba narrates everything to me.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Gandhiji–Indira Gandhi Correspondence File. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

348. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

October 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

No need whatsoever for apology. I hope you received my previous letter in reply to your earlier letter.

There are insurmountable difficulties about adopting the way you suggest.[3] As a prisoner I am not free to discuss them. But if it was open to me to discuss them, I think you would be convinced of the soundness of my reason. But this I may say that no one can be more eager than I am to see peace established between the Government and the people or the Congress.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
"THE LEADER" OFFICE
ALLAHABAD

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 223. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 117-8

[1&2] Addressee's daughters

[3] The addressee had suggested withdrawal or suspension of civil disobedience.

349. LETTER TO MOHANLAL

October 8, 1932

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

You are right in your view that inter-dining and inter-marrying with *Antyajas* are not a necessary part of the movement for the eradication of untouchability. Hence there can be no coercion brought to bear on anybody in regard to these. If, however, anybody wishes of his own free will to have such relations with *Antyajas*, he should not be prevented from doing so, just as members of "touchable" communities are not prevented from having such relations among themselves. Eradication of untouchability means permitting Harijans, and persuading others to permit them, to enjoy the rights which as a human being every Hindu enjoys.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 232

350. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

October 8, 1932

There was some merit in Mohamad Kaji's decision to observe the *roza*. Islam enjoins keeping of the *roza* during a time of misfortune. One other Muslim friend also had kept the *roza* at that time. The *roza* is not a fast. In this matter Muslim friends should earnestly wish that, just as the problem of the *Antyajas* has been solved, that of the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs also may be solved, and should do their duty towards that end.

A solution of the problem from the religious point of view was certainly one of the aims of my fast. The Hindu public realized this without any propaganda for that purpose, and the great awakening that has come about is indeed of a religious nature.

From the religious standpoint the Government award would have destroyed the *Antyajas*. As compared with that aspect of the problem, the political aspect was insignificant. Politics is included in religion and is not an independent activity. The

solution of the *Antyajas* problem from a religious point of view includes the solution of the problem of all oppressed races in the world. The Christians and Muslims also seem to have grasped this point.

I see no violation of principle in a teetotaller present at a feast passing a glass of wine. If one attends such a feast, it is one's duty, according to me, to pass the glass and there is no hypocrisy in doing so. That is one way of quietly winning the love of the people who drink. This argument applies only to a strict teetotaller, and the question also was put with reference to such a person. If my reply is not properly understood, it is likely to be misapplied, but I have no fear in giving you this reply.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 116-7

351. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 8, 1932

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have your letter. Do what you think best. I cannot guide you from here. Think over the pledge which was taken. It should not be violated in the slightest degree. This does not mean that I know anything in the matter. I don't remember everything now. This is why I have always insisted that whenever a person takes a vow, he should immediately write it down. If he does not do that, afterwards his resolution weakens and he interprets the vow to make it much milder. I have often been guilty of such behaviour myself and my conscience has pricked me afterwards.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5511

CWMG 61

352. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

October 8, 1932

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI)[1],

Have you requested me not to take the trouble of writing to you, so that you also may not have to write to me? But how can I, when I am well enough and eat and work as usual, and get time to write, refrain from writing? I don't mind Vimu's having had a trip to Yeravda, but has she started working as a scavenger-girl? The brave Dhiru seems to have become a little wiser.

Has his health improved?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5336

353. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

October 8, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

I got your letter. I have now regained sufficient strength. Make proper use of every moment of your time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9447

354. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

October 8, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

I got your letters.

Mixed dinner parties with Harijans are not a necessary part of the movement against untouchability, but they are a consequence of it. I am glad, too, that they take place. Though opposition to them is only to be expected, no one will be able to stop them if such dinners have become a popular movement. There is no argu-

[1] Wife of Chhaganlal Joshi

ment whatever based on dharma in support of ideas of pollution through food, etc.

While we do not encourage image-worship in the Ashram, we do not forbid it either. Temples in one form or another will always remain as long as Hinduism flourishes. *Antyajas* should have the right to enter all temples recognized as such by the Hindus. It cannot be otherwise if we wish to root out the very idea of a certain class of people being *Antyajas*. Hence, not only is there no contradiction of Ashram principles in an Ashram inmate encouraging temple-entry, but on the contrary it is his duty to encourage it. From a religious standpoint, this issue is very important for the *Antyajas*. It is going to be a test for the Hindus.

I think it necessary that Ashram inmates should be permitted to go, or should go, to work outside for anti-untouchability work. All Ashram inmates are intended and trained ultimately to go out to work among the people. No inmate of the Ashram who wishes to worship Ganesh or any other deity should be stopped from doing so.[1] However, as an institution we should, in my opinion, remain equal towards all religions and, therefore, should not permit a public temple with an idol in the Ashram. Our public temple is the open prayer ground with the horizons in the different directions as its walls, the sky as its roof and formless God as the idol in the temple. If we followed any other course, we would be required to provide for a mosque, a fire temple, a church, a synagogue and so on. At present the number of Hindus is indeed greater, but we do wish that followers of other faiths also should join us in course of time. An attitude of equality towards all religions requires us to keep in view from now the necessity for all such places of worship. If we do that, however, we might not be able to keep up our attitude of equality, and therefore, the golden rule for us to follow in this as in other matters is to exercise self-control. Think over all this carefully and understand it fully, and ask me again and again till you have done so. I shall not get tired of answering your questions. I have now regained sufficient strength to attend to such duties.

I have forgotten how Sundarabai and Deshpande came to know each other. The religious issue arose because of the previous marriage that was believed to have taken place. I only suggested it as an ideal that there should be no marriage between a teacher and his pupil or between one teacher and another working in the same institution. There is certainly no religious objection to such

[1] Some words in this sentence, illegible in the source, are supplied from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 127-8.

marriages. If any two persons wish to marry, we may not encourage them but we certainly cannot prevent them. I am writing this as a general rule only; I have forgotten what actually happened in this particular case. The ideal which I have explained has also not been sufficiently explained to people. Nor is any warning given to persons joining the Vidyapith. How can we, then, apply the principle in this case? In such instances, though sticking to our ideal, we should adopt a liberal attitude.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 236. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

355. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 8, 1932

CHI. MANI,

I did get your long letter though it was not long enough for me. The fast is now a thing of the past. It was inspired by God and so it was crowned with success. I am rapidly getting back my normal health. I have almost regained my strength. Everyday I take two pounds of milk and lots of juice of oranges, pomegranates or grapes, and gourd or tomato soup. . . .[1] I can take a fairly good walk, and spin at least 200 rounds of fine yarn, of 45 counts. I also write a great many letters. So you see there is no cause now for anxiety. Ba is permitted to stay with me during the day. Devdas also is allowed to come and see me. He is all right now.

Your dreaming about food could be a sign of indigestion, if nothing more. Such dreams are common when one is very hungry or suffers from indigestion. You should find out the real cause and take the necessary measures, and then stop worrying about the matter. If one's life is regulated by rules of self-discipline, such dreams are bound to stop in the course of time. We must not expect the veils of ignorance of many lives to vanish all at once; they will take their own time. But we need not, for that reason, lose heart or give way to despair or slacken our efforts, and we must entertain no doubt nor worry about the ultimate victory. This is the meaning of non-attachment taught by the *Gita*.

Fasting produces different effects on different persons, and this is not surprising. They depend on one's physical constitution

[1] Some words here are censored by the jail authorities.

and psychological attitude towards the fast. One who is not accustomed to fasting will be upset by the thought of fasting even for one day. But fasting is child's play for one who is in the habit of fasting from time to time. Similarly, a person who has not much fat in his system cannot hold out for many days. But a fat person, if he is patient, can prolong the fast for a long time and physically benefit by it.

Father and Mahadev are all right. We never enjoyed such solitude before, and it has done us much good.

I hope you are in good health and so also are Lilavati and Kamaladevi. My blessings to the other women there. Tell Lilavati that I had a fine letter from Munshi. Ask her to write to me if she can and feels inclined. I enclose Nandubehn's letter which was received here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 87-9

356. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 8, 1932

I have your long letter. I was very pleased. Though you did not get all my letters, it would seem that my blessings sent through others were conveyed to you all right. My fast is an old story now. I am gradually recovering my strength. I take two pounds of milk and the juice of oranges, *mosambis*, grapes and pomegranates and the soup of tomatoes and gourd. I spin daily not less than 200 rounds of 45 counts and write letters too.

Ba spends the day with me and so I don't have to worry about anything. I am happy that you keep good health. Tell Sarup and Krishna that Mother is here. She came and saw me during the fast. Chand[1], Tara[2], Indu, etc., also came and saw me. Indu seems to be growing well. You have given no news about Kanta in your letter. If Rani Vidyavati is with you, tell her that I wrote several letters to her. Your enthusiasm for study is commendable. Read and learn as much as you can while you are there. After you are released, we shall make better arrangements. Do not be impatient however. Your purity, fortitude and devotion to duty represent your real education. It is true, of course, that education in letters

[1&2] Chandralekha and Nayantara

will add to their lustre, and, therefore, God willing, your desire for it will be fulfilled. May God preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3430

357. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 8, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you last week.

You have done right in giving up cereals and pulses for some time. If you restrict your food to milk and curds, raisins, juice of sour lemon with soda bicarb, oranges, *mosambis*, cucumber, tomatoes, radishes and salad, your weight will certainly go down. Do not eat almonds or other nuts. If you wish to chew something, you may eat one ounce of coconut. You may eat less but not more than one ounce. If it does not agree with you, you can stop it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6822

358. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*October 8, 1932*][1]

I got both your letters. There is nobody now among the prominent leaders who has not blessed my fast. There is no doubt that a fast is the ultimate weapon in non-violence. It is being misused and will probably be misused still more. But there is a saving grace even in its misuse. It can harm only the person who misuses it. And, if we consider the matter deeply, even the harm to him is very small. If his motive is pure, his soul will not be sullied, and only the body will be harmed. However, not many would come forward even to misuse it. How many, after all, would be ready to endure the physical suffering involved in a fast?

I am regaining strength quite rapidly. I take two pounds of milk and plenty of juice of oranges, *mosambis*, grapes and pome-

[1] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 116

CWMG-LI

granates. I also take soup of gourd or tomato. The weight, which had gone down to 93½ lb., has now risen to 99 lb. I can walk for a total of an hour and a half daily, and can write a large number of letters. I have thus practically regained my original strength. I spin at least 200 rounds of nearly 45 counts. Nor do I feel much tired afterwards. There is, therefore, no cause for the slightest anxiety.

Taramati came and saw me, accompanied by her children. This time she seems to have made good progress. Both the children are in excellent condition. Dilip writes to me occasionally. Taramati writes regularly.

Ba is permitted to stay with me during the day, and Devdas is permitted to come and see me. He has now recovered his health. He still seems to be a little weak, though.

Though I suffered much physically during the fast, I also enjoyed immense peace of mind.

I hope you are keeping good health.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 116-7

359. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 8, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter has come. Kudsia's brother has sent a letter. He too will come to the Ashram this month. Kudsia must be all right now. I am getting back my strength. I was glad to have seen you.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 258

[1] The addressee had been permitted to see Gandhiji during his fast.

CWMG - LII

360. LETTER TO SECRETARIES, FRIENDS OF INDIA

October 9, 1932

JOINT HON. SECRETARIES
FRIENDS OF INDIA
46 LANCASTER GATE
LONDON, W. 2

DEAR FRIEND[S],

I thank you for your letter of sympathy. The funds can be sent to the anti-untouchability association formed under the chairmanship of Sjt. G.D. Birla for the furtherance of its objects.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 224

361. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

October 9, 1932

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your two letters—the only ones to be received by me. I hope you had my note sent through Kamala. Tell the 4-year old dame that she was forgiven for not completing her fast. Prayers of little ones are better than their fasts. Who knows but that it was such prayers that were answered. Well, the whole time the fast was on, I was thinking too of the Hindu-Muslim question and asking God to give me light. How I wish your, Maulana Abul Kalam's and Malaviyaji's efforts fructified. It would be a grand day if we could achieve not a paper but a heart unity.

I am glad your wife and sisters are better. You too must be well now or you must have a compulsory fast for regaining health.

My salaams to both the Maulanas.

Love from us all.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 223. Also G.N. 5076

362. LETTER TO VITHAL R. SHINDE[1]

October 9, 1932

I am not going to be party to any quarter being granted to untouchability—this enemy of all truth, righteousness and progress.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 122

363. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

October 9, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have your beautiful letter. I am daily seeking light. This unity between Hindus and Muslims is also my life's mission. The restrictions do hamper me. But I know that when I have the light, it will pierce through the restrictions. Meanwhile I pray though I do not yet fast.

I hope you were none the worse for the strenuous work in Poona and equally fatiguing long journey.

Mahadev has translated for us your beautiful sermon to the villagers on 20th ultimo.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4633

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji if in the matter of eradication of untouchability he would agree to a workable compromise.

364. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

October 9, 1932

MY DEAR URMILA[1],

What a tragedy! As you were going out that day, I was about to shout out, when Sarojini said you were all coming back soon. And I subsided. But so it was to be. It was to me a sharp reminder that I was a prisoner and therefore not to have all my way. It is a good thing to have these shocks. They keep me humble.

The lesson is, never put off till tomorrow what you can do today and never put off till the next moment what you can do this moment. I wanted to know all about you and your children. Now you must write fully about your joys such as you may have and sorrows that you do have. But sorrows of God's servants are their joys. They are the fires through which God tries and purifies them. Unmixed joys of this earth will stink in our nostrils and we should die of want of the oxygen of sorrows. I have read your letter to Mahadev. Let your boy go through the hard mill of difficulties instead of getting a soft job.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 120

365. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS[2]

October 9, 1932

It was fearful not to have met you again. As you were going, I do not know whether you noticed that I was casting hungry eyes on you, when Sarojini said you were soon coming back. But you were not to.

What is the meaning of my being a prisoner, if things could happen in the natural course. Let us therefore be thankful for the mercies we had. I was glad that my fast drew you to Poona. I was hungering to see you, since you will not write.

And now do throw yourself in this glorious work of untouchability.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 119

[1] Sister of C. R. Das
[2] Wife of C. R. Das

366. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 9, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

Vinoba's advice is correct, but it does not mean that one should not try physical remedies. One should strive for self-purification, whatever the condition of one's health. But your constipation ought to be cured by ordinary remedies. I am writing to Narandas and suggesting to him that he should let you go to Rajkot or Vijapur. Change of water often helps. Moreover, you will benefit from good company at either place.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6738. Also C.W. 4481. Courtesy : Bhau Panse

367. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

At Night, October 9, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I duly got your mail. We must help Bhau to overcome his constipation. I feel that, if you send him to Rajkot, the water there may perhaps agree with him. If it is impossible to send him to Rajkot, you may send him to Vijapur. But I am eager that he should go to Rajkot, as we know that the water of that place agreed with Purushottam. Moreover, he will benefit from the company of Purushottam and Jamnadas. Do what you think best.

I feel worried about Kusum. The thought that her health does not improve is a painful one. Does she take proper rest now? Prema told me in her letter that you abstained from many things during my fast. I hope that has not affected your health. I am regaining my strength with wonderful speed. You see how many letters I write. I must have written about 30 letters today, important and unimportant. As for spinning, I spin at least 200 rounds a day, of more than 45 counts. The elbow is in excellent condition, so far. I have gone up to two pounds of milk. Fruit continues. The weight also has gone up to 99.

I can walk for a sufficiently long time. You need not, therefore, worry about me at all.

In which jail is the elder Kusum[1] to be kept? Where is she at present? After the death at Trivedi's place,[2] I felt that we should either banish the primus stove from the Ashram or the women should resolve never to light it. I enforced this rule today in the case of Ba. We have got a primus here at present. Ba went to light it. I stopped her and Mahadev went instead. The dress of our women is such that there is every danger of its catching fire. If the women must use a primus stove, they should ask a man every time to light it. Really speaking, it is not at all necessary.

I hope that Qureshi's piles have completely disappeared now. How is Amina? Ask her to write to me. Anyone who wishes may write. Nobody need refrain out of pity for me now. Ba is still permitted to stay with me for the whole day. But the permission may now be withdrawn any time. Devdas is free to come and see me every day. Read my letter[3] to Panditji.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8259. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

368. LETTER TO MULCHAND PAREKH

October 9, 1932

Send a report and accounts to Thakkar Bapa[4] and request him for help. While the movement for self-purification is in full swing, take a pledge that you will sell yourself and your belongings but will not let any school or Ashram be closed for want of funds. Do not reconcile yourself to the inability of Kathiawar to collect such a small amount. You have dedicated yourself to this work. You ought not to give up the task in despair so soon.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 118

[1] Kusumbehn Desai

[2] Of Taragouri, his sister-in-law; *vide* p. 190.

[3] *Vide* pp. 208-10.

[4] Amritlal V. Thakkar, member of Servants of India Society and social worker who dedicated himself to the cause of Harijans and Adivasis

369. A LETTER

October 9, 1932

No son is entitled to sit in judgment over his father. Your work is that of a reformer. A soldier in the cause of reform works so as to influence the criminal-minded and does not publicize their weaknesses or drag them to courts of law. Your duty is to reform your father's conduct through love, but it would be a sin for you to make his weaknesses public. You actually mention several virtues of your father. It would of course be better if he were free from greed, but you will be able to overcome that weakness in time through loving persuasion. You should tolerate it till then. Reason with your brothers and sisters. Make your own life purer and more self-controlled. If even after all these efforts you cannot persuade your father to change his ways, you may leave your home. I would see nothing improper in that. But even that you should do after giving him sufficient time to improve. We ought not to be self-righteous and expect, as soon as we have changed, that the world will change too. We may have changed in one respect, but probably we do not see the many other weaknesses which remain in us. We ought to bear this in mind and adopt a liberal attitude towards the weaknesses of other people. I think you now have the answers to all your questions.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 118-9

370. LETTER TO DR. SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

October 10, 1932

MY DEAR SURESH,

Why have you kept me in suspense about your health? I know your views of old on caste and untouchability. I quite agree with you that caste has got to go. But whether it would do so in my generation I do not know. Only let us not mix up the two and spoil both causes. Untouchability is a soul-destroying sin. Caste is a social evil. Anyway you get thoroughly

well and work away against caste with your usual vigour. You will find in me a good supporter.

With love and all good wishes,

BAPU

Advance, 15-10-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 124

371. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

October 10, 1932

You are always punctual in sending me the right message at the right moment. You put to shame the youth of the country by your enthusiasm at your time of life. May God enable you to finish the century in the same state of vigour.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 125

372. LETTER TO SOMASUNDARAM[1]

October 10, 1932

You do not seem to have studied my very first statement given to the Press. You will find from it that although technically I could express my purpose in the manner I did, the fast was in truth addressed to the Hindus and others who had faith in me. You will observe too that the vast mass of Hindus instinctively understood the purpose of the fast. I hope this is quite clear. The reason why Government acceptance was necessary was because the Pact would be useless in the teeth of the adverse decision. This was the natural corollary to the Pact and the fast.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 123

[1] The addressee, writing from Ceylon, had asked why Gandhiji was not satisfied by the Pact itself and had made the Government's acceptance of it a condition for breaking his fast.

CWMG - II

373. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

October 10, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I had got your letter. You may have thought it too long, but I did not feel so, especially as it gave me the news that the 'beggar' had started on his begging mission. Tell him that I had got his letter. Since he has relieved me of my worry, I intend this letter for him too. My body has almost recovered its normal strength. My diet includes milk, oranges, *mosambis*, grapes or pomegranates, and gourd and tomatoes among vegetables. Sometimes I drop milk for a day or two. I walk twice a day, for a total of an hour and a half. I write a great many letters. I spin, as I used to do before the fast, not less than 200 rounds daily, of more than 45 counts. This should reassure everyone. I suffered much physically during the fast but the mind was completely at peace. If the fast had had to be prolonged, I would not have felt any strain on the mind. But it was for God, at whose prompting I had undertaken the fast, to prolong it or make it short. Ba is still permitted to stay with me for the whole day. But that will probably stop now. Devdas can come and see me for some time. However he does not come every day. Sardar and Mahadev continue to be with me. Your health can be considered all right. If you have lost some weight, that is to the good. But you should not lose any more now. Vinoba's company has undoubtedly benefited you in that it has strengthened your faith in God. He has a beautiful way with him indeed. It is also good that you have had Gulzarilal's company. It is good, too, that you have come to have faith in nature-cure methods and simple food. These two save us from many diseases. Your daily programme is excellent. You should be happy that you are a 'C' class prisoner. Personally, I have always disliked being in 'A' or 'B' class. Even in 'C' class one can secure the facilities necessary to preserve one's health. Has Gulzarilal become sufficiently strong now? Is Madhavji all right? Sardar had acquired great speed in his study of Sanskrit, but owing to the fast it has slowed down a little. He is now preparing to resume the former speed. So far our daily routine has been quite satisfactory. We eat and sleep, read newspapers, pace up and down for a walk, read

and study what we wish to and spin. Carding is Mahadev's monopoly. But he has suspended that work for some time, for a fairly good stock of slivers has accumulated. Moreover, Chhakkaddas also has been sending fine slivers. I get letters from Wardha regularly. Give regards from us all to everyone there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad, pp. 74-5

374. LETTER TO DADACHANJI

October 10, 1932

BHAI DADACHANJI,

This is in reply to your letter of the 23rd. I wish to clarify my position in regard to Baba[1]. I find it very difficult to believe that one person can help another to see God. My heart refuses to accept this idea. When Baba, however, makes such a claim, I can only tell him that I would welcome his help if he could make me see God. We need not believe that a person has necessarily seen God just because he says that he has seen Him. Many persons who make such a claim are found to be suffering from a delusion. In many cases the claim is merely an echo of one's own wishes. I certainly do not believe that seeing God means seeing some Power outside of us, for I believe that He dwells in the hearts of us all. But only one in thousands knows Him through the heart. It is not enough to know God with one's intellect. I do feel that no person can help another to see God in this sense.

One cannot fast at the instance of somebody else in order to be able to see God. I would do so only when I feel an urge from within me. And when there is such an urge, I will not let myself be dissuaded from the step by anybody. There is absolutely no reason for assuming that fasting would help me to see God. I cannot believe that, if I agree to fast for forty days, Baba can help me to see God. That would be an easy bargain. If one can see God as easily as that, the experience has no value for me.

I thought that Baba did not divide life into separate fields. To a person whose life is dedicated to dharma, politics, economics, etc., are all aspects of dharma, and he cannot leave out any of them. According to me, a person who regards dharma as

[1] Meher Baba

one of the many activities of life does not know what dharma is. It is, therefore, inconceivable to me that I might some day give up politics, social reform and other similar activities. I have entered the fields of politics, social service, etc., for the sake of dharma.

I did not promise to translate Baba's writings into Gujarati. On the contrary, I suggested to Baba that he should come out of the spell of English and not write or get somebody to write for him in English, but write and explain his ideas in Gujarati, his mother tongue, or in Persian which, as he says, he knows very well. Yes, I would certainly translate into Gujarati any of his writings which deeply appeal to me.

In short, I am a student of Baba's ideas. I saw Baba, having received a wire from Jamshed Mehta whom I regard as a pure soul. I am always in search of *bhaktas* of God and, thinking that Baba was one, I met him.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 125-6

375. LETTER TO JHAVERCHAND MEGHANI[1]

October 10, 1932

I had very much liked the loving gift which you had sent to me when I sailed for England. I cannot put this[2] on the same level. . . . I am not a good judge of poetry.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 124

376. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SONI[3]

October 10, 1932

On the whole I liked the poems. But I did find the language of some of them bitter. . . . I am no good judge of poetry.

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 125

[1] (1897-1947); Gujarati poet and writer
[2] The addressee had sent to Gandhiji a poem "*Chhelli Salaam*".
[3] A Gujarati writer and translator

CWMG - LII

377. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR P. TRIVEDI

October 10, 1932

After the tragic death of Taragouri, would not all of you do this by way of *shraddha* to her? You should either banish the primus stove from your home or, if that is not possible, the women members should take a vow never to light it themselves. They should always ask a man to light it for them. The dress of our women is not designed to enable them to light a primus stove.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 127

378. A LETTER

October 10, 1932

Caste reform is necessary and anybody who can do that work should undertake it. The movement for the eradication of untouchability is bound to have an indirect effect in that field. I commend the efforts to help child-widows to marry again. These tasks can be undertaken by men of self-control and pure character.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 123

379. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

You are a very clever girl. You want me to fast again in order that you may send me *bhajans* composed by you. No, I will not fast. And the *bhajan* will please me only when you sing it to me. If I had not heard you sing the *bhajan* "Arise and Awake, O Traveller", it would not have touched me so deeply.

[1] *Vide* also p. 190.

CWMG - LI

Even if you sing this *bhajan* from outside the jail walls, your voice will reach me. I do hear, for instance, the sound of all of you dancing. Greetings to Father and Mother from us all. And a slap for you. Blessings to Dahyabhai. Is Pashabhai all right now? Ba spends the whole day with me. I am now regaining strength fairly rapidly, and, therefore, Ba's visits may stop now.

Many blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9669

380. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 10, 1932

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter containing the *bhajan*. I suppose you must have got my letter today. I am writing this letter to tell you about Hari-ichchha. I forgot to write about her earlier today. She is Valjibhai's niece. She lived in the Ashram for some years and has now married Engineer Kamdar of Baroda. I had been writing to her and asking her to go and see you. But since I had not written to you about her, you could not recognize her when she called on you. The fault was mine and not yours. Hari-ichchha informs me that you did not make her feel in any way that she was a stranger, and that both Mother and you showed her great love. The other one was Shanta, who still lives in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAIHANABEHN
C/O ABBAS SAHEB
CAMP
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9668

381. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

October 10, 1932

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got your letter. Yes, it is true that I completely forgot to write to Raihanabehn. It would have been better if I had prepared her. I have now written[1] to her today. But the truth is that she does not require anybody to be introduced to her. Visit her now and then and keep up the acquaintance.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARI-ICHCHHABEHN
C/O SHRI P. V. KAMDAR
SHIA BAGH
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7472. Courtesy: Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

382. LETTER TO BALDEVDAS BIJORIA

October 10, 1932

I have your kind letter. For people like me removal of untouchability is solely a matter of faith. I would never attempt to give up my life on a political issue. Yes, I agree that no coercion should be used whether in a religious or any other matter. As far as I can judge from here there is no coercion in the current activities and God is behind them. I firmly hold that there is no religion in observing untouchability. What more shall I write? I hope I shall continue to enjoy your love.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 124

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

383. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 10, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter reached me only today. Destiny is certainly there but so is effort too. Destiny simply means that in the absence of effort we have only the fruits of the actions of our past lives. Effort can change destiny. Therefore *brahmacharya* is necessary for those who wish to realize the Brahman. See the fifteenth chapter[1] of the *Gita*. Anyway *brahmacharya* is the essence of the *Gita*. One who wants to lose himself in the Brahman, one who wants to be ever immersed in service has no time for sensual pleasures. This answers all your doubts.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4262

384. LETTER TO CHAUNDE MAHARAJ

October 10, 1932

I have your letter. Here is my message:

I am growing stronger in my belief that cow-protection is an impossibility until we carefully study its economics, take into our fold the untouchables who can do immense service in this work until all the dairies are run on scientific lines and we take a vow to use the hide of dead animals only. Thus the duty now of workers for cow-protection is to understand well these significant points, act accordingly as far as possible and induce others to do so.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 123-4

[1] This was a slip; *vide* "Letter to Krishnachandra", 31-10-1932.

385. A LETTER[1]

October 11, 1932

I thank you for your letter. I quite agree with you that milk of cows and buffaloes should be avoided for the reasons given by you. I do not take this milk. But I do take goat's milk, though I consider that too objectionable on more general grounds. I have been trying to find an effective substitute for it, but have so far failed. I did not break my fast on honey, but on orange juice. But I do take honey and I do not consider it objectionable. If honey is obtained in a scientific manner not a bee need be destroyed or starved. But I confess to you that I do not always get such innocent honey.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 130

386. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

[*October 11, 1932*][2]

CHI. RUKMINI,

I now understand your previous letter.

You got a silver medal for singing, and now you want compliments for having made a speech. Am I right? But how can you get compliments if, in your joy for having won a medal, you fall ill? Get well if you wish to have my compliments. Who presented the medal to you? I hope you have kept up the practice on sitar.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

At present either you or Benarsi should write to me regularly.

SHRI RUKMINIDEVI
C/O SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR, BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9141

[1] The addressee, a Muslim Municipal Councillor from Gujarat, had said that Gandhiji ought to give up milk and honey.

[2] From the postmark

387. LETTER TO SUSHILABEHN GANDHI

October 11, 1932

CHI. SUSHILA,

What a strange person you are! You fell ill as soon as you landed at Bombay. May I take this to mean that I should send you back to South Africa immediately? Earlier, Manilal came in hot haste and took you away. This time, too, you two seem to have come with some such conspiracy. That is why, I suppose, Sita refused to come here without you. She was afraid that you might go away without her. I hope you are improving now. Ba will come to see you. Do not be in any hurry to come and see me. There is nothing to worry about in regard to my health. Take complete rest and get well. Ask Tara to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUSHILABEHN
C/O SHRI BALUBHAI MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA'S BUNGALOW
SANDHURST ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4796

388. LETTER TO TRIBHUVANDAS TRIKAMLAL

October 11, 1932

BHAI TRIBHUVANDAS,

I am grateful to you for sending me the works of Harikrishna Maharaj. I hope to go through them when I get some time. After that if I feel the need I will certainly call for the larger volume.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. TRIBHUVANDAS TRIKAMLAL
AMRITBHAVAN
RAILWAYPURA
MANINAGAR
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10501

389. A LETTER[1]

October 11, 1932

Eradication of untouchability means that we should treat *Antyajas* as we treat members of the other communities. That is, we should not object to their physical touch or to drinking water served by them, and they may enter our homes or public temples and attend schools like other Hindus. This much is necessarily implied in it. Whether one should eat food cooked by them or eat in their company or intermarry with them is a matter of one's own choice. Religion does not forbid that, nor does it enjoin it. The mixed dinner parties which are often arranged these days are not a necessary part of the movement. But I have no doubt that they deserve to be commended.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 129

390. A LETTER[2]

October 11, 1932

I have your letter. The Congress workers who left the meeting because drinking water was fetched by untouchables acted most improperly.

Drinking of water offered by untouchables is an integral part of the eradication of untouchability. Our dharma is to treat the untouchables the same way we treat other communities. Those who have done "expiation" have committed a sin and acted against the Congress. Your being boycotted is immoral and you must on no account undergo expiation. I am distressed that some of our brothers at Bilaspur by their immoral conduct have created a

[1] The source says the addressee was a Marwari gentleman of Nagpur.

[2] The addressee, not identified by name in the source, had given a distressing account of a meeting held at Bilaspur in connection with Gandhiji's fast. On some people accepting water from Chamars, it seemed, protests were raised. Some were forced to go through purificatory rites and others who had refused to do so were being threatened with excommunication. The correspondent had asked whether this was right.

misunderstanding in the minds of the untouchables. I want them to make a public acknowledgement of their mistake.

I am in favour of inter-dining and intermarriage but I do not consider them a necessary feature of removal of untouchability. I feel that those who consider it a dharma to practise these deserve to be applauded. The mixed public dinners that are arranged these days are in my opinion a good thing. I have not noticed any injunction against inter-dining and intermarriage in the scriptures.

This answers all your questions. Please write to me about further developments in the matter.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 129-30

391. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 12, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Today I will not write in Urdu.[1]

You do deserve *shabash*[2] for curing yourself quickly. You will get well quicker if you won't worry about meeting me. When God wills it, we shall meet. Meanwhile let us be thankful that we can write to each other.

Yes, I will write to the other girls about the baths.

Let us hope Kudsia will find her peace during her walks with Narandas. She will, if she keeps good health.

As for your womb it must not be removed unless it is diseased. For that you should consult Mrs. Lazarus and do as she advises. There should be no hurry about this operation. Operations are not always a sure cure. Natural treatment is the most efficacious in the long run and never harmful. Operations have often been harmful and at times even proved fatal.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 259

[1] Up to this the text is in Urdu.
[2] Compliments

392. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 12, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your weekly letter was received today. I am glad the weather there has improved and that you are feeling better. You do not tell me whether you have commenced your studies in earnest. If your health does not permit, I do not want to goad you to them. My question is, therefore, merely out of curiosity. It has been your wont to report your progress in your studies.

Though my weight shows no increase my general condition is decidedly better. I was walking with the aid of a stick. I gave it up two days ago. The feel is better in every way. Yes, Ba has been attending to my feed. It is still largely fruit. But that means much time and labour as you know to your cost and joy. The proportion is about the same. Manilal and Sushila have arrived. On hearing of the fast they could not restrain themselves. Sushila is ill and is laid up in Bombay. Manilal is not much better. I think I did tell you that he had that deadly fever through which Natal passed a few months ago. But he has seen me. He has brought many good apples from South Africa and oranges from Zanzibar. I wish you could share them. It is no use my attempting to send them there.

I understand what you say about visits. You remember Princess Aristarchi. She has kept up regular correspondence and sends very beautiful postcards containing sacred representations and adorned with suitable texts of her own choice.

Love to you both from us all including Ba.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6245. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9711

CWMG-II

393. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

October 12, 1932

What could be more auspicious than that I should execute God's will on Millie's birthday? She must have many many more birthdays and more opportunity of service.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

394. LETTER TO A. TURTON[2]

October 12, 1932

Thank God it was not I that embarked on the fast. It was all God's doing. And how shall the whole world's 'no' prevail against God's 'yes'?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

395. LETTER TO CHAMAN KAVI[3]

October 12, 1932

It does not seem likely that I shall get the permission to write what you suggest. If anybody suspects my motives, God alone can remove his suspicion. Personally I feel that I have served all religions. Many friends have even realized this. If my claim is true, the fact will not remain hidden for ever. God, who inspired me to undertake the fast, will also make all people realize its significance.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 132

[1] Polak in a letter had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the fact that the latter had begun his fast on Millie Polak's birthday.

[2] Turton had disapproved of Gandhiji going on a fast since, in his opinion, it amounted to suicide.

[3] A Khoja gentleman from Kutch

CWMG-LI

396. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

October 12, 1932

CHI. NARAYANRAO ALIAS BABLO,

I did receive a complaint against you. All children play, but they should play when it is time for play and should work when it is time for work. In any case, they should not give trouble to others. I am told that these days you play all the time and also harass people. Is this true ? If it is, you should not behave in that manner.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9480

397. LETTER TO GULAB

October 12, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I have your letter. You have to improve your handwriting a great deal. You should write with great care. You do right in standing up when you feel sleepy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1726

398. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

October 13, 1932

MY DEAR ANGADA[1],

Your dear letter. It is like a soothing draught. I knew that you and others whom I have in mind would see the inwardness of the fast. God let me down gently as a mother her child. And the glorious manifestation all over the land was more than that to me. Horace Alexander told me you had accepted a job. Do tell me something about yourself. Do not think us to be uninterested in your personal life and welfare. Ba is allowed to be with me during the day. So you have love from us all four.

[1] Monkey prince sent as a messenger by Rama to Ravana. The addressee had carried to the Viceroy Gandhiji's letter of March 2,1930; *vide* Vol. XLIII, pp. 2-8.

CWMG - LI

I have almost regained lost strength.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4543. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

399. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 13, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. You have a difficult task. Do, cheerfully and with faith, as Narandas advises, or live alone independently. If you think you cannot possibly do that, go to the Ashram. It would also be good if you lived under Mridulabehn's[1] care. If, however, you are determined to work in the city, you should stay in the city. You are not strong enough to go to the city and return on bicycle. I think it would be a risky thing to do. Give up the desire to ride two horses at the same time. You should not become an obstacle in the attempt being made in the Ashram to do without outside labour as far as possible. Do not worry about your letter being long, but you should always write with ink. You should not spend a pie in excess of your income. Write to me from wherever you are. What you write about prison life is not correct. I have not come across any instance of a person having been made dull and insensitive by prison food.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9323

400. LETTER TO RASIK S. DESAI

October 13, 1932

CHI. RASIK[2],

I was surprised to see your note. I hope you have gained peace of mind as much as you have improved in health—my health also has improved. Blessings to you all. Sardar and Mahadev are quite well.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6619. Also C.W. 4351. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Mridulabehn Sarabhai
[2] Valji G. Desai's nephew

401. LETTER TO JAYA

October 13, 1932

CHI. JAYA,

I was surprised to see your slip. My health is now what it was before I started this fast. I am very happy that all the women of your group are together. One does not often get such experience in one's life. I get news about Venilal from time to time. My blessings to all the women. Sardar and Mahadev are quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

402. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

October 13, 1932

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I got your letter written in English, as also the printed article. But I have still not got permission to write even about untouchability. Personally, I am indeed very eager to write. I have also written to the Government for necessary permission. Let us see what happens. All of us are happy here. Please take care and see that your constant travelling does not affect your health.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1103

403. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 13, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your English letter. I am not sure how far it is proper to conduct satyagraha through the untouchables. Tell Satisbabu to go slowly. Keep writing to me. Patience is imperative. Why did Satisbabu get fever? He should take rest if that is needed. You too must not work at the cost of your health. Why hasn't Kshitishbabu recovered so far?

CWMG - LI

May God give you right discernment and strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have gained enough strength. I can take milk, fruit and such things.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1690

404. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVETIA[1]

[Before *October 14, 1932*][2]

All of us were pained to read about your daughter's death. Mahadev told me that she was the only one left to you. I need not offer my condolences to you.[3] Both of you possess true knowledge. May God grant you peace.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 146

405. LETTER TO KUMUD BANDHAB CHATTERJEE

October 14, 1932

I am glad to find that temples in your part of the country are being opened to Harijans. The removal of untouchability does not necessarily include inter-dining or intermarriage, but it is open to anyone to dine or marry among Harijans. In other words, Harijans should have the same status as the rest of the Hindus in all matters. Inter-dining does not mean eating out of the same plate. Hence, there can be no question of anybody's saliva being mixed with food.

The Hindu, 3-11-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 134

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

[2] Although in the source this letter is listed under October 18, 1932, the addressee in his book *Narsinhraoni Rojnishi* says that he received it on this date.

[3] According to the addressee, whose reply to this letter is quoted by Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had said: "But you are above sorrowing on this account."

406. LETTER TO KESHAV[1]

October 14, 1932

Yes, the fast was God's gift to me. Whatever personal service you render to the untouchables without proselytization at the back of your mind is to the good.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 135

407. A LETTER

October 14, 1932

I firmly believe that the so-called caste Hindus are responsible for every evil habit that one finds among the Harijans. They can only be removed by sympathetic treatment.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 134

408. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 14, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

I cannot be so easily persuaded to withdraw my charge of lethargy against you. Even though you help in selling khadi, you should find time to drop me a postcard. For that, however, you should learn to regard every moment as having value. You will learn that in time. Service of *Antyajas* is certainly a great cause, but it should not get priority over your former vow. I hope you remember the verse and its meaning:

> Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9334. Also C.W. 580. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Member of Christ Seva Sangh
[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

CWMG - LI

409. LETTER TO S. K. GEORGE

October 14, 1932

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I prize your letter[1] for its gentle frankness. Only I cannot give you the full reply it deserves. My position as a prisoner would not warrant my giving you a detailed reply. One thing I may say. I do not isolate politics from religion as you appear to me to do. Religion to be true must pervade every activity of life. And that activity which cannot be pursued without sacrificing religion is an immoral activity to be shunned at all costs. Politics is not only not such an activity but it is an integral part of civic life. The rest of the discussion must be postponed to a more auspicious occasion. Only do not give me up in despair. I hope you had my previous letter[2].

Yours,
BAPU

Gandhi's Challenge to Christianity, p. 93

410. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI M. THAKKAR

October 14, 1932

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

The purpose behind bangles, the vermilion mark, and the coloured sari might be adornment or conformity to custom, just as one might eat for pleasure or only to give the body its hire. One ought to give up eating for the sake of pleasure, but may give the body anything it needs, even if it be something which one enjoys eating. Milk and curds taken with dates give us no little

[1] Of October 5. In it the addressee had expressed his misgivings about building up the "Kingdom of God with people who have not seen the Vision of it"—by which he meant the Congress, which had accepted non-violence only as a policy. He had also criticized Gandhiji for his fast in connection with untouchability, saying it was religious, not political and therefore was not for independence.

[2] *Vide* p. 179.

pleasure. But you eat them, since you have not adopted that diet for the pleasure of the palate. In the same way, you should give up bangles, the vermilion mark and coloured sari despite opposition from society, if they arouse passion in you, but it is not blameworthy to retain them if you do so merely in obedience to custom or to respect the wishes of the elders. In other words, there is no absolute duty not to retain them, as there is the absolute duty of not telling a lie. It was for such a reason that I said in my letter that the error was in taking a vow not to wear bangles. It is not proper to take a sudden vow for something which is not an absolute duty. There is no great self-sacrifice in such a step. It would have been right for you to take that vow if you had been pining for bangles, travelling all over the world to get bangles of your choice, or were in the habit of stealing them. I know women who want to have bangles of various styles, fight with their husbands to get them or steal them. It would be good for such women to take a vow not to wear bangles, but they would fight with me if I so much as made such a suggestion. A woman who thinks that all her beauty lies in her hair would get red with anger at the mere suggestion that she should cut off her hair. She might get it cut off, but it is not wrong, for a woman, who dislikes long hair and thinks it to be a burden, to keep her hair long to please her parents or to avoid being cut off from society. Do you now understand this shastra of bangle-wearing ?

Now about the children. The problem is similar to that of the bangles. Suppose the children do not feel at home in the Ashram without you, and suppose that there is no other place where they may be kept; then it will be your duty to stay for some time with them in the Ashram. This cannot be described as "living" in the Ashram. Just as it is not wrong for a person who is very ill to take rest from work for a time, similarly it is not wrong to spend a fortnight or a month in the Ashram for the sake of the children, that might even be one's dharma. Such matters require careful thinking. That is why the *Gita* says that it is not easy to distinguish between what is right action, what is wrong action and what is inaction. If, therefore, you are convinced that it is difficult to keep the children at Calcutta and that it is your duty to put them in the Ashram, you should spend, on my responsibility and above all for their sake, one month with them in the Ashram after their arrival and accustom them to the life there. Even during that period, if some urgent work requires you to leave you may certainly go, and Narandas will look after the children as best he can. Wouldn't he have to look after them if you were to

die and there was nobody at Calcutta? However, let the children remain where they are if this arrangement does not suit you or the children refuse to go or the elders are likely to feel very much hurt.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do ask me if you still have any doubts.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6823

411. LETTER TO WOMEN PRISONERS

October 14, 1932

Tell Durgabai Joag that the women can get rid of the fear which they feel in going about their work through firmness of mind. They should go freely wherever necessary for work or service with a firm conviction that God is there to protect them. Whom do they fear? Why should they fear any men? Why think that all men are only waiting for an opportunity to harass women? After all, men are born of women and the latter ought to have the faith that no man would ordinarily attack a woman who is like a mother to him. Every woman should regard herself as a mother and fear a man only if she would fear her own son. If, nevertheless, a woman meets a man who is blinded by lust, she should remain firm in her conviction that the armour of her purity will protect her.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 135-6

412. A LETTER

October 14, 1932

Temple-entry is the crux of the movement for eradication of untouchability. Members of other communities should act towards *Antyajas* in the same way as they act towards one another. Inter-dining with them is a matter of everybody's own free will. It is not necessarily included in removal of untouchability. I believe, however, that there is no restriction in Hinduism on inter-dining with anybody *provided the food is otherwise acceptable.*

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 134

413. LETTER TO A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR

October 15, 1932

MY DEAR RANGASWAMY,

I hope you got my wire[1] two or three days ago. It was handed in by me on 3rd instant but was delayed by the authorities pending instructions from the Government of India. I enclose copy of my wire[2] to the Zamorin. You will see therefore that there is not much time to lose if the temple is to be opened in due time. I hope therefore that you and the friends you mentioned will quickly move in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI A. RANGASWAMY IYENGAR
"THE HINDU"
MADRAS

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

414. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

October 15, 1932

I should have written earlier but the authorities were considering whether such correspondence should be allowed. They had held up my telegram to the Zamorin which I had handed in the same day as I had sent the one to you, i.e., 3rd instant. It has now been sent. I enclose copy herewith. You will see therefore that I began work immediately.

You will move there gently and courteously. There should be no threats and no loud claims made. The real thing is conversion even of the most orthodox. Please keep me regularly informed of the progress of the movement.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 137

[1&2] *Vide* p. 177.

415. LETTER TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

October 15, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

The wire[1] which I handed in on 3rd inst. was considered by the authorities and released for despatch only three days ago. I hope you duly received it. I trust that you will please move in the matter and ensure the opening of the temple during the period of suspension.

I do not know the proper style of addressing you. If therefore there is any want of propriety you will please instruct me knowing it to be wholly unintended.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 137

416. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 15, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter after a long interval.

All those who were ill must have recovered now.

All I have to say for the New Year[2] is that you should understand the meaning of the vows better and become more thoughtful and vigilant about them. Both the soul and the body will benefit in proportion as you observe the vows willingly.

It was very good that once the girls by themselves did the cooking. And, moreover, there were only five items for eating, so that, if I had been there, I too would have got an opportunity to eat food cooked by them. But I forgot. How can I come there in the immediate future? God willing, I shall some day eat the food cooked by the pure hands of the girls there.

BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* p. 177.

[2] According to the Vikram era

417. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 15, [1932][1]

CHI. RUKHI,

I got your letter, but it contains no mention of the letter[2] I wrote to you at the Thatheri Bazaar address. If that is not your full address, you should not give only that in a letter. Always write your full address in your letters. It is good news that you are well again; I have nearly regained my strength. It is desirable that the weight should increase slowly. Till yesterday Ba used to come daily to attend on me. Now that I do not need her help, we both decided that she should stop coming. She must have gone to Bombay today. I get Radha's[3] letters from time to time. There has been no great improvement in her health, but it seems that the improvement which had taken place at Deolali has been kept up.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RUKMINIBEHN
K 23/96 PANCHGANGA
BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9142

418. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 15/16, 1932
At Night, October 15, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I duly got your mail.

Champa seems to be seriously ill. I had a direct letter from her. She asks me in it what she should do if her expenses go up because of illness or some other reason. Read my reply to her. Please reassure her. If she spends more sometimes, let her do so. Do you draw the money for her from Bombay or from Rangoon?

[1] From the postmark
[2] *Vide* p. 228.
[3] Addressee's sister

I guess from your letter that Champa's illness has improved Ratilal's temper. This is certainly good news.

4.15 a.m., October 16, 1932

Panditji had asked me where the inmates of the Ashram may work to make their contribution towards removal of untouchability, and what work they should do. I had replied to him. Still, I will say something more here. One of the aims of the Ashram is that the persons trained in it should afterwards spread out in villages and start doing work in them. The work will of course be connected with khadi, removal of untouchability, etc. But they should also take advantage of the prevailing atmosphere at any time and pay more attention to that particular activity. If, therefore, we can do any work in the surrounding villages for removal of untouchability, we should certainly do it. We should, if possible, work even in cities. There is a temple on one side of the Ashram. There is one opposite to the Ashram, too. See if you can get them thrown open to *Antyajas*. We may acquaint ourselves with their conditions. If we can accommodate them, we should invite more *Antyaja* families to come and live in the Ashram. Vinoba's scheme is certainly excellent. If we can implement it, we should try to do so. These are only a few isolated suggestions for guidance. What is essential is that each one of us should take up whatever work he can think of and do his best. We should become one with the work as sugar becomes one with milk, and still remains detached. We should never think that some work was done by the Ashram or by an inmate of the Ashram. We should feel that we do everything as instruments in God's hands and act in that spirit. These suggestions do not—ought not to—interfere with other vows which we may have taken. They should remain undisturbed. Everybody should go on working in accordance with his vow and, in addition, participate in the present movement against untouchability as much as he can. If such work is not compatible with one's vow, the path is clear. However noble another's dharma may be, one's good lies in one's own dharma. Whether we live or die doing that dharma is the same for us, that is, we shall advance spiritually in either case. Who had placed Punjabhai in such a chair that he fell down? Anybody who gets fainting fits should have a seat which would not overturn. But this is wisdom after the event. However, don't we all advance by learning from one's own or other people's mistakes to avoid similar mistakes in future? We need not be perturbed by the death of Trivedi's brother's wife, Taragouri. Her death was ordained. In her case the stove has

been only instrumental. And, moreover, she could not get immediate help. Taragouri also got frightened and could not loosen the knot of her skirt. Her attempt to loosen it resulted in a further knot. All these things were preordained. We ever live besieged by Death. Nobody knows from which side and when he will attack. We should draw only one lesson from such a death. What we can do today, we should not leave for tomorrow, and what we can do this minute we should not leave to the next. Apart from that, we should overcome our love of the primus stove, and everybody should also learn what to do when his or her clothes accidentally catch fire.

The leather for repairing sandal soles received this time seems to be excellent. If you had not sent the pair of sandals, I could have done without it, for I have already three pairs with me. Their upper sides are in quite good condition. But the soles of all three of them are worn out. I will now get them repaired, so that they will become as good as new. The pair which you have sent will then be the fourth. But never mind. Instead of your having to keep it safe there, we will keep it safe here.

Think a little more about Kusum. Can you arrange to send her to Almora? The whole family seems to be infected with the disease. Navin clearly exhibits signs of tuberculosis. Dhiru also seems to me going in the same direction. And Kusum does not improve at all. The condition of Manjula's ear is only a symptom. The real disease seems to be the same as in the case of the others. However, all the four may possibly recover, provided strict measures are taken immediately. Change of air may perhaps be the chief among them. Navin and Dhiru are still strong enough to be able to look after themselves. Apart from their health, they have had sufficient experience to be able to manage things. If they have the requisite spirit of service in them so that they would willingly look after Kusum, if there is sufficient space in the room, if they are eager to go, and if Prabhudas is ready to have them, and if you think that they can go, only then should you go ahead with this plan. Otherwise you should forget it.

But[1] this is for people who are passionately eager to live. The royal road was shown by Gangadevi. If they can keep alive remaining in the Ashram, they should try to do so. If they cannot, they should realize that life is always accompanied by death. I would advise them to resolve to stay in the Ashram, to live

[1] What follows is from *Bapuna Patro – 9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, p. 487. Also C.W. 8260-a. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

in the open air all the twenty-four hours of the day and do what work they can without exerting themselves too much, eat the plainest food, take hip-baths, etc., and thus pass their time. If they live thus with cheerful minds, they may even get all right. First you should think over all this. You may then discuss the matter with them if you think it proper to do so. If you think it inadvisable to discuss this just now, forget the suggestion. I have received a copy of Madan's book about fasting. Most probably you have got a copy in the Ashram. If you do not have it, I will send the one which I have received. You may go through it. Bhau at any rate should reflect over it. It is not at all necessary to get Keshu's machine patented. Nobody is likely to compete with him. And if anybody tries, we need not mind. We cannot take out a patent. This is how I feel just now. I write to Godse[1] from time to time.

I had completely followed the method of making bread. The method used here is easier. As the fast intervened, I could not send a description of it. I will do so now. Try this method there.

BAPU

[PS.]

Test Mahadev's and my yarn carefully and let me know the figures of the strength, evenness and count of each. When will you get cloth made from it? Do you have a *rach*[2] and a heddle suitable for weaving such yarn?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8260. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

419. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 15, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. I welcome the news you have given about everyone. Lilavati's problem is rather difficult. Since she has faith in you, it is possible that you will be able to do something about her. She is a simple-hearted woman and her motives are good. But she is very restless and has no control over her thoughts. Show her love and do the best you can.

[1] Ganesh Vasudev Godse, a graduate of Vidyapith who had joined the Dandi March in 1930.

[2] Weaving implement

You should discover the cause of your losing weight and remove it. If the quantity of milk, etc., is not adequate, you should increase it. Don't be obstinate and ruin a good health. I can't bear anyone describing you as too weak to work.

I am happy that . . .[1] has apologized. Take him into your confidence if you can. I have observed that he is intelligent. How nice it would be if he used his intelligence well.

The Ashram money is used for any inmate for whom it is necessary to use it, irrespective of his or her position. But it is possible to criticize any action. Perhaps we do make errors but our aim is always to use the Ashram money impartially.

The public has a right to inspect every pie of the Ashram's accounts. The Ashram is not a private institution. Its income is the limit of its expenditure. The Ashram will run even if it does not get a single pie, and it will spend even crores if someone gives so much. People will give as long as they have trust in us. The institution is run by God. It is He who prompts people to donate.

According to me, anyone who goes out of the Ashram should first obtain the Secretary's permission to do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10306. Also C.W. 6745. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

420. LETTER TO MITHIBEHN

October 15, 1932

Eradication of untouchability does not imply inter-dining and intermarriage with *Antyajas*. But I don't believe that those who inter-dine with the so-called untouchables, Harijans, violate dharma. Restrictions on inter-dining and intermarriage among communities are not an inseparable part of Hinduism. They are only a matter of custom. We cannot treat Harijans differently from other communities. Since there will be no coercion in this matter, there is no reason for anybody to feel hurt.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 138

[1] The name has been omitted.

421. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 15, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Put to Premabehn the questions which you have put to me. If she cannot reply to them to your satisfaction, then write to me again.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1740

422. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

October 16, 1932

I may say that during the fast I kept repeating God's holy name with greater concentration, since I enjoyed great peace in spite of physical suffering. It is possible, in certain circumstances, that a person suffering from an incurable disease would not be committing the sin of suicide if he gave up food. But such a person, if his mind is clear, has no right to take that step, since he can serve even with his mind. By my last illness, do you mean the one I had in Kolhapur?[1] Whichever that may be, as far as I remember every illness has proved to be a blessing to me. And so it must be to one devoted to God even though the illness may have resulted from his own folly. Whether consciously or mechanically, I go on repeating Ramanama every day, but whenever I am in difficulty and feel helpless, I do so consciously and with my whole mind. As far as I remember, the repetition of the name has always given me peace. I cannot say that I keep some fixed time or period for Ramanama.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 142

[1] In March, 1927; *vide* Vol. XXXIII, pp. 194-5.

423. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

October 16, 1932

I do not consider that your total expenditure of Rs. 125 for three months is excessive. I wished to know the details because they tell me a number of things. Everyone must keep an account of every pie spent, even though the money might be one's own. For the truth is that nothing in this world is our own but all belongs to God, as we realize from experience every day. Hence, we should not be attached to whatever we enjoy or spend. A person who does so will gladly keep an account of every pie for his own satisfaction. If you have not kept a detailed account of the expenditure of Rs. 125 in this manner, you should from now on form the habit of keeping such account. I remember that Devbhabhi used to keep a full account of her expenses mentally.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 141

424. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 16, 1932

I welcome a test in any form. God has given no assurance to his devotees that He will test them only so far and no further. Yes, there is certainly one limit. He never tests anyone beyond his strength.

If you learn to do all work without attachment, you may rest assured that the result will always be good. I observe that the key to good health also lies in such non-attachment.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 142

425. LETTER TO NARMADA BHUSKUTE

October 16, 1932

Service, not literature, is our mission. Literature is a means of service, therefore so long as we have some work of service on hand we must quietly devote ourselves to it. The *Gita* says that God will grant the means to those who have devotion. Do add to your literary education whenever you have some time. In that matter too take it that reflection is more important than reading. However little you may read, you should digest all that you read.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 141-2

426. LETTER TO ZOHRA BANU ANSARI

October 16, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

You have explained my errors most lucidly. I am afraid that I take up too much of your time. Give me only as much time as is convenient to you. Can you tell me the proper usage of 'ص', 'س', 'ث' and also of 'ط' and 'ت'? If your handwriting cannot be called beautiful I do not know of any other which can be. I, at least, have not seen any letters more beautiful.

I have not received recently any letter from Father, so it is well that you gave me the news. Please convey our respects to Mother. Ba has now gone to Bombay. We decided that Ba should resume her duties now that I have regained enough strength. I write on a postcard deliberately because that takes up the right amount of time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Urdu in *Mahatma*, Vol. III, between pp. 304 and 305

427. *LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK*

Silence Day, October 17, 1932

This is just 4.20 a.m. after morning prayer. I got your letter of the 7th instant yesterday. The value I attach to your letter you will perceive from the fact that I am devoting to the reply my most precious hour. The value lies in that it is an expression of your love and sincerity. It has little or no value as an agency designed to carry conviction. If I have erred, I should love to have the conviction even after the event since it would serve to protect me against repetition of the error. But I miss that conviction.

I see that though our mutual love remains the same, our view-points have become different, our way of approaching things has also become different. We have therefore to agree to differ.

In this matter I had thought that even if everybody else would not understand my action, you and Millie would instinctively perceive it and become my shield. But that pleasure was not to be mine. I derive however the richer pleasure that our love can persist even in spite of political and spiritual differences. I was unprepared for the latter. But I see that political, social and the like are inextricably mixed up with and derived from the spiritual outlook. Therefore when we have sharp political differences, the odds are that they are traceable to the spiritual.

You seem to have missed the very core of the fast. You have to go back to my speech[1] at the Minorities Committee. It was not a prepared speech. The end of it came irresistibly. The fast was an inevitable result of that solemn declaration. I little knew how that declaration was to find fulfilment. I say that the declaration was from God and so was the fulfilment. If it was so, all argument is useless. If it was a hallucination, friends who believe it to be such are bound to drive home the truth to me with all the love and persistence they can summon to their assistance.

Everything that happened since confirms me in the opinion that the fast was a God-given trust.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 293-8.

Not the Premier but Sir Samuel was the vehicle through whom the message of the fast had necessarily to go. But if you had followed all the statements I have made and even my letter to the Premier you would have seen that the fast was addressed to the millions who had faith in me, and who had surrounded me with their undying affection whenever I went in their midst. They understood the fast with all its implications without any argument. For them, the political part of it was trivial; internal reform was everything. The latter is still going on. And remember the fast is only suspended, it may have to be resumed if people go off to sleep. When a lover fasts to prevent the loved one from going astray, it is not blackmail, it is the cry of an anguished heart ascending to heaven. Of such, in your language, is the music of the spheres made. My fast was a whip administered to lethargic love.

You ask why it was not administered ten years ago. The answer is: God did not call me to it. He comes to wake you up when you least expect Him. His ways are not our ways. You will of course believe me when I say that I had then the same capacity for sacrifice that I seem to have now.

Lastly, you should accept my judgment based on much ampler data than yours that the same settlement could not have been arrived at in London and that the Premier was not called upon in any way to decide on any question outside the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh tangle.

Love to you all.

BHAI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 148-9

428. LETTER TO HENDERSON[1]

October 17, 1932

Argument is useless when you talk of your God and my God. Hitherto I have thought there was only one God for the wise and the foolish, saints and sinners. Instead of arguing with me, I suggest your praying for me, so that 'your' God may open the eyes of my understanding and let me see what in your opinion is my error.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 143. Also G.N. 4797

[1] A Christian missionary

429. A LETTER

October 17, 1932

I can only say this that where a man pleads the promptings of the inner voice, he should be left to God's mercy.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 143

430. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA

October 18, 1932

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I am writing this after the morning prayer at 4 o'clock. I got both your letters. All three of us will join you at 8.30 p.m. today in performing the *shraddha* on the tenth day. Instead of praying silently, we will sing your translation[1] of "Lead Kindly Light". Does it not give as much peace as both of you would desire? Your children of course enjoy eternal peace. But are not all the children in this world your children? You have taught plenty of such wisdom to others. May it help you in your present plight.

You will like this story about "*Premal Jyoti*". When Father Elwin was leaving, he thought that it would be a good thing if my Christian friends could mentally be in communion with me once every week. For that purpose, he asked me to suggest a hymn which all of them might sing at a fixed hour one day every week. I selected Newman's hymn. It is now sung by friends in America, Europe, India and other countries on every Friday at 7.30 p.m. We here, the inmates of the Ashram at Sabarmati and some other people, sing "*Premal Jyoti*" at the evening prayer on Fridays. Thus the life which you have poured into this *bhajan* is increasing in its power. May this gift of yours bear fruit for you too.

Yours sincerely,
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 147

[1] "*Premal Jyoti*"

431. LETTER TO BEGUM MOHAMMAD ALAM[1]

October 18, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

I am much obliged to you for your letter and telegram. I was shocked to read of Doctor Saheb's serious illness. May God have mercy on him. Please keep me informed of Doctor Saheb's condition weekly. Did he have these complaints when he was free? I trust he is getting proper treatment in the hospital. My salaams to Doctor Saheb and yourself. Pray to God that there may be unity between the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 25-10-1932, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 25-10-1932

432. LETTER TO H. F. HUDSON

October 18, 1932

DEAR MR. HUDSON[2],

You will, I hope, pardon this presumption.

The restriction you conveyed to Dr. Ambedkar and me in connection with his interview, I had no difficulty in understanding from the Government standpoint.[3] It was faithfully carried out, and so far as I am concerned I shall breathe not a word to the public about it. But the threat conveyed at the end of your note was, I think, gratuitously offensive. You said that if either of us did not carry out the restriction, all such future interviews would be stopped. So far as I am concerned, it is easy enough for you to verify that I have meticulously observed the prison regulations. And the threat presupposes that such interviews are a concession, whereas in my opinion they are the necessary consequence of the Yeravda Pact.

[1] The letter, according to the sources, was in Urdu.

[2] Home Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council

[3] The addressee in his note had desired Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedkar to be informed that Government would not allow any report of the discussions to find their way into the Press, "or any manifesto to be issued by Mr. Gandhi".

Surely untouchability reform should be, if it is not, common cause between the Government and the people. Again a prison was assuredly not the place to spring upon Dr. Ambedkar, a free man, restrictions accompanied by a threat of which he was not informed in the telegram acceding to his request for an interview with Srimati Sarojini Naidu and me.

May I in this personal note ask now for a definite reply to my letter[1] of the 29th ult. addressed to Major Bhandari and forwarded to the Home Department? In view of your said memorandum, a clear definition of the Government policy has become doubly necessary. I hold it to be essential that I should be permitted to see people and carry on correspondence, strictly regarding untouchability, without let or hindrance. You may know that my fast is only suspended. It has to be resumed if the Hindu public do not play the game by the Harijans. My contact with the public therefore is inevitable if the reform is to be carried out in all its thoroughness. Sjt. A. V. Thakkar, the Secretary of the newly-formed League has already asked for instructions. I have informed him that I am awaiting clear definition of Government policy before I could send any instructions. I would therefore esteem an early reply.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3863. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. I, p. 215

433. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

Monday [*October 18, 1932*][2]

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. You may come whenever you wish. It would be good if Sushila can accompany you, but she need not come if she is weak. Bring Sita if she comes. You should take care and see that your bowels move regularly. Take only light food. It will help you if you can take more milk. Take care and safeguard your health. Tell Ba that I have asked for a prescription from Major Advani. She should consult a doctor there

[1] *Vide* pp. 151-2.
[2] From the postmark

too. I hope that Pyarelal has received my letter. Convey my blessings to Manibhai[1] and Gulab. I had expected Deva[2] today.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANILAL GANDHI
MANI BHUVAN
LABURNAM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4797

434. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 19, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter came in today.

My progress continues. There is no change in the food. The weight has gone up to 99½. I have almost reached the normal strength.

I had a long letter from Kisen giving a graphic description of your activities. Naturally you miss her and she misses you. She says she profited much by your company.

You mentioned criminals as your companions now. The word criminal should be taboo from our dictionary. Or we are all criminals. 'Those of you that are without sin cast the first stone.' And no one was found to dare cast the stone at the sinning harlot. As a jailor once said all are criminals in secret. There is profound truth in that saying half uttered in jest. Let them be therefore good companions. I know that this is easier said than done. And that is exactly what the *Gita*, and as a matter of fact all religions, enjoin upon us to do.

Did I not tell you that during the fast we were removed to another yard where there could be more seclusion. Our feline companions were therefore left behind us. We have now been brought back to the old yard much to the joy of these gay four-footed companions. They are all purring round about us.

I understand what you say about your studies. You will take your own time and do exactly as you feel. There should be no strain either on your body or your mind.

[1] Manibhai Revashankar Jhaveri
[2] Devdas Gandhi

Sushila, Manilal's wife, had a slight operation. Ba is with her. Manilal is better.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6246. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9712

435. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

October 19, 1932

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. You do not write how you are. Has Manu forgotten me because he does not live in the Ashram now? He has to send me some more descriptions, and has still to pass the examination in good handwriting. It will not do, therefore, if he stops writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7440. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

436. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

October 19, 1932

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your letter and the book. Expecting that this letter will reach you, I am not sending it by registered post to save the cost. Do write to me, however, when you get it.

I may say that almost as soon as I got the book I went through it. I find your language sweet, so I did not pay attention to it. If I did I might, in my wisdom, want to suggest a few corrections, but they seem to be immaterial.

I was not favourably impressed by the book. You call it *Ishucharita*[1], but I do not see anything in it to justify the title.

If I remember correctly, you once told me or I told somebody that I believed you thought yourself too humble to produce anything original and that you were satisfied with translating the best that the ancestors had left to us. If I accept this argument, I would perhaps approve your book. But I do not

[1] "Life of Jesus"

accept the argument. If it is accepted in your case, it should be accepted for others too. And if all acted accordingly, the only result would be that we would drown ourselves in the waters of our ancestors' well. I believe that it is our duty to augment the legacy of the ancestors and to change it into current coin and make it acceptable to the present age. Mere translation cannot achieve this. What you have given in your book is already available in Gujarati. The translations brought out after immense industry by Christians themselves are not bad. Why should we not put them in people's hands? I am sure you do not write such books so that people may read your sweet language. Even if you do, your purpose will not be served.

In my view this book is an example of a kind of lethargy. I am sure that you would not call a man industrious merely because he reads much and writes much. As for you, I believe that you have a mania for reading and translating. You ought to get rid of it. What I should like you to do is this. Give us by all means a book on the life of Jesus. Read the New Testament as often as you please, but then put the book on a shelf and create a living picture of Jesus from what you have read.

Do not think that because the book has been printed, you must give it to the people. If you find substance in my view, cancel the printed matter and don't mind if so much money is wasted. Try to write something original as I have suggested. If you feel that it would be too much trouble to do so, keep quiet; give up reading and engage yourself in physical activity to improve your health. I have seen many persons both in India and elsewhere who suffer from the mania of reading. You also have that disease. To get rid of it take walks, contemplate the beauty of God's creation, read the book of nature, learn the language of trees, listen to the music of spheres in the sky, watch the drama enacted in it every night; and during the day spin, when you feel tired, do sewing or, if you can, carpentry or shoemaking. I know that your hand gets benumbed if you strain it, but with practice that will disappear.

There are in English many beautifully written books on the life of Jesus. We can get some material even from them, but I would not put that burden on you.

The portion relating to Angels, etc., in your book should be left out. Why add to the superabundance of things that we already have. Even if in fact the Angels and the wise men had not come, Jesus's fame would not suffer. My complaint is that

you have failed to raise before the reader a vivid image of Jesus. You have merely given the teaching of Jesus and that, too, through quotations. Will anyone disbelieve you if you give it in your own words?

I do not know what type of readers you had in view in writing this book. If you have the general mass in view, you should not have inflicted foreign names on them. A man like me whose reading is very limited cannot make out whether you have decked the Biblical names in clothes of your make or in borrowed clothes. I am afraid there is not much to be gained from things of this kind. If your intention was to give names that might sound well in Gujarati, you should have coined fitting Gujarati names suggesting the same meanings as the corresponding Biblical names, as the latter are always significant.

If, regardless of my criticism, you decide that the book should be published, it is not necessary to offer the book free, charging only postage. Do not mind if people do not buy it even at cost price. The book is bound to sell as it will bear your name. (But don't take that as a test of the quality of the book.) Your work ended with the writing, it will be up to some philanthropic institution which distributes such books free among people to give copies of this one, if it so wishes, to those who cannot afford to buy it even at cost price. It is best that one person should not attempt to ride two horses at a time. Let that sum of Rs. 150 grow with compound interest.

I have written much more than I had intended. Moreover, I have let myself go in my criticism, which means that I have yielded to ignorant nature and so I have decided to spend money on registering this.

Do you like the *takli* because you can spin on it while walking? One can spin on it while resting. Excessive greed for anything is the root of all evil. Your present task is to make your body as strong as steel.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7441. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

437. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

October 19, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. I do not know at all what blue brain is. When Dr. Gilder left after examining me the blood pressure was normal. My health is quite all right, and I have nearly regained my former strength. I have my daily walks, spin as much as I used to and can also write a large number of letters. I spend all the twenty-four hours in the open. What is blue brain, and who told you that I had high blood pressure and that there was a danger of my getting blue brain?

Why should I be prejudiced against Bhai Mehta? Was it not I who sent Vidya to him? But it was not necessary to send for him daily during the fast. And that could not be done either, in jail. It would have been improper for me to call him when so many other doctors were visiting me. Moreover, he could not have helped me much. Having had experience of many fasts, I am bound to know my body. Mehta could only suggest some simple measures and I had asked him if he knew any. Even now he may send his suggestions, if he has any. Please send me his address. I will certainly write to him to please him. In any case you should write to him and tell him that he may send me any suggestions he wishes to and write to me freely.

And you also should not worry. I will let you know if there is any difficulty. I am returning today the books about massage.

As I had a slight fear that the pain in the hand might come back, I have given up spinning with the left hand and rotate the wheel with the foot.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

PS.

I hope that you yourself are all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7553. Also C.W. 5028. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

438. LETTER TO NIRMALA B. MASHRUWALA

October 19, 1932

CHI. NIRMALA,

Manilal gave me your letter. Keep me informed about the condition of everybody who is ill. I did not receive Surendra's letter (postcard). I will certainly inquire now.

I am all right. Since Manilal will be giving you all the news, I don't write more here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2886. Courtesy: Nirmalabehn Shroff

439. LETTER TO MEHER BABA'S SECRETARY

October 19, 1932

I got your letter of the 8th and the accompanying note. I have gone through the latter. I don't think that it should be published. It leaves out a great deal, and what it includes is put in a form which can be easily misunderstood. I am, therefore, of the opinion that no part of it should be published. All that is necessary to state is that the relation between Baba and me is not that of guru and disciple but is that of two ordinary friends, and that most of the conversation related to spiritual matters. Thus, the public here or in the West need not attach any importance to our meeting or conversation.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 153

CWMG - LII

440. LETTER TO SHAMBHUSHANKAR

October 19, 1932

We should not insist on taking a Harijan to a hospital or temple at a place where public opinion is against such action. However, those who wish to serve Harijans may provide such facilities in their own locality or near it and also invite other Hindus, if they wish, to avail themselves of such hospitals or temples. Meanwhile we should continue to plead with the people gently. We shall not help our cause by getting angry with the people or by indulging in bitter criticism of them. We can overcome their ignorance by showing perfect love towards them. We should make Herculean efforts to provide for Harijans whatever amenities they lack. The State authorities can do a great deal. It may give them lands, improve the localities where they live, build them good houses, pay them better salaries, etc.

People should not give left-overs to Harijans. We should try to teach them rules of cleanliness, etc. In short, we should take all necessary measures, without creating any conflict, for improving their conditions of life.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 154-5

441. LETTER TO HARIJANS OF VALVA

October 19, 1932

I have your beautiful letter written in a beautiful hand. I can understand your hardships[1]. I have had a long discussion with Babasaheb Ambedkar. I can do little service from here. All I can do is to advise you to acquaint the newly formed association[2] with your tale of woes. And of course keep writing to me.

That you remain Hindu is no favour to others. Hence how can I advise you to forsake Hinduism because of the hardships ? It is in tribulation that one's dharma is put to test. But I can certain-

[1] Such as not being permitted to build their huts on elevated ground

[2] For the service of Harijans; it was first named All-India Anti-Untouchability League and later renamed Harijan Sevak Sangh.

ly assure you that I have staked my life for the amelioration of your lot. If other Hindus do not treat you justly, I shall atone for it by resuming my suspended fast. May God give me the strength to do this.

I remain,
Your servant,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 154

442. LETTER TO SECRETARY, JAT-PANT TODAK MANDAL[1]

October 19, 1932

If abolition of castes means the abolition of the varna I do not approve of it. But I am with you if your aim is to end the innumerable caste distinctions. All the same eradication of untouchability and abolition of castes are separate problems. Eradication of untouchability requires that we deal with the untouchables in the way we do with other Hindus. Mixing up the two problems would jeopardize the success of both. For this reason intermarriage and inter-dining with untouchables are not an integral feature of the removal of untouchability, but their practice is not against religion either.

[From Hindi]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 153

443. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 19, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

One boy is born sick, he conquers his disease by nature-cure. The other is stupid but learns by constant effort. Both by individual effort triumph over fate.

Fasting usually does not result in permanent weakening of the system; on the contrary frequent fasts bring an ultimate improvement of health. Every man can judge by experience his limits for fasting.

[1] Literally, League for breaking down caste distinctions

CWMG LI

Everything can be set right if the trade is carried on by setting up a loom and charkha in the home.

I have not seen the Hindi translations. But it has been my feeling for a long time that even sesame oil cannot supplant olive oil. Some people do use linseed oil but I have no knowledge in this respect.

I have heard great praises of *triphala*[1] but I have very little faith in medicines. I believe in nature-cure.

Devdas has no intention at present of marrying. No one in my knowledge has married for the purpose of realizing God. Devdas is not free from passion. It is not a matter of surprise or regret to me. Marriage is a means of regulating passion but it has a sublime purpose too. Anyway God alone knows the human heart.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 39

444. TELEGRAM TO ABUL KALAM AZAD[2]

[*October 20, 1932*][3]

MOULANA ABULKALAM AZAD
CALCUTTA

THANKS FOR WIRE. FROM THIS PLACE OF SECLUSION I CAN ONLY SAY I WISH WITH ALL MY HEART THAT WE MAY ACHIEVE THE REAL UNITY BETWEEN HINDUS MUSLIMS AND SIKHS AS SYMBOL OF ALL-INDIA UNITY FOR WHICH YOU AND I AND OTHER CO-WORKERS HAVE BEEN WISHING AND PRAYING ALL THESE LONG YEARS. ON MERITS I MAY SAY NOTHING IN IGNORANCE OF FULL FACTS AND SITUATION. BUT FOR ME PERSONALLY ANY SOLUTION THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO PARTIES CONCERNED WILL BE ACCEPTABLE. THEREFORE I WISH ALL SUCCESS TO YOU AND ALL OTHER FRIENDS WORKING FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF LONG DEFERRED PEACE IN THIS DISTRACTED COUNTRY OF OURS. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI JOINS.

GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] An Ayurvedic preparation

[2] This telegram, which was withheld by jail authorities, was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated October 19, 1932, which read: "Muslim leaders conference unanimous not to press separate electorate if other demands accepted. In present situation no better solution possible. Your absence hindering success. Bless us by message. At least trust Government won't object."

[3] *Vide* the following item.

445. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 20, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to the telegram from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad I send herewith the original and my reply[1] to it. To be of any use the reply should go promptly or not at all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

446. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

October 20, 1932

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

I have your letter. God's grace has been wonderful. Those days were days of basking in the sunshine of His presence. There was not one step taken out of self-will. Never have I experienced such an immediate response to prayer.

Yes, it was well you stayed there. I knew what it would mean for you to remain there. And yet I did not take a moment to decide the reply to your cable. Vallabhbhai and Mahadev too had never any doubt about the correctness of the decision. Indeed it is wonderful how they instinctively felt the soundness of all the fateful decisions that had to be taken during those terrible days.

But the work has only just begun. It is a life and death struggle for me. The fast has to be a fast to the finish or untouchability has to go now. It is a tremendous task. I must test the affection of the millions who have flocked to those meetings, I have to wrestle with God Himself. But He is both indulgent and exacting. He will have full surrender or none. The late fast was possibly only a prelude to what is yet to come. But no more of speculation. His will, not mine, be done. I can but try to prove worthy of the sacrifice if it has to come.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - LI

And you have still to be there. The untouchability you speak of is far subtler and wears the cloak of respectability. Ours in India looks what it is and therefore in a way less difficult perhaps to fight.

I have almost regained my lost strength. Our love to you and all the members of the ever-growing family.

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 975. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 158-9

447. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

October 20, 1932

You must not give way to despair.[1] Even organic defects have been known to have been removed or at least brought under control. Proper breathing, proper diet and fresh air added to the will to be better, bring the desired recovery. You should have a living faith in God and know He will keep your body intact so long as He has use for it.

And why do you think that we can serve only with the body? Mind is a far more powerful instrument of service. Those serve best who have perfect purity of heart. Indeed, we serve so as to attain perfect purity. Thoughts of the pure in heart can do what the bodies with corrupt hearts can never do. Therefore in no case have you the slightest cause for despair. Do not seek to prove how thoughts work. Enough for you to believe that they do work and produce mighty results. Therefore, always cultivating purity of heart, you should be perfectly at peace whether you are well in body or not. Will you do this?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 157-8

[1] The addressee had been ailing.

448. LETTER TO DOROTHY[1]

October 20, 1932

MY DEAR DOROTHY,

I prize your love letter. Muriel was right when she told you 'pray' in reply to your question. Real praying from the heart brings the real work behind it. For in the end work itself becomes prayer. I like your simple affirmation 'I am clean now'. God will keep you clean. Do not look back to the past. You have had your lesson from it. Look forward to the future in hope and confidence.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 161-2

449. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

October 20, 1932

MY DEAR HOYLAND,

Your letter is among the treasures I have received on the fast. It is a matter of great joy to me that if some have misunderstood the fast, friends like you have had no difficulty in appreciating it. And if one may judge an act by its results, it has proved itself to have been from God.

Love to you all from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 4507. Courtesy: Woodbrooke College, Birmingham and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

[1] The addressee, an English girl, had written: ". . . I became interested in India 21 months ago. Before that I had been in the grip of a deadly vice which very nearly destroyed my body and perhaps my wits. . . . Then I read about *brahmacharya* and have since been humbly trying to follow your teaching. . . ."

450. LETTER TO SHANKAR

October 20, 1932

I am sorry about the objection to the name of Harijan.[1] You may use any name that your friends like. But do please explain to them that I had not the remotest idea of thinking of Vishnu or Shiva. For me the name means 'people of God'. I make no distinction between Vishnu, Shiva or Brahma. They are all names of God. But let their decision be taken and prevail.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 163

451. A LETTER

October 20, 1932

Removal of untouchability does not include inter-dining and intermarriage. But in my opinion Hinduism does not prohibit inter-dining or intermarriage with anybody by reason of mere birth. Essential religion has nothing to do with the regulation of such social relations.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 163

452. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 20, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got your letter. What a shame that so many of you should fall ill! And who should feel ashamed for this? I hope Mohan is all right now, and others also are out of danger.

BAPU

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

[1] The addressee had said that in Madras they objected to the untouchables being called 'Harijans' because they were Shaivas and not Vaishnavas. They ought, therefore, to be called 'Harajans'—men of Shiva—or Adi Hindus.

CWMG - II

453. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

October 20, 1932

BHAI VALJI,

I got your letter which arrived with the Ashram mail. You seem to have lost considerable weight. Regain it now by eating properly and giving rest to the mind. You must have got the registered letter[1] which I posted yesterday in regard to your book.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7442. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

454. LETTER TO GULAB

October 20, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You should ask Premabehn how the earth came into being.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1727

455. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 20, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is improving. Improve it as much as you can and learn to be methodical in all that you do.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1741

[1] *Vide* pp. 258-60.

CWMG - LI

456. LETTER TO NARAYAN KULKARNI

October 20, 1932

BHAI NARAYAN KULKARNI,

I have your letter. I regret my inability to write in Marathi. I hope that you will find no difficulty in following my Hindi.

Several vaidya friends of mine had informed me three or four years ago that honey should not be taken in warm water. My other friends, the allopathic doctors have no objection to it. But I am not influenced by their opinion as they have not made a close study of the effects of articles of food. In their system they do not observe much[1] distinction between what may be eaten and what eschewed. But I am writing of my personal experience. I have found no harm but rather benefit by taking honey with warm water. I started taking honey on a doctor's advice which came about in this way. Owing to a lack of carbohydrates in my system sugar was needed. The best sugar in his opinion was obtained from honey. I have taken honey since then and he never objected to my taking it in warm water.

My complaint against our vaidyas is that they hold on to whatever is expounded in the ancient texts even if it be contrary to experience as they consider them the last word. I am sure in the Ayurvedic system there is need for further research. It should be revised in the light of experience. Does honey lose its property by being poured into hot water? Have you made a chemical analysis of honey? Obesity and leanness are relative[2] terms. For which kind of leanness is warm honey undesirable and why so? To conclude, have you proved by experience what you write? Vaidyas do not follow this method but are content with quoting *shlokas* from the old texts. I beg you to give up this irrational attitude and test by trial whatever is written in the ancient works.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 803

[1] & [2] The letter is damaged at these places.

457. MESSAGE TO "THE DAILY HERALD"

[On or before *October 21, 1932*][1]

I am keeping excellent health. My blood pressure is normal. I have now gained three quarters of a pound, thus weighing now 99¾ lb. I had no stroke at all.

The Hindu, 21-10-1932

458. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 21, 1932

MY DEAR MARY,

I have your letter. Devdas has been overworking himself. He had therefore a slight attack of fever. He is, I understand, better again.

It is true I do not believe in idol-worship in the sense generally understood. But I do not disbelieve in others worshipping God through idols. In one sense we are all idol-worshippers. We worship God of our image. That image need not have a physical form. Each one has his own imagination of and attributes for God. And yet God in reality is without attributes and beyond our imagination. Hence when we form our own picture of God, we are idol-worshippers. Therefore my mind does not condemn those who conceive God as residing in a stone or metal image. They are not wrong for God is everywhere and in everything. Now whenever we want to worship God in everything we consecrate it. But if a man excludes his fellows from participation in common worship we are entitled to say that God flees from such worship. And He is installed when there is repentance and the bar against one's fellows is removed. I hope this explanation is capable of being understood even though it may not be appreciated. In my opinion it covers a profound truth. If the truth is not seen, the fault lies in my inability to express clearly what I want to say. You must tax me again if I have not stated my position clearly.

Love from Mahadev and myself.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 5985. Also C.W. 3314. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The report in the source is dated October 21.

459. LETTER TO DUNICHAND[1]

October 21, 1932

Of course, I am under discipline like everybody else. But what shall man's discipline avail when God imposes His own?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 165

460. LETTER TO JAMSHED MEHTA[2]

October 21, 1932

BROTHER JAMSHED,

What does this letter mean? I have not replied to the writer. May I ask you about it? If you will write to me, I will send a reply to the writer.

Hope Kikibehn is getting well.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. III, p. 309

461. A LETTER[3]

October 21, 1932

Women like you instinctively saw the correctness of the fast and did not fear the result. Infect your husband with your faith.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 165

[1] The addressee had said that in future Gandhiji should take the country into his confidence before taking any step and that he should place himself under the discipline of the country.

[2] There is nothing in the source to indicate that the addressee was Jamshed Mehta, ex-Mayor of Karachi. The reference, however, to Kikibehn, J. B. Kripalani's sister who lived in Karachi, would suggest that it was he.

[3] The addressee, not identified in the source, had said that her husband had been unhappy at the fast but that she had been confident that the result was bound to be good.

CWMG - 51

462. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

October 21, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

You will improve your handwriting if you write carefully and in big, separate letters. I find it hard to read your present writing. I hope you are quite well now. Do you get clear bowels?

It was of course bad that the wasp died. We do not know what punishment God inflicts for such a sin knowingly committed, but it would be enough if we resolved not to do such a thing again. True service is service which we give with love without expecting any return. Any work that we do in the Ashram is service, because the Ashram has been established for service of others. Our vision would be purified if, instead of letting our eyes wander while we walk we kept them fixed on the ground as if bowing to Mother Earth, and while sitting if we kept them fixed on the work we might be doing.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3282

463. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 21, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter. Any of you brothers who wishes to come may do so now. I hope Devdas is now completely all right. Ask him and Pyarelal to write to me. You are acting wisely in not being in a hurry to bring away Sushila from the hospital. You should let her recover completely before doing so. Since I am writing to you, I am not writing a separate letter to Ba. Tell her that Vallabhbhai and Mahadev often think about her as she does about them. Please write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4798

464. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

October 21, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I got your letter after a long interval. With whom does Father stay in Lucknow?

With whom did Vimal stay in your absence?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7509. Also C.W. 4986. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

465. LETTER TO KHWAJA[1]

October 22, 1932

Terrorism does affect me to the very depth and if God pointed the way as He did on untouchability I should unhesitatingly take it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 169

466. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

October 22, 1932

By a constant study of the *Gita*, you should learn to shed all care. When God is the caretaker for us all, why need we carry the burden? Ours is but to do the task that falls to our lot.

Hence I would urge you not to think of retirement. True retirement is not a physical state, it comes from within. We have to find retirement in the midst of ceaseless work. And, are not the minds of those who are living in caves, oftener than not ceaselessly at work?

We should not brood on our hard lot. The lot of those who would serve is generally, if not always, hard.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 168

[1] The addressee had asked Gandhiji why he did not resort to satyagraha against terrorists as he did against untouchability.

467. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 22, 1932

CHI. SHARDA,

You can certainly take hip-baths even when you have fever. I had given hip-baths to a coughing old man of 75 years and his asthma was cured. While taking a hip-bath the upper portion of the body should be covered and also the legs if you feel cold. Only the portion between the abdomen and the thighs is kept in water and during the treatment the abdomen is gently rubbed with a small towel. The patient enjoys this bath. He shivers while getting into the tub but once in it, he enjoys it. Diet should be simple and the bowels must clear daily. Continue to have oil-massage as usual. And you should not let yourself be tired. Then see how healthy your body becomes. I have no objection to idol-worship by anyone who has need of it. I do not feel the need of it. Millions can do without it. Moreover, all of us are idol-worshippers in a sense. Anyone who worships God by attributing virtues to them is an idol-worshipper. I have written this very briefly. Ask me again if you have not understood. I shall explain at greater length. But before that, try to understand from Narandas. Consult Chimanlal too.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9958. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

468. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

October 22, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter and the report. The report is good. It is a matter of regret that not much khadi was sold during the Puja season. Consult Ghanshyamdasji about this and see if he can do something. Arun must have got my letter[1]. All this touring

[1] *Vide* p. 267.

should not affect your health. How are Satisbabu and Kshitish-babu?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1691

469. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 22, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

Your letter. You can give up hip-bath but not sitz-bath. You can take it between two and three in the afternoon. The water can be first warmed in the sun and the bath may last for two or three minutes only. It is good that you are re-reading *Talash-e-Haq*[1]. You must not work to excess. Purification will come by and by, you must be patient. It is very good that Kudsia has become equable. Can you understand fully what I have written? Tell me if you find any difficulty. Do correct my mistakes.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 260

470. LETTER TO DAVID

October 23, 1932

Many thanks for your elaborate letter.[2] You have almost converted me. I knew the sinfulness (for me) of taking wild honey. But stupidly and lazily I went on taking it. Your graphic description of the manner in which wild honey is prepared has almost driven me to the abjuring of wild honey. So you see what you would have me to do when, if ever, I am outside Yeravda, I am likely to do almost immediately. But surely there must be places in India where innocent honey is prepared. What about the Himalayan honey which we see in the market?

[1] The Urdu edition of Gandhiji's autobiography

[2] In a long letter the addressee had described how wild honey was extracted, how impure it was and how it involved destruction of bees.

It was good of you to have sent the different varieties of honey.[1] The parcel has not yet been received. I know we shall all eat it with relish and without any sense of guilt. Do you stock these honeys or have you specially bought the specimens sent by you?

With regards from us all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PS.

Do I gather from your letter that it is possible to extract honey by scientific means from wild honeycombs without injuring the comb or the bees? If it is not, must wild honey be beyond human reach unless one is prepared to destroy the comb and the bees?

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 172-3

471. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

October 23, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

You should not despair. We ought to be able to overcome a simple complaint like constipation. It can be cured by determined effort. One should not neglect it, nor worry about it. The argument you had with Dr. Talwalkar was unfortunate. I am writing to him. Read the letter[2] and understand it. Narandas will show it to you if he thinks fit.

Bhaji is certainly worth trying. Try the suggestions I made in my last letter to Narandas. Fast for three days or more. Take short walks when fasting and do some light work. Drink as much water as you can, mixing in it, if necessary, a few drops of sour lemon. There will be no harm if you drink with water the juice of two or three lemons in the course of the day. Eat or drink nothing else. Take an enema every morning. Take in 2 pints (2½ lb.) of lukewarm water, putting in it 40 grains of soda bicarb and 20 grains of salt. Retain the water for 20 minutes if you can. You should take the enema lying on the floor. If you do not pass stool even then, you may repeat the

[1] The addressee had sent Gandhiji specimens of Palestinian honey, American honey, New Zealand honey and French honey.

[2] This letter is not traceable.

enema in the evening. Do not worry if you still do not pass stool. Take an enema in the same way next day. Take Kuhne-bath at noon. If you do not feel too weak and the tongue is still coated, continue the fast. If you begin to feel weak, break the fast with fruit juice, such as orange juice, juice of sour lemons with honey, juice of black raisins. They should be soaked overnight in water and squeezed the next morning, and the juice should be strained. It would be better to warm the juice. On the first day drink as much juice as you can. You may also eat grapes if you wish. The next day you may take *bhaji*, gourd or some other vegetable. Let two days pass in this way. Probably, you will pass stool in the natural course. If you don't, you may have recourse to the enema again. Thereafter begin taking milk. Milk may be taken with green vegetables. I mix with gourd or pumpkin the milk I wish to take and eat the dish. Start bread or *rotli* only after you begin passing regular stools. Fasting in this way will most probably overcome constipation and, in any case, it will do no harm at all. If this does not help you, we will think of some other way. You are right in deciding not to take the medicine prescribed by Dr. Talwalkar. You should not think at all of leaving the Ashram whether at Sabarmati or at Wardha (they are not distinct from each other). A person who wishes to serve others, whose thoughts are pure and who works to the best of his ability, should never think that he is a burden on others. Write to me regularly and in detail. I shall not weary of your letters. Carry out with faith whatever measures I suggest from time to time.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6739. Also C.W. 4482. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

472. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

3 p.m., October 23, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Ghelabhai's wire about Punjabhai having passed away reached me yesterday at 9 p.m. Who is this Ghelabhai? I will expect detailed information about him. I am sure all the inmates of the Ashram attended the funeral. I will give my reminiscences of Punjabhai in a separate article.[1]

[1] *Vide* the following item.

Read my letter to Champa. What is her problem? If Kotwal[1] comes and stays with her, it will certainly be good. A letter for him also is enclosed. Champa writes in her letter about her desire to go to Rangoon. Think over this.

The Ashram does not seem to be a fortunate place for Jamna. She seems to be keeping all right in Rajkot. Why, then, should she not continue to live there? Those who live outside the Ashram but follow its rules, really live in the Ashram itself. On the other hand, those who live in the Ashram but follow its rules unwillingly and only in their letter, and who in their thoughts live outside the Ashram, do not really live in the Ashram. It would be far better that Jamna, instead of living in the Ashram and remaining ill all the time, should keep good health outside and do what service she can. I am not writing a separate letter to her today. But both of you should think over what I have said and do what seems proper.

I duly got both your postcards regarding Mohan. I should have received Anandi's postcard earlier, but I got it at the same time as yours. We should not feel surprised at such things happening here. I was glad that Mohan was out of it soon. We should thank God if there is no relapse. That Kusum, Navin, Dhiru and Manju, all four of them are ill is a terrible thing. I have already explained my ideas concerning them. Do what you think best.

Read my letter[2] to Bhau. That letter made it necessary for me to write to Talwalkar. Read the letter which I have written to him also. Pass it on to him if you approve it and think it is all right. Bhau should see whether the facts are stated correctly. If you do not approve of the letter, tear it up.

Where was Joshi arrested? Where is he at present? Is anyone permitted to see him?

Anandi may take the injection. I see that your list does include a letter from the Jain *muni*. I had replied to him directly. If you have got his address, drop a postcard to him and tell him that I sent a direct reply to him. I have advised him not to give up his *muni's* dress.

I don't remember having seen Ramniklal's letter. It must have been left behind there. Ask him to write again.

I get a letter from Mirabehn every week. She has stopped visiting me in order that she may be permitted to write to me

[1] A co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

as frequently. She is quite cheerful now. Her letter had given me the impression that she must have been in a daze during my fast. She was of course working, but could not concentrate on anything.

I see that your list includes a letter from Chhaganlal Joshi also. I did not get that letter either.

I saw your list of primus stoves. It took me aback. We certainly live in no ordinary style. However, it will be enough now if the women agree that only men may light these stoves. If they don't, they should be ready to sacrifice one victim at least on the altar of this demon-god. The Ashram has no licence of exemption from such accidents. In this age of freedom, I should be satisfied with this warning.

Read my letter to Lilavati.

I don't seem to have received the postcard from Wardha.

Read my letter to Prabhudas. You should certainly be strict. He must live within his budget. If it is absolutely necessary to spend more, he should get your previous permission. If there is no provision in his budget for a gardener, I think we should make it.

Manilal's and Devdas's visits have not been stopped. They can come whenever they wish to.

My food is practically the same. I ate bread for two days and then stopped it. The weight has increased by three-quarters of a pound. That is, it is 99½ pounds.

Enquire about Kusum.

You should read the *Gita* daily for many hours during the fast.

There are 45 letters with this.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8261. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

473. *LONG LIVE PUNJABHAI!*

[*October 23, 1932*][1]

Once when speaking of Punjabhai I had used before his name the prefix *chiranjivi*[2], a child had asked me in surprise: "Since Punjabhai is older than you, how can you refer to him as *chiranjivi*?" I had answered somewhat as follows: "In age Punjabhai is certainly older than I, but he trusts me like a child. And he offers me even his devotion in the same way." This was literally true. I had my doubts about my fitness for that trust and that devotion. But I had not even an iota of doubt about Punjabhai's trust and devotion to me. In any kind of difficulty Punjabhai would accept my advice as gospel truth. Punjabhai was not himself without a sense of discrimination but he had deliberately decided to put his trust in me.

Punjabhai may well not be here today in the sense in which I had addressed him when I called him *chiranjivi*, but he is *chiranjivi* in a wider sense than that.

Though I used to address him as *chiranjivi*, there was nothing I could teach him. I for one was a worshipper of his virtues. In my view, no one could surpass Punjabhai in humility, in devotion to religion, in devotion to truth and in generosity. Punjabhai had the capacity to sacrifice everything.

The poet Raichand was all in all to Punjabhai. I myself was an admirer of Raichandbhai, so Punjabhai was drawn towards me. That I, unlike Punjabhai, could not look upon Raichandbhai as my guru did not pain him. Punjabhai knew that no one could become a guru merely by being offered that status. A guru attracts a disciple just as a magnet attracts iron.

Punjabhai greatly liked what I used to say about Raichandbhai and what he liked more was the fact that I tried to assimilate what I extolled. As a consequence the bond between us became stronger and stronger every day.

Punjabhai was closely associated with the Ashram right from its inception and though he did not become an inmate of the

[1] From "Diary, 1932"; Punjabhai Shah died on October 22.

[2] Literally long-lived, a term usually applied by people to those younger than themselves

Ashram, he lived as one. Punjabhai had shared in the ups and downs of the Ashram. He would explain to us the intricacies of the Ahmedabad market. He would bring whatever was required. We could draft Punjabhai's men for the service of the Ashram at any time. Punjabhai's shop and house had become the inmates' place of refuge in the city. He would indicate where anything from a broomstick to cereals could be had at a reasonable price. The Ashram has saved a lot of money owing to his supervision and his advice. It was Punjabhai who found and purchased the piece of land where the Ashram now stands. For these and other services he did not ever expect even a few words of thanks. Punjabhai worked till his last moment as though the Ashram were his own. Though I had occasion to come into very close contact with him, I never found him given to impatience or exaggeration at any time. He would not speak unless it was necessary. How could he ever take part in idle gossip? His conversation ever concerned dharma, and he loved to dwell on the lives of virtuous men. I never sensed any hatred for anyone in Punjabhai's heart. I never heard him speak harsh words about anyone.

Punjabhai was skilled in business. He earned much. He could have earned more had he so desired. But it is my impression that after coming into contact with Raichandbhai, he had reduced his business operations. His credit was first class. The monies kept with him were perfectly secure.

It was Punjabhai who administered the finances of the Ashram. He was for a long time even the treasurer of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee.

Punjabhai was pious; he aspired for *moksha*. In the Ashram one could count on one's fingers the men who are as free from covetousness as Punjabhai was.

Punjabhai's touch sanctified the Ashram. His religion was not narrow. It had a place in it for all other faiths.

Such a man as Punjabhai will live for ever. As far as we are concerned, we should remember his virtues and prove worthy of our association with him.

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

474. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

October 23, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I hope Chhaganlal's arrest has not made you nervous. Do you get letters from him? Do you visit him any time? Where is he lodged? I put up with your negligence in writing to me till now. I will not do so any longer. You should write to me regularly. Have you recovered strength now? How do Dhiru and Vimu behave?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5337

475. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 23, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter.

Jamnadas's case is a painful one. What can we do? No one can escape his fate do what he will.

I had a long letter from Kisan. She has given a good description of her daily life. Hard work comes so naturally to her that she got up at three in the morning to write that letter. I thought I was the only one who worked so hard. It seems even girls can humble my pride. You cannot do so, for in the Ashram it is a rule that everyone should get up early and so it is not surprising that you should do so. In Bombay, however, to get up at six in the morning will be a favour to one's family. This is, of course, not true of labourers. But Kisan is not one of them.

You should, if you can, spare some time and learn the art of ridding the Ashram of its frequent illnesses. But your first task is to learn how to make your body strong.

If maize doesn't grow on our farms, can we not buy it? If that is what you require to increase your weight, the matter is very simple. Here in jail they do say that maize gruel helps easy evacuation and increases one's weight. Prisoners always get maize gruel in the morning. They add salt to it. Bran does not

have to be removed from maize flour. It is worth while to make this experiment for a few days for its own sake and feel one with the prisoners. What do you serve in the morning these days? If you have been serving wheat gruel as formerly, it should be easy to switch on to *jowar* gruel. The women, Vithal, Kanti and others are familiar with it from experience. Their judgment should be final. I am only writing what I hear from others.

I did not follow anything of what Shanta said. She has told me nothing. It would be good if she confided in you. Now that I remember, 'confides' is an English word. The Gujarati idiom is 'to open out the heart'. If Shanta wants anything to be kept confidential, you should certainly respect her wishes.

I cannot just now answer the questions which you have put to me. Have patience for some time.

There is no limit to your capacity and fitness for work. But these can be seen only if I give you an opportunity to display them. For the time being they waste their sweetness on the desert air like the flowers in Gray's poem[1].

Our cat was really mad with joy when she saw us. She simply would not leave us. She must have keenly felt the separation from us. She is contented now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10307. Also C.W. 6746. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

476. LETTER TO MANIBEHN N. PARIKH

October 23, 1932

CHI. MANIBEHN[2],

I hope you are not worrying about Mohan. I used to get news about him here. Children fall ill suddenly and recover as quickly, for their stomachs are not impaired as ours are. We ruin ours by stuffing them with all kinds of harmful things. Children have not had sufficient time to ruin theirs. Do not worry about Narahari either. He is protected not by us but by God. Who can harm a person whom He wishes to save?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5973. Also C.W. 3290. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*
[2] Wife of Narahari Parikh

477. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. This time your handwriting was bad. If your health has improved in other respects, the weight will increase of itself. You should do only as much work as you can without getting exhausted. Do not worry about anything. I do not know of any complaint having been made to me against you. I hope you do not regard that matter of accounts as a complaint.

Sheela must be very happy now, for she has now gone to stay in Shailashram.

Tell Sarojinidevi[1] that she should favour me with a letter occasionally at least.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6139. Also C.W. 3491. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

478. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

October 23, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

You have pampered me enough with your love. Kindly do not tempt me now. Till now I used to accept all the fruit that you sent, as I could plead the excuse of weakness which followed my fast. My companions also are not men who would gladly eat whatever fruit they are given. They, too, wish to observe the restrictions proper for prisoners and for human beings in general. Hence it seems improper on my part to let you send me fruit in a continuous stream. Let me, therefore, have my own way about fruit as I had about honey. I shall ask for it as and when I need it. The pomegranates which you sent are enough for me just now, and the oranges and the apples brought by Manilal are also there. I will trouble you when all this stock is exhausted.

[1] Addressee's mother

I have written to Trivedi about honey. I have sent him a letter from a friend named David. You may read that letter. I have no choice but to give up the use of wild honey. Mr. David's letter gives a vivid description of the sin of consuming such honey. I am sure one must be able to get innocent honey in some part of India. If we cannot get it, I think we ourselves should arrange with some people to produce it. You will get a clearer idea of all this if you read Mr. David's letter. However, drop the matter if you do not feel interested in it. I don't wish to give you unnecessary trouble. These facts are worth knowing only if one is interested in the subject.

Ba has told me much about your kindness and love. But, to be able to accept all that love without hesitation, I must have a strong desire to serve humanity.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 74. Also C.W. 4824. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

479. TELEGRAM TO SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

October 24, 1932

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

LET US REJOICE OVER PUNJABHAI'S LONG SLEEP. SEND FULL ACCOUNT LAST MOMENTS. HOPE ASHRAM FULLY REPRESENTED AT FUNERAL.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 175

480. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

October 24, 1932

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

I had your telegram and I sent a reply[1] there and then. It has been forwarded to the Government for approval.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
CARE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
CALCUTTA

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

481. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

Urgent *October 24, 1932*

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Your communication regarding my request[2] for a definition of Government policy about my interviewing friends and carrying on correspondence in the matter of untouchability and another matter was read to me by Major Bhandari this morning. I was allowed to make a copy of it.

According to the communication, "Government are prepared to allow me a reasonable number of interviews (with persons approved by them)", and to carry on correspondence, "provided it is clearly understood that it is not reproduced in the Press".

It is clear to me that Government could not be aware that my fast is only suspended and that it may have to be resumed if the work of removal of untouchability is not thoroughly done. Moreover, so far as a temple in the South is concerned, I might be obliged to join Sjt. Kelappan in his fast, if by or before the 2nd of January next that temple is not opened to the so-called untouchables. This the Government has known. Three weeks

[1] *Vide* p. 265.
[2] *Vide* pp. 197-8.

have already passed without my being able to do much work, apart from being permitted after long delay to send two telegrams. Despatch and publicity are essential, if I am to overtake the work of reform in due time. Every day counts. I therefore submit that all restrictions on the choice of visitors and publication of correspondence should be removed. I can have no objection to the presence of an official or officials at the interviews and inspection there and then of correspondence. If assistance is supplied to me, the Government may have copies of all correspondence and shorthand notes of interviews. Naturally these interviews and correspondence should have no reference to civil disobedience and must be strictly limited to the removal of untouchability.

Unless therefore these restrictions, as submitted above, are removed, before the 1st November next, I shall be reluctantly obliged to withdraw, subject to the limitations imposed by the law of satyagraha, such co-operation as is possible for me to do. And as a preliminary, I shall deny myself all the feeding facilities permitted to me and restrict myself to such 'C' class diet as I can within my vow consistently take and so long as my body can accommodate itself to such food. I do hope the Government will not regard this as a threat. The contemplated step is the natural consequence of the Government attitude. I can have no interest in life if I cannot prosecute, without let or hindrance, work for which the fast was undertaken and suspended. I would have said nothing if this moral and religious reform had anything to do with civil disobedience.

With reference to my personal letter[1] to the Honourable Mr. Hudson, the reply comes upon me as a painful surprise. If the warning read out to me at the interview with Dr. Ambedkar was by way of punishment for what I am alleged to have done regarding the telegram to Maulana Shaukat Ali, common justice even to a prisoner demanded that the cause of the punishment should have been conveyed to me at the time of the warning, and before the punishment was pronounced explanation should have been called for from me. I never knew that a prisoner could be condemned unheard. Nor had I the remotest idea that the letter to my son which I had seen was intended to convey any warning to me. Let me say that my son told me definitely in official presence that Mr. Hudson had in a generous manner not only quickly granted him permission to see me as often as he liked but that he had permitted him to talk to me about anything and carry any messages from me, so long as he gave no interviews to the Press

[1] *Vide* pp. 255-6.

and published nothing. In view of this conversation I saw nothing wrong in asking my son to tell Mr. Shaukat Ali that I had seen his wire and that I had replied to it, and that he was likely to receive the reply in the course of a day or two, the delay being due to the fact that it had gone to the Government for being passed. I had not then the remotest idea that the utterly innocent telegram would not be passed. I did therefore give my son also the purport of the reply. Let me however correct two misstatements in the paragraph of your communication regarding this matter. I had no knowledge at the time of talking to my son that the telegram had not been "passed for transmission". Nor is it correct to say that the text of the reply has been published in the Press. What I have seen is only the substance. I did not give my son a copy of the reply. I add that my son out of nobility of his nature wrote a gentlemanly letter to Mr. Hudson regretting that Maulana Shaukat Ali had published his conversation with him in spite of his caution. He had expected a letter of thanks in reply for his frankness but unfortunately he received a reprimand, and he remained quiet under it. I should be sorry if after this very full explanation Mr. Hudson does not revise his opinion and think that as man to man he has done me a grave injustice.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Since it is obviously impossible for me to guarantee non-publication by my correspondents, known and unknown, of letters I may write to them, whilst the bar referred to lasts, I have to suspend what correspondence on untouchability I have hitherto carried on. I am entitled therefore to ask that a reply to this matter be sent as early as possible before the 31st instant.[1]

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. (800) (40)(4), Pt. I, p. 227. Also G.N. 3864

[1] On receipt of the letter, Home Department telegraphed to Bombay Government on November 1: "Your letter of 28th October forwarding important letters of Gandhi, dated 18th and 24th October, reached us only yesterday. We are after full consideration recommending to His Majesty's Government that Gandhi should be allowed complete freedom in regard to visitors and correspondence on matters strictly confined to removal of untouchability and that there should be no restriction on publicity. Conditions suggested by Gandhi himself about right to have official present at interviews and inspection of correspondence would be accepted, though it might not be necessary to

482. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

October 24, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

As my elbow needs rest, I am now dictating my letters. You have married a well-known man indeed! For there is only one Bazaj family in Banaras, and it is so famous that the mere word 'Bazaj' is enough for a letter to reach. Do you know how much that increases your responsibility? Having been married into such a family, you have to shine with the power of your character and enhance the prestige of the family too. May God give you the strength to do so.

What good fortune that you got a medal at the blessed hands of Malaviyaji! If the *sitar* is not in order, get it repaired. You should not get out of practice. Your cough will have gone by the time you get this letter. It is easy to cure it. For a day or two, take every one or two hours some hot water—just bearably hot—with a small teaspoonful of lemon juice and as much clean salt as you can tolerate. The cough will subside in only one day if it has not become chronic. But you should eat nothing whatever for that day. Take an enema if you do not get a clear motion on that day. The next day you may take milk and sweet grapes or *musambis*. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

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

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enforce them. Meantime we regard it as of utmost importance that in these conditions Gandhi should not start restriction of his diet. Please therefore inform him immediately that his letters only reached Government of India yesterday, that the matter is under closest consideration, and that we hope to communicate decision within two or three days. Meantime suggest that it might complicate situation if he started restriction of diet before we have had opportunity of fully considering his requests." Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32.

483. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

October 24, 1932

The comparison with Banabhatta and Valmiki is not right.[1] One may compare the two types of yarn with "Balakanda" and "Kishkindhakanda," or better still, with "Kishkindhakanda" and "Uttarkanda". Fine yarn of 200 counts or more is "Uttarkanda" in the absence of which "Kishkindhakanda" would lose all value. Our forefathers forced the poor to produce Dacca *shabnam*[2] to gratify the delicate tastes of people who loved luxury. Let us atone for their sin by spinning as *yajna* yarn of the finest count and offer it to the Lord. The art in both cases is the same, but in olden times it ministered to selfishness. Let our art help in spreading the spirit of service, it is necessary to revive the old skill in order to popularize khadi among all classes of people. We should prove that what was possible then in the days of slavery can be done in the age of freedom too. Will not the devotee do for God what a libertine would do for a prostitute? This involves neither great trouble nor any expense; for, all that we wish to do is to learn slowly to spin fine yarn in a spirit of self-sacrifice. I have also found from experience that, if we try to spin finer and finer yarn, we shall more likely discover ways of producing better and cheaper khadi. Here we have the practical application of the *Gita* verse beginning with "*Yavanartha udapane*".[3]

If this reasoning appeals to you, I need not explain to you why I put down 20 counts as the minimum for a voluntary spinner to achieve. There is however nothing sacrosanct about this figure; it is not laid down as a rigid rule. It is only a test of the devotion of the voluntary spinner. An institution must lay down some such rule. Drawing out any sort of yarn should not pass for *yajna*. There ought to be some rule, some standard. If this is admitted, then 20 counts is not a high requirement. A voluntary spinner should not spin as if he was doing forced labour. He should enrich his *yajna* with devotion and art and beauty, identifying himself with the work, that which is offered as sacrifice should be of the purest quality, shouldn't it?

[1] Vinoba Bhave had objected to spinning of fine yarn. He had compared coarse yarn with Valmiki's *Ramayana* and fine yarn with Banabhatta's *Kadambari*. He had also mentioned the difficulties one had to face in the villages.

[2] Literally "morning dew"; kind of muslin

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXII, p. 124.

If I have not been able to explain my point of view, you may write to me again and ask me. I have no doubt in the matter, but I cannot rest at ease till I have satisfied you.

The problem of working in the villages is a very difficult one. We need not worry what the *smriti* has to say regarding onions. We should go by our experience. As medicine, they are good. I have tried them very often. I also dislike their odour and generally do not eat them, though I certainly would if I found it necessary. One may eat them with the last meal of the day, for one meets few people thereafter. If eaten in small quantities as medicine, the odour will probably be less acute. If we cannot get cow's milk anywhere at all, I would say that the country is heading towards bankruptcy. If a person touring villages carried with him *mawa* of cow's milk, he would get both ghee and protein in it and, if he should dissolve the powdered *mawa* in hot water, it would then be as good as milk. I do not suggest the addition of sugar or jaggery to the *mawa*, since, in the first place, that is not necessary and, secondly, it may mean indulging the palate. Thus, one can live on *rotlas*[1], *pendas*[2], onions and tamarind or sour lemon. Public workers should not have their dinner late in the evening. The only things which they may accept from the village people are *rotlas* and onions, or they may cook their own food. Wherever they go, they should boil water for their use and drink only that. This way they will not have to depend on others, and no one will be put to trouble as nothing will have to be specially prepared for them. They should sleep in the open, accepting if available a charpoy to keep themselves, so far as is humanly possible, safe from the danger of snakes, etc. I am giving all this advice without experience of course. I know that the facilities which were offered to me in the villages may not be available to others. Follow from this whatever is practicable and desirable, and reject the rest. I have made all these suggestions so that you may be prompted to think more about the problem. I realize very well how exceedingly difficult it is to go into the villages. However, despite the difficulties, we must go. I, therefore, very much like the beginning you are making. Every public worker ought to have some knowledge of simple remedies. It is quite easy to acquire it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 174-5

[1] Thick flat bread prepared usually from millet or maize flour

[2] A sweet made from milk

484. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

October 24, 1932

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. Since the pain in the elbow has returned, I have again started dictating as many of the letters as I can to give rest to my arm. None of us was scared by your letter in which you spoke of "blue brain". I had not the least idea what "blue brain" was, and as I had been lying under a tree when your letter came, I said: "Who knows what 'blue brain' is! But living under a tree might cause 'green brain', and it would certainly be good to have it." Thus we had some fun about it, as I showed no symptom at all of what you feared. And we have more cause for fun now that we can understand how you came to have the fear.

There is absolutely no reason why I should not let myself be examined by Bhai Mehta. I would like him to examine me and make some suggestions. Why should not I learn from Mehta, when I am always ready to learn from anybody who has something to give? But the truth is that I would have to obtain special permission to get myself examined by him, and I am really afraid I would not get such permission if I asked for it. I do not ask the permission to spare myself the shock of the refusal. However, I would certainly think about whatever suggestions he sends in writing on the basis of any likely causes that occur to him. Like him, I also believe that disease is lurking somewhere in me, despite all the self-control I exercise, and that the disease expresses itself through the pain in the elbow or otherwise. The bowels certainly are weak. After all I have not been a man of self-control all my life. I lived a life of self-indulgence for a number of years, and who can measure the self-indulgence that must have mixed with self-control after I consciously started to lead such a life?

It would be very good indeed if both of you could go to a quiet place. Do not fight nature.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7554. Also C.W. 5029. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

485. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

October 25, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I thank you for your letter of 24th inst. I appreciate your assurance about the health of my several friends. But you will perhaps agree that it does not give the same satisfaction as a personal letter. So far as Sjt. N. D. Parikh is concerned, my letter was sent during the fast and you are under promise to get me a letter from him in reply as you were good enough to secure from others. So far as Shrimati Manibehn Patel is concerned, her ordinary letter is overdue. She unfailingly writes either to Sardar Vallabhbhai or to me, and neither of us has heard from her. As for Swami Anand's letter, I can only rely upon your goodwill. There is no letter due from him in the ordinary course. If, therefore, you do not mind, I would like to know whether I may have the promised reply sent by Sjt. Parikh, the ordinary monthly letter from Shrimati Manibehn Patel and a letter by grace from Swami Anand.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 9

[1] To this Doyle replied the next day that prisoner N. D. Parikh had forfeited his privilege of writing for having joined in a "work-strike". Miss Patel and Swami Anand had not written.

486. LETTER TO TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

October 25, 1932

DEAR DR. SAPRU,

As I need to give rest to my right hand, I am dictating this letter.

Many thanks for your letter. I have almost regained my normal health. I go through the usual daily routine without much difficulty.

We all feel glad that your son has nearly recovered and that his injuries were not so serious as they were reported in the Press.

I hope this letter will find you completely recovered from the effect of influenza. About the other matters I may not write anything just yet.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Sapru Correspondence. Courtesy: National Library, Calcutta

487. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

October 25, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

I have your letter. When you come, come at twelve. Sushila and Tara can also come. Surendra too. Has he not lived in the Ashram? Moreover, being related to your father-in-law, he is a relation of ours as well. There should not be more than five at a time.

Your tour of Madras, etc., should start soon. The account of the interview with you which has appeared in newspapers does not seem to be correct. If you have not seen it, do so. It has appeared in *The Hindu*.

I hope you have fully recovered now.

Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

CWMG - LII

[PS.]

Devdas came and saw me today. Sushila, therefore, can come on Tuesday next at the earliest. Devdas will tell you the rest. I have sent the papers.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4799

488. LETTER TO SITALA SAHAY

October 25, 1932

We must not look upon young men and women with suspicion. We must not deliberately tempt them. Here there is no such thing. . . .[1] is careful. He is not a young boy any more; he is about thirty-two. . . .[2] too is a sensible girl and . . .[3] has a commendable habit. He hides nothing from me; if he is a prey to passion he confesses it to me. Their relationship, therefore, causes me no anxiety. I am to some extent acquainted with the Roman Catholic injunctions. Our experiment is unique, it is open to many risks. It is also not in conformity with the prevalent atmosphere in India. But the service we want to render to the women of India and the freedom that we want for them, are not possible without incurring risks. We must proceed fearlessly, cautiously, and with faith in God. And this is why we must be very careful in choosing the Ashram manager. In my judgment we cannot find a purer, more patient, disciplined and balanced person than Narandas. As long as he is there, I need not worry. Still, if you have any misgivings, if anything reaches your ears, do write to me.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 177-8

489. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

October 26, 1932

Humanly speaking, it must be evil fate that took you to Sinhergaon. You went there for recuperation and came in for an attack of influenza. But who knows whether it is for your well-being[4] that you have had this attack leaving you completely prostrate. And since we are so hopelessly ignorant as to the truth of things, I suppose the *Gita* teaches us to be equi-minded, no mat-

[1], [2] & [3] These names are omitted in the source.

[4] Perhaps a slip for "who knows whether it is not for your well-being"

ter what fate overtakes us. So on the one hand we have to learn to be equi-minded, and on the other we have to apply natural remedies within our means in order to get well when we are ill. I shall try therefore not to be anxious about your health but pray that whatever is good for you may happen to you.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 178-9

490. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

October 26, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter comes with unfailing regularity.

You will find many more gems in the Quran. Some of them are penetrating. The quotation about Christianity is of a different order. It hardly does justice to the Christian doctrine. Sonship has no literal meaning. Nor does trinity mean three gods. Here 'Letter killeth' applies. Whose translation are you reading?

My weight and health keep steady. I tried bread for two days and then fell back on fruit, milk and a vegetable. I pour my milk over the vegetable which is just now alternatively marrow and pumpkin. These are the only two vegetables to be had just now in the prison garden. And I try to restrict myself just to the vegetables grown there. They seem to suit the body quite well. The monotony does not worry me.

I see with the comparative coolness of weather you are improving. I hope the improvement will be steady.

The seven years seem like a dream. As I recall the terrible scoldings I tremble. And I derive such comfort as is possible from the fact that it was love that was scolding; but I know that there was a better way. As I look back upon the past I realize that my love was impatient. To that extent it was ignorant. Enlightened love is ever patient. Ignorant love is a crude translation of the word *moha* in Sanskrit. I shall learn to be patient. As I watch myself in little things, I know that I have not yet acquired that measure of patience which true love demands. That patience shall come.

You remember Shanti, the Chinese young man? I had a wire from him during the fast and now I have a penitent letter from him. Poor boy! He could not keep his vows and so kept silent. He is father of many children. He gives a desolate picture of China and is impatient to come back to India by way of penance for the past. His English has improved wonderfully.

Devdas was here yesterday. He is much better. Pyarelal obstinately refuses to take milk and butter and confines himself to oil. Fruit too he will not take. The result is that he has a sore throat. I have asked him not to be so obstinate.

Sivaprasad is better. Sushila is also better. And Ba will be going to the Ashram. She was anxious to see you. But I weaned her.

If Kisen is there, love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

This is going in a special envelope which I hope you will get.

From the original: C.W. 6247. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9713

491. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 26, 1932

Constant reflection will strengthen your resolution. If you analyse each word of the *Gita* in detail and reflect over its meaning, that itself will give you more than enough strength. That is what I find happens to me. Do you try and understand the *Gita* in the original Sanskrit? Do you study Sanskrit? Among other books, Tolstoy's essays. *Imitation of Christ* is worth reading. You must read an account of the life of the Buddha, and *The Light of Asia*[1], if you can understand it. It will of course be very good if you read the *Ramayana*. There is a booklet in Hindi entitled *Brahmacharya* which is very good. If you wish to read it, I will get it from the Ashram and send it to you. There is a collection of articles by me entitled *Nitinashne Marge*[2], which also is worth reading. For the present, this reading list is enough. Instead of worrying how you will be able to carry out your resolution, tell yourself that you are bound to succeed in carrying it out and that God will help you. Fix this thought firmly in your mind and keep yourself absorbed in your work. Do not be impatient even in reading. If you do not follow anything, read it over again. It does not matter if this takes more time. Even if you do not remember what you read, do not brood; always remain cheerful. Do not worry however slow your progress is. One day you will find everything easy. Do not do anything at the cost of your health. Put only as much burden on your mind as it can bear.

Your eagerness about the children is right. But you need not worry about them right now. Just now it is necessary that they should improve in health and become very strong. For that we require Nimu's co-operation. I will write to her about them. Recently,

[1] By Sir Edwin Arnold

[2] "Towards Moral Bankruptcy"; *vide* Vol. XXXI.

I have been getting her letters fairly regularly. You also should write to her often. If their bodies become strong and if they grow up in a healthy atmosphere, they will automatically become what you want them to become. You are of course right when you say that you two should exercise self-control at least for their sake. What pure education means, how it can be imparted and what kind of education will suit the present age, all this requires careful thinking. But there is plenty of time for that. You may ask me any questions which occur to you concerning these problems. If you wish, I will send you a short note which may help you.

I suppose Surendra is busily occupied with his shoemaking. Tell him that God may be found even in shoes and the leather of dead cattle. The leather for soles which I recently received was excellent. I see in it God in a beautiful form. He is not to be found only in scriptures. Ask Surendra to explain to you the story of Tuladhar, and let him also reflect again over its meaning. It is not necessary to search for Him in inaccessible places. We carry Him under our arm, but, forgetting that, we go about the whole town looking for Him. When at last we remember that He is in our arm, we weep and laugh over our foolishness.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 179-80

492. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI PATEL

October 26, 1932

CHI. DAHYABHAI[1],

Probably you will now get regular letters from Manibehn also. That means you will get more literature to read or have read out to you. And as you are allowed to do more reading, the time is drawing near when you will also be permitted to leave the bed. But don't be impatient for that. I am sure you know that it is possible for one to serve even from the sick-bed.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI PATEL
RAM NIVAS
PAREKH STREET, BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 149

[1] Son of Vallabhbhai Patel

493. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 26, 1932

CHI. MATHURADAS,

This time I was waiting for a letter from you every day and wondering why there was none, when I got it. You have caught the point regarding the testing of yarn. An understanding of such practical aspects saves us much time. Some of the methods followed by the mills are devised with a purely commercial aim and some others to help in mass production. These methods are of no use to us in our rural industry, though some of them do deserve to be adopted by us too. We have to use our discrimination and judge which ones we should adopt. I suggest that Mahadev's fine yarn may be passed through doubling before weaving, if you feel that it is unfit for weaving only because of its lack of strength. If you think, however, that we do not have the type of *rach* and heddles required to weave such fine yarn, we should manufacture them. Perhaps Ramji's experience may not help us much in this matter as he may not have the intelligence necessary for dealing with yarn of such fine count. To get this yarn woven, you should approach other skilled workers in Ahmedabad who weave very fine cloth. Again, it is likely that the method for testing the strength of very fine yarn is a different one, and the tools for that purpose and also the knocker required for weaving fine yarn must be especially delicate so that there is the least possible strain on the yarn. The method of starching fine yarn must also be different. It is likely, however, that the skilled weavers in Ahmedabad weave only fine silk yarn and do not know enough about very fine cotton yarn. If that is so, we should procure the necessary tools from Andhradesha or Bengal where they weave very fine yarn, or we may send to them a specimen of our yarn and inquire about the method of weaving it. Have you seen the Andhra weavers at work? Did you observe the starching and other processes which they demonstrated at our exhibitions? But I think that after reading what I have written you yourself will be able to find a better solution. We must acquire the skill to weave our finest yarn ourselves in the Ashram. You will perhaps be able to see from all this that only voluntary spinners can fully master all aspects of the art of spinning and that, when we have mastered

it, it will be quite easy for us to produce ordinary khadi of the best possible quality. You will also see, if you cast a glance at other crafts and skills, that when the people themselves had not learnt the required skill the craft remained poor, and that it was only amateurs who became experts in it. It is because our people neglected hand-spinning that the country lost a cottage industry which gave work to millions in their homes. Now the craft can be revived as an occupation only if we do hard *tapascharya* and cultivate the art once again in a spirit of *yajna*. Looking at the matter from this point of view, I was very happy that you had finally decided to cling to your work and overcome your restlessness.

Keshu's carding-bow will of course be useful. As it cannot be installed in a village home, the old carding-bow will remain as the old spinning-wheel has remained. The best thing to do is to make improvements in it, and I believe that such improvements are possible. Mirabehn has been working fairly hard with that aim. She has been carding in jail too, and has made some improvements. You are quite right in applying yourself to that task.

Your test report on the yarn spun by both of us will help us very much. I saw the justice of most of your criticism. I myself have observed the defects which you have pointed out, but I ignore them sometimes when I am tired. I often observe that the yarn is rough because of an occasional bad sliver or because of uneven tension when spinning. Instead of cutting off and taking out that part, I let it pass. I do know that this will mean a lot of trouble for the weaver, and that, therefore, by letting that yarn remain I also commit violence. However, while I am actually spinning, partly through lack of vigilance at the time, partly through greed, partly through lethargy and partly through fatigue I may ignore defects in the yarn. But now that I have received your criticism, I know that the quality of my yarn will automatically improve. If, therefore, I receive further criticism when the yarn is woven, it will certainly help both Mahadev and me, for both of us wish to spin yarn of the finest count and of the finest quality that we can. As we cannot get here other yarn for comparison, some defects will of course remain; but we will keep up our efforts to reach as high a standard as possible.

I hope you are keeping good health. I don't write anything about Meghaji.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3757

494. LETTER TO VASANTLAL MORARKA

October 26, 1932

Concentration during prayers is attainable by practice alone. When one starts thinking during prayer time that prayer is even more necessary for the spirit than is food for the body, one starts enjoying the prayers after a few days. If one holds that forgetting Ramanama is the greatest sorrow, chanting the name becomes a regular habit. Holding untruth as the greatest sin and renouncing any temporary gain accruing from it will make us naturally love truth.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 178

495. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

October 26, 1932

BHAISHRI SATAVLEKAR,

I had been awaiting your letter when it came. I was apprehending some trouble. Your letter makes it clear.[1] We all hope that your son will speedily recover his strength and so will you. I have often noticed that dentists make many mistakes and the patients have to suffer. Thanks for the exhaustive reply to the article by Mahendra Mishra that you have sent in spite of your poor health.[2] I shall preserve it and study it with care. Sardar's study of Sanskrit is progressing well and many learners are using the second set of the Sanskrit Readers sent by you.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4767. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

[1] The addressee in his letter of October 20 had informed Gandhiji that his son had been ill with typhoid and that he had been having trouble with a tooth which a dentist had made worse.

[2] Mahendra Mishra in his article had contended that meat-eating was a common practice in Vedic times and the addressee had refuted the contention, citing profuse references.

496. LETTER TO RAMNATH 'SUMAN'

October 26, 1932

Individual prayer alone can be the basis of congregational prayer. My emphasis on the latter does not at all mean that I attach greater importance to it. Since we are not used to congregational prayer, I have attempted to show the need for it. What you can experience in seclusion is certainly difficult, if not impossible, to experience in a group. I have also noticed that some people cannot pray except in a group. For such people individual prayer is essential. I would also admit that one can do without congregational prayer but certainly not without individual prayer.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 178

497. LETTER TO HARISINGH GAUR

October 27, 1932

I confess that I do not feel the same afflatus as you do, for I do not share the view that you hold about the Brahminical influence.[1] Whilst the Brahmins have undoubtedly a great deal to answer for, I am sure that they have been much more sinned against than sinning. Every religion has produced its own Brahmins. That they have not been known as such makes no difference. Our Brahmins would, I think, compare favourably with the others. At the same time I am not in love with the caste system with all its ignorant restrictions. I do believe in varnashrama, without the restrictions superimposed upon it about inter-dining and intermarriage and the idea of superiority and inferiority. I believe with Vivekananda that Shankara never drove Buddhism from India for he was himself a *prachchhanna*[2] Buddha. He merely rid it of the bad things that were creeping into it, and prevented its alienation

[1] The addressee had said that Shankaracharya, by making the supremacy of Brahmins the basis of Hinduism, had rendered it prone to many attacks, and contended that Buddhism was Hinduism in its purity. He had enclosed a book of his on Buddhism.

[2] Disguised

from Hinduism. In my opinion nowhere has the influence of the teaching of Buddha been more abiding than in India. Nevertheless I would go with you the whole distance in saying that we need again a very thorough cleansing.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 181

498. LETTER TO TARA R. MODI

October 27, 1932

CHI. TARA,

If I got your letter, it is unlikely that I did not reply to it. If you wrote to me directly, it is possible that your letter was lost on the way. If you sent it with the Ashram post, I would certainly remember receiving it. If you had asked me any special questions, please send them again. However, you should be able to get much from my numerous letters and articles.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4174. Also C.W. 1673. Courtesy: Ramniklal Modi

499. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

October 27, 1932

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter.

It is a mark of intellectual laziness to believe that whoever can give an account of every moment of his life can become a mahatma. There are in the West many hard-working men and women who can give an account of every moment of their lives, but they are not fortunate enough to have become mahatmas. Under the pretext that only a mahatma can do it, you cannot escape your duty to give an account of every moment. Every one of us should form the habit of keeping such an account. And no great credit should be given for it either.

The phrase, 'one's duty however defective' should not be interpreted to mean a duty which violates morality. 'Defective' here means what seems to be inferior. According to the *Gita*, all duties have equal value, for Mother *Gita* attaches importance only to people's hearts and, therefore, her standards are bound to be

faultless. For example, if a grain-dealer who feels that his occupation is inferior to a clerk's, gives up his trade and tries to become a clerk, wouldn't he be a loser both ways? In the same way, if Titus, who looks after the dairy, leaves the cows in order to serve *Antyajas* because *Antyaja* service has become fashionable just now, he will be said to have given up his duty and acted contrary to the teaching of the *Gita*. Similarly, if you women who have bound yourselves by vows to do certain work, leave it and take up some other work of service, you will be guilty of forsaking your duty. Is this quite clear?

I see nothing wrong in a person going out of the Ashram to improve his health and returning to it after it has improved. Don't I myself ask many to do so? But anybody who vows not to return to the Ashram and keeps the vow, as Gangadevi did, deserves all honour. Only a rare person can do that, and only if he has accepted the idea with his whole heart. Such a person, even if he or she has to be looked after by others, does great service by setting an example of immense patience and non-attachment to life. Moreover, our aspiration is to live as simply as poor people do. The latter, even when they suffer extreme pain through some disease, cannot leave either their home or their village. They remain satisfied with whatever their friends and relations can do for them, and some do not get even that much service. We should bow in reverence to a a person who, being a man of knowledge, voluntarily suffers with similar patience. He serves the people even by setting an example of such patience. That is why I had suggested to Punjabhai that it would be good both for him and for the Ashram if he died in it, nursed by the inmates. And for the same reason, I told Kishorelal that he should not mind having to be looked after by other people in the Ashram, for a man like him served the Ashram by his mere presence. I have only stated a principle[1] in my letter to Narandas. You need not think much about it. If anybody is inspired by that highest sense of dharma, let him take such a step. You should do only what you can.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9335. Also C.W. 581. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] Vide pp. 246-7.

500. LETTER TO SHANKARRAO GHATGE

October 27, 1932

The *atman*, as everyone will agree, is not destroyed with the body. Similarly the *atman* exists prior to the birth of the body. If we accept this, we have no reason to believe that the *atman* will not be reborn in a body or that it did not occupy a body in the past. But to hold that the *atman* will necessarily inhabit a form because it is inhabiting one at present would be merely falling in with the popular belief.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 182

501. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 27, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

It is good that you are learning Hindi. You must finish whatever you take up. I do not see any need for observing a weekly fast. But it is another thing if fasting is necessary for health. You may take my word in all this. Your good lies in doing with all sincerity whatever work Narandas may assign to you. Give up worrying about Kudsia. Let Narandas do what is his duty. Express your opinion if he consults you. Give me the news of Dr. Sharma. What was decided about his coming to the Ashram? Do you find any difficulty in reading this?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 261

CWMG II

502. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL[1]

October 28, 1932

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

HOPE YOU ARE NOT UPSET BY GRANDMOTHER'S DEATH WHICH ANYONE WOULD ENVY. WHY NO LETTER FROM YOU LONG TIME. LOVE.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 89

503. LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

October 28, 1932

I have almost regained my normal health and am pursuing my normal activities without much strain being felt. Please therefore entertain no anxiety about me. What the future has in store one does not know, and one is not permitted to pry into it. God will take care of the future if we would mind the present.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 184

504. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION, SCOTLAND

October 28, 1932

I have always prized the blessings of children, because they are generally so innocent. Don't you know that there is no such thing as soul-force without God behind it? Therefore the distinction that you have made is wrong. Anyway I have no knowledge of any person believing in the existence of the soul and denying God.

I like very much the idea of your praying for the peace and prosperity not only of your own land, but of the whole world.

[1] The original English text is not available.

CWMG - LI

Personally I do not believe in patriotism that excludes the welfare of other countries than one's own. I therefore wish you every success.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 183

505. LETTER TO HENRY S. SALT[1]

October 28, 1932

I thank you for your letter. May I say in all humility that one rarely finds people outside India recognizing non-human beings as fellow beings. Millennium will have come when mankind generally recognizes and acts up to this grand truth.

Thank you.

With my best regards to you and Mrs. Salt,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 18579

506. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

October 28, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

No parallel can be drawn at all between what was said during the conversation with Acharya Gidwani and the question of inter-dining with Harijans. Those who arrange such dinners have already goodwill in their hearts for the latter. Hence the students who join such dinners for sharing in their pleasure cannot be compared with them. And in any case the Harijans cannot be compared with such students who are attracted to the parties by the thought of enjoyment, for what we do for Harijans cannot be described as temptation held out to them. Those who do *prayaschitta* do it not as a temptation to anybody but for self-purification. Is not all this as clear as daylight? Whether or not mixed dinner

[1] An octogenarian, Salt had met Gandhiji in London in November 1931. On October 8, 1932, he had written: "The subject under special consideration, when I saw you in London, was vegetarianism; and I feel as strongly as ever that food-reform, like socialism, has an essential part to play in the liberation of mankind. I cannot see how there can be any real and full recognition of kinship, as long as men continue either to cheat or to eat, their fellow-beings!"

parties are proper is a separate issue. In certain circumstances such a party may be proper and in certain other circumstances it may not be so. Thus it is entirely a question of the circumstances of each case.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7510. Also C.W. 4987. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

507. MESSAGE TO ARYA SAMAJ

[Before *October 29, 1932*][1]

I cannot imagine a more effective means of honouring the memory of the great Swami Dayanand than by every Arya Samajist devoting his best energies to the cause of the Harijans (so-called depressed classes) during this wave of reform.

The Hindu, 31-10-1932

508. A LETTER[2]

October 29, 1932

Your objection would be sound if 'Harijan' was to be used for all time to denote 'untouchable' brethren, but whilst they have to be distinguished, I felt that 'untouchables' or its vernacular equivalent was no longer equivalent.

Mahadevbhaini Diary Vol. II, p. 185

[1] The report in the source is dated October 29.

[2] The addressee, a Bengali gentleman not identified by name, had said that Gandhiji appeared to perpetuate the name "Harijan" for untouchables.

CWMG - I.I

509. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

October 29, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I very much liked your programme of the 20th. I indeed feel tempted to taste the food cooked by you, both boys and girls, but I don't think you would let me, would you? You will get this letter after the New Year's day. It is my wish and my blessing to you that during the coming year all of you may keep excellent health, do sincere work and that your conduct may become more upright day by day.

BAPU

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

510. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

October 29, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

I got the paintings sent by you. None of us here is an expert on painting. But all three of us liked both the paintings. We liked the painting of Rama and Hanuman more than the other. Sardar was pleased most. On one of them is written your name, and on the other the name is "Bhau". If the second painting is not by you, who is "Bhau"? I take it they are both by you. Are they both original or copies? Give me any other information that may be relevant.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 309. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

CWMG - 71

511. A LETTER

October 29, 1932

If you are sure in your mind that you will never marry again, you need not marry now. If, however, deep in your heart you desire to marry, you should yield to your mother's wish. The way out of the problem created by the number of eligible young men in your community[1] being smaller than that of girls is to marry the girls outside the community. The division into castes and clans has nothing to do with dharma. It is true that it is an age-old tradition among the Hindus but traditions change with time. I have replied to your questions because your letter was so very sincere. May your love of dharma grow during the year which has commenced.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 186

512. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Padavo [*October 30*][2], *1932*

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet on Tuesday. By the time you get this letter, I am sure Mohan will be on his feet again. I don't suppose you read Balbhadra's[3] long letter. Pass on my letter to him without reading it, since that is his wish. It is desirable that we should respect children's wishes in such matters. Send for him and tell him that, as suggested by me, the letter is given to him without being read. That will make him happy. He had mentioned two things in his letter. One, that he was very much afraid of his father, and two, that every time he did something wrong you and Prema threatened to send him away to his father. The complaint seemed exaggerated to me. But he is an obstinate child and likely to get on one's nerves. I would not, therefore, be surprised if he had really been scolded in that manner. The child has

[1] The addressee was a goldsmith.

[2] The source has October 29, *Padavo*, which however corresponded to October 30.

[3] A student of the Ashram school

no one to care for him. And, moreover, he is dull-witted, so that everybody makes fun of him. Not being able to realize his foolishness, he is upset when people make fun of him. Such children deserve great pity. Talk to him casually and find out all this from him, and give what sympathy you can. If his fear of us, whether or not he has reason for such fear, leaves him, the fear of his father also will not remain much longer. At present he is very much afraid that, if he is sent away from the Ashram, he will have to go to his father. One more complaint which he makes is that students do not now enjoy the freedom which they formerly had. I don't think there is any truth in this complaint, and I have told him so in my letter. However, you may think about the matter if there is any element of truth in it.

I have a very angry letter from Ratilal. He says in it that you got very angry with him, insulted him, and so forth. Champa also has joined in the complaint. I do not understand why she is angry with you. I understand what you say in regard to money. I have a letter from Mahavir in which he says he will return to the Ashram in a few days, and also that he has asked for your permission to come and see me on his way to Ahmedabad. On my part, I have asked him to give up the idea. For one thing, it is still uncertain whether I shall start seeing visitors again. And a visit here would mean an unnecessary expense of about thirty rupees. How can it be justified ?

I think it would be desirable if Navin goes to Almora as soon as he can. In my letter[1] to Mathuradas, I have written at length about spinning fine yarn. Read that letter. Did you find Tilakam's health very much improved when he returned there ? What is his diet at present? I think Mirabehn's diet will suit him. His body is built on non-vegetarian diet. I have often observed that persons who have been used to non-vegetarian diet cannot preserve strength on pulses. But they can live on milk, *rotli*, green vegetables and sour lemons. The reason is this. Non-vegetarians do not require much starch. When they give up flesh, they eat plenty of starch to satisfy their hunger and a good quantity of pulses to provide nourishment to the tissues. Naturally they cannot digest all this food and in consequence fall ill. If, when giving up non-vegetarian food, such persons take milk in sufficient quantity, it would supply them the nourishment which they previously got from flesh. And their hunger would be satisfied by whole-flour bread. The bran contained in such bread and the natural water of the green vegetables would

[1] *Vide* pp. 301-2.

help them to keep their bowels clean. This is the theory. Vegetarian diet agreed with Mirabehn immediately because I did not permit her to eat pulses at all. Of course her firm determination also was an important factor. She had resolved, from the very day she came into contact with me through letters, that she would not eat non-vegetarian food even if she died without it. But her resolution and faith are unusual.

I have written to Jamna a long sermon on the primus stove. Ask the other women also to read it, and then they may do as they like. Their renouncing the use of the primus stove will benefit them only if they do so willingly.

Read my letter to Jethalal. I need not write more about the subject here. That letter contains the answers to your questions. I hope Purushottam's health has not deteriorated after his arrival there.

You will notice that I have dictated quite a large number of the letters this time. The right elbow is in the same condition now as the left was. I may say that I took too much freedom in writing letters after the last fast. Besides the letters to people in the Ashram, I wrote a great number of other letters too. Moreover, I wrote every day. Add to that spinning for two and a half hours. The exertion proved too much. I, therefore, decided to spare the right hand from writing work as much as possible. As a result, the condition of the elbow is a little better now. But you need not worry at all. At this age, I cannot expect to regain lost fat and tissue very soon. In six days the body had thinned visibly. It cannot become as it was before the fast in a month. There is no reason in this to feel concerned. I can do all ordinary work as usual. If I have been writing for the whole life, there is nothing wrong in my giving a long rest to the hand, and no cause whatever to feel surprised or concerned. There is certainly no disease in the hand. It does not pain when I do not work with it. I do not feel the pain even when I am working but afterwards as it starts paining I feel that that part is exhausted. Hence, as a measure of precaution, I am giving rest to it.

All the inmates have my blessings for the New Year as a a matter of course. Even children who can understand things know very well now what I expect from the Ashram. It is my hope that all the inmates, grown-ups and children, may acquire the strength of character and devotion to service which would fulfil my expectations, and my prayer to God that He may grant such strength to you all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8262. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

513. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

Padavo, 1989 [*October 30, 1932*]

DEAR SISTER,

I am sure you got the letter which I wrote to you. And still it seems you could not restrain yourself on the Diwali day. I got your loving gift. The containers were returned. I hope you will not take any trouble now. I will not fail to write to you when I need anything.

All of us wish and pray that the New Year may bring you prosperity and happiness, that your aspirations may be fulfilled and your devotion to service may grow stronger.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4826. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

514. LETTER TO SHANKAR[1]

October 30, 1932

I hope that the New Year will give you a larger spirit of sacrifice, greater steadiness of purpose and a more vivid appreciation of self-restraint.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 186

515. A LETTER[2]

October 30, 1932

You have asked me for my opinion about occult sciences. I am not in love with them. The book of life is open to the simplest minds and it should be so. There is nothing occult in God's plan.

[1] Presumably S. Shankar, Joint Secretary of the Harijan Seva Sangh, Madras

[2] The addressee, an Englishwoman living in Switzerland, had asked Gandhiji what he thought of occult sciences.

Anyway the mysterious and the occult have never made any appeal to me. Truth has no secrets and Truth is God.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

516. LETTER TO MOHANLAL M. BHATT

October 30, 1932

I don't think that I can lay down rules for indefinite fasting which would satisfy you. I might say only this. A fast should be characterized by perfect truth and non-violence, and should be undertaken only upon the prompting of one's inner voice and not in blind imitation of somebody. One should never undertake a fast for a selfish end; the aim behind a fast should always be common good. A fast should never be undertaken for any object which is inspired by ill will towards somebody. But what is inner voice? Can everybody claim it? These are important questions. Of course the inner voice speaks to everybody; but he whose ear has not learnt to recognize and listen to the inner voice will not be able to hear it, just as a deaf person cannot hear even the sweetest music. The ears of one who lacks self-control cannot recognize the true inner voice. Only that person will be fit to recognize it who possesses the characteristics of the *sthitaprajna* given in Ch. II of the *Gita*, or of the devotee in Ch. XII, or of the *gunatita* in Ch. XIV or the one in whom all the three *gunas* blend. The question put by Sundaram is improper.[1] But now that he has asked it, I ought to say that, according to me, on the whole the Hindu religion is "nearest to the truth". But at the same time I admit unhesitatingly that in holding this view I may be making a mistake through ignorance or partiality. The mistake, if any, is pardonable and one which has its use, because, in the absence of all ignorance and partiality it would be impossible for any man to cling to his religion, and he would, and ought to, embrace another religion in which he saw more of truth. Call it God's *maya* or know it by any other name you choose, but all human beings have this weakness. And yet, in spite of such attachment to one's own religion, one ought to hold all religions in equal regard. In other words, I should, as a Hindu, accept it as natural for a Christian to believe that Christianity is nearer to the truth and for a Muslim to believe that about Islam, and also that it is necessary for them to do so if they are to follow their respec-

[1] He had asked which religion, in Gandhiji's view, was nearest to the truth.

tive religions sincerely. I ought to bear them no ill will for such a belief, nor should I regard their belief as mistaken. I hope that what I have said will be clear to Bhai Sundaram and to all of you. Probably this view of mine about equality towards all religions is a new idea. If other people also have thought about the matter along similar lines, I am not aware of the fact. For me at any rate, the idea is original and it has given me the purest joy. My view enables me to cling to Hinduism and to hold other religions in reverence at the same time, and adopt from them without hesitation whatever is good in them. I owe this discovery to non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 186-7

517. LETTER TO GULAB

October 30, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

You should improve your handwriting. You say that your weight is 169 pounds. But that cannot be. Let me know the correct figure. If you take pains over learning carding, you will succeed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1728

518. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 30, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. What you write about Krishnan Nair is correct.

Did you have any talk with him before he left with Rambhau? He is misusing his intelligence. I should be glad if he could be cured of this tendency.

You seem to have quite a large number of girls on your hands now. May God give you the strength to manage them all, i.e., purify them with your love and keep them ever pure.

Take care of Lilavati. She is an unhappy girl.

CWMG - II

You may try gum *pak*[1], if you wish. Personally I am afraid that you will not even be able to digest it. What you need is oil massage and Kuhne bath. The whole back should be massaged.

How nice it would be if you had buried your anger with the year that has ended.

Don't worry if there is no agreement about the use of the Ashram money. A solution will come by and by. It will come at any rate when one day you take the management of the Ashram in your own hands.

Greet the plants and the flowers on my behalf, and give them some hope. Ask them to give us beauty and fragrance like theirs, their single-minded devotion and their firmness, their humility, equi-mindedness and innocence, and thus demonstrate their friendliness.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10308. Also C.W. 6747. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

519. LETTER TO KULKARNI[2]

October 30, 1932

Vidya means knowledge and *avidya* means activity. The meanings of *sambhooti* and *asambhooti* are related to the meanings *vidya* and *avidya*. Hence *asambhooti* means the body and *sambhooti* means the self. I interpret the expressions thus for my own satisfaction. I feel that this interpretation explains the meaning of the *Ishopanishad* easily and satisfactorily.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

[1] A tonic preparation

[2] The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to explain the meanings of *vidya*, *avidya*, *sambhooti* and *asambhooti* in verses 11 and 12 of the *Ishopanishad*.

520. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

October 30, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I have not neglected to reply to a single letter of yours. Nor is there any possibility of a letter having got lost. Your handwriting has improved a little. Make the letters slightly bigger and write slowly. If you are patient, you will make quite good progress in learning. You should write in every letter what you learnt during the week. You should go through a letter again to see that the conjunct letters are correctly written.

Does Shambhubhai write to you? Or anybody from home?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2765. Courtesy: Ramanarayan N. Pathak

521. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

October 30, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

Your handwriting is good, but you don't write much in your letters. You can certainly describe what you did during the past week.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1742

522. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 30, 1932

You have still a long life before you. May all your aspirations and your ambition to serve be fulfilled. May you be a true representative of the ideals of truth and non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

523. A LETTER

October 30, 1932

There is no uniformity of policy in public institutions because the workers lack charity and the men at the head do not have perfect humility. Generally no difficulty is experienced in an institution in which the head is a man of self-control. From these facts, we can deduce one rule at any rate, namely, that the greater the self-control on the part of the workers the greater the chances of unity in that institution will be.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 188

524. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 31, 1932

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER, BELGAUM JAIL

GRANDMOTHER DIED PEACEFULLY WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON KARAMSAD AFTER FOUR HOUR ILLNESS. HOPE LETTER GIVING DETAILS SENT FRIDAY DELIVERED. WE ARE ALL WELL. LOVE.[1]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro – 4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 89

525. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 31, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

As the Government have not granted the relief sought in my letter to Col. Doyle of the 24th inst. and unless it comes in the course of the day, the progressive non-co-operation adumbrated in that letter will commence from tomorrow.

[1] The original English text of the telegram is not available.

As stated in that letter, I shall begin by denying myself the special food issued to me. Will you kindly therefore have the goat's milk stopped as from tomorrow? Besides this, just now I am only drawing sour limes and vegetables in common with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and sometimes taking a little brown bread from Sjt. Mahadev Desai's ration. Sardar Vallabhbhai sends for the limes and vegetables and I have asked him not to send for my portion. In lieu of this, I shall take, for the time being, and if they are issued to me, the morning *kanji* and the noon and the afternoon *bhakri* out of the 'C' class rations. I may not take anything else from the 'C' class rations, and I can only take during any twenty-four hours five ingredients besides salt, soda and water. The vegetables and dholl generally issued to 'C' class prisoners contain more than three or four ingredients. These therefore I may not take. I do not propose to take anything specially prepared for special 'C' class prisoners.[1]

As a large amount of correspondence on untouchability, some of which is very important, has accumulated, and requires answering with a view to publication, I think that it is incumbent upon Government either to publish my correspondence with Government on the matter or to inform the public, in any other manner Government may choose, of my request and their refusal to accede to it.

It is needless to add that I have scrupulously avoided, either directly or indirectly, the leakage of any information about the correspondence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3855. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 245

[1] On receiving this letter, Mahadev Desai says, Major Bhandari saw Gandhiji and tried to dissuade him saying that by refusing food he was used to he would become weak and might even get dysentery. For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* the following item.

526. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

October 31, 1932

I do not want to have dysentery, but if I get it I should go through it. But at the slightest sign of it I shall stop all food. The non-co-operation has to be progressive. This course I have adopted to cause the Government the least possible inconvenience. I cannot live and not work for the removal of untouchability. But if the Government would that I died rather than I lived to work for removal of untouchability I cannot help it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 189. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 249

527. LETTER TO C. K. NAMBIAR[1]

October 31, 1932

MY DEAR NAMBIAR,

I have read your letter from top to bottom. I think that you are needlessly suspicious and therefore harsh in your judgment. Whilst Press propaganda has a value, substantial results are only attainable through solid, silent, persistent work. Those who realize this will not deplore absence of notice of their work in the Press.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 148

[1] The addressee's name is supplied from the G.N. register.

528. A LETTER[1]

October 31, 1932

I hope you will fulfil your promise never again to tell lies or steal. You would not like people to deceive you or steal your things. Therefore you do not expect that other people would like you to deceive them or to steal their things.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 191

529. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK[2]

October 31, 1932

It is your moral duty to tell him[3] about your private life too. Surely you do believe that impurity even in private life does harm to one's work. Don't argue that others who are impure in their private lives have succeeded in business, etc. It is not for us to judge whether they have succeeded or not. We make no distinction between private life, public life or business activities. All our activities are for self-purification and hence any impurity in us our will obstruct progress at every step.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 190

530. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

October 31, 1932

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. Who can foresee the future? The predictions of astrologers are not gospel truth. One should pay no attention to the words of astrologers. The scripture wherein fate is discussed enjoins *brahmacharya* too. Therefore whatever be our fate our duty is to make full effort. I mentioned Ch. XV[4] by mistake.

[1] The addressee, a little girl, is not identified in the source.
[2] Manager of Srinagar Khadi Centre
[3] Shankerlal Banker
[4] *Vide* p. 227.

I should have said Ch. VIII, verse 11. The word *daiva* in Ch. XVIII implies *prarabdha*.

The wheel one can ply on one's own. There is adequate literature on the subject. The book[1] by Richard Gregg and the one[2] by Puntambekar and Varadachari both are worth reading. They are available from the Bombay Navajivan Karyalaya, Princess Street, Bombay 2. Of course you have my blessings on the vow of *brahmacharya*.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.G. 41

531. A LETTER

October 31, 1932

Patients observe silence on account of their suffering, some orators observe it to give rest to their throats and some observe it when in a mood for introspection. All three can benefit each in his own way. The introspective persons will, ordinarily, spend the day in seclusion, fast or have a light meal. If necessary they will study writings inducing calm thoughts. Observing silence for its own sake does little good and may cause harm. The seeker after truth should have a well-defined purpose behind every action he takes.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 191

532. A LETTER

October 31, 1932

Decide upon the central core of the *Gita*. Then put into practice that interpretation of each verse which applies to one's life. This would be the best commentary on the *Gita*, and the truest study of it. There can be no doubt that non-attachment is the central core of the *Gita*. I am certain that there is no other inspiration behind the composition of the *Gita*. And I know from my own experience that observance of truth or even ahimsa is im-

[1] *Economics of Khaddar*
[2] *Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving*

CWMG - LI

possible without non-attachment. Undoubtedly non-attachment is difficult of attainment. But what is so strange about it? For the realization of Satyanarayana some effort is necessarily called for and this realization is impossible without non-attachment.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 191-2

533. MESSAGE TO BEGUM ALI IMAM

[On or before *November 1, 1932*][1]

Deepest sympathy in your loss which is also mine. Your dear husband[2] was one of my oldest friends.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-11-1932

534. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

November 1, 1932

MY DEAR PLAYMATE AND UNWILLING SLAVE,

Wanting you to be a willing slave, though a driver of slaves, I slavishly carry out your wish that out of philanthropy I should write to you with the left hand. I had no notion of my being a slave-driver till mates like you from personal experience made the discovery. So I had thought that they must have willingly submitted to the yoke. But I see that your pride comes in the way of your making a frank admission. I do not want more accidents to humble your pride. . . .[3]

About reading the books you have sent me, I shall follow the course suggested by you. I am fast increasing the number of my teachers. Raihana was the first, then Zohra was appointed. And now you have sought the honour. Let this serve as the letter of appointment. But in order to retain the honour you will have to be good and not ill and bed-ridden.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 194

[1] The report is dated November 1, 1932.

[2] Sir Ali Imam, a one-time judge of Calcutta High Court and a prominent Muslim League leader, had died towards the end of October.

[3] A portion is omitted in the source.

535. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

November 1, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I specially remember you today. I have had no letter from you since long.

I didn't get any even in the last week of September.

How are all of you? How is Grandmother? How is Gokibehn[1]? Are your worries over now?

I wish you a happy New Year.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4798. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

536. LETTER TO HOMI PESTONJI

November 1, 1932

I duly received the books sent by you. I have met Upasani Maharaj. I formed a very bad impression about him and have found his writings wanting in purity.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 193

537. A LETTER

November 1, 1932

It is not for me to decide when I should fast. What God has decreed will happen.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 194

[1] Addressee's father's sister

CWMG - LI

538. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

7 a.m., November 2, 1932

TO
HOME SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

YOUR MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED TO ME TEN O'CLOCK LAST NIGHT. IT IS PAINFUL SURPRISE TO ME THAT MY LETTER OF TWENTY-FOURTH ULTIMO SHOULD HAVE REACHED GOVERNMENT THIRTY-FIRST NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE PROSPECTIVE FAST THEREIN ADUMBRATED INVOLVED PRISONER'S LIFE AS BECAUSE FAST COVERED MATTER HIGHEST URGENCY AND DIRECTLY ARISING OUT OF YERAVDA PACT ENDORSED BY HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT. IN VIEW HOWEVER OF THIS UNFORTUNATE DELAY AND IN VIEW OF ASSURANCE AND SUGGESTION CONTAINED IN YOUR MESSAGE I HAVE SUSPENDED RESTRICTION ON DIET WHICH COMMENCED YESTERDAY.[1] I TRUST MY LETTER OF THIRTY-FIRST ULTIMO ADDRESSED TO SUPERINTENDENT YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON WAS REPEATED TO YOU. WHEN HE CAME TO ME TO UNDERSTAND IMPLICATIONS OF THE LETTER I TOLD HIM THAT IF I DID NOT GET RELIEF WITHIN FOUR DAYS FROM FIRST INSTANT AMONG OTHER THINGS I MIGHT BE OBLIGED TO STOP FOOD ALTOGETHER. THIS I MENTION TO CONVEY TO GOVERNMENT SOME IDEA OF INTENSITY OF MY FEELING. ALMOST DAILY I AM GETTING LETTERS ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY FROM REFORMERS AND REACTIONARIES DEMANDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND REPLY DESIGNED FOR PUBLICATION. A MATTER IN WHICH MILLIONS OF PEOPLE HAVE TO BE INFLUENCED CANNOT BE HANDLED BY PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE UNDER BAN OF PUBLICATION. I HAVE LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS FROM RECENTLY FORMED ALL-INDIA ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE ASKING FOR IMMEDIATE GUIDANCE AND ADVICE AS TO METHOD OF WORK. I HAVE MOST IMPORTANT LETTER FROM CALICUT DEMANDING IMMEDIATE REPLY AND REQUEST FROM UNTOUCHABLE FRIENDS SEEKING EMERGENT INTERVIEW. KNOWING THIS AND KNOWING THAT MY LIFE IS AT STAKE IN ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN GOVERNMENT WILL APPRECIATE MY READINESS AND

[1] On November 1 Gandhiji had started taking food supplied to 'C' class prisoners; *vide* the following item.

DESIRE TO FORFEIT IT IF IN THIS MATTER I AM NOT TO BE ALLOWED FULL AND UNFETTERED FACILITIES AS REQUESTED IN MY LETTER. A PRISONER HAS NO OTHER HONOURABLE OUTLET FROM AN INTOLERABLE AND SOUL-KILLING POSITION.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. I, p. 277. Also G.N. 3866

539. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

Urgent *November 2, 1932*

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

With reference to Government of India message handed to me by you last night I enclose herewith a reply[1] which I request may be sent as an express wire. As you will gather from the wire I have already suspended the restriction on my diet and partaken of my usual food. If it is at all possible, I suggest that this wire to the Government of India may not await the opening of the office of the Inspector-General of Prisons.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. I, p. 267. Also G.N. 3865

540. LETTER TO THE MANAGING COMMITTEE, SUNFIELD SCHOOL

November 2, 1932

I can well agree with much of what you say about the material and the spiritual. Matter without spirit is dead and spirit without matter cannot move. So long as we think of *them* and not *it*, each needs the help of the other. But I must not wander into that very beautiful realm.[2]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 197

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The letter, according to the source, also contained a reference to "my friend and daughter Esther Menon".

CWMG-LI

541. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 2, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

On hearing disturbing news about the condition of your ear, I sent you a wire[1] today. I hope you got it. We are waiting for a reply. I also expect a detailed letter from you. I have of course written to Dr. Modi and requested him to send a report. May I suggest a few changes in your diet? Bananas are not at all necessary. Nor do I see any need for papaya at present. You should omit pulses for some time from your diet and add fresh grapes or oranges or *mosambis*. It would also be better if you could drink more milk. I have had no letter from you for a long time now. Give all details about your health.

How is Manilal? Give me news about other companions too. We are quite happy here. Manilal, Sushila, Tara[2], Surendra[3] and Sita paid us a visit yesterday. Sushila has improved now. I suppose you know that she had to be kept in Dosibai's Hospital for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2902

[1] This is not available.
[2] Sushila's sister
[3] Sushila's brother

542. LETTER TO BHIKHIBEHN

November 2, 1932

CHI. BHIKHIBEHN,

I am glad you wrote to me. If you learnt reading and writing in the Ashram itself, then you have made very good progress. And that is as it should be. Still if you are a little more careful, your handwriting, as also your Gujarati, will improve further.

Tell me something more about yourself when you write again. What village do you belong to? Are your parents alive? What is your husband?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1743

543. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 2, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

I got your letter. There was no harm in your ruling the sheet, but you should have ruled with a rod, and if you write slowly you can write in a straight line even without ruling the sheet. God guides his *bhaktas*. But how can we say that He guides even those who do not pray to Him and never remember Him? We use our reason well or ill according to the tendencies with which we are born as a result of our karma in past lives. God has given to all of us the strength to wipe out those effects of past karma. Anybody who uses that strength can wipe them out. Your Gujarati is very weak. Try patiently to improve it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3283

544. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 2, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

Bhau's fast must have ended now. After reading this, you or Bhau should drop a postcard to me every day without fail. I suppose he took enema daily while the fast lasted. Ask him to give me full details about the period of the fast. I think I have already explained to him what he should do after the fast has ended.

I got your letter yesterday. Manilal, Sushila, Tara, Surendra and Sita came and saw me.

BAPU

[PS.]

Think and decide about Kusum without delay. Give me news about her also by return of post. The following is for Ba. She used to take it while in Sabarmati jail. You will notice that there are two things, one to be taken by mouth and another for external application.

Atophan — One tabloid to be powdered and divided into three parts. One portion to be taken three times a day. Belladona plaster for local application over the painful part.[1]

If Jugatram's treatment is going on, she need not follow this prescription just now.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8263. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

545. LETTER TO GULAB

November 2, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

I got your letter. You have still not told me what your speed in spinning is. Remember to mention it in your next letter.

[1] Gandhiji gives the prescription in English.

You should learn the way a letter is written.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1729

546. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

November 2, 1932

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your letter and my postcard seem to have crossed. You are being tested fairly severely, and I am sure that you will prove your perfect worth.

Give my respectful greetings to Grandmother. I hope she preserves her peace of mind.

My blessings to Sumati.

All three of us are quite well and often think of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4799. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

547. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 2, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I got your long letter. Today I will write only about what you should do after giving up your fast, though I think I have already written about it.[1] For the first two or three days, you should eat only fruit and *bhaji*. Then you may start bread, and then milk. Please write to me every day giving full details. This experiment must succeed.

More in the next letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6740. Also C.W. 4483. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] *Vide* pp. 278-9.

548. LETTER TO PRABODHKUMAR AND OTHERS

November 2, 1932

CHI. PRABODHKUMAR, BHUPENDRAKUMAR AND NARENDRAKUMAR,

The names of all of you seem very short. Hence think how to make them longer. A potter would never be satisfied with a badly shaped pot. He will mix up the clay again and again with the unused lot till he gets a well-shaped pot. Similarly, Prabodh should not write to me till his handwriting has improved. He should first learn to draw straight lines, triangles, circles, etc. Sardar, Mahadevbhai and I, all three of us, are well. May all of you grow up and be good men.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12152

549. LETTER TO PADMA

November 2, 1932

CHI. PADMA,

I did write to you on a slip of coloured paper. I have no doubt about that. But what can I do if you, wearing glasses, cannot see the colour? Let me know whether you can see it this time. Just now you should not touch either the *takli* or the Magan spinning-wheel or the ordinary spinning-wheel. At present your only care should be to regain your weight and build fine health. Try and learn the correct method of writing accounts. The abscess must have been cured. You say in your letter that Mother teaches you the *Gita*. Does she teach you the syntax, too, of each verse? Is Sarojinidevi's study of the *Gita* so deep? Does she know Sanskrit? Why does she not write to me at all?

There is not much difference between pure love and universal love. Your interpretation of the latter as non-attachment is perfectly correct.

Write to me regularly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6140. Also C.W. 3492. Courtesy: Prabhudas Gandhi

550. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

November 2, 1932

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. If you spin with better slivers, you will spin still finer yarn. You should feel no shame whatever in asking Premabehn any questions. If you cannot ask a teacher, whom else can you ask? Do, therefore, ask her and let me know what replies she gives. If, even after this, you feel ashamed to ask her, write down the questions and give them to her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1744

551. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN CHATURVEDI

November 2, 1932

BHAI MADAN MOHAN,

I saw your letter to Narandas. Inform me of Dr. Modi's opinion by wire and ask him to send me full details.[1] Keep me posted with the news. I hear Balkoba[2] has not recovered as yet and that even speaking is a strain for him. Tell Balkoba to write to me. Tell Janakibehn also. We are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3090

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj at this time was suffering from ear trouble and was under the care of Dr. Modi; *vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", p. 329.

[2] Balkrishna, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

CWMG - LI

552. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

November 2, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I got your letter after many months. We were all very glad. You have written nothing about your work. Why? Write next time. Surendra, Ramdas and others are here. I meet them occasionally. They are all doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6540

553. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 3, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

I got your letter yesterday afternoon. It is now 5.15 a.m. We have had the prayer, then the honey, hot water and a pinch of soda. Then we three together prepared my fruit, viz., two *musambis* which Mahadev peeled, two *santras* which I peeled and juice of a pomegranate which Sardar extracted. I added a pinch of salt to the juice and put the *musambi* and the *santra* pulp into the juice. They two went out for a stroll and I ate the salad. It was then 5.15. And I began this letter. The left-hand writing is by way of change and rest for the right hand.

Writing of the fruit salad, I give you my discovery. I find that fruit to produce the greatest effect should be taken by itself and on an empty stomach. You might almost say, the same law applies to juicy fruit that applies to opening medicines. In fact all food should be taken as medicine. The Sanskrit for food and medicine is a common word *aushadh*. Kisen will explain this more fully to you. Medicine need not be nasty to taste; nor is it taken for the pleasure of the palate. Food should be treated exactly in the same manner, i.e., suitable food in suitable proportion in suitable manner and at suitable times. Here I interrupted the writing for the morning walk and now resume at 6.45.

There are many books on the life of the Prophet. The first place must be given to Amir Ali's *Spirit of Islam*. Then there is

Washington Irving's *Mahomet and His Successors*, a very well written work. Carlyle's *Mahomet as Hero* is also well worth reading.

I am glad you have Kisen with you. She should get the most out of you and you of her. I wonder if she got my letter in reply to hers. I sent it to the address she gave. Whether she received it or not, tell her never to write a bad hand whether there is hurry or not. This lesson everyone should learn from my misfortune. Bad writing and bad everything is truly *himsa*. We have a rare opportunity of learning the virtue of patience in prison life.

I think your comparison between Jesus and Muhammed is striking and partly true. You have heard the saying comparisons are odious. In my opinion all revolutionaries are reformers and all reformers are revolutionaries. Both were great teachers and each was in response to his age and its requirements. And each made a unique contribution to the advance of mankind. They have an equal place in the universal pantheon. Your description of yourself as an ashramite is perfect. You do not deny Christ but you affirm yourself as an ashramite who denies no teacher. We are not concerned much with the interpretations of the different teachers. Each fashioned his or her own.

I am sending by registered post Amir Ali's book. When you have finished it, post it to Raihana. It belongs to the Tyabjee's.

Love from us all to you and Kisen.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6248. Courtesy: Mirabehn

554. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

November 3, 1932

HOME SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

SUPERINTENDENT YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON HAS JUST CONVEYED GOVERNMENT OF INDIA'S DECISION[1] ON MY CORRESPONDENCE AND

[1] This was contained in a telegram dated November 2, addressed to the Bombay Government, which, *inter alia*, read: "Government of India recognize in view of considerations stated in Mr. Gandhi's letters of 18th and 24th October that if he is to carry out the programme that he has set before himself in regard to removal of untouchability, which they had not before fully appreciated, it is necessary that he should have freedom in

REQUEST THEREIN REGARDING UNTOUCHABILITY. THE DECISION I GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE GIVES ME ALL FACILITIES I HAD HOPED FOR AND I COULD POSSIBLY HAVE EXPECTED. I RECOGNIZE FULLY GRACEFUL MANNER IN WHICH GOVERNMENT PROPOSE TO TRUST ME TO CARRY OUT BOTH LETTER AND SPIRIT OF MY UNDERTAKING THAT NEITHER THESE INTERVIEWS NOR THIS CORRESPONDENCE SHALL HAVE ANY REFERENCE TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MATTERS OUTSIDE REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY. THIS TRUST SHALL NEVER BE ABUSED.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. I, p. 289. Also G.N. 3867

555. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON

November 3, 1932

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I was not able before now to acknowledge your letter. As soon as I was in a position, the first thing I did was to send you a telegram which I hope you received in due time. I am glad you have written at length. It has enabled me to get an idea of the difficulties that face us. But this movement is taken up in God's name. He is our guide and I am positive that if we do not lose faith in Him, He will remove all difficulties in our path and if we would conduct ourselves in the spirit of service we would not be uncharitable towards those who may oppose the reforms nor should we be uncharitable to the Zamorin. After all we do not know his difficulties. We must therefore step into his shoes and look at the position even from his point of view. I have always

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regard to visitors and correspondence on matters strictly limited to removal of untouchability. They also recognize that if Gandhi's activities in this matter are to be fully effective, there can be no restriction on publicity. As they do not wish to interpose obstacles to Mr. Gandhi's efforts in connection with the problem of untouchability, they are removing all restrictions on visitors, correspondence and publicity in regard to matters which in Mr. Gandhi's own words have no reference to civil disobedience and are strictly limited to the removal of untouchability. They note that Mr. Gandhi contemplates the presence of officials at the interviews, and inspection then and there of correspondence, should Government at any time consider that such procedure is desirable."—Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32

found that this is the quickest method of reaching a goal. We may not take our gaze off the goal for one single minute but in pursuing it we may not judge those who do not see eye to eye with us. After all, as you very properly say, we have but ourselves to die in the attempt to deliver our suppressed brethren from the yoke. Whatever happens, therefore, the people who are for the reform must remain strictly non-violent in every sense of the term. You are anxious to have Pandit Malaviyaji in your midst. Of course he would be a tower of strength if he could come, but his life has been a life of dedication. There are therefore many calls on him. He has aged, he is weak in body though his mind is as vigorous as ever. I know that he will come if he can at all spare himself. But it will be the glory of the workers of Kerala if he can be saved the long journey to the South. However, if you think that his presence is indispensable you will press your suit and I will certainly write to him.

I like your idea of a sister being sent from the North to work there during these precious few weeks that are available to us before the fateful 2nd of January. I have already moved in the matter and hope to let you know whether it is possible for anyone to come.

Do please tell me how Kelappan is doing. Why have I not heard from him?[1]

From a photostat: S.N. 18602

556. LETTER TO MAGANBHAI DESAI

November 3, 1932

I am becoming more convinced from experience that, as one's faith in God grows, one finds greater joy in doing one's duty, becomes more efficient and vigilant, and also more calm and patient.

Since I have unlimited faith in God, I believe that it is He who enables us to do any work, small or big. I do not know how He does that. If a person who claims to have dedicated his all, body, mind and possessions, to God, believes that he himself has done something, he would be a thief. I would not sin by ignorantly believing that I have done anything. If I sometimes believe that or say that in ordinary conversation in joking or in

[1] The letter as found in the source is unsigned.

order not to seem different from other people, it is foolishness on my part. The truth is that I am daily growing more humble and, therefore, feel pained whenever I think in pride that I have done something.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 201

557. LETTER TO PARAMANAND DESAI

November [3, 1932][1]

CHI. PARAMANAND[2],

I have your letter. I am glad that Mother and you have gone there. I very much wish that both of you should now stay permanently in the Ashram. In which form are you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9483

558. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 3, 1932

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. I can understand your shock at the plight of the Harijans. But there is no need to be agitated. You should get what workers you can and try to improve the condition of the Harijan localities. Meet the Harijan men. Ultimately, ours is only to make the effort to the utmost, the result rests with God. Give up worrying. The *Gita* forbids us to worry. I am awaiting Arun's reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1692

[1] From the S.N. Register
[2] Mahadev Desai's step-brother

559. LETTER TO ALI HASSAN[1]

[Before *November 4, 1932*][2]

Thanks for your letter. You must have seen my statement appealing for Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity. From here, I can do little more. It is for those who are outside to make the move.

The Hindu, 7-11-1932

560. LETTER TO SOHANLAL SHARMA

[On or before *November 4, 1932*][3]

BHAI SOHANLAL SHARMA,

I have your letter. What is the good of merely removing the signboard? Our aim is to secure temple-entry for Harijans. If Maganiramji does not agree to it you must wait. This temple too will be thrown open when public opinion is sufficiently enlightened. Find out what temple-goers feel about it. This has to be done peacefully. See Ghanshyamdasji.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SOHANLAL SHARMA
PRESIDENT, HINDU SABHA
PUSHKAR VIA AJMER
(B.B. & C.I. RLY.)

[From Hindi]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2827

[1] Secretary, Bihar and Orissa Muslim Association
[2] The report in the source bears the date November 4.
[3] The postmark bears the date November 4.

561. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY[1] – I

November 4, 1932

For reasons over which I had no control I have not been able to deal with the question of untouchability, as I had fully intended to after the breaking of the fast. The Government having now granted me permission to carry on public propaganda in connection with the work, I am able to deal with the numerous correspondents who have been writing to me either in criticism of the Yeravda Pact, or to seek guidance, or to know my views about the different questions that arise in the course of the campaign against untouchability. In this preliminary statement I propose to confine myself to the salient questions only, deferring for the time being other questions which do not call for immediate disposal.

I take up first the question of the possibility of my resuming the fast. Some correspondents contend that the fast savours of coercion and should not have been undertaken at all and that, therefore, it should never be resumed. Some others have argued that there is no warrant in Hindu religion, or any religion for that matter, for a fast like mine. I do not propose to deal with the religious aspect. Suffice it to say that it was at God's call that I embarked upon the last fast and it would be at His call that it would be resumed, if it ever is. But when it was first undertaken, it was undoubtedly for removal of untouchability, root and branch. That it took the form it did was no choice of mine. The Cabinet decision precipitated the crisis of my life, but I knew that the revocation of the British Cabinet's decision was to be but the beginning of the end. A tremendous force could not be set in motion merely in order to alter a political decision, unless it had behind it a much deeper meaning, even unknown to its authors. The people affected instinctively recognized that meaning and responded.

Perhaps no man within living memory has travelled so often from one end of India to the other or has penetrated so many villages and come into contact with so many millions as I have. They

[1] Following the lifting of restrictions by the Government on Gandhiji's interviews and his carrying on propaganda in connection with anti-untouchability work, Gandhiji issued a series of statements to the Press. This is the first of them.

have all known my life. They have known that I have recognized no barriers between 'untouchables' and 'touchables' or caste and outcaste. They have heard me speak often in their own tongues denouncing untouchability in unmeasured terms, describing it as a curse and a blot upon Hinduism. With rare exceptions, at hundreds of these mass meetings or at private meetings in all parts of India, there has been no protest against my presentation of the case against untouchability. Crowds have passed resolutions denouncing untouchability and pledging themselves to remove it from their midst and they have on innumerable occasions called God as witness to their pledge and asked for His blessing that He may give them strength to carry out their pledge. It was against these millions that my fast was undertaken and it was their spontaneous love that brought about a transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. And it will be against them that the fast will be resumed if that Pact is not carried out by them in its fullness. The Government are now practically out of it. Their part of the obligation they fulfilled promptly. The major part of the resolutions of the Yeravda Pact has to be fulfilled by these millions, the so-called caste Hindus, who have flocked to the meetings I have described. It is they who have to embrace the suppressed brethren and sisters as their very own, whom they have to invite to their temples, to their homes, to their schools. The 'untouchables' in the villages should be made to feel that their shackles have been broken, that they are in no way inferior to their fellow-villagers, that they are worshippers of the same God as other villagers and are entitled to the same rights and privileges that the latter enjoy.

But if these vital conditions of the Pact are not carried out by caste Hindus, could I possibly live to face God and man? I ventured even to tell Dr. Ambedkar, Rao Bahadur Raja and other friends belonging to the suppressed group that they should regard me as a hostage for the due fulfilment by caste Hindus of the conditions of the Pact. The fast, if it has to come, will not be for the coercion of those who are opponents of the reform, but it will be intended to sting into action those who have been my comrades or who have taken pledges for the removal of untouchability. If they belie their pledges, or if they never meant to abide by them, and their Hinduism was a mere camouflage, I should have no interest left in life. My fast, therefore, ought not to affect the opponents of reform, nor even fellow-workers and the millions who have led me to believe that they were with me and the Congress in the campaign against untouchability, if the latter have on

second thoughts come to the conclusion that untouchability is not after all a crime against God and humanity.

In my opinion, fasting for purification of self and others is an age-long institution and it will subsist so long as man believes in God. It is the prayer to the Almighty from an anguished heart. But whether my argument is wise or foolish, I cannot be dislodged from my position so long as I do not see the folly or the error of it. It will be resumed only in obedience to the inner voice, and only if there is a manifest breakdown of the Yeravda Pact, owing to the criminal neglect of caste Hindus to implement its conditions. Such neglect would mean a betrayal of Hinduism. I should not care to remain its living witness.

There is another fast which is a near possibility and that is in connection with the opening of the Guruvayur temple in Kerala. It was at my urgent request that Sjt. Kelappan suspended his fast for three months, a fast that had well-nigh brought him to death's door. I would be in honour bound to fast with him if on or before the first January next that temple is not opened to the 'untouchables' precisely on the same terms as the 'touchables', and if it becomes necessary for Sjt. Kelappan to resume his fast. I have been obliged to dwell at some length upon these possible fasts because of the receipt of hot correspondence from two or three quarters. Co-workers, however, should not be agitated over the possibility. To become unnerved over a prospect one would not like to face very often results in its materializing. The best way of averting it is for all affected by it to put forth their whole strength into the work that would render the occurrence impossible.

Correspondents have asked whether inter-dining and inter-marriage are part of the movement against untouchability. In my opinion they are not. They touch the caste men equally with the outcastes. It is, therefore, not obligatory on an anti-untouchability worker to devote himself or herself to inter-dining and intermarriage reform. Personally, I am of opinion that this reform is coming sooner than we expect. Restriction on inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriage is no part of Hindu religion. It is a social custom which crept into Hinduism when perhaps it was in its decline, and was then meant perhaps to be a temporary protection against disintegration of Hindu society, and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth. Wherever, therefore, people voluntarily take part in functions where 'touchables' and 'untouchables', Hindus and non-Hindus are invited to join dinner parties, I welcome them as a healthy sign. But I should never dream of making this reform,

however desirable in itself it may be, part of an all-India reform which has been long overdue.

Untouchability in the form we all know it is a canker eating into the very vitals of Hinduism. Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society. I think the distinction is fundamental. It would be unwise in a hurricane campaign to overweight and thus endanger the main issue. It may even amount to a breach of faith with the masses to call upon them suddenly to view the removal of untouchability in a light different from what they have been taught to believe it to be. On the one hand, therefore, whilst inter-dining may go on where the public is itself ready for it, it should not be part of the India-wide campaign.

I have letters, some of them angrily worded, from those who style themselves sanatanists. For them untouchability is the essence of Hinduism. Some of them regard me as a renegade. Some others consider that I have imbibed notions against untouchability and the like from Christianity and Islam. Some again quote scriptures in defence of untouchability. To these I have promised a reply through this statement. I would venture, therefore, to tell these correspondents that I claim myself to be a sanatanist. Their definition of a sanatanist is obviously different from mine. For me sanatan dharma is the vital faith handed down from generations belonging even to prehistoric period and based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them. For me the Vedas are as indefinable as God and Hinduism. It would be only partially true to say that the Vedas are the four books which one finds in print. These books are themselves remnants of the discourses left by the unknown seers. Those of later generations added to these original treasures according to their lights. There then arose a great and lofty-minded man, the composer of the *Gita*. He gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu religion at once deeply philosophical and yet easily to be understood by any unsophisticated seeker. It is the one open book to every Hindu who will care to study it, and if all the other scriptures were reduced to ashes, the seven hundred verses of this imperishable booklet are quite enough to tell one what Hinduism is and how one can live up to it. And I claim to be a sanatanist because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book. Whatever is contrary to its main theme I reject as un-Hindu. It excludes no faith and no teacher. It gives me great joy to be able to say that I have studied the Bible, the Koran, Zend Avesta and the other scriptures of the world with the same reverence that

I have given to the *Gita*. This reverent reading has strengthened my faith in the *Gita*. They have broadened my outlook and therefore my Hinduism. Lives of Zoroaster, Jesus and Mohammed, as I have understood them, have illumined many a passage in the *Gita*. What, therefore, these sanatani friends have hurled against me as a taunt has been to me a source of consolation. I take pride in calling myself a Hindu because I find the term broad enough not merely to tolerate but to assimilate the teachings of prophets from all the four corners of the earth. I find no warrant for untouchability in this book of life. On the contrary it compels me, by an appeal to my reason and a more penetrating appeal to my heart, in language that has a magnetic touch about it, to believe that all life is one and that it is through God and must return to Him.

According to sanatan dharma taught by that venerable Mother[1], life does not consist in outward rites and ceremonial, but it consists in the uttermost inner purification and merging oneself, body, soul and mind, in the divine essence. I have gone to the masses in their millions with this message of the *Gita* burnt into my life. And they have listened to me, I am quite sure, not for any political wisdom or for eloquence, but because they have instinctively recognized me as one of them, as one belonging to their faith. And as days have gone by, my belief has grown stronger and stronger that I could not be wrong in claiming to belong to sanatan dharma, and if God wills it, He will let me seal that claim with my death.

The Epic Fast, pp. 311-7

562. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

November 4, 1932

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have two letters to answer. Of course your decision is right. Your problem of untouchability is in a way more complex than mine. Untouchability is a dying cult and has an ever-growing army of reformers to deal it death blows. Yours shows no signs of dying and claims many supporters in the name of science. And you have very few workers. But as you and I have repeatedly found, what is difficult for man is easy for God. Anyway,

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*

we have but to do our part of work, and I shall pray for success in your work.

I assure you I do not want to kill brother ass. He is in God's safe keeping. If He means to starve him, neither your effort nor mine can save him. For the present he is flourishing on goat's milk and plenty of fruit with some home made bread thrown in.

Gurudev is still at it. That little fast brought me many undreamt of treasures. Gurudev was the richest find. If someone had said "fast to find Gurudev" I should have done it without a second thought. I was dying to find a corner in his heart. Thank God I found it through the fast.

Love from us all.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 976

563. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–II

November 5, 1932

A correspondent, in spite of having received liberal education, suggests that before Harijans are put on a level with caste Hindus, they should become fit for such reception, shed their dirty habits, give up eating carrion; and another goes the length of saying that Bhangis and Chamars who are engaged in what he considers are 'dirty occupations' should give them up. These critics forget that caste men are responsible for whatever bad habits are to be observed amongst the Harijans. The so-called higher castes have deprived them of facilities for keeping themselves clean and also the incentive for doing so. As for the occupations of scavenging and tanning, they are no more dirty than many other occupations I can name. What may be admitted is that these occupations like several others are carried on in a dirty manner. That again is due to the high-handed indifference and criminal neglect of the 'high castes'. I can say from personal experience that both scavenging and tanning can be done in a perfectly healthy and clean manner. Every mother is a scavenger in regard to her own children and every student of modern medicine is a tanner inasmuch as he has to dissect and skin human carcases. But we consider theirs to be sacred occupations. I submit that the ordinary scavengers' and tanners' occupations are no less sacred and no less useful than those of mothers and medical men. We shall go wrong if caste men regard themselves as patrons

distributing favours to the Harijans. Whatever is done now by the caste Hindus for the Harijans will be but a tardy reparation for the wrongs done to them for generations, and if now they have to be received in their existing state, as they must be received, it is a well-deserved punishment for the past guilt. But there is this certain satisfaction that the very act of receiving them with open hearts would be a sufficient incentive to cleanliness, and the caste men will for their own comfort and convenience provide Harijans with facilities for keeping themselves clean.

It is well to remind ourselves of what wrongs we have heaped upon the devoted heads of the Harijans. Socially they are lepers. Economically they are worse than slaves. Religiously they are denied entrance to places we miscall 'houses of God'. They are denied the use, on the same terms as the caste men, of public roads, public schools, public hospitals, public wells, public taps, public parks and the like, and in some cases their approach within a measured distance is a social crime, and in some other rare enough cases their very sight is an offence. They are relegated for their residence to the worst quarters of cities or villages where they practically get no social services. Caste Hindu lawyers and doctors will not serve them as they do other members of society. Brahmins will not officiate at their religious functions. The wonder is that they are at all able to eke out an existence or that they still remain within the Hindu fold. They are too downtrodden to rise in revolt against their suppressors.

I have recalled these tragic and shameful facts in order to make the workers vividly realize the implications of the Yeravda Pact. It is only ceaseless effort that can raise these downtrodden fellow-beings from degradation, purify Hinduism, and raise the whole Hindu society and with it the whole of India.

Let us not be stunned by this simple recital of the wrongs. If the demonstration during the last week was a genuine expression of repentance on the part of caste Hindus, all will be well, and every Harijan will soon feel the glow of freedom. But before this much-desired end can be achieved the message of freedom will have to be carried to the remotest village. Indeed the work in the village is far more difficult than in the big cities where it is possible quickly to mobilize public opinion. Now that there is the All-India Anti-untouchability League, workers should work in co-ordination with that League. And here I would like to recall what Dr. Ambedkar told me. He said, "Let there be no repetition of the old method when the reformer claimed to know more of the requirements of his victims than the victims

themselves'', and, therefore, he added ''tell your workers to ascertain from the representatives of the Harijans what their first need is and how they would like it to be satisfied. Joint refreshments are good enough by way of demonstration, but they may be overdone. There is a flavour of patronage about them. I would not attend them by myself. The more dignified procedure would be to invite us to ordinary social functions without any fuss. Even temple-entry, good and necessary as it is, may wait. The crying need is the raising of the economic status and decent behaviour in the daily contact.'' I must not repeat here some of the harrowing details given by him from his own bitter experiences. I felt the force of his remarks. I hope every one of my readers will do likewise.

Many suggestions have been sent to me for adoption by the reformers. One is a repetition of what Swami Shraddhanandji used to repeat so often, namely, that every Hindu should have in his home a Harijan who would be for all practical purposes a member of the family. The second comes from a non-Hindu friend deeply interested in India's welfare. He says that every well-to-do Hindu should bear the expense of giving, if possible under his own observation, higher education to a Harijan young man or girl so that these after finishing their education might work for the uplift of fellow-Harijans. Both the suggestions are worthy of consideration and adoption. I would ask all who have made fruitful suggestions to pass them on to the newly-established League. Correspondents should recognize my limitations. From behind the prison gates, I can only tender advice to the League and the people. I can take no part in the real execution of plans. They should also recognize that my opinions, based as they must be on insufficient data, and often on second-hand information, are liable to revision in the light of new facts and should, therefore, be received with caution.

Though it is now past history I would devote a paragraph to the objection raised by a correspondent and even voiced in suppressed tones in the Press. Referring to the political part of the Pact they ask, 'What have you gained by it? The Harijans have surely got much more than the Prime Minister gave.' Well, that is exactly the gain. My objection to the decision was that it gave stone instead of bread. This Pact has given bits of bread. I personally would have rejoiced with Dr. Moonje if the Harijans had got all the seats allotted to the Hindus. That would have been the greatest gain to caste Hindus and Hinduism. What I wanted and what I still want is their complete merger in the caste Hindus

and the latter's in the former. It is my deliberate opinion, not likely to be altered by any fresh fact that may come to light, that the more the suppressors give to the suppressed the more they gain. They gain *pro tanto* discharge from overdue debts. Unless the caste Hindus approach the question in that humble, penitent, religious and right spirit, the remaining part of the Pact will never be observed in the spirit that seemed to pervade Hindu society during the fast week.

I would like to tender my congratulations to those Princes who have opened their State temples to the Harijans and have otherwise proclaimed banishment of untouchability from their States. If I may say it, they have thereby done some penance on their own behalf and their people's. I hope that the Hindus residing in these States will carry out the terms of these proclamations and so fraternize with them as to make the Harijans feel that they never were the despised outcastes of Hindu humanity. We are too near the scene of tragedy to realize that this canker of untouchability has travelled far beyond its prescribed limits and has sapped the foundations of the whole nation. The touch-me-not spirit pervades the atmosphere. If, therefore, this white ant is touched at its source, I feel sure that we shall soon forget the differences with regard to caste and caste and religion and religion and begin to believe that even as all Hindus are one and indivisible, so are all Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Jews and Christians, branches of the same parent tree. Though religions are many, Religion is one. That is the lesson I would have us learn from the campaign against untouchability. And we will learn it, if we prosecute it in the religious spirit with a determination that will not be resisted.

The Epic Fast, pp. 318-22

564. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

November 5, 1932

I hope you clearly understood what I meant when I said you should cease to think the body as yours.[1] It is God's. But God has given it to you for the time being to keep it clean and healthy and use it for His service. You are therefore the trustee, not the owner. An owner may abuse or misuse his property. A

[1] *Vide* p. 267.

trustee or keeper has to be very careful and make the best use of the property left to his care. So whilst you must not be anxious about the body you have to take every care you can of it. God will take it away when He wishes.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 209

565. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

November 5, 1932

I have endeavoured to explain the position[1] in the Press statement which you must have seen. I wonder whether it gives you satisfaction. I draw, as I have always done, a sharp distinction between castes and varnas. Castes are innumerable and in their present condition they are a drag upon Hinduism. Therefore you and I do not observe caste distinctions. Varna stands on a different footing, and it means profession. It has nothing to do with inter-dining and intermarriage. People belonging to the four professions used formerly to inter-dine and even to intermarry and by so doing they naturally could not and did not leave their varna. This is absolutely clear from the definitions of the different varnas in the *Bhagavad Gita*. A man falls from his varna when he abandons his hereditary profession. Today, however, varnashrama is a lost treasure and there is utter confusion. Therefore so far as I can see there is only one varna and that is Shudra. That there is confusion of varnas is humiliating. That we should call ourselves Shudras is no humiliation, for in religion there is none high and none low. Profession of Shudra is just as honourable and necessary as that of Brahmin. Equally so of Kshatriya and Vaishya. But even if it should hurt our pride to consider ourselves as Shudra, there is no escape from it as a moment's reflection will show. This fortunate circumstance if it is generally accepted solves the difficulty of ranking the Harijans. To what varna should they belong on admission? If we say, 'to the Shudra varna' we immediately accept the gradation in varna dharma and the Harijans will have every right to resent the lowest rank being given to them. If we are all Shudras there is no difficulty left. I remember a learned Shastri in 1915 suggesting at a Social Reform gathering in Nellore that there was confusion of varnas and that as originally there was only one varna, viz., that of

[1] With regard to varna and caste distinctions

Brahmins, we should all now call ourselves Brahmins. I could not reconcile myself to that proposition then and I could do so less now. Whilst we can all serve and hence be called Shudras, we do not all possess learning nor do we possess divine knowledge. Therefore it would be untruthful to regard ourselves as Brahmins. If we rob inter-dining and intermarriage of religious significance in the manner it is understood, it becomes purely a matter of option, where we dine and where our children marry. And removal of untouchability would then have exactly the meaning I have always given it. This ought to be quite clear.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 205-6

566. LETTER TO V. RAMJEE RAO

November 5, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 1st inst. Go on with the work with Rama's name on your lips and all obstacles will be removed. You will see the statements on anti-untouchability work that I am issuing from day to day. Please read them carefully and digest them. They should allow enough guidance to the anti-untouchability worker.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4579

567. A LETTER

November 5, 1932

Why do you not serve all Indians, instead of only members of the Modh community? How long will these petty divisions into castes and sub-castes survive? Why do you take interest in a movement which your elders do not like and which can achieve nothing? And please do not believe that the multiplication of pamphlets does any good.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 208

CWMG - II

568. LETTER TO BINDANI DEVI[1]

November 5, 1932

I was very happy to have your letter. From your humorous manner I can see that your health is now improving. May God restore you to perfect health. If you are benefiting from your stay there, there is no reason to hurry back to Jabalpur.[2]

There is great disadvantage in adopting a son.[3] Men tend to be arrogant and want a share in the father's property. It is another thing that Govinddas has renounced it. The poor daughter cannot even think of demanding any share, and moreover self-appointed fathers like me extract service from the daughters. The question of making provision for the daughter does not even arise. I have warned you of the difficulties involved in becoming my daughter.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 210

569. LETTER TO HABIBUR RAHMAN

November 5, 1932

I was glad to get your letter. Let me know more about yourself. How much Sanskrit have you studied? For how many years? What is your age? How long have you been teaching? What is the number of boys studying Sanskrit and how many are Muslims and how many Hindus? Are your parents living? If so, what is your father's occupation?

Now I shall attempt to answer your queries. The special feature of Hinduism is that it permits considerable freedom of thought. And since tolerance towards other religions is implicit in it, Hindus may adopt such good points as they find in other religions. Indeed it is their duty to do so. That is why the exegesis of Hindu scriptures is ever developing. There is nothing new in

[1] Wife of Seth Govinddas

[2] The addressee, a heart patient, was at this time convalescing in Jaipur.

[3] The addressee had jestingly referred to her husband's annoyance at not being considered a son by Gandhiji although she was considered a daughter.

what I have said regarding the characters of the *Mahabharata* and the *Gita*. I have taken it from the commentaries. The idea has been very well developed by Sadanand Mishra in his commentary on the *Gita*. I am told that some Prakrit works contain similar views. Not all that is contained in works popularly known as Hindu scriptures is gospel truth, and it is not necessary for the Hindus to accept everything laid down in the scriptures. I am in no way prepared to accept as religion, even though it might have a historical basis, the punishment of pouring molten lead into the ears of the Shudra listening to Vedic recitations. And there are innumerable Hindus who do not accept it as religious injunction. There is one simple test laid down in Hinduism which even a child can understand: anything which is not acceptable to reason, anything which goes contrary to reason cannot be religion; so also anything that violates truth and ahimsa.

Now for the Yeravda Pact. To me at any rate votes were no consideration. To me the question was one of undoing the harm that had been done to Harijans by the declaration of the British Cabinet. What explanation can I give you about my fast? I can only say that it was inspired by God and that I could not have avoided it.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 208-9

570. LETTER TO HANUMANPRASAD PODDAR

November 5, 1932[1]

BHAI HANUMANPRASAD,

I have your letter. It does not matter that it is long. I shall make good use of it. What you write about Devdas becomes you. I still stand by my statements which you have quoted from *Navajivan*. To understand what I say one needs to understand my conduct for I try to avoid saying anything that contradicts my conduct and doing anything contrary to what I say. And I admit my own weakness whenever my conduct is inconsistent with the opinion I express. Here I do not see any inconsistency between my profession and my conduct.

Those who taunt and slander sanatanists commit *himsa* and undoubtedly injure the cause of the removal of untouchability.

[1] The date is from *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II.

This whole work is purely religious and should be performed in a religious spirit. Those sanatanists who see untouchability as a part of religion should not be subjected to attacks of any kind. They have as much right to stand firm on their belief as we have to stand on ours. Even in inter-dining, cleanliness and some code of conduct are always desirable. It is a sin to use coercion in this matter or to despise those who refuse to inter-dine. Similarly to force one's way into the temples against the wishes of the trustees is an act of sin. And even if the Harijans should manage to enter the temples in this manner and some Hindus should inter-dine with them, I would never accept it as removal of untouchability. Rather than be a witness to such reform I would prefer death, because I am convinced that compulsion can neither remove untouchability nor safeguard Hinduism.

Let me make myself clear: I am not opposed to inter-dining in any way and I consider it *adharma* for anyone to refuse to eat in the company of a person out of contempt for him or on account of his birth. Assuredly it would be an exaggeration to assert that dining together necessarily promotes friendly feeling. But to refuse to dine with someone who is clean and is a vegetarian because he follows another religion or he belongs to another province or is an untouchable, would be *adharma*. It cannot be considered proper to attribute to the untouchables as such insanitation and such other defects and to refuse to dine with them. We must bear in mind one thing if we are to consider the question in a religious spirit. The caste Hindus, having created a class of outcastes, have up to the present day been treating them in a most irreligious and brutal manner. This has caused uncleanliness and other vices to creep in among them. Sooner or later the Hindus have to atone for it. The time has now come when we can no longer deprive them of temple-entry, etc., by attributing to them vices of which we ourselves were the cause. Our atonement consists in meeting them as they are, allowing them to enter the temples and behaving decently with them. We must have the faith that our contact will exercise a purifying influence on their habits and that they too will make an effort to that end. There is no other way of reforming them and of the caste Hindus doing atonement. It is essential to remember that uncleanliness and similar shortcomings found in Harijans are common to lacs of other Hindus who are not prevented on that account from entering the temples or joining other public institutions. Why should we sit in judgment on the Harijans? Ultimately to whom does God belong? Does He belong to the meritorious and the rich or to the sinners

who can hardly lisp His name. We must not judge others. Our duty is to judge ourselves. Read and ponder calmly over what I have written and if still there is anything to ask, do not hesitate to ask me. I want to satisfy you, and that from self-interest for I expect a great deal of work from you in this cause. To me the question is purely a religious one and I want full co-operation from religious-minded people like you.

How long will you be in Ratangarh?

From a photostat of the Hindi: S.N. 18598

571. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 6, 1932

CHI. LILAVATI,

How can I help if you misunderstood my letter and made yourself unhappy? The letter which I wrote to calm you only upset you. I have already declared my faith in you. How can I forsake a daughter who became such to me on her own? I believe that I have always protected you, and will continue to do so. Do not worry at all. God will assuredly lead you to your good. But have patience and be calm. Do not be greedy. Continue to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9571. Also C.W. 6543. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

572. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 6, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I got Sharda's letter giving a beautiful description of how you enjoyed the five holidays. I can give only a short reply to it. Harijan work now takes up a great deal of my time, so that neither much time nor enough strength is left to me to write a long letter to you. You also should do whatever service you can to Harijans.

BAPU

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

573. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

Your letters please me. Keep up the fearlessness which you show in them. I thought you kept better health in Rajkot. If you keep well in the Ashram both mentally and physically, I would not like you to leave it even for a moment.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 861. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

574. LETTER TO KESHAV GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. KESHU,

You have asked me why I felt unhappy to learn that Ba had kept the spinning-wheel for herself. I have so much faith in you and in your impartiality that I readily tell you the reason. I was happy that Santok wished to use my spinning-wheel. Ba's wish to have it made me unhappy because I smelt jealousy in it. I have assumed in this that she knew that that spinning-wheel was earmarked for Santok. If my assumption is not correct, I must say that I have done great injustice to Ba. She has suffered so much at my hands in the past that I could not bring myself to ask her about the matter. You will understand that I was doubly unhappy. Santok did not get the spinning-wheel and Ba showed jealousy. But how could we alter what was destined to happen? Do not feel even inwardly angry with Ba. I know I need not tell you even this. If you have as much goodness in you as I want you to have, go to Ba and say to her: 'I had asked for this spinning-wheel from Bapu for my mother, and Bapu had promised it. I will get a new one made for you. Will you kindly give me this?'

This is worth doing provided you have courage enough. I spin with the slivers sent by you. I find them quite good. There is one defect in them: they are very hard. That was the experience of both of us. From one *tola* of cotton, we should make thirty-two soft slivers.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev believes that Ba did not know. I would be very happy if that was so. All the same, I should like you to go and see her.

From Gujarati: C.W. 9465. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

575. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail from you in due time. I understand what you say about Champa. If it is necessary to get the bungalow painted, you may do so. Let me know how much it will cost to put up a stone fence. At the present time whom else need you ask for permission ? The brothers[1] are in no fit state of mind to think about such matters, and so it is I who will have to decide. But as I am dictating these lines Mahadev reminds me about the necessity to secure permission from the Government. He believes that that is what you have referred to. I do not think you mean that. All the same, you should ascertain whether such permission is necessary for putting up a stone or brick wall. In that case, we shall have to decide two questions: whether, if the expense is too much, we should incur it, and, if the Government's permission is necessary, whether we should apply for it at the present time.

I hope Mohan's fever has now completely left him. Even then, it will be necessary to nurse him carefully for some time. I cannot overcome my fear about Kusum. She wants to follow our advice, but cannot control her mind. I have written a letter to you about her and Bhau, which I suppose you will have got before you get this. After writing that letter, I also wrote a postcard to Kusum. If you have not already discussed with Bhau the subject about which he wrote to me, do so now. I have still not heard from Dr. Talwalkar. Ramniklal's and Joshi's letters were received, but they were kept back here. I had detailed information about Jamnalal. His health cannot be described as very good.

8 p.m.

Read my letter to Ratubhai. Persuade him to go to Rangoon immediately. After reading Bhau's letter this is what I think.

[1] Sons of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

The food which prisoners get in South Africa is wholesome from the point of view of health and self-control. In the Ashram, we serve at breakfast whole wheat flour boiled in water and with jaggery mixed in it. Here they give to every prisoner gruel of five *tolas* of *jowar* flour with salt. This experiment seems worth trying there. Perhaps we may not be able to digest five *tolas* of flour. We can start with 2½ *tolas*. Salt is better than jaggery. Moreover, by replacing jaggery with salt we shall put ourselves in the same condition as the prisoners. Rice may be served on alternate days instead of daily as now. It follows that dal also should be served on alternate days. In the jails in South Africa, they served dal only on two days in a week, and that too with one meal only. Vegetable should be served daily. Mostly it should be leaves. It would be better if only one vegetable was served every day. It may change from day to day. In South Africa, they served in the evening the same kind of gruel which they did in the morning. I am sure that there would be no difficulty if we followed the same practice. Discuss this suggestion with others. The food which the well-to-do outside and we in the Ashram eat certainly does not keep us healthy. In jail a good proportion of prisoners maintain good health. Why cannot we make suitable modifications and discover a diet which would be conducive to self-control and help to preserve our health? Just now our chief motive for doing this should be to live in the same way as the prisoners do and thereby learn greater self-control. Even if we adopt these suggestions, we shall retain ghee and milk, which prisoners do not get. I am at any rate convinced that we do not need rice very much, and also that, if we consume milk and ghee, we do not need much dal either. If whole wheat flour, milk and green vegetables are available, we need little else. Yes, I do believe that some fruit in the diet is essential. It is desirable, and even necessary, that everybody should get sour lemons, tomatoes, radish, carrots, radish pods, etc., in small quantities and uncooked. Besides ghee, we may use fresh oil also. If you feel interested in these suggestions, discuss them with other people. Introduce, by way of experiment, such changes as appeal to you. And the rest you may discuss with me in your letters. Actually, I have been thinking about many other changes. I have mentioned here only a few more important ones from among them. If you wish, I will discuss the others too. If you ultimately decide to introduce any of these changes, you will have of course to discuss them with the others. However, if you feel that even a tentative discussion of them will upset the people, you may

leave them aside. I would certainly not press you to experiment with any changes, since I cannot be there to help in implementing them. I go on making such suggestions to you, knowing that they are not likely to frighten you.

In all there are 46 letters, 41 tied in a bundle and 5 separate.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8264. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

576. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I hope you got the letter which I wrote to you after the last post and have started acting as I advised. Not to show anger against anger or speak ill of one who speaks ill of us, but to meet anger with patience, to speak well of one who speaks ill of us and to do good in return for evil—this is dharma and this is the ideal which guides our relations in the Ashram. See that you do not stray from it.

Give me news about Chhaganlal if you have any.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5338

577. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 6, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

The burden on me is so heavy now that I cannot possibly write long letters to the Ashram. You will be the first victim. But I know that you will be satisfied to read the long letters I shall be writing in the journal.

After reading the different accounts of the Diwali days there, I felt like flying away from here to be in your midst. But I found that the cage was closed on all sides. So I merely fluttered my wings and remained where I was.

If you increase butter in your diet and improve your health, I think the medicine would be cheap enough.

I know that your responsibilities are increasing. God will protect you. Do not give up faith in yourself. My only advice to you is that you should not lose patience.

Ramabehn has made one complaint, which seems to be justified. You got irritated and told Dhiru, "You may go to Palanpur". You should not speak thus to anyone. One should always be courteous to children. If anyone who lives in the Ashram makes a mistake, we insult him if we tell him to leave the Ashram and go his way. Take care not to speak thus to anyone and win over Ramabehn. Krishnan Nair's conversation with you was interesting. If I had the power of attorney from you, I would have given the very replies which you did.

You have given a good description of Kisen.

Our song[1] is the one that becomes us most. I cannot analyse the dream.

Did you understand Narandas's intention behind the presents which he gave?

There is no uniform rule for all occasions when one may express the emotion in one's heart. I would say that one may do so when prompted by Satyanarayan[2].

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10309. Also C.W. 6748. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

578. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

November 6, 1932

CHI. PARASRAM,

I understand about Father. You can write about me on these conditions: (1) Your writing should not interfere with the work there. (2) You should not write at the cost of your health. (3) You should not mention any facts about my life here which the people do not know. (4) You should not let yourself be carried away and become hyperbolical.

If you have really put your life in my hands, your statement that you have no joy in life has no meaning—or, if it has any, it is this, that you have put your life in my hands unwillingly and, therefore, it has become uninteresting. Anybody who has willing-

[1] "*Vandemataram*"
[2] God as Truth

ly accepted the path of service must feel his life to be full of joy, for he finds joy in service itself.

Grams are pulses. No one can digest *roti* made of gram flour. Give up that idea. Wheat, milk and greens—that is the best diet.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7511. Also C.W. 4988. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

579. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

November 6, 1932

CHI. BABAL,

Your letter helped me very much. You forgot to mention the name of the village where you have taken up work. Mention it in your next letter. We can meet the Chamars' objection. I think there is substance in it. We should arrange to carry away the carcasses of dead cattle. Mention the name of the village, population, etc. We have started this work in the Ashram with that very aim. We can carry away the carcasses in carts. It is only a matter of planning and organization. I am glad that you have started working among the Harijans. Get as much help from the villages as possible and carry on the work. Send me detailed report from time to time. If necessary, you should devote even more time to the work.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9446

580. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

November 6, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I do not have time to write much today. I hope you got the letter which I wrote after the last weekly post. I am eager to know the effect of the fast. You should know how to resume food gradually after the fast has ended. Please remember that in connecting one's food with dharma one is likely to go to an extreme.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6741. Also C.W. 4484. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

581. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL[1]

November 6, 1932

CHI. SHANTA,

You seem to be as mischievous as ever. A mother who does not listen to her daughter's complaints is no mother; similarly, a daughter who feels shy in opening her heart to her mother, thinking that she is too busy to listen to her, is no true daughter. Even in your long letter to me you have only beaten about the bush. Mahadev will, no doubt, agree to guide you, but do you think you will let yourself be controlled by anybody? You want to work. Well, there is plenty of work even in the Ashram. Besides, the Ashram supports all the three of you. Why then do you worry? If you want paid work, how much more do you expect to earn through it than what you require for your needs? You know that, generally, however much a person may earn, he feels that it is too little. He always wants to earn a little more. It is the aim of the Ashram to cure its inmates of such a desire.

Are you sure in your heart of hearts that you do not want to have a home of your own? I can see even from your letter that whether you know it or not, all your discontent springs from

[1] Daughter of Shankarbhai Patel

your desire to marry. It is not certain, of course, that you will be happy even after marriage. To marry, however, is to let yourself be bound. Then, the question of happiness or unhappiness does not arise at all. So great is the spell of this wonderful thing, marriage. Ask yourself whether you want to marry. If the answer is no, then, you must remain in the Ashram till your headstrong temper and your childishness disappear. If you trust Premabehn, you may talk to her and open your heart. You may write to me, too, or to Mahadev, if you wish. But please write seriously, to whomsoever you write. I was not happy to learn about Kamala's laziness. The remedy I have suggested for Mangala is the only one for her. She seems to have forgotten me altogether.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4067. Also C.W. 18. Courtesy: Shantabehn Patel

582. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL AND AMINA QURESHI

November 6, 1932

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your beautiful description. I wish both of you to have equally beautiful health.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. AMINA,

I will not tolerate your silence. I wrote to you and asked you to improve your health. I should be very happy if you could pick up courage and try.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6662

CWMG-LI

583. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 6, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

I got your letter. You should put a point at the end of every sentence. It is called full stop.

You wrote *utasva*. The correct word is *utsav*[1]. You wrote *pootri*. It should be *putri*[2]. You wrote *svikarsho*. It should be *sveekarsho*[3].

Please do not feel unhappy that Panditji has stopped your training in music. You should tell yourself that he must have some reason for doing that and accept his decision.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2766. Courtesy: Ramanarayan N. Pathak

584. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

November 6, 1932

BHAI RATILAL,

I wrote a letter to you at your Bombay address, to which I expected a reply but did not get any. However, I had a wire from Lilavati today. She informs me that Chhaganlal has gone to Thitan, but he accepts Nanalal and you as arbitrators. This lightens my burden. Now I am waiting for your letter. I should like you to go to Rangoon as early as possible. It would be very good if Nanalal and you went together. This problem must be solved.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7169. Also C.W. 4663. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Festival
[2] Daughter
[3] Please accept

CWMG - II

585. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 6, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Have you now really decided not to write to me? I must have at least one letter in a week from you. When I do not get it, I fear you may be ill. Did I tell you that I have found a new teacher for me? Her name is Zohra Ansari. She teaches me with great enthusiasm. She writes the Urdu letters very neatly.[1]

Teach me to write a letter [in Urdu], and tell me whom we can address as *Janab* or as *Maulvi* and when. How should I address you? Have I correctly written your address? And mind you do not fall ill. If, however, you do fall ill, then ask Hamida to write to me. Convey my regards to both Father and Mother.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

BIBI RAIHANA
C/O ABBAS SAHEB
CAMP
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9667

586. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

November 6, 1932

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I got your beautiful letter. The handwriting is very good. Keep it up. Do take hip-baths. They ought to benefit you. It is all right your taking on fresh work but do not overdo it. Do only as much as you can and be thankful for it. Of course my blessings are always with you. Have no worry about Kudsia. Narandas is responsible for her, so why must you worry? You write nothing about Dr. Sharma. What happened about his coming?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 262

[1] The letter up to here is in Urdu.

587. LETTER TO KAPILRAI M. MEHTA

[Before *November 7, 1932*][1]

CHI. KAPIL[2],

I had heard about your ill health and so was eager for a letter from you, when I got one. Your first duty now is to regain your health and strength. You should resume work only after you are completely all right. Those who take cover behind khadi work out of fear of imprisonment are hypocrites, but those who though convinced of the importance of khadi work prefer to go to jail out of fear of being looked upon as hypocrites, are conceited. We should avoid both, such hypocrisy and conceit. Hence we may do whatever service we get an opportunity to do from time to time and be content. Your conscience alone can tell you what is best for you now. Listen to what Kakasaheb may say and then do as your conscience prompts you. Do keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3976. Also C.W. 1601. Courtesy: Shashilekha Mehta

588. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–III

November 7, 1932

A correspondent whom I know well and who is in sympathy with the movement against untouchability, though he does not accept the whole of the programme, wrote a long letter in Hindi from which I condense the following:

> I fear that the campaign is not being kept within bounds in all parts of the country. I understand in some cases those who claim to be workers in the cause are making use of questionable methods such as resorting to abuse of adherents of

[1] From the contents it appears that this letter was written before the letter to addressee dated November 7, 1932; *vide* p. 375.

[2] Editor, *Gujarat Samachar* and then *Sandesh*. A student of the Gujarat Vidyapith, he had taken part in the civil disobedience movement in 1930.

the old order, and pouring ridicule on sacred names. Anyone who dares to analyse your sayings or writings or to oppose the extreme forms that the campaign is taking, immediately becomes a butt of ridicule and is labelled a traitor to his religion and even threatened with dire consequences. They do not seem to care for the material or moral welfare of the outcastes. They think that their effort begins and ends with promiscuous dinners and marching crowds of Harijans to temples even in defiance of the wishes to the contrary of the trustees. I am sure you do not want the movement to degenerate into mere spectacular demonstrations calculated merely to wound the feelings of the orthodox without doing the least service to the Harijans.

Out of nearly a hundred letters on untouchability received by me during the past month this is the first letter complaining of workers' conduct bordering on violence. I, however, felt the necessity for giving publicity to the complaint, if only out of regard for my correspondent's warning to workers. I know he will not indulge in wilful exaggeration. There can be no compulsion in matters of religion, I should say in any matter. The public know my very strong views against violence in any shape or form against anyone, no matter what his caste, creed, or nationality may be.

Let those in charge of the movement, therefore, understand that even in their impatience to save me from the prospective fast they may not force the pace by adopting questionable methods. If they do so, they will merely hasten my end. It would be living death for me to witness the degeneration of the movement on whose behalf, as I believe, God had prompted that little fast. The cause of the Harijans and Hinduism will not be served by methods of rabble. This is perhaps the biggest religious reform movement in India, if not in the world, involving as it does the well-being of nearly sixty million human beings living in serfdom.

The orthodox section that disapproves of this is entitled to every courtesy and consideration. We have to win them by love, by self-sacrifice, by perfect self-restraint, and by letting purity of our lives produce its own silent effect upon their hearts. We must have faith in our truth and love for converting our opponents to our way. There is no doubt whatsoever that the deliverance of sixty million human beings from age-long suppression will not be brought about by mere showy demonstrations. There has to be solid and constructive programme contemplating an attack on all fronts. This enterprise requires concentrated energy of

thousands of men, women, boys and girls who are actuated by the loftiest of religious motives. I would, therefore, respectfully urge those who don't appreciate the purely religious character of the movement to retire from it. Let those who have the faith and fervour, be they a few or many, work the movement.

The removal of untouchability may produce, indeed it will produce, great political consequences; but it is not a political movement. It is a movement purely and simply of the purification of Hinduism and that purification can only come through the purest instruments. Thanks be to God there are hundreds if not thousands of such instruments working in all parts of India. Let impatient sceptics watch, wait and see; but let them not mar the movement by hasty and ill-conceived interference even though it may be prompted by laudable motives.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-11-1932

589. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

November 7, 1932

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME DEPARTMENT
NEW DELHI

DEAR SIR,

My thoughts having been hitherto concentrated simply upon what threatened to be an impasse about untouchability, I was unable to think of any other matter. Now that it is happily over, I would like to approach the Government of India on certain decisions of theirs which I have not been able to understand.

I should, if I may, like to know why my reply telegrams to Maulana Shaukat Ali[1] and Abul Kalam Azad[2] and to Dr. Ansari, expressing my hope of Hindu-Muslim unity being achieved, were disallowed. I saw in the Press the correspondence between His Excellency the Viceroy and Maulana Shaukat Ali regarding his request for permission to interview me on the same question. If the reasons given to him for refusal to let him see me are also the reasons for disallowing my telegrams I fail to see the connection between my association with civil disobedience and Hindu-

[1] *Vide* p. 201.
[2] *Vide* p. 265.

Muslim unity. My association with civil disobedience appears to the Government to be bad. But I hope my views on Hindu-Muslim unity and my desire to promote it do not so appear to them. If I am right in my assumption, I can only understand the ban on the interview and my telegrams on the supposition that it is a 'punishment meted out to me and those who would see me or correspond with me, even on matters that have no connection with civil disobedience, only because I would not set aside the dictates of my conscience and my reason and would not dissociate myself from it. I hope Government of India have not contemplated any such punishment.

The Government of India will admit that as a prisoner I have given the authorities willing co-operation. I should like it also to be intelligent. Wherever it is possible, I should know why particular requests are refused. So far as in me lies I endeavour to make no unreasonable requests. They have been generally either in the interests of my health or of public good as distinguished from selfish gratification.

So far as the telegrams which are the subject matter of this letter are concerned, they do not now need to be sent. But occasions for dealing with public matters outside untouchability and having no connection with civil disobedience will undoubtedly arise. I should like therefore not only to know the reasons for the disallowance in the cases mentioned, but also to know the future policy of the Government on similar occasions.[1]

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(4), Pt. I, p. 305

[1] The Home Secretary in a communication dated November 16 asked the Bombay Government to convey to Gandhiji the following order: "The Government of India have for exceptional reasons permitted Mr. Gandhi facilities for carrying on his programme in regard to the social and moral problem of the removal of untouchability. But his position as the leader of civil disobedience, which is still his avowed programme, makes it necessary to detain him as a State prisoner, and as a prisoner he cannot expect to take part in the ordinary public life of the country or the discussion of political questions, even though they have no connection with civil disobedience. The Government of India therefore are not prepared to give Mr. Gandhi facilities for dealing with such questions." Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32.

590. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 7, 1932

CHI. MANUDI,

You seem to be very lazy and forgetful. After a long interval, you write a letter. You promise that you will not be lazy again, and then forget and break your promise. This is bad. One should always keep one's promise, and should never make a promise which one cannot keep. You should write a letter every Sunday and post it to the Ashram. You should give in it a report of the work done by you during the preceding week, what you studied, what other work you did and how much yarn you spun. I hope you know that we should wear khadi even at home.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 1517. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

591. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 7, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the mail from you yesterday, the day of the week on which I usually get it. I send with this a letter from Vithal. I have replied to him and told him that he should trust you and forget Liladhar. If his sense of devotion to his father draws him towards Liladhar, he may join him and find out some means of earning. He should not divide his interest between the Ashram and his father. If you think you should reply to anything in his letter, you may do so.

I had a letter from Jethalal too. He does admit his mistake. But he thinks it was unjust to ask him to leave. I see no trace of repentance on his part. I have written to him a rather strong letter and told him that, as long as he does not feel sincere repentance, I would not advise him to return to the Ashram. But I have also said that, if he can satisfy you and if you wished to take him back, I would not oppose you either. I did not wish to waste your time by sending his letter to you, and so tore it up.

Kanti's letter was painful to read. His body seems to have become very weak. I have, therefore, sent him a wire today and advised him to go to Rajkot. I have advised in the same wire that Prema also should get herself operated upon. Remember one rule of mine. Anybody who gets fever should be given nothing to eat except fruit. If it is necessary that he should be given some nourishing food, he should be given milk only. If this rule is not followed and if the fever afterwards turns out to be typhoid, the consequences can be dangerous.

I also repeat one rule which I have mentioned concerning the experiments in food which are going on. Anybody who finds that a certain item upsets him, may stop eating it for a day or two, and not ask for anything in its place. If this is done, most probably the thing will agree with him afterwards.

I am sure you must have got Madan's book now.

Chhaganlal has not arrived here yet.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8266. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

592. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN GANDHI[1]

November 7, 1932

Since you do not like the name Kahandas, may I conclude that you do not like the name Ramdas, either? You should then find a new name for Ramdas also—a man of thirty-two. As Ramdas himself is a *das*, he will like a name only if it ends in *das*. But choosing such a name will not help. After all, it is you I should please. Suppose we chose the name Nirmaldas? How would you like it? Or Nirmallal? Send me some other names also which you like. And a new one for Ramdas too.

One should not meet anger with anger or repay ill with ill. One should meet anger with forbearance, repay ill with good, abuse with love and injury with kindness. That is dharma and that is the rule followed in the Ashram. Take care that neither of you depart from it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 212-3

[1] Wife of Ramdas Gandhi

593. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 7, 1932

I am replying to your letter today. I had wanted to reply to it much earlier, but while searching for verses [from the *Gita*] as desired by you, I thought that it would be better if I selected at one time all such verses which you could follow in life without difficulty. I could do that today, and send with this the verses which I have selected. I have mentioned the chapter and number of the verse in each case, so that you can also look up the *Gita* and see where the verse occurs. You will see that all the verses appeal directly to the heart and are easy even for children to understand, and also that the Lord has assured not once but several times that He himself will awaken knowledge in the man who cultivates *bhakti* for Him and will provide his needs. *Bhakti* means selfless service of every living creature, in all of whom dwells the Lord. This includes repetition of Ramanama for one's own peace of mind. Moreover, you will see that even the verses selected from Chapter VI contain what I wish to teach you just now. The verses from Chapter XI are the sublimest part of Arjuna's sublime praise of the Lord. And the last verse of Chapter XVIII explains the reward of studying the *Gita* and of an earnest effort to put its teaching into practice. That is, where there is Shri Krishna, who stands for perfect knowledge, and Arjuna, who stands for action informed with knowledge, everything else will follow. If you meditate over these verses, you will see that one must never worry. A student of the *Gita* ought not to worry any time. We are enjoined to offer up everything as sacrifice to the Lord. Everything means everything without exception. Do you think anybody who does that would carry a load of worries in his head?

You must have discovered by now whether your disturbed digestion is the result of too much thinking and excessive worry, or whether it indicates the necessity of some change in your food. Do not be overambitious, either, in your reading and study. The resolutions which you have formed in your mind will now go on slowly maturing. You will know your strength when you are released. Why should you worry now whether or not you will really know it? There is no need at all to do so. You will find the meanings of the verses in the *Anasaktiyoga*, and in any case Surendra

is there with you. You may, on your own or on the advice of Surendra or others like him, add some more to the verses which I have selected. I had made a note of the verses which I wished to select. While doing so in my copy of the *Gita*, I gave them the title "Ramdas Gita". Let us see how much they help you.

I will now tell you about something which will amuse you. Nimu asked me to suggest a name for your son. Sarita has already christened him Kahanji. I suggested Kahandas, thinking that it would go well with your name and would also satisfy Sarita's wish. But I should have known that Nimu would not like a name ending with *das*. She disapproved of Kahandas and asked me to suggest another name, but said that if you approved of Kahandas, she also would accept it. Vasumati, claiming her right, as aunt, to name the child, wrote to me and said that I, being an old man, would naturally suggest a name which an old man would like, but that she would not approve of any such name. She, therefore, asked for a name which would please people in this twentieth century. I have replied to her and told her that it was the exclusive right of an aunt to name a baby and that, therefore, she might give the child any name she liked. I have suggested a few names for her approval such as Fakkadlal, Chhogalashankh, Lakhtarlal, Bardolikar and Sabarmatiwala.[1] In my letter to Nimu, I have suggested Nirmallal, and also told her that, if she did not like the name Kahandas, she was hardly likely to be pleased with the name Ramdas either. I have, therefore, asked her to suggest a new name for you too. I was about to suggest one but checked myself. She should call you Nirmalkant. But we would then be going back to the age of the *Ramayana*, instead of living in the twentieth century, for in that age husbands were known by the names of the wives. Ramachandra was called Sitapati, Krishna was called Lakshmikant and Mahadev was called Parvatipati. We find a number of such instances. If you wish to throw any light on this profound subject, you are welcome to do so.

You ask how I cultivated non-attachment. The thing was very easy for me since everything I did was spontaneous, that is, arose naturally from my devotion to truth. If one is filled with a desire to serve the whole world, one can easily cultivate non-attachment. If I had chosen to serve only our family, I would certainly have been filled with ignorant love and even developed

[1] All these are fanciful and extremely funny names.

attachment. I would also have suffered because of illnesses and deaths. But suffering runs away from you if you dedicate yourself to the service of the countless millions. Over whose illness would you worry and over whose death would you grieve? It would be almost impossible to do either. However, non-attachment does not mean insensitivity, or cruelty, for after all one does wish to serve the people, and, therefore, compassion becomes stronger instead of becoming weaker, and one's efficiency and concentration in work also increases. All these are signs of non-attachment. Moreover, the beauty of the thing lies in the fact that by serving the world, one does not cease to serve one's family, for service of the family is included in service of the world. I am perfectly sure in my mind that I have served Ba, you and your brothers and other members of the family no whit less than I could have done otherwise. The service was pure because attachment was replaced by equality of mind. I am sure that none of you has lost anything in consequence and that I myself have gained much. Thus I found non-attachment easy to cultivate. The word *anasakti* occurred to me when, after I had finished the translation of the *Gita*, Kaka asked me to suggest a title. It is not that I started cultivating non-attachment after realizing that, if one wished to serve the whole world, one could do so only with non-attachment. I understood only gradually that I was acting without attachment. Those around me saw that before I did. When I returned to India, people started describing me as a karmayogi. I used to read and study the *Gita* even in South Africa. But I had not then thought about the meaning of karmayogi. But other people saw all that in my life, and afterwards I also felt that their description had truth in it. All cannot have such good fortune. I had it because I think I have always loved truth right from my childhood. But you need not go into these deep waters just now. At present you should try to cultivate non-attachment without attachment even to that aim. That is, you should do with a light and happy heart any service for which you get an opportunity and read and study at the same time whatever you can manage. You need not worry either for Nimu or for the children. You will now see, with the new eyes which "Ramdas Gita" will give you, that God is there to worry for them and for you. You should not only believe this with your reason, but have faith in it and live accordingly. You will then be happy and learn everything you wish to. Fix firmly in your mind the Lord's assurance in Chapter IX, that even the most sinful man will have become a good man if he cultivates single-minded *bhakti* for Him.

The entire world might perish, but an assurance by the Lord never proves false. I think I have written enough.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 214-7

594. LETTER TO KAPILRAI M. MEHTA

November 7, 1932

CHI. KAPIL,

I got your letter. By all means do only as your conscience bids you. Do nothing about which you have a doubt. Neither Kakasaheb nor I nor anybody else can give a confident opinion without knowing all the facts. The final decision, therefore, should be made by the person himself. This rule applies more especially to you. Take only as much work from your body as it can give. Get well soon. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI KAPILRAI MEHTA
C/O SJT. RASIKLAL VORA
SUB DIVISIONAL OFFICER
GOVT. AGRICULTURE FARM
HADAPSAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3971. Also C.W. 1599. Courtesy: Shashilekha Mehta

595. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

November 7, 1932

CHI. RAMI[1],

You wrote after a long time. And that, too, when coaxed by Bali[2]. Am I right? Is it not true that you would never think yourself of writing to me?

I shall be happy if you and your family are happy. I shall welcome your letters even if you write them when urged by somebody else. But Kunverji is not lazy like you. Why does he

[1] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[2] Balibehn M. Adalaja, Harilal's sister-in-law

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not write? Ask him to write. Can you meet the expenses of living in Bombay? Do the air and water of the city agree with you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9718. Also C.W. 699. Courtesy: Navajivan Trust

596. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

November 7, 1932

CHI. BALI,

You wrote to me after a long time. But I don't blame you. I believe you are carrying a heavy burden. I would not find fault with you if, in the midst of all that work, you cannot write purely formal letters. It seems you live only to look after your sisters' children. That is also one way, and a good one, of following the path of dharma. Who could have prevented you if you had chosen to be selfish and confine yourself to your own affair? Instead, you have chosen a path of service, however modest. May God bless you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5057. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

597. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

November 7, 1932

In a special interview given to the Associated Press inside the Yeravda Jail Mr. Gandhi emphasized that South India has become the storm centre and explained the reasons why the Guruvayur question was worth the price he had expressed his determination to pay.

. . . Replying to preliminary enquiries he said, for the present his campaign would be confined to the issue of a statement but he was in corres-

[1] The interview took place in the Superintendent's office. Also present in the room were Mahadev Desai, Pyarelal and P. Kodandarao of the Servants of India Society.

pondence with the Birla Committee and would meet them at the end of the month when other plans would be decided.

Asked about Dr. Ambedkar's declaration that the temple-entry was not worth risking his life, Mr. Gandhi said:

I do not take the same light view that Dr. Ambedkar does of the temple-entry question. In my opinion it is a deciding test as to whether the orthodox Hindu mind has responded to the call of time or not and whether it is prepared to purge Hinduism of the blackmark of untouchability. Nothing in my opinion will strike the imagination of the Hindu mass mind including Harijans as throwing open all public temples to them precisely on the same terms as caste Hindus. I can understand Dr. Ambedkar's comparative indifference, but I am not thinking of a few cultured men belonging to the depressed classes, but I am thinking of the uncultured, dumb many. After all Hindu temples play a most important part in the life of the masses and I who have been trying all my life to identify myself with the most illiterate and downtrodden cannot be satisfied until all temples are open to outcastes of Hindu humanity.

This, however, does not mean that I belittle in any shape or form other disabilities under which they are labouring. I feel about them just as keenly as Dr. Ambedkar. Only I feel the evil is so deep-rooted that one must not make the choice between different disabilities, but must tackle them all at once. That is the burden of my correspondence with the Anti-untouchability League also. The Guruvayur temple has come in my way by accident and I have no option left to me. After all, Mr. Kelappan is in my opinion one of the noblest of India's silent servants. A distinguished public career was open to him any day. He is a well-known worker of Malabar but he deliberately threw in his lot with unapproachables and invisibles. I had the pleasure and honour of working with him at the time of the Vykom Satyagraha[1]. Long before that time and ever since he has been devoting himself to the uplift of suppressed humanity. As the public know, after long waiting he made a fixed determination to give up his life in an attempt to have the Guruvayur temple opened to Harijans.

I discovered, however, a flaw in his fast and I immediately pointed it out to him and although he believed that victory was

[1] This took place in March-April 1925 and was aimed at having certain roads thrown open to untouchables from which they had been barred; *vide* Vol. XXVI.

within sight, he nobly responded and let it slip from his hands; he retraced his steps and suspended his fast. When I telegraphed to him[1] I bound myself to fast with him if resumption became necessary on the termination of three months' notice he gave. I should be an unworthy servant of India and an unworthy comrade if I now flinched and abandoned Kelappan to his fate, but there is something more than the life of a comrade or my own personal honour. Everyone recognizes that the depressed classes question has to be solved now or never, not at any rate within the present generation or several generations to come. There are thousands of men and women like me who cling to Hinduism, because they believe that there is in it the amplest scope for mental, moral and spiritual expansion. This bar sinister put upon nearly sixty million human beings is a standing demonstration against that claim. Men like me feel that untouchability is no integral part of Hinduism. It is an excrescence, but if it is found to be otherwise, and if the Hindu mass mind really hugs untouchability, reformers like me have no other option but to sacrifice ourselves on the altar of our convictions.

I have patiently and silently listened to the taunt that such a fast is tantamount to suicide and I don't believe it to be such. On the contrary for men with deep religious convictions there is no other outlet for the soul than this final sacrifice when every other effort seems perfectly hopeless. This campaign therefore in my opinion is an acid test of what I have claimed for Hinduism and I can only repeat what I said at the Round Table Conference that Hinduism dies if untouchability lives and untouchability has to die if Hinduism is to live and today I make bold to say that there are hundreds if not thousands of Indian men and women who would lay down their lives even as Kelappan and I propose to do to vindicate the claim for Hinduism that it is not a narrow creed or dogma, but a living faith, designed to satisfy the most exacting conscience of the deepest thinker and the godliest person.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-11-1932

[1] *Vide* pp. 150-1.

598. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 8, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

During the fast week there were two telegrams received from Egypt, one from Madam Zaghloul and the other from Nahas Pasha. I cabled suitable replies to both.[1] During that week all the important telegrams and my replies to them were handed to the Press. But just at present I observe that garbled versions of the telegrams mentioned above in a somewhat ludicrous form are going the round of the Press as if they were the true versions. They appear to be translations from Egyptian vernacular newspapers. I should like to supply the Press with true copies. Will you please ascertain from the Government whether these copies may be supplied by me to the Press? Of course they have reference to untouchability. I enclose herewith the text, barring Nahas Pasha's wire which for the moment I cannot trace among my papers. The cutting herewith from the *Indian Social Reformer* containing the garbled version will give some idea of the original.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 353

599. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 8, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You have been receiving on my behalf the *Vedic Magazine* —a Hindi monthly, *Purushartha*—a Marathi monthly, both religious publications, *Indian Review* of Madras—Hon'ble Mr. Natesan's monthly and possibly other magazines.

Now that I am permitted to do propaganda work regarding untouchability, I shall want these and other publications in order to enable me to keep myself in touch with public opinion

[1] *Vide* pp. 133 and 142.

as expressed in the Press and to combat, where necessary, criticism that may appear therein.

You seem to doubt whether these papers and magazines that are already coming and which may come in answer to my appeal may under the recent decision of the Government of India be given to me. Will you please obtain the Government interpretation in the matter as early as possible?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 363

600. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA[1]

November 8, 1932

What has affected me in your letter is the information you gave me about Messrs Chintamani and Kunzru. You have therefore to help me to get their confirmation and their agreement or to leave me free to get it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 217

601. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

November 8, 1932

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

You will have seen that Guruvayur is being made the centre of attack by the self-styled sanatanists. There is not much time to lose. I do not know how far your health will let you organize the battle on behalf of the reformers. To the extent it is possible I would like you to put your great Sanskrit learning at the disposal of the cause. I am sure you have been thinking of the thing yourself. But I could not restrain myself from sending you a line when I am writing to many friends about the impending storm.[2]

[1] The addressee had written: "Fasting is the worst form of coercion. No one is satisfied with the Pact, not even Chintamani and Kunzru."

[2] According to the source, Sastri, writing to a friend, said he had "written two letters clearly stating my dissent from his views and my disapproval of his threatened fast". Sastri also said he favoured the temple-entry of the untouchables.

It gives me great joy that I am able to take some work out of the Servants[1] here.

I do hope you are better.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 243

602. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 8, 1932

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your letter was delivered to me just now. It was immediately read out to me and I am now dictating this reply. May you have, on your birthday, all the blessings you desire, basketfuls of them. Why should we fear death, which comes to all sooner or later—to the great and the humble, to the white and the black, to human beings and other creatures? Why grieve over it either? I often feel that death must be a less painful event than birth. I leave aside the pain which the baby suffers in the mother's womb before birth. But all of us know the suffering in this world which commences from the moment of birth. Consider the helplessness of the baby at the moment of birth—every baby as helpless as any other. On the other hand, if our life has been pure we shall have no such experience at the moment of death. A baby does not seek knowledge, nor can it have any. At the time of death, on the other hand, it is not only possible for one to be in a state of union with the Brahman but we actually know that many persons die in such a state. Birth always means entering a world of suffering, whereas death can be complete deliverance from suffering. We can thus think from many points of view about the beauty and the benefits of death, and can also meet our death in that spirit. I bless you that your death may be of this type. This wish includes everything else which is for your good. The two friends join me in wishing this. Even after knowing all the facts about your health, I adhere to the view which I have expressed. If you are permitted to obtain your food at your own expense, I see nothing wrong in your doing so. We should regard our body as a trust, and it is our duty as its trustee to take care

[1] Members of the Servants of India Society

of it to the best of our ability. You should not ask for or accept even a grain of jaggery to gratify your palate, but I see nothing wrong in your trying and getting even the costliest variety of grapes if you need them as medicine and if they can be had. You need not, therefore, feel unhappy if you have to eat such food. If we can, we should also help others who may be placed in similar circumstances to secure such food. In my view you don't require all the wheat that is supplied to you. I also think it desirable for you to banish jaggery altogether from your food. Your body does not require it at all. It is better to take innocent honey instead. Mixing any form of sugar in milk affects its digestibility. It would be better to increase the quantity of milk instead. You are doing right in eating butter and not olive oil. The olive oil available in India is not always pure, and of course it cannot be fresh. Moreover, olive oil does not contain the vitamins which butter does. The vegetables which you eat should always be green vegetables. Potatoes and similar vegetables are practically a substitute for *rotli*. They contain starch. You require very little starch, and whatever little you require you will get from wheat. You should not eat pulses in any circumstances. If you eat a sufficient quantity of butter, two pounds of milk will be enough for you. Whether you should increase or diminish their quantity will depend upon your weight at the time. You should go on increasing the quantity of either or both to as much as you can digest, till your weight becomes steady. Among the green vegetables, gourd, pumpkin, the different kinds of edible leaves, cabbage, cauliflower, tender bean-pods and brinjal are considered good. The wheat flour should be whole. If the wheat has been properly cleaned before it is ground, no portion of the flour should be thrown away. Among fruits, grapes, *mosambis*, oranges, pomegranates, apples and pineapple are beneficial for health. Some experiments being made in America indicate that a meal should not consist of a variety of articles. Fruit has the most nourishing value if it is eaten alone, and the best practice is to eat it when the stomach is empty. There is even a saying in English to the effect that fruit in the morning is gold and in the afternoon silver. Our first meal, therefore, should consist only of fruit, though there would be no harm if it is preceded by a glass of warm water the first thing in the morning. If you can get permission to live all the twenty-four hours of the day in open air, it would be worth while to secure it. It would help you if you can slowly do breathing exercises in open air. You need not at all be afraid of the cold at night. It will have no harmful

effect on your health if you have properly covered yourself up to the neck and wound a piece of cloth over the head so as to keep the ears covered. It is essential that the lungs should be supplied with the purest air the whole day and night. You should expose your body to the sun in the morning for as long as you can bear. Discuss all these suggestions with Dr. Contractor and then do what seems best to you.

I hope Madhavji is happy and comfortable in every way. Give my blessings and regards of all three of us to the co-workers who are with you in the jail. Probably you know what is going on here in regard to untouchability. You can send any suggestions which occur to you. You will be permitted by the authorities there to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2903

603. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 8, 1932

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter, but did not get Bhau's. The thieves who carried away mattresses, etc., must have been from among those who knew the Ashram. Cannot the things lying in the red bungalow be removed? When the thieves have become neighbours, how long will you go on increasing the number of persons keeping watch at night. Is it not possible to meet the thieves themselves? Do Ratilal and Champa understand all this?

What is the total loss?

What happened to Radha all at once?

I have little faith in injections.

BAPU

[PS.]

We have a book in the Ashram entitled *Vedamen Brahmacharya.* Ask Prema to find it out and send it to me.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8267. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

604. LETTER TO KIKI LALWANI

November 8, 1932

It is true that my companions know no such thing as rest. What can one do? God himself has said in the *Gita* that He does not relax even for a moment, that He needs neither sleep nor food nor drink. How then can any rest be granted to us?

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 218

605. A LETTER

November 8, 1932

A serious obstacle in the way of those treading the path of truth is the difficulty of deciding what to accept as Shastras. What is a man of simple faith to do when he comes across a plethora of books written in Sanskrit and passing for *smritis* and also utterances that contradict them? For this reason I have chosen for myself the most universal doctrine of Hinduism, namely, that any conduct that is contrary to truth and ahimsa is to be eschewed and any book that violates these principles is not a Shastra.

[From Hindi]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 218

606. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY – IV

November 9, 1932

A correspondent writes as follows:[1]

> I consider your last fast to have been coercion of the worst type. I do not want to conceal from you my feeling about Yeravda Pact. I know my view is shared by public men who, because of their respect for your personality and because of your detention in the Yeravda Prison,

[1] The correspondent was Radhakant Malaviya; *vide* p. 380, and "Letter to C. Y. Chintamani", p. 398.

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did not like to say anything in public against your action in bringing about the Pact. I consider the Pact to be a public misfortune which would never have been brought about but for your unfortunate fast. I know of a very esteemed friend of yours who said that if the refusal had not meant your certain death he would never have given his consent to the Pact. There is a large number of thinking Hindus who regret having had to accept the Pact, as they think that there would have been no necessity for it if you had only accepted in London what you have done now.

In a statement you have said, "It was against these millions that my fast was undertaken." I take it that was your intention but in actual result it was not these millions but others who had no course left open but to suspend their judgment and feeling in the matter and agree to terms to which nothing in the world would have made them agree, if their refusal had not meant losing your valued life. It was their spontaneous love that brought about the transformation inside of five days and brought into being the Yeravda Pact. If this is a correct statement of facts, will it not be more correct to say that it was only the fear of your death by starvation which brought about the Pact? Remembering the circumstances under which it was brought about I think you will recognize that much need not be made of it; if the Pact is not carried out in its fullness, much less would there be any justification for you to embark on a second fast.

It gives me no pleasure to have to criticize a public man of your eminence, but the occasion is such that to keep quiet will not be quite honest. Your assumption that the masses whom you have addressed on the question of untouchability have accepted your views on that question, simply because they did not publicly oppose your views, is not correct. Because of their respect for your great personality and because of your political leadership they would hear in silence and, however much they may be opposed to your views, as I know many of them are, at least in Northern India, they would still consider it their duty to give you a respectful hearing. As you are aware, these people are not very vocal and they do not go out of their way to oppose the views of those who differ from them, and specially if the views are expressed by one of your eminence.

I have removed from the letter unnecessary paragraphs and names of public men referred to by the correspondent. It would be a matter of great grief to me if public men whom the correspondent mentions really suppressed their own opinions and accepted proposals which but for the threat of my death they would never have endorsed. If they acted as the correspondent suggests, they rendered a great disservice to the country and failed to appreciate the purely religious character of the fast. In public life one

has often to perform the painful duty of sacrificing friends for the sake of truth or public weal.

And what was there in the Pact that these friends considered it to be highly objectionable? Surely not reservation of seats; not joint electorate, nor the method of nomination of candidates by primary election, as it has been called. They could not object to the resolution restoring to Harijans social and religious rights, of which they have cruelly remained dispossessed for ages. The only thing remaining is the number of seats allotted to them, but more than that was given to them by the Rajah-Moonje Pact, and as I have already said in a previous statement, caste Hindus could never give Harijans too many seats, if they really believed them to be their own kith and kin, whom they had hitherto kept under their heels. Sorry indeed is the outlook for them if what the Pact has given them is regarded as an undeserved concession wrung from reluctant caste Hindus by my fast.

Therefore, if the information given by my correspondent turns out to be true, I would hold my fast to be doubly justified. I should not care to live as a member of a society which is chary even of doing a small and tardy measure of justice to its outcastes, who are so through no fault of their own, and my fast was trebly justified if the further statement made by my correspondent is true that millions of whom I have been writing as a matter of fact never endorsed my vehement condemnation of untouchability and that they remained silent or even signified approval purely out of their respect for my "great personality" or my "political leadership". Life in the midst of such falsity would be a burden to me. The sooner public men and people realize the necessity of resisting and asserting themselves even against so-called Mahatmas like myself, the better it would be for themselves, the country and for men like me. I should gladly fast even to have such a cleansing of the atmosphere.

My correspondent's is a timely contribution to the movement. Those who are in it should know the implications both of the movement and the prospective fast. I can only repeat with all the emphasis at my command that my fast is not intended to coerce anyone to act against what he may consider to be the best interests of society or country. My fast is not against persons whom I can name or number. It is intended imperceptibly and unconsciously to affect and agitate the millions whom I have in mind and between whom and me, I believe, an indissoluble bond exists. How such fasts work I do know from personal experience gained more than once.

My correspondent suggests that "there would have been no necessity for the Pact if I had only accepted in London what I have done now". I must not rake up the past beyond saying that I could not have done in London what it was possible to do in India. The correspondent although he was in London at the time simply does not know all the facts that are in my possession.

Let not the public, however, run away with the idea that I have many letters protesting against the Pact. So far as I can remember, this is the only letter of its kind. There are two or three letters complaining of coercion but none suggesting that, therefore, anything was given to Harijans that was not their due, and against this one letter I have hundreds of letters and telegrams warmly approving of the fast itself and the Pact. My closest associates both here and in the West with one or two exceptions have endorsed it and themselves felt its spiritual effect. But according to my wont and in order to keep the cause I espouse free from any harm, I publish letters containing hostile criticism, especially when it comes from men whom I know to be guided by friendly motives, as my correspondent undoubtedly is.

As I was handing in this statement, I received a wire from the ever-vigilant secretary of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League, pointing out that the total population of untouchables in India is not sixty millions but under forty. I am sorry for having given an incorrect figure, although Sjt. Thakkar corrected me even during the fast.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-11-1932

607. TELEGRAM TO THE ZAMORIN OF CALICUT

[*November 9, 1932*][1]

IT WAS NOT WITHOUT PAIN I READ YOUR STATEMENT[2] IN THE PRESS TODAY. MY OPINION IS THAT THE ASSURANCE GIVEN BY YOU TO KELAPPAN WAS AN ASSURANCE GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC. WHETHER KELAPPAN WAS DISCOURTEOUS OR NOT I AM SURE YOU WILL NOT REFUSE TO CARRY OUT A PUBLIC DUTY BECAUSE THERE IS NO APPRECIATION ON THE PART OF A PUBLIC WORKER. I WOULD THEREFORE URGE

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

[2] This was the Zamorin's letter published in *The Hindu*, 7-11-1932; *vide* p. 409.

YOU NOT TO TAKE UP THE IRRECONCILABLE ATTITUDE YOU HAVE TAKEN IN YOUR STATEMENT, BUT IF YOU BELIEVE THAT TEMPLE ENTRY BY AVARNA HINDUS IS A LONG OVERDUE REFORM YOU WILL SET ABOUT OVERCOMING EVERY DIFFICULTY.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 12-11-1932

608. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 9, 1932

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter as usual.

As against your loss of weight of one pound I show increase of nearly 3 lb., having shown nearly 102 lb. today. It is due to my ability to take more milk. I turn a portion into what may be called cheese and take it with bread. How long I shall be able to do justice to it I do not know.

You should get rid of your constipation at once. And for this fruit should be taken on an empty stomach. No other food should be taken for two hours thereafter. The second thing to do when one is constipated is to avoid protein foods, i.e., bread and also milk, and take green vegetables cooked alternately with fruit. That was how I built up my body after the fast. And latterly Vallabhbhai has been correcting his constipation, heaviness and cough by such non-nutritious fat-free and starch-free food. It sustains one's weight fairly well. Dried fruit may be taken of course. It may be wise not to mix dried fruit with fresh. Thus one may take four meals, one consisting of say pomegranate and *musambis*, the other of vegetables, e.g., *dudhi* and tomatoes, third of dried figs or dates or prunes soaked in water over-night and warmed or cold, the fourth may consist of the same vegetable or pumpkin and lemons squeezed on it or tomatoes repeated or it may consist of salad made of lettuce and tomatoes or grated carrots. Such food repeated for a few days should remove obstinate constipation. Sometimes mere omission of bread or milk may answer. I take it that your bread is real wholemeal bread and when it is chapati it is made of unsifted whole-wheat flour. The wheat has to be thoroughly cleaned before it is ground. The whole of the bran is absolutely necessary if one is to get the fullest advantage from wheat. These observations are simply to be used as a help and must be corrected from your own experience.

Yes, I am devoting practically the whole of my time to untouchability work. The elbows continue to give pain when used in a particular way. Most of my letters I now dictate. For the few I write I use the hands alternately. This seems to answer the purpose. I have cut down the spinning just now to 100 rounds from 200. Of course there is not the slightest cause for anxiety over this pain in the elbows. They need rest and nothing else. With returning strength and the filling in of muscle, probably the pain will disappear.

I am glad Kisen is still with you. Let her be most rigid about your pronunciation.

We are all well and all send you both love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be interested in the enclosed.[1] Wonderful how even such a thing should come to me. I am one of the family.

From the original: C.W. 6249. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9715

609. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

November 9, 1932

DEAR MOTIBABU,

Just now I must dictate my letters. Your book has been received. Mahadev knows Bengali quite well. The book was received today. He has already commenced reading it and fallen in love with it. He will read to me extracts from it as soon as possible.

Your question about varnashrama you will find somewhat answered in one of the statements issued to the Press. In my letter to Sureshbabu I never said that varnashrama was in any shape or form an evil, but I did say that caste was a social evil and had to go some day or other. I draw a sharp distinction between varna and caste. All I have written before on this subject I hold by with perhaps this exception: I have vaguely expressed in my previous writings what I have come to see now clearly, namely, that the four varnas are no longer in actual working order, even as the four Ashrams are not. Hence at the present moment there is only one varna in existence. We are all Shudras and if we can bring ourselves to believe this, the merger of the Harijans in *Savarna* Hindus becomes incredibly simple and in course of time, we might be able to reconstruct the

[1] This is not available.

old varnas. I also seem to see more clearly than before that the law our ancestors discovered was not that the varnas were four and were always to remain four, but that everyone had to follow his own varna which is most nearly expressed by the word profession in English. It was no part of varnadharma to regulate dining or marrying. Varna determined the profession. Custom naturally grew up of people of the same varna restricting marriage to that varna. Restriction on inter-dining was of a much later growth, but marrying outside one's varna did not entail forfeiture of the varna. I hope to develop my idea of varnadharma in the statements I am issuing, but I think I have said sufficient in my letter to enable you to understand my position.

Love to you all of the Sangha.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11039

610. LETTER TO VALJI AND MAHENDRA DESAI

November 9, 1932

BHAI SHRI VALJI,

I got your note written on a slip of paper. Vallabhbhai went through every page of your booklet carefully and said to me: "What came upon Valji? Can anyone who cares write this kind of thing? Only a Christian can. If Valji wants to write, he should write something new which our people can understand." Mahadev has not offered much criticism as he has not gone further than reading the chapter headings, but he will read the book now. I will let you know his opinion after he has read it. Personally, I do not think any book should be given free. If, however, a person who requires a particular book cannot afford to buy it, you may supply a copy to him from your stock.

BAPU

CHI. MANU,

This time your handwriting was better. Do write to me regularly.

BAPU

SHRI VALJI DESAI
P. O. SANJOLI
SIMLA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7443. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

611. LETTER TO FULCHAND B. SHAH[1]

November 9, 1932

BHAI FULCHAND,

This time I got your letter later than I had expected, but I am relieved now that I have got it. I had heard about the illness there, and hence I was all the more eager to hear from you. I do get reports from Ahmednagar. All the prisoners are now out of danger. They are being looked after well enough. Gangabehn and others even visited them. All the three of us are well here. I have almost regained my strength.

Devdas is in Prayag and Pyarelal is in Bombay. Jamnalalji keeps moderately good health. He is suffering from some ear disease, but there is no cause for anxiety. Ba is at Sabarmati.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9466. Courtesy: Chandrakant F. Shah

612. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE, AHMEDABAD

[Before *November 10, 1932*][2]

We should not place the Depressed Classes in a position where they might be insulted or injured. We should place ourselves in such a position for their sake. . . .

This proposal[3] is excellent but if public opinion is opposed to it, I see the risk involved in this experiment.

The Hindu, 10-11-1932

[1] The source does not indicate which Fulchand Shah this is. However, the reference to Ahmednagar suggests Fulchand Bapuji Shah who was at this time a prisoner in Visapur jail. There had been some conflict between the political prisoners and jail authorities there.

[2] The report in the source bears the date November 10.

[3] The addressee in his letter had informed Gandhiji that the League proposed to appoint persons belonging to Depressed Classes to serve drinking-water to passers-by on public roads.

613. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

November 10, 1932

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I thank you for copies of the annual reports. . . .[1] for the improvement of the Backward Classes of Bengal and Assam. Glancing through the pages of the reports I note the steady progress made by the . . .[2] in the work of amelioration. May its efforts bear increasing fruit from day to day.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9581. Courtesy: Santa Devi

614. LETTER TO BHUDEB MUKERJI[3]

Rewritten *November 10, 1932*

DEAR FRIEND,

Though you have absolved me from having to write to you in reply to your letter, I must not avail myself of your kindness. You have evidently ascribed to the workers against untouchability much more than they have themselves claimed. No one has ever thought of destroying varnashrama dharma. And you are wholly wrong in thinking that the movement is carried on by or is confined to the English speaking people. It is a mass movement in which even utterly illiterate men and women are taking part with religious zeal, and are you sure that varnadharma and Ashrama dharma are being observed to any appreciable degree by even those who regard themselves as orthodox? Again I do not know what you wish to convey by the expression "levelling", and you write of forcible levelling. I do not know that anybody has used force to level down anybody else, whatever the latter expression may mean. And you are surely libelling the untouchables when you ascribe to them vices from which the

[1&2] Illegible in the source

[3] An ex-lecturer of Calcutta University; he had written to Gandhiji on October 30 (S.N. 18596).

touchables, you evidently claim, are free. Not all the untouchables trade in toddy or liquor dealing, and what is worse—drinking or selling intoxicating liquors? Have you any personal experience of the private life of untouchables? Do you consider them to be guilty of the hideous immorality of the lives of many touchables who disgrace themselves and Hinduism? And who is responsible for whatever is bad about untouchables? I refrain from saying more. From your letter-head I see that you are yourself a distinguished product of English learning and have obtained an *upadhi* for your knowledge of Sankhya and Vedanta. I have never seen anything in either Sankhya or Vedanta that teaches a man to hold in contempt his fellow-beings as you seem to do in almost every line of your letter. And my grief is enhanced by my strong suspicion that you have never cared to study the lives of those unfortunate fellow-Hindus whom you and I and other Hindus who have arrogated superiority for themselves have ground down to dust. I invite you to read the signs of the times and join me in thinking that purification of Hinduism will not come through arrogance and slander of innocent people.

Yours sincerely,

BHUDEB MUKERJI
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 18609

615. LETTER TO G. S. NARASIMHACHARI[1]

November 10, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter of 23rd ultimo was received in due course, but for reasons you now know I was unable to reply earlier. Students, if they will work heartily and intelligently, can do much in spite of the orthodox opposition. They can go to the quarters of the untouchables, fraternize with them on equal terms, understand their difficulties and remove all those in their power to remove, bring them medical help, teach them the laws of cleanliness, conduct night and day schools for them, invite them to their games and take their children for outings. Those difficulties which they cannot remove, they can bring to the notice of the local branch

[1] Secretary of the Andhra University College Telugu Association, Vizagapatnam

of the newly-established League or write to the central body, make a thoroughly critical and scholarly study of their conditions and publish it in pamphlet form. This is the most effective and the easiest way students can serve without interfering with their studies. But if they have to face opposition from elders even in doing this silent service, they must stand their ground, without being irritated and without weakening.

Do please let me know whether you have begun this work and if you have, how many are doing it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-12-1932

616. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN[1]

November 10, 1932

From what I can see and feel, the battle at Guruvayur is to attain all-India importance and orthodoxy is to concentrate all its fire upon the temple. I should welcome it. It should result in much greater purification than I had expected. But that means that all that is best in Hinduism has to consolidate itself and resist the orthodox onrush. I am anxious therefore for you, if it is possible for you and if you feel with me, to throw yourself heart and soul into the movement. But I observed from your writings on the last fast that you were opposed to such fasting. I hold very strong views about it and feel that it is not only a legitimate weapon, but that for one who will not resort to violence in any shape or form it becomes obligatory under given circumstances. And now that I am free to receive visitors in connection with this movement I would like you to see me any time next week, at, say, 1 o'clock, so that we can discuss the ethics of penitential public fasts and see whether we cannot agree. You know me enough to feel sure that if in the course of our discussion I discover my own error I shall have no hesitation in retracing my step.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 221-2

[1] Editor, *Indian Social Reformer*

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617. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

November 10, 1932

DEAR GURUDEV,

You must have seen the statement I have circulated to the Press.[1] I want your blessings, if I can have them, for this further effort. I do not know whether you feel that this effort is, if possible, purer than before. The last fast had a political tinge about it and superficial critics were able to say that it was aimed at the British Government. This time if the ordeal has to come, it will not be possible to give any political colour to it. You will of course recall that the last fast was broken on the clearest possible notice that I might have to resume it if there was any breach of faith by the so-called caste Hindus. The prospective fast about Guruvayur temple is absolutely a point of honour. It is being made by the orthodox section the centre of attack and is being given an all-India significance. I rather like it. But it makes it all the more necessary for the liberalizing influences to be collected together and set in motion in order to overthrow the monster of untouchability. I want your whole-hearted co-operation if you feel as I do.

I hope you are keeping well.

With deep love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4635. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 220-1

618. LETTER TO AMBALAL[2]

November 10, 1932

I agree with most of your views about untouchability, but the reasons which you have given for refusing to join the Committee have not convinced me. I do believe that Hindus who are known to be orthodox should join such a committee. If, however, as a

[1] The reference is to "Statement on Untouchability–I"; *vide* pp. 341-5.
[2] Presumably Ambalal Sarabhai

result of waiting for such Hindus to join, the very work for which the Committee has been formed is held up, we should do without them, and, irrespective of whether or not the Committee includes such Hindus, those who have a religious disposition and want religious reforms as well must join the Committee.

The sense of responsibility which a person feels and the obligation which he accepts in joining a body, he would not feel or accept if he did not join it, however much he tried.

And now about the point on which we differ. Though I admit the usefulness and necessity of meetings, processions, speeches, conferences, etc., I believe that without constructive work we shall not succeed in eradicating untouchability completely nor will large numbers of Harijans learn to hate it. It is certainly true that such work will require an army of voluntary workers, both men and women, and much money. If, however, you recognize the imperative necessity of the work, you should not refuse to attempt it merely out of fear that we might not get the needed money and such a large number of workers. I think that, in a great movement like this, we cannot ignore a single aspect of the task.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 222-3

619. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI AND BENARSILAL BAZAJ

November 10, 1932

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got your letter. The right method to follow for writing letters or doing any other work is to fix the time for every work. If you really wish to write every week, then you should fix in your mind a day and an hour when you will write. Then the thought will not be a burden on your mind and you will be able to write regularly without any difficulty. What is the name of the vaid from Mathura? Do you get cow's milk there? Is the ghee made from cow's or buffalo's milk?

CHI. BENARSI,

I saw your signature. Father writes to me every week. How is his work prospering? What does he do in Dublin?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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620. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 10, 1932

CHI. MANILAL,

You returned from Madras very soon. It was very good that you stayed with Sir Kurma. Sastri is a man of few words. Don't believe what people may say against him.

You will find with this a letter from Pragji. Read it and think over it. Do not get angry with him. Try to understand his point of view and then write to me. I will write to him only after I hear from you. You may observe that what he writes is quite the opposite of what you complain.

If you have promised to return there in December, you must start making preparations.

Reply to me by return of post.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4800

621. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 10, 1932

BELOVED DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I hope you received my postcard. My fear has come true. Since you write to me regularly, whenever I do not get a letter from you I feel uneasy. When you are not well you can ask Father or Mother to write a postcard. Whatever may happen, I certainly do not wish that you yourself should write to me when you are ill. How did you fall ill? Did you overwork? You ought not to fall ill. I hope you are better now. You need not reply to this letter yourself. It will do if Father drops me a postcard. I have not received Hamida's letter so far. *Khuda Hafiz.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: S.N. 9666

622. LETTER TO ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY LEAGUE, UDIPI

November 11, 1932

I am quite clear in my mind that there is no occasion for you to start satyagraha just now. You have to cultivate public opinion in your favour by the gentlest means. You should see whether the temple-going population is in favour of Harijans being admitted to the temple on the same terms as the other, and you should also remember that temple-entry is not the only thing to be done. You have to ascertain the condition of untouchables in your neighbourhood in every walk of life, make a scientific study and pass the results of your study on to me, alleviating at the same time such distress among the Harijans as you are capable of doing.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 229

623. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

November 11, 1932

I have no doubt that you guessed who the author of the letter referred to in the fourth statement[1] on untouchability was. The names referred to therein were those of your good self and Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru. Radhakant, the writer, has now given me permission upon my request to disclose his name to you and Pandit Kunzru. Before I say anything, it is due to you that I should know from you whether you actually felt coerced by my fast and acted against your conscience. I am writing to Pandit Kunzru also.[2]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 235

[1] *Vide* pp. 384-7.

[2] This letter is not available, but according to the source the contents of the two letters were identical.

624. LETTER TO BASANTI DEVI DAS

November 11, 1932

If you are at all following the papers you must have noticed that all the dark reactionary forces are being brought together to impede the progress of purification. It is therefore time for all that is clean and uplifting in Hinduism to combine together and make a united effort to overthrow the many-headed monster of untouchability. Will you respond ? If you will not summon up courage enough to write a letter, I dare not accuse you of laziness. I hope you will have the courage to send me a wire. It was only last week that I invited Urmila Devi[1] to go down to the South in answer to a summons from Kerala. She at once wired consent. Will you do likewise ? I do not say go down South, but I do want you to promise to take a due share in the uplift work. The field of work shall be chosen by you unless you will leave that also to me.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 228

625. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

November 11, 1932

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your latest letter telling me how in ecstasy[2] you would have run to the telegraph office to wire to me and how you subsequently realized that that would have been wrong if only because we are poor people and all the money we had, had to be held in trust for God's service. And I had your long love letter which you had sent to the Ashram address.

Well, the fast was well worth it even for enabling Menon to give up smoking. The value lies in having given up a thing which had so possessed him. I know that many young men and young women, old men and old women were moved to such restraint and self-denial during the fast week. It shows that it was from God.

[1] Sister of C. R. Das

[2] At the news of the termination of the fast by Gandhiji

I saw and we all admired the group photo with Andrews in it. It was very good. And the bare-bodied Tangai. She looks a perfect picture.

I expect in your next letter to see the account of your visit to the diseased sister.

I had a long letter from the Sunfield School people giving me an account of the new buildings.

You must not trifle with your body by putting into it things that will not suit it. You cannot build your body on pulses. You do not need them at all. Your diet must consist largely of milk, eggs (since you do take them and it is well you do) and whole-meal bread and fruit and green vegetables, salads, tomatoes, spinach, marrow and the like. Even as a soldier keeps his arms clean and in order so must we keep our arms (God-given bodies) clean and in perfect order.

I have almost regained my strength and am taking normal food. Mira writes regularly every week and is keeping well. Devdas is much better but is overworking himself and so is Pyarelal. Mahadev of course is with me. Tilakam is at the Ashram. He is a good young man. He is not strong in body.

Enclosed is a letter[1] for the young friend from Denmark. Ba is at the Ashram. I think she has aged more than I have, though she is wonderfully active. Her mind gets easily tired. She worries too much.

Love to you all and in addition kisses to the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 115. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, pp. 95-6

[1] This is not available.

626. LETTER TO S. M. MICHAEL

November 11, 1932

I should be sorry, indeed, if my prospective fast should deprive anyone of his or her intellectual freedom. Anyway, I have declared in emphatic terms that it is intended only to affect the mass mind. Naturally friends and co-workers who believe in the removal of untouchability will be stirred to action. That is no matter for regret. Nevertheless, if you have a clear call of conscience you will, of course, fast.[1] But you will hardly expect it to move me if I continue to believe that I am also obeying God's call.

The Hindu, 21-11-1932. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, p. 236

627. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

November 11, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I was very glad to be able to see you and the friends who came with you and I feel thankful that my advice proved acceptable to you. I am quite sure that no satyagraha should be attempted regarding temple-entry, nor any fast undertaken by anybody, whilst all attention is being concentrated on Guruvayur. Nor should anybody think of undertaking sympathetic fast, should it become necessary for Sjt. Kelappan and myself to do so. My advice however to suspend satyagraha whilst all energy is being devoted to Guruvayur temple does not mean that no other effort should be made about opening the other temples. That has to be made unremittingly. But just now it is a point of honour with caste Hindus to do so. It will be time enough for Harijans to think of it when it is clearly established that caste Hindus will do nothing to secure the opening of public temples to Harijans. Fortunately every day brings the news of some temple being spontaneously opened somewhere to the Harijans and from all

[1] The addressee had announced his intention to commence, from December 1, a counter-fast as a mark of "disappointment and protest" against what he described as "coercive fast" on the question of temple-entry decided on by Gandhiji.

accounts that I have been receiving such effort is being continued, though undoubtedly not with the same enthusiasm that marked the fast week. What however Harijans may do to facilitate the work of caste Hindus is to take up, so far as it is possible, internal reform such as observance of the laws of cleanliness, and giving up carrion and drink. I have discussed such things exhaustively with you.

The matter of opening facilities for the technical training of Harijan children and offering scholarships to deserving Harijan youths, I propose to discuss with Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla and the other members of the A.I.A.U. League[1] when they come here to see me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 787. Also *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. II, pp. 233-4

628. LETTER TO SHYAMJI MARWADI

November 11, 1932

BHAI SHYAMJI,

I got your letter. I am glad that you wrote to me. I have been discussing with the chief workers the problem of educational institutions in Bombay. Keep me constantly informed and also have patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5206

629. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 11, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter, you too must have received mine. As we shall be meeting fairly soon, I will not write at length. There is nothing urgent to be communicated.

[1] All-India Anti-Untouchability League. The name was later changed to Harijan Sevak Sangh.

I have received the League's scheme. I will give you my opinion when we meet. I have written[1] to Bhai Ambalal requesting him to join the League. We must take up simultaneously both propaganda and constructive work. The League cannot leave out propaganda simply because I am doing it. What I may be doing is a different matter. But this too we shall discuss at length when we meet. I am certain that the League cannot take up the matter of inter-dining. Kerala needs the services of a lady from the north. After consulting Rajaji I have sent a wire to Urmiladevi that she is to go. I feel that her expenses should be borne by the League. For the present I have sent her some money from the funds I had recently received. I had intended to pass these on to the League. If the League approves of Urmiladevi being sent, it will pay her the rest of her expenses. If however it is decided that the League's programme cannot envisage this kind of expense we shall see what we can do.

I am maintaining fairly good health. The weight too is now satisfactory. No doubt I miss some of my former energy. I am sure I shall soon recover it. You must build up your body. I do not agree with what you write about soda bicarb.[2] A doctor friend once assured me that a daily intake of soda can keep off rheumatism. It is beneficial in other ways too. I have never experienced any harm from it and in any case, a little soda is always present in the water.

I have gone through the pledge. I have not studied it very carefully but it seems all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7903. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

630. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

November 11, 1932

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. I was so pleased. I like Tandonji's suggestion the best. Your field is literature and service to the cause of Hindi. If, while doing this you can also do Harijan service, you will have done all. I do not see any reason for revi-

[1] *Vide* pp. 395-6.

[2] Quoting Dr. Kellogg's opinion, the addressee had suggested that Gandhiji should give up soda bicarb as its daily use was harmful to the stomach and caused nausea.

ving *Patit Bandhu*. At the present moment our conduct is the best form of propaganda. There are so many newspapers; your articles will always find a place in them.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

You can certainly come if you wish to meet me.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1072

631. INTERVIEW TO P. N. RAJBHOJ[1]

November 11, 1932

RAJBHOJ: The untouchables are trying to enter the temples by all possible means. Suppose the methods of persuasion and mutual goodwill fail, do you think that the untouchables should resort to satyagraha? If they may resort to it, what should be the method adopted?

GANDHIJI: Under the present circumstances I don't think that satyagraha is at all advisable or needed. All efforts should be concentrated on Guruvayur. Harijans should for the time being watch what the caste men are doing. Whatever happens about Guruvayur is likely to happen to many if not all the other temples.

R: In the case of the entry into the Parvati temple all methods have been tried, including the attempts of Sjts. Jamnalal Bajaj and Mr. N. C. Kelkar. May I know how to get out of this fix?

G. I am aware of your efforts and satyagraha in regard to the Parvati temple. Even regarding this I should advise you to wait till the Guruvayur matter is settled one way or the other. In the meanwhile you can carry on negotiations with the Parvati Trustees and create public opinion.

R: Now that Government has permitted you to do untouchability work unfettered what objections have you to come out and devote yourself to this cause alone?

G. I cannot accept my freedom under any restrictions. But this is a matter I must not discuss.

R: We learn from the correspondence published in the papers that you have announced a fast in suit with Mr. Kelappan. Suppose any "touchable" or untouchable announces another fast in connection with some other noteworthy temple, say Kashi Vishveshwar, may I know whether you will

[1] The text reproduced here is from a report in *The Bombay Chronicle* which gives both questions and answers. Some of the answers are reproduced from a photostat of a typewritten copy containing corrections in Gandhiji's own hand.

be prepared to stake your life in every such case? Do you think that your person will be able to cope with this anomalous situation?

G. I have given my word to Mr. Kelappan, and I am in honour bound to start my fast with him on the 2nd of January, 1933. If somebody else starts a similar fast in respect of another temple, I do not hold myself bound to join him. Every case has to be examined on its merits. And in no case should workers resort to fast without full deliberation and justification.

R: What are the obligations and duties of the "touchables" and untouchables with regard to indiscriminate use by both of public wells or such other common sources of water, tanks, etc.?

G. The untouchables have as much right to have water from the public wells and tanks as the "touchables". The matter, in case of any difference of opinion should be settled amicably by persuasion and negotiation.

All the difficulties which cannot be solved locally should be brought to the notice of the All-India Anti-Untouchability League. I will of course do what I can from here.

Whereas in the matter of the use of public wells, there is a clear legal right, the untouchables can seek the protection of law-courts, but this method does not help downtrodden people. The strong will always get round or disregard the law. The chief thing therefore is by conciliatory attitude to create favourable local public opinion.

Mr. Birla and Mr. Thakkar are coming to Poona to confer with me about this problem and the methods to be adopted for its solution. You should whole-heartedly co-operate with and help the League.[1]

R: It is the desire of the depressed classes that the League should give precedence in spending its funds on technical education for the depressed classes, such as tanning, leather goods, rope-making, etc., in foreign countries as well as in India instead of spending it on other propaganda. So on behalf of these classes I have to request you to press this point of view for the promotion of this idea.

It is also our desire that common hostels be opened where "touchables" and untouchables will stay together.

G. I agree to your proposal about spending some of the funds of the League in scholarships for the untouchables and for technical education such as leather tanning, making leather goods, rope-making, etc., in India as well as foreign countries. I am wholly with you when you suggest the opening of common hos-

[1] The questions to which the foregoing three paragraphs are answers are not available.

tels for the "touchables" and the untouchables and trying to get the existing ones thrown open to the latter. The League will surely try and use its influence in this matter.

R. Don't you think that the campaign against untouchability should be confined to villages, the centres of orthodoxy, rather than to towns where people are educated and broad-minded to a little extent at least? Are not some women workers necessary to do propaganda work among village women?

G. Yes, the campaign against untouchability should primarily be carried on vigorously in the villages. In the East Khandesh District and several other Provinces and districts movement of this sort has been already commenced. Women should come forward in large numbers to work for this movement.

This is a very fine question. The untouchables should help much. They should observe common cleanliness, should refrain from eating the meat of dead animals and from drink, send their children to schools, remove untouchability among themselves and generally carry on such reform from within as is possible.[1]

R. Do you feel the necessity of incorporating the question of removal of untouchability as one of the Fundamental Rights in the new constitution of India? That is to say, will it be proper to consider it a criminal offence if any Hindu is treated as an untouchable at any public place and, further, will it be proper to punish him under a law for wounding his religious susceptibilities? If time comes, will the Indian National Congress be prepared and try to embody this principle in the constitution?

G. Removal of untouchability should undoubtedly be one of the Fundamental Rights in the new constitution of India. Yes. It should be considered a criminal offence to treat any Hindu as an untouchable. The Congress will certainly be prepared to embody this principle in the constitution.

They should see that violence is not resorted to in furtherance of their objects.

I don't think that the untouchables only are supposed to do the work of sweepers, of carrying carcases, mending shoes, etc. Cases of ill-treatment because of the so-called untouchables refusing to do any work of this sort should be referred to the local agent of the League.

Nobody should object to inter-caste dinners, but no force should be brought to bear upon persons who don't wish to attend such functions. But I am of opinion that it would not be wise to make inter-caste dinners an item in your programme.

[1] The question to which this is an answer is not available.

I should not advise the untouchables to leave their trades and professions.[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 796 and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-11-1932

632. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

November 12, 1932

DEAR SISTER,

May I hope that you will sincerely help in Harijan work? Please come and see me when you get the time. For this work, anybody can see me. I think you probably saw Urmiladevi, Deshbandhu Das's sister, during the week of the fast. She will be going to the South in a few days for this work. But she will come and see me before going. She will stay in Poona for a day or two. Will you kindly put her up? She is likely to come on any day during the next week. Kindly inform me by telephone or postcard, or come and see me personally.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4825. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

633. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVLEKAR

November 12, 1932

BHAI SATAVLEKAR,

What part are you playing in the task of eradication of untouchability? In the face of the attacks by self-styled sanatanists we need the religious organization of those who wish to purify and ennoble Hinduism. I do not mean an organization such as the ones we see coming up these days. But the reformers should declare their considered opinion in one voice. I feel that no reformer should sit back out of lethargy or hesitation. Please do whatever you consider proper in this matter.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 4768. Courtesy: S. D. Satavlekar

[1] The questions to which the foregoing four paragraphs are answers are not available.

634. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

November 12, 1932

Asked whether he had seen Lord Sankey's latest appeal in the *Newsletter*, Gandhiji observed:

So far as I can understand Sir Samuel Hoare's answer in the House of Commons to a question, letters dissuading me from civil disobedience can pass the jail precincts and be delivered to me. But I know that I have no authority to send replies to such letters with the assurance that they will leave the precincts of the jail. Under the limits that I have accepted or imposed upon myself, so far as these interviews are concerned, I may not give any reply in answer to questions by reporters or even by private friends who may visit me.

When reminded that Lord Sankey wanted a gesture and asked how he would get a reply, Gandhiji said he would gladly read Lord Sankey's appeal with all the respect and attention that an appeal from him would demand. The Mahatma observed:

After having read it if I come to the conclusion that I can make a useful reply, it will be duly submitted to the Government for despatch to Lord Sankey.[1]

Gandhiji answering my question regarding Guruvayur, told me that the next fast to be declared was dependent upon Mr. Kelappan's. He said:

I can conceive of circumstances when I have to take it up independently. Supposing Mr. Kelappan dies, God forbid it, I shall have to carry out the fast. I have taken an extreme illustration. Ordinarily speaking, I do not expect to take it independently of Mr. Kelappan.

Asked what his attitude would be if Mr. Kelappan felt satisfied that steps were being taken in right earnest, and the temple was bound to be opened shortly, though not exactly on January 1st next, say, one or two weeks later. Gandhiji said:

Supposing Mr. Kelappan comes to such a conclusion, he will have to reason it out with me and satisfy me that there is no occasion for fasting. Let me say I do not expect Mr. Kelappan

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Lord Sankey, *vide* pp. 413-5.

ever to say that. But assume that Mr. Kelappan weakens and wants to wriggle out of the vow taken before God and man; if there is the slightest suspicion of that character, I would require some satisfaction for my reason. But I have always believed Mr. Kelappan to be inflexible in his determination and unbending in the good cause.

Questioned whether he had examined, as was his wont, the Guruvayur temple-entry question in all its details before deciding on a fast, Gandhiji replied:

I cannot pretend that I have examined the question in all its details. I have entirely depended upon Mr. Kelappan having done so though, generally speaking, I have been undoubtedly satisfying myself as to the correctness of the claim for opening the temple to the untouchables. But if anyone were to ask me whether I have seen the trust-deed, if there is any, of the Guruvayur temple or whether I have critically examined the customs or conditions governing the management of that celebrated temple, I must confess my ignorance.

When his attention was drawn to the Zamorin's latest letter published in *The Hindu* dated 7th November that the Zamorin stood no longer bound by the assurance given to Mr. Kelappan when he commenced his fast, to go into the question if in the meanwhile Mr. Kelappan broke his fast, as Mr. Kelappan had rejected the offer and continued the fast, Gandhiji observed:

The Zamorin's charge against Mr. Kelappan of discourtesy and his refusal on that ground to carry out his assurance appears to be incomprehensible. His assurance though given to Mr. Kelappan was quite an assurance to the general public and it amounted to a declaration that he was alive to the duty that rested upon him, of making every endeavour to find a way out. As a responsible person, and as a trustee, in my opinion, he is bound, irrespective of Mr. Kelappan's conduct, to carry out that assurance.[1]

The trustee of a Hindu temple is not merely to guard the customs or so-called privileges of a particular caste, but to guard the purity of Hinduism itself, and to respond to the daily-growing spiritual aspirations of the Hindus. Such a trustee cannot afford to be ruffled by what one or even many men may say against him.

And so far as the legal aspect of the question is concerned, I know the Zamorin's contention, but the legal difficulties are there to be combated and overcome when they stand in the way of a great moral reform. Therefore neither the Zamorin nor any other person can be allowed to plead legal difficulties as a sufficient ans-

[1] *Vide* also "Telegram to the Zamorin of Calicut", pp. 387-8.

wer against the opening of the temple. If public opinion itself is morally justified, a responsible trustee like the Zamorin is expected to remove the legal obstacles in the way of the moral demand of the public being satisfied.

Q. Would you postpone your fast, if efforts are made to amend the Act to admit untouchables into the temple, but the legislature is not able to find time to get the Bill through before 1st January?

A. Supposing it is physically impossible to secure an amendment of the Act before 1st January, that would be sufficient justification for the postponement of the fast. That presupposes that all the steps that could be taken have been taken, and that humanly speaking, there is every chance of the legislation going through. That again presupposes that the public, trustees and everybody have to be of one mind.

Asked whether he would entertain the suggestion to invite a body of orthodox sanatanists to meet him and attempt to reach an amicable settlement of the issue, Mahatmaji said:

I would consider it a presumption to invite a body of great people to come to me. It is out of respect to them that I say that I won't invite them. I don't invite these people not because I do not want to see them, nor because I think they can have nothing to say to me. I refrain from inviting them out of regard for their status. But if I discover that if I only issued an invitation to them they would gladly come, I would have no hesitation in sending such an invitation.

Asked how he was disposed towards those who sympathized with the temple-entry movement, and at the same time wanted to respect the feelings of the orthodox sanatanists that the so-called untouchables should be allowed to go into the temples as far as the *Dhwajastambham* and the deity brought down there on festive days for *darshan*, the Mahatma said:

This movement is to remove untouchability. Therefore, the untouchables should enjoy precisely the same rights as the "touchables", but that does not mean that they should have access to the sanctuary, which is only open to those who are in charge of the ceremonial. If non-Brahmins are prevented from going because they are considered untouchables, then undoubtedly that untouchability must go. But if there is no black mark of untouchability against them, but it is only the Brahmins who are allowed to go as far as certain parts of the sanctuary, I should have nothing to say against it as a part of this movement. The question of the exclusive rights of the Brahmins in connection with

religious ceremonies stands on a different footing, and if that exclusiveness has to go, that question will have to be separately examined. I am not prepared, offhand, to condemn the practice of reserving certain functions exclusively for a particular class. This won't be a matter of right, but of duty, to be performed by a body of experts, having the required qualifications.

Referring to Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar's remark that temple-entry is being urged as generous gesture of political conciliation, Gandhiji observed:

I had the privilege of knowing Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar even before he became a Judge of the Madras High Court, and it is astonishing to me how temple-entry can, by any stretch of imagination, be regarded as a political question. I simply cannot understand it.

Concluding, Gandhiji said:

If Hinduism could cure itself of the age-long curse without outside intervention the cause of Hinduism would be better served. Non-Hindus will immediately begin to think that there is something very vital in Hinduism. I feel that the removal of untouchability is such a tremendous reform in Hinduism that it must have a reaction throughout the world. It will be a total denial of my existence if my method of approach proves a failure.

At the end of the conversation, I found Gandhiji exhausted. When I expressed my doubt as to whether he would be able to successfully undergo another fast, Gandhiji remarked that he was hopeful of it.

To another remark as to what he would do if the Madras Council rejected the proposed Bill, the Mahatma remarked:

I don't anticipate such a failure. A House which adopted Dr. Subbaroyan's resolution will not reject a Bill amending the present Act if introduced. I don't believe in dying before my days.

Gandhiji is pleased with the Madras Council's action in passing Dr. Subbaroyan's resolution and is watching what steps are taken to give effect to the same.

The Hindu, 14-11-1932

635. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA[1]

[Before *November 13, 1932*][2]

If you think that being appointed one of the trustees[3] will make you free, you are mistaken. The word "trust" means responsibility, and I would certainly welcome a person becoming a trustee of his own property. He then ceases to be the owner of his property. He must then live within the commission which as a trustee he gets from the property. This is the meaning of trust. I am not talking here about trustees who abuse their office and misappropriate the property. I am only explaining here the duties of a trustee. You say that you want to acquire strength to stand on your own feet. Do you understand what that means? To stand on your feet means that you will not depend on your father's earnings, nor on your father-in-law's, nor your husband's but subsist on your own earnings, however small they may be. You have never shown evidence of such strength in you. Nor did I ever observe any such desire in you. . . .

In the past I have congratulated persons whose houses had been burgled. My attitude is the same in this case. We have no moral right to possess a single pie. Whatever we possess is as good as stolen property. Since all people in the world are thieves, possessions are not looked upon as theft. That, however, should not blind us to the truth. Is it any matter for wonder if other thieves rob us of some of the stolen property in our possession? The lesson you should draw from this theft is that you should not possess things which would tempt a thief, and that you may use the few things which you possess as long as they are not stolen. If you learn that lesson from the theft, you will have lost nothing but on the contrary gained wisdom.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 243-4

[1] The source does not identify the addressee. The reference to the theft in the letter however indicates that this was written to Champabehn Mehta, wife of Ratilal Mehta, whose house had been burgled. *Vide* also p. 422.

[2] Though the source gives November 14, the reference to this letter in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", before 13/14-11-1932, suggests that this was written before that letter.

[3] Presumably of Champabehn Maganlal Trust

636. CABLE TO LORD SANKEY

November 13, 1932

LORD CHANCELLOR
LONDON

PAINED READ CABLED SUMMARY YOUR APPEAL TO ME THROUGH "NEWS-LETTER".[1] CAN PRISONER MAKE GENEROUS GESTURE TOWARDS HIS JAILORS? IT IS HARDLY FAIR FOR MINISTERS AND VICEROY CRITICIZING AND MISREPRESENTING, MAYBE UNCONSCIOUSLY, MY ACTIONS OR ATTITUDE WITHOUT GIVING ME OPPORTUNITY REPUDIATION. REMEMBER I RETURNED HERE PROMOTE PEACE AS MY SPEECHES, PRIVATE LETTERS, TALKS IN LONDON AND DURING RETURN VOYAGE WILL SHOW. I HAD ACTUALLY PLANNED TOUR TO THAT END. SOUGHT INTERVIEW VICEROY AND RECEIVED HIGHLY DISCOURTEOUS REPLY ATTACHING IMPOSSIBLE CONDITIONS TO GRANT REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW.[2] REPLY AND SCARCELY VEILED PREPARATIONS OF PENDING ARREST LEFT ME NO COURSE OPEN

[1] In "Letter to an Indian Friend" published in *News-letter*, Lord Sankey had observed:

"I believe that if Gandhi dropped the weapon of civil disobedience and offered to co-operate with the British Government the whole situation would be transformed. . . .

"The problem will be solved by a united effort to secure agreement among Indians. Their refusal to assist the cause of peace is as much a weapon of war as tanks and aeroplanes. No federation can be successful if the people refuse to federate. Twice in the past few years while we were doing our utmost to arrive at an agreed solution through consultation and co-operation others endeavoured to achieve their ends by a civil disobedience movement. So long as this is your work, mine is made more difficult.

"Gandhi has power to change the situation and can do much to restore peace. Civil disobedience does not strike individuals but ordinary organized Governments and civilized society. I believe that if Gandhi made the great gesture and dropped the weapon of civil disobedience and with his followers offered to co-operate with the British Government the whole situation would be transformed." *The Statesman*, 12-11-1932

[2] For Gandhiji's correspondence with the Viceroy on the subject, *vide* Vol. XLVIII.

BUT DRAW UP FOR CONGRESS TENTATIVE PROGRAMME CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. SEQUENCE EVENTS SHOWS THAT COMPLETE PREPARATIONS INCLUDING DRAFT ORDINANCES WHILST I WAS IN LONDON WERE MADE FOR EXECUTION OF WHOLE PLAN THAT FOLLOWED. CONCLUSION IRRESISTIBLE THAT INDIAN GOVERNMENT WANTED FORCE CRISIS BY PROVOKING CONGRESS TO ACTION ANY EVENT. I CAN ESTABLISH BEFORE ANY IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL THAT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA HAD WILFULLY BROKEN SEVERAL CONDITIONS IRWIN-GANDHI PACT BEFORE MY ARREST AND COMPLETELY BROKE THEM AFTER MY ARREST. SOME OF THEM WERE OF HIGHEST PUBLIC GOOD AND NEED NEVER HAVE BEEN BROKEN. AND NOW THERE IS VIRTUAL MARTIAL LAW IN LAND. YET SPIRIT OF PEOPLE THOUGH HUSHED REMAINS UNBROKEN. DISCONTENT IS DEEPER. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND PRESS VIRTUALLY DESTROYED. NO MAN'S LIBERTY OR PROPERTY SAFE. HEAVY FINES RECOVERED FROM RELATIVES OR BY SALE OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF PRISONERS. PUNITIVE TAXES IMPOSED IN VILLAGES AND POPULATIONS FOR GUILT OF FEW AND THOUSANDS IMPRISONED AND TREATED AS COMMON FELONS. IT DOES SURPRISE ME THAT ON TOP OF THIS YOU FIND IT POSSIBLE INVITE ME DROP CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. YOU DO NOT EVEN SEEM TO REALIZE THAT THE MOVEMENT IS NOT IN MY HANDS OR THAT OF ANY SINGLE PERSON, THAT I AM NOT PERMITTED SEE COMRADES WHETHER IN PRISON OR OUTSIDE AND EVEN MESSRS SAPRU AND JAYAKAR AND RECENTLY MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI COULD NOT SEE ME TO DISCUSS WITH ME POSSIBILITY SUSPENSION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. INVITATION TO BONDSMAN TO MAKE GENEROUS GESTURE IS EQUAL TO MOCKING HIM. I WOULD LIKE YOU ALSO TO REALIZE THAT SO FAR AS I AM CONCERNED CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE UNDER GIVEN CONDITIONS IS AN ARTICLE OF FAITH WITH ME. I DO NOT BELIEVE IN USE OF BRUTE FORCE IN ANY CASE. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE THEREFORE IS FOR ME WHAT ARMED REBELLION IS FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS IN GENERAL. IN ATMOSPHERE I HAVE DESCRIBED IT IS FUTILE EXPECT LIBERAL CONSTITUTION. I WHOLLY ENDORSE YOUR PROPOSITION

THAT IT IS BETTER TO BRING MEN TOGETHER THAN KEEP THEM APART. BUT YOU DO NOT FOLLOW UP YOUR THOUGHT BY RECOGNIZING THAT UNNATURAL RELATION OF CONQUERORS AND CONQUERED MUST KEEP TWO PEOPLES APART EVEN AS PRISONERS AND THEIR KEEPERS ARE IN REALITY APART THOUGH THEY ARE PHYSICALLY PLACED NEAR ONE ANOTHER. THROUGH CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND KINDRED METHODS I AM SEEKING MIGHT AND MAIN TO BRING TWO TOGETHER BY DESTROYING UNNATURAL RELATION. I SHOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU THAT ONE SUPREME GESTURE THAT WAS POSSIBLE FOR ME EVEN AFTER MY IMPRISONMENT AND THAT WAS PERHAPS LARGELY AFTER YOUR STYLE I DID MAKE WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF MY INCARCERATION BY WRITING PERSONAL LETTER[1] TO VICEROY APPEALING TO HIM TO LET ME SEE HIM AND DISCUSS WHOLE THING AS BETWEEN MAN AND MAN AND I WROTE ADVISING SIR SAMUEL HOARE OF STEP I HAD TAKEN.[2] VICEROY NEVER EVEN ACKNOWLEDGED MY LETTER WRITTEN IN FRIENDLIEST TONE POSSIBLE. NOW THEREFORE ONLY HONOURABLE GESTURE I CAN MAKE OR IS OPEN TO ME IS TO DRINK CUP OF SUFFERING TO DREGS, IN FAIRNESS I SUGGEST THAT THIS REPLY MAY BE PUBLISHED.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3942. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 13

[1] This letter dated January 15 is not traceable.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XLIX, pp. 10-1.

[3] On recommendation of the Viceroy, the Secretary of State agreed that Gandhiji's message should not be published and that no reply should be sent. Lord Sankey was informed accordingly. —Government of India, Home Department, Political, File No. 31/95/32

637. LETTER TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

November 13, 1932

TO
THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
H. E. THE GOVERNOR
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I have seen Lord Sankey's public appeal to me. I feel that it calls for an immediate reply from me. I therefore submit the enclosed for His Excellency's approval and despatch by cable. I do not know whether this falls within His Excellency's jurisdiction or His Excellency the Viceroy's. If the latter, I request that the text of my reply to Lord Sankey be wired to H. E. the Viceroy for being cabled to the Lord Chancellor.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3868. Also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 5

638. MESSAGE TO VERRIER ELWIN

November 13, 1932

Cleanest air, cleanest water, simplest food and cleanest thinking which really means communion with God, are the four laws —the first three flowing from the fourth. Hence your English saying—simple, that is, plain living and high thinking. I should like to simplify that saying—clean thinking and clean living. Boils are a symptom of unclean living in my sense of the expression. Let this then be my message to the brothers[1] for a beginning.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 240

[1] Members of Christi Seva Sangh

639. LETTER TO M. M. ANANTA RAU

November 13, 1932

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Your argument seems to be this: *Bhagavad Gita* refers the devotee to *shastravidhi* and since Shastras support untouchability, *Bhagavad Gita* must be said to support it. The question then is what are Shastras? And I have answered that question by the answer that whatever is contrary to the main theme of the *Gita* must be rejected as being no Shastra. And since the main theme is oneness and therefore equality of all life, there is no warrant for untouchability in the *Gita*.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: C.W. 9558. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

640. LETTER TO ASHRAM BOYS AND GIRLS

November 13, 1932

DEAR BOYS AND GIRLS,

I read the names of the new office-bearers. Let me see now what work you do during this year. Do not distrust one another. Do not be rude to anybody. You should be polite even towards one another. Make the best use of every minute. Playing at the proper time also is good use of time. Reading at the time fixed for playing and playing at the time meant for study, this is bad use of time.

BAPU

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

641. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. JAMNA,

I have done my duty in regard to the use of the primus stove and don't think about the matter further.[1] You should do, courageously and without regard to my views, only what seems right to you.

There is no cause at all for worrying about my elbow.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 862. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

642. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. JAMNADAS,

You are blaming me, instead of yourself. You wrote to me after many months and are now impatient to get a reply. The fact, however, is that I did reply to your letter by return of post.

I got your second letter. You will continue to have difficulty about money, but I am sure that at the critical hour God will send you what you need.

If somehow you can improve your health, I would regard it as a great achievement. Do not be unnecessarily diffident. Why do you not rest happy after doing your best? Why do you think that you should have as much strength as you desire?

Your experience about Harijans is both interesting and painful. But that is the state of affairs everywhere. You can come whenever you like and see me in connection with this work. Now that you have started writing to me, keep it up. It is for me to judge whether what you write is foolishness or wisdom.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9467. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Following an accident, Gandhiji had advised that the use of the primus stove should be discontinued; *vide* p. 190.

643. LETTER TO GULAB

November 13, 1932

CHI. GULAB,

You should improve your Gujarati. The correct word is not *atyanja*, but *atyanta*, which means "very much".

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1732

644. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

November 13, 1932

CHI. RAMA,

I count Joshi more fortunate than Gangabehn. We need not worry about him. God will worry about him.

If you think that you should go and stay with your aunt's people for a few days after her death, you may do so.

As regards the taunt to Dhiru, you should not get angry or be upset if anybody has said that. Just as we should not take it seriously if somebody asks us to leave our own home, so also you should not take it seriously if anybody, who has known you long enough, still asks a woman like you to leave the Ashram, much less so if that is said to a child. There is no doubt, however, that nobody should utter such threats.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5339

645. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

November 13, 1932

CHI. PREMA,

This letter, too, will be a short one. These days most of my time is taken up by Harijan friends.

Kamalabai[1], who has recently joined the Ashram, complains that she can get no time to give to her child or to reading. See what you can do about this.

[1] Wife of a khadi worker from Maharashtra

I must congratulate you on your having been able to digest the gum confection. What was the quantity? What were the other ingredients?

I fully realize the difficulty of your task. God will protect you and also give you the necessary strength.

Now that you have discovered the cause of your disease, you should find the remedy too.

You ask me about my feelings, but you can learn nothing about them. No one can analyse his own feelings.

When we seem unable to follow a principle in life, we should conclude that we have not understood the principle correctly. A principle which is correct ought to be capable of being followed in life. Of course no principle can be perfectly acted upon. But a way of life which does not conform to a principle as nearly as possible is insincere and we should avoid it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10310. Also C.W. 6749. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

646. LETTER TO GAJANAN V. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. GAJANAN,

I was glad to read what you wrote about the paintings. You should get over your fever as quickly as you can. I would advise you to go either to Vijapur or Rajkot. But first you should write to the people there. If going to either of the two places is not practicable, you may go to whichever place you like, but get well quickly. I like your idea of going somewhere. You may go even to Wardha.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 310. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

647. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. PANDITJI,

Bhangis and Chamars do not keep clean because we have never so much as looked at them. We cannot now tell them: "Learn to be clean and then we will accept you." Instead, we should tell them this: "Come, we will embrace you and teach you rules of cleanliness, hygiene, etc." There is no exaggeration whatever in what I am saying when I think of our cruelty towards Harijans and our indifference towards their welfare, I wonder through whose power of goodness Hinduism is still living. If we fail to atone for this sin, I clearly see the destruction of Hinduism.

BAPU

[PS.]

The leaves of the *Bhajanavali* are getting loose. But I have no time. I will see, however.

From Gujarati: C.W. 219. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

648. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA N. KHARE

November 13, 1932

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I got your letter. It was good that you went and stayed with your maternal uncle. If you had stayed for some time longer, perhaps you would have benefited still more. I hope you will now rapidly regain your strength.

Did you ask Premabehn's forgiveness? Has she forgiven you?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 300. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn N. Khare

649. LETTER TO RATILAL P. MEHTA

November 13, 1932

CHI. RATILAL,

I was glad to see your letter. I have often told you that God protects you. Don't mind the theft. Do not replace the articles which have been stolen. If we have too many things with us, we may even lose some through theft.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8764. Also C.W. 1048. Courtesy: Champabehn Mehta

650. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

November 13, 1932

CHI. NARMADA,

This time your handwriting is much better. You should leave some space at the top before commencing the letter. Where was your sister when she left? How old is she?

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 2767. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

651. LETTER TO SULOCHANA

November 13, 1932

CHI, SULOCHANA,

Your report of work is good, and so is the handwriting. You did not state how much yarn you spun on the *takli*.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1745

652. A LETTER[1]

November 13, 1932

You are as dear to me as Arun, and I would have admitted you to the Ashram if that were possible. Just now, however, I would arrange for your admission in the Ashram for handicapped children in Calcutta if you agreed to go there.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 241

653. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

November 13, 1932

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

I was glad to get your letter. You must be getting all the news from this end. Give me an account of your activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6541

654. LETTER TO KESHORAM TANDON

November 13, 1932

BHAI KESHORAM TANDON,

I have your letter. The eradication of untouchability does not necessarily imply inter-dining and intermarriage.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHRI KESHORAM TANDON
JAMUNA COAL TRADING CO.
FARUKHABAD, U.P.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5057

[1] The addressee was a Muslim youth.

CWMG - II

655. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[Before *November 13*]/*14, 1932*[1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on the usual day of the week. I got another small packet too. You will find with this a letter for Champa. Read it before you pass it on to her, for it contains my views on thefts and so, if you read it, I need not write the same thing again. You should explain my advice to others too, for I have repeated it every time there has been a theft. It is also necessary that you should glance through what I have advised Champa concerning her duty.

In the existing circumstances, I will not include your name among the trustees. I will never knowingly take any step which will put you in an embarrassing position. Our ideal is to do a duty which comes to us unsought. We have no other interest. In any case, we should never seek a position of authority or influence for its own sake.

If you remember, and if available, please send some oranges and *mosambis* from there as samples with anybody who may be coming here. I am very happy though the trees yield only a few. I do not mind the expenditure on trees and other farming activities. It is possible that some of the expenditure was unnecessary, but my impression is that on the whole it was all right.

I hope you have written to Prabhudas and made the necessary inquiries for Navin.

Damodar should have informed you that he had not gone to the bungalow to sleep at night.

If you feel that it is impossible to influence the Chharas[2] go and see Mavalankar and do whatever is possible. In the last resort, we can of course endure the present state of things.

I hope that Shelat's children have recovered. I know from a letter of Chhaganlal Joshi that Shelat has got a book entitled *Flowers of St. Francis*. If he has it, get it from him and send it to

[1] The letter, obviously begun before November 13, was continued on November 13 and completed on November 14.

[2] An ex-criminal tribe of Central Gujarat

me with somebody who may be coming here. Its value lies in the fact that it was a loving gift from somebody.

I understand what you say about Balbhadra.

I got a postcard from Ramji, in which he says that, after reading my recent statements about untouchability, he wished to come and see me. I am sure he will also take the opportunity to pour out his complaints. Even then, it seems to me that it will be good to let him come here once. Moreover, he will be permitted to see me whenever he comes.

As regards the *rach* and heddle which we require for weaving khadi from fine yarn, I have just remembered that we had these implements which were made for weaving khadi from very fine yarn. We had got them from Adamji Miankhan. I also remember that Maganlal had made a number of heddles for weaving khadi from coarse yarn by breaking up this same heddle. In any case, we had quite a large number of heddles. They are probably lying in some corner among old discarded things. Ask somebody to search for them and, if you cannot get them inquire at Miankhan's place. They may be able to find another heddle of that type, or at any rate get one manufactured. They were four brothers, Adamji, Gulam Husain, Chandabhai, and one more whose name I do not recollect. Of these Adamji is dead, Gulam Husain lives mostly in Natal and Chandabhai divides his time between Natal and Ahmedabad. Chhaganlal knows him personally. Even if none of you knows his address in Ahmedabad, Chhaganlal is sure to know it. Most probably his house is in Vohravad in Kalupur and he has also a bungalow near Ellis Bridge. The elder Kusum is your neighbour. Try to get some news about her if you can. And also go and see her if any of you is permitted to do so, and send her books, etc., if she wants them.

Rice and potatoes are like poison for Tilakam. Moreover, both contain pure starch. Then how can he feel energetic? Starch does not make one energetic, on the contrary it produces acidity in the stomach. Tilakam should only drink milk, as much as he can digest, and eat fruit and green vegetables. After he is able to digest these things, he can add bread.

Do what you think proper about Jethalal. As soon as Purushottam feels constipated, you should understand that the trouble has started. Trying city water will most probably not help him. It would be much better for him to drink the Ashram water itself after boiling it. To cure the weakness of his bowels, *pranayama* exercises and light massage of the abdomen are necessary.

If Kusum herself can live cheerfully in the Ashram and follow the three important rules which I have suggested, I would be relieved of my fear and worry on her account irrespective of what the final result might be.

Why did not Raojibhai write the revised letter?

So you explained to Kasumba, with logical arguments, that by eating in your company she had lost caste. If a person thus states the plain truth, instead of deceiving himself or anybody else, he would enjoy much greater peace of mind and also earn greater merit.

The mendicant could have been the cause of so much fuss only in the Ashram. Even if we do not discover the true meaning of the Vedas, I am sure we shall be able to call ourselves *vedias*[1].

It is a mercy that in this world things people do are more foolish than wicked. You know this very well indeed, otherwise you would have had to be sent to an asylum long ago.

I have not yet read Parasram's letter, but even without reading it, after reading your letter and your recommendation, I give my consent for giving him the things which he has asked for.

Sunday Afternoon, November 13, 1932

[PS.]

I give to the hand as much rest as it needs. My weight has reached 102 pounds this week. But my strength has not increased to the same extent.

I hope my articles do not upset people there. It is an occasion for rejoicing. I will ask Rajaji about Ba. Urmiladevi is certain to go there.

Read my letter to Liladhar.

Morning, Silence Day [*November 14, 1932*]

[PPS.]

Vinoba's explanation of the importance of the *takli* is worth pondering over by everybody. He should learn from Bhau the art of spinning on it.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. I, pp. 501-4. Also C.W. 8268. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Pedants

656. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–V

November 14, 1932

In this fifth statement to the Press, in which I would like to express my gratefulness for the publicity they are giving to my statements and movement generally, I want to summarize a part of what I said last week to Sjt. Rajbhoj and his friends,[1] who met me to discuss practically the whole movement.

One of their questions related to what Harijans could do in order to help the movement. They could do a great deal in the direction. They could anticipate the charges brought against them in justification of the refusal of some caste Hindus to associate with them on terms of absolute equality. I have already said in emphatic language that the caste Hindus are wholly to blame for the undoubtedly deplorable condition of the vast mass of Harijans and that the improvement will follow the removal of untouchability as a matter of course. It should never be made a condition of removal. Nevertheless, it is the obvious duty of Harijan workers to carry on internal reform to the extent it is possible even in the face of the existing state of things.

Harijan workers should therefore devote all their energy to:

(1) the promotion of cleanliness and hygiene among Harijans,

(2) to improve the method of carrying on what are known as unclean occupations, such as scavenging and tanning,

(3) giving up of carrion and beef, if not meat altogether,

(4) giving up of intoxicating liquors,

(5) inducing parents to send their children to day-schools wherever they are available and parents themselves to attend night schools wherever such are opened, and

(6) abolition of untouchability among themselves.

Let me go through the items to indicate what is meant by them. A daily bath is necessary at least in our climate, and clean clothes are necessary under all climates. I know that water is not easily available in Harijan quarters. They have, as a rule, no access to public wells and tanks, and they are too poor to afford a change of clothing. It is not generally realized that even a *lota*-full

[1] *Vide* pp. 404-7.

of water can give one a clean bath. It is taken by thoroughly wetting a clean towel and vigorously rubbing the body, including the head, all over, and then wiping with a dry towel. If the bath is taken daily, the wet towel after wringing out all water from it can serve the purpose of drying the body. In this climate again, the same clothes can be easily washed and dried there and then, whilst one has merely the *langoti* on.

I know there is nothing new in what I am saying, and yet I have been obliged to explain these very elementary things to hundreds of workers. Even graduates have been found to be ignorant of these elementary aids to hygiene as to the improved method of scavenging. Selfish, ignorant caste men make it well-nigh impossible to remove human remains in a decent manner. The closets, because of the untouchability, are unclean beyond description. They are dark and ill-ventilated and so constructed that only a portion is somewhat capable of being cleaned and that too under filthy conditions. To use these closets is a positive daily descent to Hell and but for the beneficent climate many more thousands than already do will find an early cremation. Owing to the superstitious refusal to see one's own faeces and to permit the untouchables or themselves to clean the interior of the closet, the Harijans who have to perform the very necessary social service can even in the existing unfavourable circumstances at least have their bath immediately after the cleaning is done and use plenty of dry earth for cleaning instead of just a little straw that they use.

Being an expert scavenger that I claim to be, I could show many very cheap, efficient and thoroughly clean methods of performing this service, especially if the villagers and city people would help, but I cannot deal with this interesting subject in this cursory statement. The curious may look up my writings on sanitation in general, and village sanitation in particular. Scavengers should wear a professional dress, while they are doing the cleaning work. Every employer or a group of employers can supply such a dress for his or their scavengers.

Clean tanning is a far more difficult proposition. Our tanners do not know the modern method of skinning carcases nor of tanning. Tanning I have here used in a comprehensive sense. The so-called higher classes having criminally neglected this useful body of their co-religionists and fellow-countrymen, the whole of the process from the carrying of the carcase to the dressing of the hide is done in a crude manner resulting in the loss to the country of untold wealth and the production of inferior hide.

The late Madhusudan Das,[1] who was a great philanthropist and had himself learnt the modern process of tanning, had prepared statistics to show what the country was losing annually owing to the superstition of untouchability masquerading under the name of religion. Harijan workers can learn the modern method and acquaint the tanners with it in so far as it is practicable. The scavengers should be taught resolutely not to accept the remains of the householder's daily food which is virtually thrown at them in the cruellest manner possible. Years of habit have dulled the aesthetic sense of the scavengers and they see nothing wrong in eating the remains of another man's dishes. They crave for what they regard as dainties from their employers' dishes. I have known Bhangis having removed their children from school because the latter were taught not to touch these leavings and be satisfied with the *jowar* or the *bajri* bread baked in their homes.

Tanners should be induced to give up carrion and beef. As a vegetarian, I would like Harijans to give up, as many have done, meat altogether, but if they are not ready for this reform they should be taught to give up carrion as being unhygienic, besides being taboo by the rest of mankind and beef as being forbidden in Hinduism. I know that carrion is part of the price they get for removing the carcases. Dr. Ambedkar told me that in some places villagers beat those who had given up carrion, telling them it was their religion to eat it. The fact was that they were afraid that if the tanners gave up carrion-eating they would demand an equivalent price or give up carrying dead cattle. Whatever the difficulty, carrion and beef eating must be given up. That one self-restraint will at once raise the Harijans in the estimation of the caste men and make the task of caste reformers comparatively easy in the campaign against untouchability.

Items four and five do not call for any remarks. They are self-explained.

The last item is abolition of untouchability among untouchables themselves. This is an urgent need. Removal of untouchability will become most difficult if this double untouchability is not removed with one sweep. It is an uphill task for Harijan reformers. But if they will realize that this movement is predominantly religious and is designed to purge Hinduism of the uncleanness that has crept into it, they will have the necessary courage and self-confidence to carry out the great reform.

[1] In fact, Madhusudan Das was not dead. Gandhiji came to know of his mistake later from a member of the Ashram and at once apologized to Madhusudan Das. *Vide* Vol. LII, "Telegram to Madhusudan Das", 18-11-1932.

It is needless for me to stress the point that workers in such a movement must be selfless and pure in character. I have given here a constructive programme that should satisfy the most ambitious reformer among Harijans and occupy the whole of his time and energy. But there are one or two things he and the Harijans may not do during this period of grace. At any rate, no Harijan need fast against anyone nor need satyagraha be offered by them. Let them watch the caste Hindus who are on their trial and see what they do to remove the bar that separates the Harijans from them. Let them not engage in quarrels with local caste-Hindus. Their behaviour should be at all times courteous and dignified, much more so at this time. Religion can only be vindicated by self-suffering, never by violence done to the oppressors though there may be many things they may get by force. Their credit will lie in getting their rights by the conversion of caste Hindus and today they have ample reason for deriving hope from the knowledge that there are tens of thousands of caste Hindus who have a lively sense of their guilt and are straining every nerve to do reparation to Harijans. Let them have perfect confidence in the absolute justice of their cause and in the ability of self-suffering to win it.

In the next statement[1] I must give my reply to caste men who have asked what they can do to help the movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-11-1932

657. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ[2]

November 14, 1932

JAMNALAL BAJAJ,
PRISONER, DHULIA JAIL

GET COMPLETE REPORT FROM DR. MODI. HE SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY CALLED TO EXAMINE YOU, SO THAT A DEFINITE DIAGNOSIS CAN BE MADE. HOW IS YOUR COUGH ?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad, p. 80

[1] *Vide* pp. 434-6.
[2] The original English text of the telegram is not available.

658. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

Morning, Silence Day, November 14, 1932

CHI. BHAU,

I am afraid I am writing this letter very late, as you will get it twelve days after the fast was ended. I wrote to you in my previous letter what food you should eat. You may make a few changes in it to suit your constitution. The fast may be said to have succeeded only if you pass stool naturally without enema in six or seven days or before that, feel sufficiently hungry, can easily digest simple food, put on weight and also regain your strength. If, however, you do not pass stool without enema, then you should take a purgative. Castor oil is very good. Take about two tea-spoonfuls of it immediately after brushing your teeth in the morning. If you put a little salt in the mouth, then swallow the castor oil and then again lick some salt, you will not feel the unpleasant flavour of castor oil. After this, you are sure to pass stool without taking enema. If you do not, you may conclude that your bowels are still not clear. You may, in that case, fast again after a few days when you are strong enough. But this is the only method of curing constipation.

I fully believe in the importance of *takli* explained by Vinoba in his letter. I have no doubt whatever that a person who spins on the *takli* in a spirit of service and as *yajna* will attain deliverance.

BAPU

[PS.]

Can you teach your method of spinning on a *takli* by explaining it in a letter? To how many persons are you teaching it at present?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6742. Also C.W. 4485. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

CWMG - DL

659. LETTER TO M. G. BHANDARI

November 14, 1932

DEAR MAJOR BHANDARI,

You know by now the late Dr. Mehta about whom I received so many telegrams when he died recently.[1] I am trying to look after his affairs as far as possible from here. I have now to advise the members of Dr. Mehta's family about the disposal of the estate he has left behind him. He was a diamond merchant and landed proprietor in Rangoon where he had settled many years ago. It is necessary for me to see some or all of those in the enclosed list[2] in connection with his affairs. None of them has ever been engaged in politics, and with the exception of two the rest have businesses in Burma. As you are aware, before the fast I had dropped receiving weekly visits altogether. After the fast I have occasionally had such visits chiefly from my wife and children. But with reference to the enclosed list it might be necessary for me to see those who will come continually from day to day till the matter is settled. I trust that the Government will have no objection to my request being granted as early as possible.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40) (2), Pt. I, p. 339. Also G.N. 3869

660. LETTER TO KUNHAPPA

November 14, 1932

You have done well in sending your letter and also copies of letters and telegrams passed between the Zamorin and Kelappan. Your letter and the enclosures have been most valuable to me. The fast if it has to come won't be against the Zamorin. If the vast mass of *Savarna* Hindus are really in favour of the tem-

[1] Dr. Pranjivan Mehta died in Rangoon on August 3.
[2] This is not available.
[3] The request was granted by the Government.

ple being opened to the *Avarnas*, do you not feel that the temple cannot be closed against them even by the Zamorin? It is not his property. It should be remembered that he does not make any claim himself and admits that he is only a trustee. And let us assume for the moment that he is a trustee only for the *Savarna* Hindus, who alone are the temple-goers. Then the key to the temple is in their hands and the Zamorin holds the key for them. Then if the *Savarnas* are in earnest, there are many ways of their showing their wish in unmistakable terms. Has an attempt ever been made to take a referendum of all the *Savarnas*, men and women, making use of the temple? If the position is not as I imagine it to be, and if the *Savarnas* have no rights, if the trust is not held for them, I should then be informed of the correct position. It would then be time for you to ask me to revise my decision. If, for instance, the temple is the private property of the Zamorin, if in other words he could shut the doors of the temple against anybody entering it, if he is so willed, the whole of the agitation for opening Guruvayur to the Harijans was wrong from the commencement and we have to retrace our steps. Let all the workers examine the position from this viewpoint. If a mistake has been made there need be no shame in an open confession.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 244-5

661. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

November 14, 1932

MY DEAR RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter. Here is the corrected copy of my answers.[1] I have not made any corrections in your questions. Some questions being repetitious may be dropped.

I hope you got my previous letter which contains the message you want.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 796

[1] *Vide* pp. 404-7.

662. A LETTER[1]

November 14, 1932

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

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 242

663. A LETTER[2]

November 14, 1932

I am glad you realize that poverty is the common lot of millions. The real way to pray to Lord Krishna is to do in His name some little service to those who are less fortunate than ourselves; and when we show the spirit of service in daily life, unbelieving neighbours will begin to believe in God. You can do untouchability work by yourself going among untouchables and rendering such service as is possible to them as if they were members of our own family. If you do not know Hindi, you should quickly learn it.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 243

664. STATEMENT ON UNTOUCHABILITY–VI

November 15, 1932

If, among the Harijans, Sjt. Rajbhoj has yet been the only one to have asked me what Harijans might do to advance the movement, I have scores of letters from all parts of India, from caste Hindus, both men and women, students and others, inquiring in what way they can help without interfering with their other preoccupations; and since anti-untouchability is a movement, as applied to the masses, of merely change of heart and

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, had asked: "Do we not treat others—such as Christians, etc.—also as untouchables?"

[2] The addressee, a young boy not identified in the source, had asked in what way he could do service.

changing their attitude towards Harijans, the vast majority of the caste Hindus do not need to interrupt their daily activities in order to serve the Harijans.

The first thing is for everyone to understand the implications of the removal of untouchability in his or her own life, and if the answer is that he or she has not only no objection to, but is desirous of, seeing them entering public temples, using public places, such as schools, serais, roads, hospitals, dispensaries and the like, in short, to Harijans being put precisely on the same footing as themselves religiously, socially, economically and politically, he or she has personally taken the full step.

But that is not all that the questioners want or all that I should be satisfied with. Having gone so far, they want to know what more they can do in the furtherance of the cause. Such inquirers need not extend their activities beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Let them canvass the opinion of those with whom they come in daily contact, and if the former are not convinced of the necessity of removal of untouchability, they should, if they have critically studied the movement, endeavour to convince their neighbours or, if they are not competent, they should procure the necessary literature, supply them with it and put them in touch with those full-time workers who are specially qualified for such propaganda work. If they find that their neighbourhood is not touched by the spirit of the movement, and if they have any influence, they should arrange public lectures and demonstrations. So much for the work among caste Hindus.

But the real work that this large body of men and women can do is undoubtedly among the Harijans. Those caste Hindus who have studied my fifth statement could not fail to have noticed that there is a vast amount of silent and effective service to be rendered by caste Hindus without much expenditure of time, energy or money. Caste Hindus can effectively supplement the effort of Harijan workers in inculcating habits of cleanliness and by procuring facilities for having easy access to the required water supply. They can find out public wells and tanks situated near Harijan quarters and canvass the opinion of caste Hindus who may be using such wells or tanks, pointing out to them that Harijans have a legal right to the use of all such public services. And they can, at the same time, see to it that when the consent of caste Hindus has been secured for the use by Harijans of these services, the latter use them in a manner not offensive to the former.

As to scavenging, they can visit the owners of houses served by Harijans in their neighbourhood and explain to them the neces-

sity of making it easy for Harijans to do the cleaning work in a hygienic manner. To this end, it would be naturally necessary for them to study the scientific method of constructing closets and disposing of night-soil. They can also procure from the householders special dresses to be supplied to the scavengers and make the Harijans feel by unhesitatingly doing the scavenging themselves that there is nothing low or undignified about rendering such service. Such workers should also carry on propaganda against caste men giving to their scavengers leavings from their daily food and, where they are ill-paid, persuading the employers to pay them a decent wage.

As to tanning, not much help can be rendered, unless someone of such voluntary leisure-time workers has humanity and enthusiasm enough to study the hygienic method of skinning carcases and having done so, will spread the knowledge among tanners.

They certainly can do one thing. They can find out the custom about the disposal of such carcases and see that the tanners are assured of a proper wage for the service they rendered. Those who have capacity and time can conduct day or night schools, take Harijan children for picnics and sightseeing on holidays or whenever an opportunity occurs, visit Harijans in their own homes, procure medical aid where necessary and generally let them feel that a new page has been opened in their lives and that they need no longer regard themselves as the neglected and despised portion of Hindu humanity.

All that I have described can be most easily and efficiently done by the student world. If this work is done with silent zeal, determination and intelligence by a large body of men and women, I have no doubt that we shall have taken many steps in our progress towards the goal, and it would be found too that there are more things than I have described that require attention. I have but chosen a few of the many things that have come under my observation in the course of my journeyings.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-11-1932

665. TELEGRAM TO FEROZECHAND[1]

November 15, 1932

HOPE EVERYONE HONOURING LALAJI'S MEMORY WILL DO SOMETHING REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 900(40)(3), Pt. III, p. 367

666. TELEGRAM TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*November 15, 1932*][2]

MANIBEHN PATEL
PRISONER CENTRAL PRISON
BELGAUM

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

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 55

667. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

November 15, 1932

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

Sjt. Dahyabhai is the only son of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He has been suffering from fever for the last eight days. Doctors have now pronounced it to be typhoid. It is necessary to inform his sister Manibehn Patel who is in the Central Prison, Belgaum, of Dahyabhai's illness from day to day. I enclose draft of a telegram to be sent to her. I hope you will kindly send it with instructions to the Superintendent to deliver it to Manibehn Patel and

[1] Of Lahore
[2] *Vide* the following item.

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to receive from her whatever message she wishes to give. And could I, whilst the fever lasts, give her detailed information from day to day and receive from her whatever messages she might have to give in reply to the daily report? My reason for wishing her to send even a daily postcard is to pass it on to the patient. It must cheer him to know that his only sister is being kept informed of the progress of his illness and that she sends him messages of love.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(4), Pt. II, p. 55

668. LETTER TO U. GOPALA MENON[1]

[*November 15, 1932*][2]

Anyway, if there is legal difficulty we must patiently create public opinion that would demand even legislative interference. You have therefore to mobilize *Savarna* opinion in favour of the opening of the Guruvayur temple. Do not mix up the issue by raising the cry of general entry into all temples. Mr. Kelappan's fast[3] was directed to the opening of the Guruvayur temple and if it has to be resumed, it must be restricted to that purpose. If that temple is opened it will be only a question of time for other temples also to be opened, but we must be true to ourselves. There should be no abuse hurled at the Zamorin. Combat his position by all means when that is necessary. I have read his statement. If Kelappan has been discourteous, he should apologize. But in my opinion, the Zamorin is wrong in saying that his assurance was cancelled by Mr. Kelappan's discourtesy.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-11-1932

[1] President, Anti-untouchability League, Travancore
[2] From "Diary, 1932"
[3] The fast, which was begun on September 20, ended on October 2.

669. A LETTER[1]

November 15, 1932

My whole heart goes out to you and your wife. I am quite clear in my mind as to the course you have to follow. You should forget the man and the deed. God alone punishes and rewards. It was open to you, as I suppose it is even now, to prosecute the offender. But that is clearly not what you intend to do. After all he was not in his senses. Who knows that some day he may not learn the lesson and become a better man? If an opportunity offers for you to do a good turn to him you will not omit to do it. You should console your wife and induce her to forget the incident. Your daughter should not even be allowed to remember the incident. I suppose she has no knowledge of what was attempted to be done to her. But even if she has, she should be brought up so as to forget it altogether.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 245-6

670. LETTER TO VASANTRAM SHASTRI

November 15, 1932

According to me, I am the same man that I was in 1921. I hope, though, that I have progressed further in the same direction. Nothing in this world remains fixed; things either progress or decline. I did not write about people whom you imagine to be wicked. The number of people who may be described as wicked is always small. I wrote about the countless millions. They may be ignorant and stupid, but they are not wicked. If you reflect more deeply, you cannot but be convinced of this. I should like you to explain more clearly what you mean by oppression.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 247

[1] The addressee, not identified in the source, had written to Gandhiji that an acquaintance of the family, 50 years of age, had, while drunk, tried to commit rape on his, the addressee's, six-year-old daughter, which had caused much distress to himself and his wife and asked Gandhiji's advice as to what he ought to do.

671. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

November 15, 1932

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

About your criticism of the Yeravda Pact we shall talk when we meet. I shall not waste time over it just now. What Thakkar Bapa writes about Patna is true about many other places too. We should write to local people about it. Why should not the municipality take up this work? The League should bring out a bulletin or journal or newspaper every fortnight or every week and make all these horrible things public.[1] However poor we may be, no municipality is so poor as to be unable to rectify such wrongs. I wrote to Mathuradas and to Ambalal too.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 7904. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

672. DIARY, 1932[3]

(1-9-1932 to 15-11-1932)

SEPTEMBER 1, THURSDAY, YERAVDA MANDIR[4]

Spun 238 rounds. Letters—Vasukaka, Mira, Brijkrishna, Manekbai, Anasuyabehn + Shankerlal.

SEPTEMBER 2, FRIDAY

Spun 224 rounds. Letters—Champa, Pyare Ali, Tilakam, Nirmala Mashruwala, Devdas, Taramati + Ramachandra, Prasad + Dilip. Met Joshi, Raman Gandhi and Agashe. Dahyabhai came to see Vallabhbhai. The Collector paid a visit.

[1] Following Gandhiji's suggestion, Birla planned to bring out a weekly from January 1933 and had requested him for an article for the first issue.

[2] *Vide* pp. 395-6. The letter to Mathuradas is not available.

[3] Continued from Vol. L

[4] This place-name is not repeated in subsequent entries. Gandhiji was arrested on January 4, 1932, and released on May 8, 1933.

SEPTEMBER 3, SATURDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters—Suresh Banerji, Maneklal, Khimchand.

SEPTEMBER 4, SUNDAY

Spun 250 rounds.

SEPTEMBER 5, MONDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—The Ashram (47–"What Women Should Do in a Difficult Situation") Manilal + Gulab + Tilak + Dhiru, Neelam, Satyavati Chidamber, Mohanlal Bhatt, Umashankar Srivastava, Nagari Pracharini, Pyare Ali + Amina + Hamida + Qureshi, Govinddas, Chhaganlal Mehta, Polak, Manilal Kothari. Sent Narandas's letter to Ramdas. Received honey, etc., from Lala Hansraj. A basket of *mosambis* arrived yesterday from Padmaja.

SEPTEMBER 6, TUESDAY

Spun 230 rounds. Letters—Karsandas, Kaikhushru Kanga, Padmaja, Baburam, Santaram, Lily, Nanalal, Raihana. Dalal came and examined my denture.

SEPTEMBER 7, WEDNESDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—Lala Hansraj, Devdas + Dr. Das Gupta. Dr. Dalal came again to examine the denture. Corrected the lower one slightly and brought it back. Today it is Parsi *Navroz*[1]. Merne came in the evening and took a vow to abjure drink. He has promised to write to me after a few days from outside. Today ate the jail *rotli* made of wheat.

SEPTEMBER 8, THURSDAY

Spun [...][2] Letters—Kamala Nehru, Krishnadas, Ramsharan Sinh, Col. Doyle (about bread). Another letter to Col. Doyle regarding the 20th. Long talk with him about Government's decision. Answered the point raised by him. Talking about bread he said that those who were used to bread would not have any difficulty. Gave me news of Kaka and of Ba. Mahadev showed today some signs of fever—had gone to help in making bread.

[1] New Year

[2] The figure has been left out in the source.

SEPTEMBER 9, FRIDAY

Spun 213 rounds. Letters—Khimchand, Dinkar, Prabhashankar + Balwant, Mathuradas Trikumji, Taramati, Nirmala Mashruwala, Narandas. Received and answered MacDonald's letter. Wrote to Doyle. Today ate brown bread made here. Asked for plums and dates. The Major had brought MacDonald's letter. Mahadev has slight fever.

SEPTEMBER 10, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters—Govind Ballabh Pant, Bidhan Roy. Yesterday plums worth Rs. 4 arrived. Did not at all like this, but thought I must accept them. Ate 20 in all in the morning and the evening.

SEPTEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Spun 248 rounds. Spent the day in writing letters to the Ashram.

SEPTEMBER 12, MONDAY

Spun 236 rounds. Letters—The Ashram (including "Working and Thinking [–II]"), Pyare Ali, Jamshed Mehta, Sarojini Devi. Kateli today took Mahadev along to persuade some of those on fast, to give it up. Has not succeeded so far. Prepared a draft of the appeal concerning the fast of the 20th.

SEPTEMBER 13, TUESDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Ratilal Desai + Mani + Jeki+ Manekbai, Prabhashankar, Devdas. Correspondence about the fast published. Met Naidu, who was on fast—he gave up the fast. Cable from and to Andrews.

SEPTEMBER 14, WEDNESDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Devdas, Mohanlal Bhatt, Narandas, Ba. Cable to Manekbai,[letter to] Bhaktibehn. Cables from Heath and others arrived. The Major informed me that the cable to Andrews handed over yesterday was dispatched today.

SEPTEMBER 15, THURSDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters—Parachure Shastri (four volumes of Vivekananda's works), Savitri Standenath, Ghanshyamdas, Vithal, Kamakoti, Gurudev. Telegrams from Raja and Ghan-

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shyamdas—replied to them. Dr. Dalal came and cleaned the denture. Today the bread was spoiled.

SEPTEMBER 16, FRIDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Nargis, Lily, Saraladevi, Anasuyabehn, Raihana, Mira, Radha, Romain Rolland, Muriel, Verrier, Polak, Privat, Ansari, Agatha Harrison. Today a number of telegrams arrived about the fast. Sent telegrams in reply to Sapru's, Jamshed Mehta's and Satis Babu's. Woke up at 2 in the morning, left bed at 3 o'clock and drafted a public statement and handed it over to the Major for publication. Had talks with Ramdas and Surendra for about two hours and later with Khadilkar. Read in the evening that I might be released, subject to certain conditions, on starting the fast. Telegraphed to say that I would not agree to be released in that way.

SEPTEMBER 17, SATURDAY

Spun 206 rounds. Letters—Qureshi, Madhukanta, Narayanrao, Mate, Gosibehn. Today I drew up draft of agreement between caste Hindus and untouchables as I should like to have it. Vallabhbhai has fever. Dr. Dalal came and examined the denture.

SEPTEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Spun 240 rounds. Letters—Sarojini Naidu, Padmaja, Darbari Sadhu. Vallabhbhai had slight fever today too. Ghanshyamdas, Purushottamdas, Chunilal and Mathuradas came in the evening. We talked for over an hour. I explained what I had to say through written notes.

SEPTEMBER 19, MONDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters—Nanabhai Mashruwala, Rajbahadurlal, Gora, Raja, Mary Barr, Manilal Gandhi, Madhavdas + Krishna, Maganlal Mehta, Dr. Muthu, Taramati, Hansa Mehta, Shankar Kalelkar, Lakshmi (Raja's), Christ Seva Sangh, the Ashram (60 letters). Sir Purushottamdas, Mathuradas, Chimanlal, Ghanshyamdas called. We talked for two hours. Devdas came in the evening. Today did not take milk, took almonds instead.

SEPTEMBER 20, TUESDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters—Narandas + Punjabhai, Trivedi, Nariman, Rajbhoj, Kaka, Mira, Devdhar, Gurudev, Shinde. Sent telegrams or cables to the following—Ambalal, Horace,

Agatha, Urmila, Kasi Krishnacharya, Ranikaki's, Krishnadas, Indians of Taiping, Ramniklal Desai, Aparna, Gurudev, Hari Singh. Col. Doyle handed to me the Government's decision. Met reporters, Pyarelal, Brijkrishna, Sarojini. At 12 o'clock entered the fiery ordeal with Raihana's devotional songs. Mahadev recited the *Gita*.

SEPTEMBER 21, WEDNESDAY

Spun 153 rounds. Letters—Mathuradas, Kishorelal, Jairamdas, Mani, Fulchand, Jamnalal, Narahari. Cable to Polak. Talk with Sarojini, Sapru, Jayakar, Raja, Rajenbabu, Ghanshyamdas and others. Rajbhoj came, accompanied by Mate and others. Padmaja came to see me.

SEPTEMBER 22, THURSDAY

Spun 195 rounds. Letters—Nargisbehn, Taramati.

SEPTEMBER 23–29, FRIDAY–THURSDAY

Could not write the diary all these days. It is being written on the morning of the 30th. The yarn spun during this period was: 23rd–60, 24th–43, 25th–60, 26th–60, 27th–108. The mind was full of peace during these days. Was suffering acute physical discomfort when I broke the fast on the 26th. There was a stream of visitors. Was much pleased by Gurudev's visit. Kelappan's fast weighed on the mind all the time, and is still doing so. During fast, I started spinning on Keshu's new spinning-wheel from 26th. The interviews were stopped on the 29th. Only Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas can now see me about *Antyaja* work. Have written a strong letter about this. Ba and Sarojini were taken away in the evening. Devdas visited me at night. Was weighed on Wednesday and stood at 95. It was 93.5 on Monday. Before the fast, it was 101.

SEPTEMBER 30, FRIDAY

Spun 235 rounds. Wrote a good many letters to Europe. Read part of the mail. Sat up for quite some time. Walked a few paces. Had a natural motion in the evening. Ba was released today and then was granted permission to visit me by day. Just as I wrote the English letters in the morning, I wrote inland letters till 8 in the evening.

OCTOBER 1, SATURDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Birla, David, Anandshankar, K. Munshi, Jamshed Mehta, Manmohan Gandhi, Krishna

Nair, Krishnadas, Avantikabai, Mira. Cable to Ansari. Letters to Kingsley (*Chicago Tribune*), Miss Petersen. Telegrams to Kelappan and Madhavan Nair. Ghanshyamdas and Mathuradas Vassanji came at 12 o'clock. They stayed till 4 o'clock. Ba remained the whole day.

OCTOBER 2, SUNDAY

Spun 219 rounds. Letters—Maithilisharan, Bhikshu Balchandracharya, Chaman Kavi, Hemprabha, Kamalnayan, Ali Hassan, Paul, Prabhashankar, Hassan Imam's children, Taramati, Miss Petersen, Ramdas. On being weighed today, I stood at 100, Vallabhbhai at 140 and Mahadev at 143.

OCTOBER 3, MONDAY

Spun 247 rounds. Letters—Deepsinhji, Maganlal Velji, Sohanlal Sharma, Dhirajram Shastri, Gyanchand Verma, Joglekar, Khimchand, Phadke, Manilal Patel, Satyananda Bose, Kovadkar, Kesarimal Agrawal, Mate, Manekbai Mehta, Mulchand Parekh. Telegram to Motilal Roy. The above were despatched yesterday. Those being sent today—letters to Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Fulchand Bapuji, Hari-ichchha, 50 letters to the Ashram. Telegrams to Kelappan, the Zamorin and Rangaswami. Telegram to Kewalram Gidumal about Kikibehn. Letters to Nirmala Mashruwala, Kewalram + Kikibehn, Zohra, Atmaram Prabhashankar Bhatt, Kanbivad, Naran Ghughari Delo. Devdas came after getting Hudson's permission.

OCTOBER 4, TUESDAY

Spun 250 rounds. Letters—Keki Dariyasha, Bartlett, Hoyland, Samuel, Joan Parsons, Scott Henderson, Motilal Roy, Bernard, Chandrashankar Pandya, Shankerlal, Umiyapati, Nandini, Bal Mandir—Khar, Joseph, Govinddas, Shankerprasad, Rameshwardas—Dublin, Purnachandra, Krishnanand, Sitaram, Satyendrakumar, Manibehn Galiara, Kisan. Telegram to Badridutt Pande.

OCTOBER 5, WEDNESDAY

Spun 209 rounds. Letters—Narayana Menon, Premi, Prakasam, Virendra Prakash, Badridutt Pande, Alexander, Esther, Winston, Larks of St. Francis, Subbiah, Standenath, Aristarchi, Kingsley Hall + Gladys + Devi, Ramachandra Bahal. Devdas had called. Ba of course was there. Today again the weight went down to $98\frac{3}{4}$.

OCTOBER 6, THURSDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Vasudev, Hiralal, Padmakumar, Manilal Vyas, Padmaja, Behramshah, Maganlal Mehta, Raman Gandhi, Haribhau Phatak, Gaurishankar Bhatt, Agatha, Elvin, Mrs Lindsay, Cora Fry, Mira, Sidney Bokaine, Kamala Nehru + Syed Mahmud, Patankar, Gulbai Dastur, B. D. Lakshman, Samuel Borgai, Darbarilal (Japla, Palamow). Letter to Col. Doyle about the Zamorin's telegram and to Saruprani through Ba. Khagendra Priya's khadi arrived from Barua. *Pendas* arrived from Patankar of Belgaum yesterday.

OCTOBER 7, FRIDAY

Spun 215 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle + Swami Anand, Nirmala Mashruwala, Annadanappa, Dahyabhai Savji, Rukhi, Manishankar, Dadachanji, Lily, Katiyal, Kahan Chaku Gandhi, Bapalal Vaidya, Chandulal Ganderia, Rani Vidyavati, Abdulla Fakir, Khagendra Priya, Shankar (Madras), Ramji Rao, Lakshminarayan Gadodia, Thappan Nair, Bhaktibehn, Kaka, Saruprani. Umedram and Atitkar called. Telegram to Shaukat Ali. Devdas paid a visit. Today Major Roy examined me. There are symptoms of piles. The District Magistrate paid a visit.

OCTOBER 8, SATURDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Prabhavati, Sadashiv, Gomati, Mani, Mathuradas, Mohanlal, Eliot Breckett, Nath, Samuel, Salvi, Nanibehn, Angarika Govind, Dwarakaprasad Sharma, Jyotiprakash, Marie Petersen, Shankar Kalelkar about his fast. Sent a letter to Father Winslow through Gagan. As Shankar refused to give up the fast, again wrote a letter to him. Did not drink milk today. Took *gulkand* in the evening.

OCTOBER 9, SUNDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—Emma Harker, Chintamani, Atmaram, Krishna Narayan, Urmila, Basanti Devi, Guruvayuruppan, Mulchand Parekh, Rukhi, Surbala + Rohini, Bajeram, Paramhansa Yati, Thakorelal Mehta, Mohanlal Somalal, Shravan Choudhari, Jadunath Sarkar, Bimala C. Gupta, Chunni Mahetar, Gramya Charkha Samiti, Sursasang and Sons, Youths of Singapore, Telegraph Check Officer.

OCTOBER 10, MONDAY

Spun 204 rounds. Letters—The Ashram–23, Dr. Mahmud, Muljibhai, Mohanlal, Somasundaram, the Friends of India,

Leonard, Maude, Gurudev, Chaunde Maharaj, Suresh, Baldevdas, Meghani, Ramayya, Raman Soni, Santhiavu, Kathirvelu, Kotak + Sharda, Taramati, Thakkar Bapa, Hardayal Nag, Hales, Jairam Varalkar, Shantiswaroop, Girindra Kishore, Krishnadas, Kirchand Shivlal, Dadachanji, Jamnalal, Trivedi, Raihana. Manilal came. Today the Major summoned Shankar and scolded him. He and the others gave up their fast yesterday on my writing to them to do so.

OCTOBER 11, TUESDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Potdar (Vilaspur), Krishnachandra, Nyalchand, Rohit Mehta, Jamshed, Hari-ichchha, Raihana, Nizamuddin, Mahomed Hyatkhan, Parulekar, Bapalal, Manji Rambhai, Tribhuvandas, Indumati Patel (Mombasa), Bhogilal Popatlal, Rambhau (Nagpur), Chatursen Shastri, Raghunath Prasad, Sushila, Raghunath Limaye. Devdas had come. He brought news of Manilal's fever.

OCTOBER 12, WEDNESDAY

Spun 221 rounds. Letters—Turton, Polak, Aristarchi, Behramsha, Chaman, Chhotelal, Thadani, Prof. Wadia, Narasinhrao, Stokes. Manilal paid a visit. Slivers, leather, a pair of sandals, etc., arrived from the Ashram. My weight 98¾.

OCTOBER 13, THURSDAY

Spun 225 rounds. Letters—Mira, Vaman Athavale, Mulchand Parekh. Today began spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel. Completed Thadani's book.

OCTOBER 14, FRIDAY

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—Joshi Becharlal, Godse, Thakkar Bapa, Keshav, Manukumar, R[ao] B[ahadur], Aiyengar, Atmaram Shastri, Dr. Dutta, Kelavkar, Motilal Roy, Reynolds, Kumudchandraji, Hemprabha, Bhaktibehn. Devdas paid a visit. Ba will not be coming hereafter. Telegram from Dr. Ambedkar saying that if permitted he would call on Monday. Completed Wadia's book.

OCTOBER 15, SATURDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters—Dutt, Urmila Devi, Ramabhadra Iyer, Nargisbehn, Hiralal, Jeki, Mithubehn, George, Maganlal Mehta, the Zamorin, Kelappan, Rangaswami, Thakorebhai.

OCTOBER 16, SUNDAY

Spun 205 rounds. Letters—Manekbai Mehta, Pyarelal, Lalji Naranji, Kikibehn, Radhakrishna, Kamala Nehru, Shankar, Omkar Upasana Prachar, Rukhi. Completed Madan's book on fasting.

OCTOBER 17, MONDAY

Spun 210 rounds. Letters—Narandas (41), Nanalal Kalidas, Padmaja, Zohra, Rangaswami, Michael, Lala Roshanlal, Scott Henderson, Polak (Jr. and Sr.). Ambedkar called today. Sarojini was also with him. Hudson had made it clear that only untouchability could be discussed and that even that discussion should not be published.

OCTOBER 18, TUESDAY

Spun 222 rounds. Letters—Dr. Dalal, Manibehn Desai, Maganlal Mehta, Chhaganlal Mehta, Nanalal Kalidas, Narasinharao Bholanath, Begum Mohmmad Alam, Premji Dayalji, Manilal Gandhi, David. Telegram to a temple trustee in Colombo. Letter to Hudson. Dr. Katiyal called.

OCTOBER 19, WEDNESDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letters—Nalini, Krishnachandra, Khambhatta, Harijan (Waive), Dadachanji, Shambhooshankar, Kamalani, Jatpat Todak Mandal, Shailappa, Kanaiyalal, Arjunda, Kisan, Winslow, Gaurishankar Lal, Nath, Mohanlal Bhatt. Manilal paid a visit. We were taken to the old cells this evening.

OCTOBER 20, THURSDAY

Spun 216 rounds. Letters—Andrews, Narayan Kulkarni, Arun, Valji Desai, Srinivasa Sinh, Mira, Mama, Shankar, Nirmala, Taramati, Col. Doyle, Dorothy Newman. Commenced bread this evening.

OCTOBER 21, FRIDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters—Mrs Shivaprasad Gupta, Shakarabhai, Godse, Satikumar Chatterjee, Lala Dunichand, Kaushalya, Alu Vihari, Hoyland, Jaiji Petit. Suleman Kaji and Ishwarlal arrived from the camp. Met Brelvi too. Talked about his diet.

CWMG-LL

OCTOBER 22, SATURDAY

Spun 217 rounds. Letters—Manilal Gandhi, Dr. Dalal, Khwaja, Hiralal, Urmila Devi, Jamshed, German, Mary Barr, Bhilode[1] Chandraji. Met Sardar Pratap Singh.

OCTOBER 23, SUNDAY

Spun 220 rounds. Letters—Prof. Trivedi, David, Sesha Aiyangar, Jamshed, Harilal Parikh, Rambharose, Hemprabha, Madhavan, Nagendranath, Lady Thackersey. Last night at 9 o'clock, received Ghelabhai's telegram about the death of Punjabhai at 3.30 o'clock. Spent the day in writing letters to the Ashram. Wrote reminiscences of Punjabhai.

OCTOBER 24, MONDAY

Spun 208 rounds. Letters—The Ashram 45 including reminiscences of Punjabhai also, Abul Kalam, Lakshmi. Today Bhandari read out to me the Government's order concerning the correspondence about untouchability. Refused to give me a copy. I have sent a reply to it today. A telegram from Abul Kalam Azad also has been withheld.

OCTOBER 25, TUESDAY

Spun 200 rounds. Letters—Khambhatta, Sitala Sahay, Dinshaw Mehta, Harjivan, Rukhi, Vaikunthlal, Manilal Revashankar (Ba, Pyarelal, Neelam, Manilal). Devdas called. Sent with him Pyarelal's book and also Manilal's. Kateli called at night and suggested deletion, in my letter to Doyle, of the paragraph about his refusal to give me a copy of the Government's letter. He allowed me to take out a copy. Handed over the corrected letter today. Received yesterday the honey sent by David.

OCTOBER 26, WEDNESDAY

Spun 219 rounds. Letters—Satavlekar, Vasantlal Morarka, Brajendra, Shankarrao Godse, Ramnath Suman, Krishnadas, Doddamati, Rohit, Atulendu Gupta, Sapru, Lalji Naranji, Ramdas Gandhi. Telegram to Shivprasad Gupta. Col. Doyle, Dahyabhai came.

OCTOBER 27, THURSDAY

Spun 223 rounds. Letters—Mira, Ratilal Sheth, Maganlal Mehta, Harisingh Gaur, Nanalal (Natvarlal), Chhaganlal (Lila-

[1] In the source this can also be read as "Trilok".

vati), Shankar Ghatge, Nemchand Kacharabhai, Prabhashankar, Harchandbhai, Thadani, Narsinharao.

OCTOBER 28, FRIDAY

Spun 245 rounds. Letters—Aristarchi, Hugh Marshal, Pyarelal. Telegram to Mani. Letter to Bhaktibehn, Dadachanji, Salt. Telegram to Birla.

OCTOBER 29, SATURDAY (DIWALI)

Spun 207 rounds. Letters—Maganlal P. + Manjula, Kewalram + Nirmala, Shivji Nanji, Taramati, Narendra Dev (Calcutta), Maganlal Parmar.

OCTOBER 30, SUNDAY, PADAVO 1989[1]

Spun [...][2]. Letters—Mathuradas, Mohanlal, Gertrude Keller, Mr. Hirnom, Mathuradas, Shankar, Kedarnath, Sukabhau, Sarojini, Lady Vithaldas. As my leg was aching today, did the rest of the spinning on the Gandiva.

OCTOBER 31, MONDAY

Spun [...][3] Letters—The Ashram 43—Harjivan Kotak, Chhotalal Shah + Manekbai, Satavlekar, Prabhavati. Telegram to Mani. [Letters] Mani Galiara + Vanita + Ratan + Devi, Kamala Nehru, Major Bhandari—about the beginning of non-co-operation from tomorrow. Condolence telegram to Lady Ali Imam. Both the Majors paid a visit. Have agreed to take unspiced dal with *bhakkari*. Vallabhbhai has a severe cold.

NOVEMBER 1, TUESDAY

Spun 124 rounds on the spinning-wheel + 36 on *takli*. Letters—Mulchand Parmar, Satyamurti, Homi Pestonji, Nambiar, U. Vasudev Joshi, Krishnachandra Agrawal, Dr Latif Syed, Bhaktibehn, Padmaja Naidu, Anasuyabehn, Shantikumar. Sent five Gujarati books to Bhaktibehn. Tomatoes from Prof. Wadia. Manilal, Sushila, Tara, Surendra, Sita paid a visit. Started taking 'C' class food from today. Ate *bhakhari*, unspiced dal and the morning gruel. Mahadev observed a fast. Read the *Gita*.

NOVEMBER 2, WEDNESDAY

Spun 106 rounds. Letters—Prof. Wadia, Ramdas, The Ashram (Bhau, Rama, Titus) Jamnalal, Madanmohan. Telegram

[1] The Gujarati New Year

[2] & [3] The figures have been left out in the source.

to Jamnalal. The Major called last night and handed to me telegram from the Government of India. Replied today. As a result of that telegram, I resumed today the usual food. Sent for fruit from Lady Vithaldas.

NOVEMBER 3, THURSDAY

Spun 115 rounds. Letters—Mayashankar, Mira, The Ross brothers, Michael Wilson (Sunfield), Najuklal, Dr. Gaur, Narottam Girdhar Company. Government decision on untouchability received. May be considered good. Sent a reply. For the present at any rate God has dispersed the clouds. The hand pains so much that I want to reduce the spinning still further.

NOVEMBER 4, FRIDAY

Spun 90 rounds. Letters—Kusum Gandhi, Prabhashankar, Amritlal Shah, Hirji, Bhansali, Dadachanji. About untouchability —Gopala Menon, Har Sarup, Nibaran Chandra, Dunichand, Narsinhbhai, Sohanlal, Jagannath Prasad, Hemprabha, Jagannath Visharad, Raghunath Sashtri, Rameshwarnath Oza, Prafulla Ghosh, Chaturbhuj Vithaldas, Santapal, Prabhunath Mishra, Sharma, Dolatram Gupta, Dhanulal Sharma, Tatachari. On Vaze being invited, Vaze and Patwardhan called on me. I gave them the first statement for the Press. Trivedi and Nanavati from the Camp and Munshi from the Circle called on me.

NOVEMBER 5, SATURDAY

Spun 109 rounds. Letters—S. Godse, Nirmala (Rajkot), Ghanshyam Birla, Parachure Shastri, Vernekar, Ramji Rao, Somsundaram, Atmaram Shastri, Talegaonkar. Telegrams—Sarup Rani, C. Mehta, Birla. Vaze, Kodanda Rao and Limaye paid a visit. Handed them the second statement.

NOVEMBER 6, SUNDAY

Spun 102 rounds. Letters—Nanalal Kantilal Vora, Arun, Uma, Sushila, Govinddas, Kalidas Jaskaran, Jamshed, Chunilal Vyas, Hanumanprasad, Habibur Rahman, Satisbabu.

NOVEMBER 7, MONDAY

Spun 116 rounds. Letters—Lilavati Mehta, Bali + Kumud + Rami + Manu, the Ashram (46), Raihana. Telegrams to Birla, Urmila. Today Pyarelal, Kodanda Rao, Shastri and others came. Handed them the third statement. Mahadev got permission to stay with me.

NOVEMBER 8, TUESDAY

Spun 113 rounds. Letters—Harjivan Kotak, the Ashram (Ba + Radha + Champa + Narandas + Talwalkar), Ramdas (together with two books—the *Ramayana* and Ruskin), Jamnalal. About untouchability—Natarajan, Kodanda Rao, Shastri. Major Bhandari about the Egypt cable. Anandshankar Dhruva, Bhandari (2) about newspapers. Telegram to Shanti, the Chinese. Mama paid a visit. Interview to the *Sakal* correspondent.

NOVEMBER 9, WEDNESDAY

Spun 111 rounds. Letters—Hasam Ali Sale, Kapil, Mrs. Chidamber, Dr. Modi, Kikibehn, Munnalal, Ranka, Annadanappa, Bernard, Fulchand, Lalji Naranji, Maganlal Mehta, Valji Desai. About untouchability—Radhakant, Motilal Roy, Vasukaka, Vakil, Gosibehn, Namjoshi, Ramasami, the President—District Council, Amaravati, Jethalal Ramji, Damodar Mishra, Mahadev Shastri, Chhotabhai U. Patel. The fourth statement on untouchability, Bhudev Mukerji. Telegrams to Rajbhoj, Sir Lallubhai, the Zamorin and Thakkar.

NOVEMBER 10, THURSDAY

Spun 103 rounds. Letters—Karsandas Chitalia, Mira, Boridas (Madras), Anasuya, Naoroji Belgaumwala, Narsinhrao, Ansari, Rukmini, Manekbai, Bhagwandas, Hiralal, Chhaganlal Mehta, Jeki, Firozechand, Bhagawati, Devi, Lakshmanlal, Narayanswami, Pyarelal, Kewalram, Raihana, Bhaktibehn. About untouchability —Chunilal, Ganesh Bhikaji, Kennedy, Hiralal Shah, Sukhabhau, Vanubhai Parmar, Vasukaka, Natarajan, Gurudev. Telegrams to Ambalal, R. Babu, Gopala Menon, Kirchand. Telegram to the Wadhwan Ashram about Qureshi.

NOVEMBER 11, FRIDAY

Spun 104 rounds. Letters—Devi West, Satyanand, G. S. Narasinhachari, Bharati, Chhagan Jhaveri, Lakshmi, Esther. About untouchability to Srinivasan, G. Ramachandran, Purushottamdas, Harkisandas, Mathuradas Vassanji, Satur, K. M. Shah, Sadanand, Buddhivallabh, Urmila, Basanti Devi, K. R. Nath. Telegram to Urmila. Sent a M.O. for Rs. 100 to Urmila. Lallubhai, Rajbhoj and his friends called. The meeting lasted three hours. Among the friends [who visited] were Prof. Oturkar, Bhagyavant, Datar.

NOVEMBER 12, SATURDAY

Spun 100 rounds. Letters—Bhatnagar, Maganlal Narsinhdas, Amritlal Gordhandas, Kotak. About untouchability to Purushottamdas, Michael, Hiralal Joshi, Vishvanath Gavarikar, Shyamji Marwadi, Swami Yoganand, Kikabhai Lavjibhai, Uttamchand Gangaram, Venkatramayya, Viyogi Hari, Rajbhoj, Birla, Vakil—his discussions with me. Anandshankar, Chintamani, Kunzru, R[ao] B[ahadur] Raja, Avantikabai, Karsandas Chitalia, Hansabehn, Premlilabehn, Satavlekar, Hiralal Shah. Telegram to Anandashankar. Salivati of *The Hindu*, Kodanda Rao, Vasukaka and Haribhau called.

NOVEMBER 13, SUNDAY

Spun 113 rounds on Kanitkar's spinning-wheel. Letters—Hardayalbabu, Abdul Alim, Elwin, Rohit, Nanalal. About untouchability to Keshoram Tandon, Suryanarayan Vyas, Gaur Gopal, Parikshitlal, Ramnath 'Suman', Mahadev Shastri, Dhanumal Sharma, Sharada Mehta, Madanmohan Mishra, Radhakant, Basantkumar Chatterji.

NOVEMBER 14, MONDAY

Takli—52 rounds. Started spinning on the *takli* because of the pain in the arm. Telegram to Sheth Jamnalal and Chhaganlal. Letters to the Ashram (41), Dr. Modi, Sahni. About untouchability—Kanitkar, Nripendrasingh, Rajbhoj, Anantrao, Manmathrai. Telegram to Satisbabu. Gave the fifth statement to Kodanda Rao.

NOVEMBER 15, TUESDAY

Takli—40 rounds. Letters—Col. Doyle about Manibehn, Major Bhandari, Chinna Thambi. Telegrams to Kewalram and Maganlal. Letters to Bhavanji, Shukraram Shastri, Lakshmikant, Narasinharao, Lakshmanlal Mehta, Taramati, Gulabchand Shah, Paramahansa Pragnaneshwara, Lady Thackersey, Natarajan (the son). About untouchability telegrams to Kunhappa, Sharma, Jenkins and Firozechand. [Letters—] Datar, Karsandas, Ghanshyamdas, Gopala Menon, Vasantram Shastri, Hariharprasad, Nemichandra. Radhakrishna, Prof. Purandare, his wife and Kodanda Rao called.

From the Gujarati: S.N. 19337

ADDENDA

1. LETTER TO H. S. L. AND MILLIE POLAK

September 16, 1932

DEAR HENRY AND MILLIE,

Well, I expect you to fully understand and appreciate the step[1] I am about to take. It was an irresistible call from within. Pray tell Charlie. I am not writing to him as I am not sure of his movements.

With love to you all,

BHAI

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 193

2. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

September 16, 1932

On the eve of the (to me) sacred step I am about to take I want to tell you I have been thinking constantly of the whole of the Kingsley Hall family among whom I passed so many happy months.[2]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 30

3. LETTER TO PADMAJA NAIDU

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR PADMAJA,

I shall treasure your very beautiful letter. It has been followed by loving sermon from Mother. You must not consider me so proud as not to need the prayers of 'friends, comrades and playmates'. Indeed God is nearer to me than the air which surrounds me and which I breathe. But I sense His invisible

[1] Fast against separate electorates for Harijans; *vide* pp. 62-5.
[2] During Gandhiji's visit to England in 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII.

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presence in the prayers of the innocent. They sustain me. Do therefore pray that He may give me the strength to pass through the fiery ordeal that awaits me.

Be well and serve well.

Love from your intimate friend, comrade and playmate.

THE SLAVE-DRIVER

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, 42

4. *LETTER TO H. KALLENBACH*

September 18, 1932

MY DEAR 'LOWER HOUSE',

If I go I shall go in the hope that you will one day fulfil the hope you and I have long cherished of you.

If God has more work to take from this body, it will survive the fiery ordeal. Then you must try some early day to come and meet. Otherwise goodbye and much love from,

UPPER HOUSE

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 43

5. *TELEGRAM TO A LAWYER OF JABALPUR*

October 1, 1932

I CANNOT GIVE OPINION.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 98

[1] The English original of this is not available. The addressee had asked whether inter-dining might be resorted to despite opposition from Congressmen.

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6. A LETTER

October 6, 1932

It is certainly wrong to exclude cobblers, etc., from the scope of the Association for the poor. But it would not be proper for you at once to start a fast in protest against this injustice. You should plead with the elders. You should win their good opinion by serving them. Nobody ought to be compelled to do a particular thing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 113

7. A LETTER

October 13, 1932

All the varnas are Shudras and every Hindu has the right to recite the Vedas.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 134

8. A LETTER

November 11, 1932

Punjabhai is still with us. I do not miss him because I do not feel that he is no more. All this time he used both to receive and to give. Now he only gives.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 212

CWMG - LI

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I[1]

(*A*) *DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

September 6, 1932

GANDHIJI : You were, of course, joking in the morning, but if you really have any questions to ask please ask them.

VALLABHBHAI PATEL : What do you think will these people do?

G. I still feel that they will release me on or before the 19th. It will be the limit of wickedness if they let me fast, let no one know about it and then say that I did what I as a prisoner ought not to have done, and that they could do nothing about it. I do not say that they cannot go that far, only they will not find it necessary. And they certainly are not the people to go further than it is necessary.

V. P. Then what will you do?

G. The fast cannot commence on the 20th. We cannot stick to the 20th.

V. P. Does it not mean then that we have got time till the new constitution is drawn up? Or that you can give a longer notice to the people and the Government?

G. Yes, but that depends on how much the people will allow me to do after I get out. I cannot tell what the situation will be. I have no idea of the kind of letter I may have to write. But I shall have to consider every-party—the Hindu society, the *Antyajas*, the Government, the Muslims. It will be necessary for the Hindus to hold meetings along with the *Antyajas* at every place and reject this thing. The Government has done this thing as a Christian Government and hence I shall have to tell both the Government and the Christians the same thing—that as Christians they cannot do this thing. Let our swaraj come into being, then they may influence the *Antyajas* in any way they like, but they should not divide us today. I had said this to the Muslims even in England. I shall say the same thing here also. I shall explain to the Hindu society that now the *Antyajas* have no choice but to turn Muslims or Christians.

V. P. But where are the Muslims here who will listen to you?

G. It does not matter if there aren't any. But we should hope that those people too will wake up. The root of satyagraha lies in faith in human nature, in the faith that it will be possible to melt the cruellest of men. So there will surely be some Muslim who will say that if things go to that length he will not be able to bear it. To accomplish all this, I shall have to call

[1] *Vide* pp. 62-5.

certain people. I do not know whether all of them will be permitted to come here. But they may even insult me. They may say that they have released me because they will not take the responsibility for my death. However, if I launch civil disobedience, they will have to put me back into prison.

MAHADEV DESAI : Among the people who will come will also be Christian friends and they will say to you that before accusing the Government you should accuse yourself. Why does Hindu society regard the *Antyajas* as untouchables?

G. That is up to me to explain. That is not a difficult thing. We can say to them : 'Allow us to settle our problems ourselves, why do you interfere ? After we have set about managing our own affairs, you may do what you like. Why do you divide us and then argue over things? Today the *Antyajas* have either to turn to Muslims or to you. The question of women is similar to that of the *Antyajas*. But women are not untouchables. Even if they wish to become untouchables, men will go and sit on their beds. They cannot be separated even by having a separate electorate. Today the *Antyajas* have been separated permanently. What would be the outcome of it? There would be internal strife. There are people like . . . . He would collect bad characters in the community and get them to attack Hindus, poison wells and do other things.

The duty of those of you who have remained here is merely to inform everyone in the Camp jail that fasting is wholly prohibited and that everyone must remain calm.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 7-9

(*B*) *DISCUSSION WITH B. R. AMBEDKAR*

September 22, 1932

AMBEDKAR : We must accept that in the country there are two groups belonging to two different ideologies and act accordingly, and I should get my compensation. I also want that a clear understanding should be arrived at which would recompense me in other respects also. The decision of the Government gives me seventy-one seats and I feel that is a just, reasonable and definite allocation.

GANDHIJI : According to you.

A. Over and above that I get the right to vote and contest elections in the general constituencies. I also have a franchise in the labourers' constituencies. We do realize that you are of immense help to us.

G. Not to you personally.

A. But I have only one quarrel with you, that is, you work for the so-called national welfare and not for our interests alone. If you devoted your-

self entirely to the welfare of the Depressed Classes, you would then become our hero.

G. Very sweet of you to say so.

A. I want political power for my community. That is indispensable for our survival. The basis of the agreement therefore should be: I should get what is due to me. I wish to tell the Hindus that I should be assured of my compensation.

G. You have clarified your position very beautifully. However, I should like to ask you one question. You say that if there is any genuine party among the Depressed Classes it should be given sufficient scope to rise. Therefore their refusal to accept joint electorates without primary elections is quite reasonable. What I do not understand is why you have not said so far that there should be a separate election of this kind. I feel from whatever study I have made of the subject that if I accept the primary election, the letter of my vow is not violated. I therefore accept the Clause [of primary election] but I would most certainly have to scrutinize its wording. At the moment, I say only this, that the idea of separate primary elections does not go against my vow. But I suspect something when you insist that the panel should consist only of three candidates. It does not give me sufficient place to turn in. Moreover, you consider panel system for some seats only, thereby satisfying both the parties [among Harijans]. There would be one election, i.e., of the primary nature by the Harijan voters only. The other would be by the joint electorate. I have to safeguard without any discrimination not the interest of one group alone but of the Depressed Class as a whole. I want to serve the untouchables. That is why I am not at all angry with you. When you use derogatory and angry words for me, I tell myself that I deserved that. I will not get angry even if you spit on my face. I say this with God as witness. I know that you have drunk deep of the poisoned cup. However, I make a claim which will seem astounding to you. You are born an untouchable but I am an untouchable by adoption. And as a new convert I feel more for the welfare of the community than those who are already there. At the moment I have before my eyes the dumb untouchables—unapproachables and unseeables—of South India. I am scrutinizing the scheme to see how these people will be affected by it. You will of course say why I should worry about that. All of you will either accept Christianity or Islam. I say that you may do whatever you like after my body falls. What I say is that if the panel system is good for the Depressed Classes it should be good for the entire electorate. I do not like it from the beginning that the community should be divided into two groups. I will raze to the ground the fort of sanatanists with dynamite if all the untouchables are one and united. I want that the entire untouchable community should unitedly rebel against the sanatanists. You should not worry about the number as long as the appointing power is in your hands. I am a lifelong democrat. The whole world will agree that I was the foremost among the

democrats after my ashes are scattered in the air or, if that does not happen, after they are immersed in the Ganga. I do not say this out of pride but tell the truth with humility. I learnt the lesson of democracy at the tender age of 12. I quarrelled with my mother for treating the domestic sweeper as an untouchable. That day I saw God in the form of a Bhangi. You spoke the truth when you said that the welfare of untouchables is dearer to you than my own life. Now be honest and stick to it. You should not care for my life. But do not be false to Harijans. My work will not die with me. I have asked my son to convey my message to the Conference. In that, I have said that they should not be tempted to forsake the interests of the Harijans in order to save my life. I am sure that if I die my son will definitely follow me. Not only he but many others also will lay down their lives, for I do not have only one son, I have thousands. He would not be my worthy son if he did not lay down his life for the honour of Hinduism. Without eradicating untouchability root and branch the honour of Hinduism cannot be saved. That can only happen when untouchables are treated on par with caste Hindus in every respect. A person who is regarded as 'unseeable' today should also have the opportunity to become the Viceroy of India. I had said, in the first political speech I made on coming to India that I would like to make a Bhangi the President of the Congress.

So I appeal to you not to haggle. Do not bring to me something which is so bad that I would not even like the look of it. Bring to me some nice present which would inspire life into a person who is willingly courting death. However you will do that only if you are convinced that my co-operation has some value.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 69-72

(C) *A STATEMENT*

September 22, 1932

I do not see any objection from the point of view of my vow in the system of primary elections which Dr. Ambedkar has explained to me and which has been laid down in Clause B of the scheme given to me. But before I finally accept any scheme, I would like to see it drafted in very clear language. After that I will give my final decision on Clause B. I do not like its language. It requires many changes. I give below my objections against Clause B and its language.

(1) The system of primary elections and reserved seats should terminate automatically after 10 years.

(2) The number of voters should be ascertained from the Lothian Committee Report. I have double objection against Clause B. Not only that

it nullifies the object for which I have staked my life but it is harmful to the nation also.

About other issues you should put the Hindu community on its honour. Do not ask me to do anything which would not do justice to a man on deathbed. I know that the country will be ruined if I swerve from the stand I have taken.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 72

(*D*) *INTERVIEW TO VOHRA DEPUTATION*[1]

September 23, 1932

If you think deeply, you will see that no task in this world has been possible without someone sacrificing his life for it. Your love for me is inspired by my determination, my strength to give up my life. Hence those of you who love me should let me go. My life is in the hands of God. Even if I wish to depart I cannot, and if I am to depart, even expert doctors will not be able to save me. It will be a great thing if you bear witness to the fact that I died for truth. It is not that the blot to remove which I have been fasting disfigures Hindu religion alone it disfigures the whole of India, because the entire country is witness to it. Hence you should all pray that Gandhi's pledge be fulfilled. It is not as if the Hindus could not pray for Muslims and *vice versa*. That sort of belief is hypocritical.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 73-4

(*E*) *MESSAGE TO M. M. MALAVIYA, M. R. JAYAKAR AND TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU*[2]

September 24, 1932

They should not take hasty steps on my account. They should endorse only that which they feel is right. They as well as I will be doing a wrong thing if later on I had to be persuaded to change my opinion. We should not stand on our honour as far as our duty is concerned. They should therefore cling to what is true, proper and just. If in doing so my body falls, let it be so. Everyone should do what he thinks is proper. My stand is: either agree to referendum after five years or let me die. Anyone who feels that this condition is not proper and is harmful should not accept it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, p. 80

[1] The Vohras had gone to urge Gandhiji to give up his intention to fast.
[2] Gandhiji had asked Mahadev Desai to convey this message.

(F) *DISCUSSION WITH B. R. AMBEDKAR*

October 17, 1932

AMBEDKAR: I have not come to discuss untouchability but political matters.

GANDHIJI: That is true. I cannot talk about it with you; even if you do I shall not be able to express an opinion—my mind does not work in that direction.

A. I have come here for this. I want to request you to give up civil disobedience and to join the Round Table Conference. The point is that if you do not come, we shall get nothing in England and everything will be upset. People like Iqbal who are enemies of the country will come to the forefront. We have to work any sort of constitution. Hence though I am a small man, I request you to come.

G. If you elaborate your argument, I shall think over it. I suggest you go and write about it at length in the newspapers. I shall think over it.

A. It is not a thing that can be put down in writing. In it I shall have to say a lot that will hurt the Muslims and I cannot say that publicly. But I shall write anonymously or have someone write in a different way. Please have a look at it and, taking it to be mine, think over it.

G. It will be good if you write under your own name. But of course you may do as you wish.

A. I must honestly say that I have no interest in the temples being thrown open, common dinners and the like, because we suffer thereby. My people have to put up with beatings and bitterness increases. After the common dinner at Vile Parle, the Maratha workers went on a strike. If the caste Hindus had the strength they would have engaged untouchables as servants. But that has not been so. Hence I do not feel interested in the thing. I only want that social and economic hardships should end.

G. Give examples.

A. The untouchables do not get houses to live in; they continue to suffer injustice and oppression. In one case, an untouchable was accused of having murdered a Maratha. I could have taken the case to Sessions and got him acquitted, but the magistrate changed the charge of murder to one of grievous injury. Now he will receive some punishment. You may not know what even I have to face. I do not get any other place to live in in Bombay except the Port Trust chawl. In my village, I have to stay in the midst of the Mahars. In Poona, all others stay with their friends. I have to stay at the National Hotel and have to spend Rs. 7 and transport fare.

G. Servants of India?

A. Yes, I can perhaps stay there. But only perhaps. You will know if you ask Vaze. Once Vaze's servant insulted me in his presence. I want to do away with all these hardships.

G. I am at one with you. You ought to know that my fast has not ended yet, it is still on. To correct the agreement was a minor thing. The

main thing still remains to be done. I am ready to give my life for it. All the injustices you mention ought to end.

A. Birla said that I should be taken on the Committee for the Abolition of Untouchability. I declined to join, because what can I alone do? I would have to agree to the work of abolishing untouchability being done in accordance with your wishes. If we are in a majority we can get the reforms that we wish brought about. You wish that temples should be erected or wells should be dug. We might feel that that would be a waste of money, that there should be another way out for it.

G. I understand your point of view, and I shall keep it in mind and shall see what can be done.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 144-6

APPENDIX II[1]

THE AGREEMENT ARRIVED AT BETWEEN THE LEADERS ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES AND OF THE REST OF THE HINDU COMMUNITY REGARDING THE REPRESENTATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES IN THE LEGISLATURES AND CERTAIN OTHER MATTERS AFFECTING THEIR WELFARE.[2]

1. There shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of general electorates. Seats in Provincial Legislatures shall be as follows[3]:

MADRAS	30
BOMBAY WITH SIND	15
PUNJAB	8
BIHAR AND ORISSA	18
CENTRAL PROVINCES	20
ASSAM	7
BENGAL	30
UNITED PROVINCES	20
Total	148

[1] *Vide* pp. 140-1.

[2] The signing took place on the 24th September, at about 6 in an atmosphere of cordiality. According to a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-9-1932, Madan Mohan Malaviya signed first, followed by Dr. Ambedkar, who used Rajagopalachari's pen for the purpose and kept it for himself and in exchange gave him his own pen to sign and keep as a momento of the occasion.

[3] These figures are based on the total strength of the Provincial Councils announced in the Prime Minister's decision.

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2. Election to these seats shall be by joint electorates subject, however, to the following procedure:

All members of the Depressed Classes registered in the general electoral roll of a constituency, will form an electoral college which will elect a panel of four candidates belonging to the Depressed Classes for each of such reserved seats, by the method of single vote and the four persons getting the highest number of votes in such primary election shall be the candidates for election by the general electorate.

3. Representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in clause 2 above for their representation in Provincial Legislatures.

4. In the Central Legislature 18 per cent of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

5. The system of primary election to panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial Legislatures, as hereinbefore mentioned, shall come to an end after the first ten years unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of Clause 6 below.

6. The system of representation of the Depressed Classes by reserved seats in the Provincial and Central Legislatures as provided for in clauses 1 and 4 shall continue until determined by mutual agreement between the communities concerned in this settlement.

7. The franchise for the Central and Provincial Legislatures for the Depressed Classes shall be as indicated in the Lothian Committee Report.

8. There shall be no disabilities attaching to anyone on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any elections to local bodies or appointment to public service.

Every endeavour shall be made to secure a fair representation of the Depressed Classes in these respects subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to public services.

9. In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to members of the Depressed Classes.

Madan Mohan Malaviya	B. S. Kamat
Tej Bahadur Sapru	G. K. Deodhar
M. R. Jayakar	A. V. Thakkar
B. R. Ambedkar	R. K. Bakhle
Srinivasan	P. G. Solanki
M. C. Rajah	P. Baloo
C. V. Mehta	Shankerlal Banker
C. Rajagopalachari	Govind Malaviya
Rajendra Prasad	Devdas Gandhi
G. D. Birla	Biswas

RAMESHWARDAS BIRLA	P. N. RAJBHOJ
	GAVAI[1]
SHANKERLAL BANKER	
LALLUBHAI SAMALDAS	P. KODANDA RAO
HANSA MEHTA	G. K. GADGIL
K. NATARAJAN	MANU SUBEDAR
KAMAKOTI NATARAJAN	AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE
PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS	K. J. CHITALIA
MATHURADAS VISSANJI	RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
WALCHAND HIRACHAND	A. R. BHAT
H. N. KUNZRU	COLAM
K. G. LIMAYE	PRADHAN

The Epic Fast, pp. 153-6

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[2]

November 10, 1932

GANDHIJI : The Zamorin does not say that it is impossible to throw open the temple but he goes on pointing out his difficulties. If he fails in his efforts Kelappan and I have to resort to fast unless I see some flaw in the claim advanced. In fact there is no flaw in it. There are difficulties in the way of the Zamorin but they are not such that they cannot be got over. The real test is whether the sanatanists, those who have the privilege of entering the temple, have any objection to untouchables entering the temple. All the information I have received shows that the majority of the temple-goers have no objection. The whole movement is based on the belief that the temple-goers, i.e., sanatanists are prepared for this reform. Our fast would be premature if they are not prepared for the reform.

QUESTION : There won't be any fast if the difficulties regarding the opening of these temples are removed. Isn't that so?

G. The proposed fast is above all for the opening of this temple. To make it a test case Kelappan had concentrated all his efforts on this temple alone. They have made their utmost effort to get the temple opened. After I began my fast Kelappan also decided to follow me. But he had not given due notice. I pointed out this fault and advised him to postpone the fast. He agreed to it. Now therefore I am honour-bound to fast with him. This is the reason why we have concentrated our efforts on Guruvayur.

[1] The signatures that follow were added to the document in Bombay at the final sitting of the Hindu Conference on September 25.

[2] *Vide* pp. 387-8.

Q. The Zamorin says that thousands of people are willing to lay down their lives.

G. That statement of his is not true. However, I won't be worried if thousands of people who call themselves sanatanists go on a fast. Truth is more precious than thousands of lives. I feel that a fast is a means to self-purification and awakening the inner self. It cannot be a means of coercion.

Q. Won't this movement divide the Hindu community? Won't the sanatanists be separated from the rest of the Hindus?

G. I entertain no such fear. Being a democrat, I would not oppose as I am doing now the movement known as the sanatanist movement if I am satisfied that it has the support of the majority. The whole movement of eradication of untouchability rests on the belief that the opposition does not have a formidable support. It is well known that it does not have any moral support.

Q. Don't you feel that you would be more effective if you were outside? Do you consider eradication of untouchability less important than civil disobedience?

G. I do not give anyone of them either less or more importance. For me both are religious principles and so I cannot consider one inferior to the other. Here I am talking about civil disobedience as a principle, not as a movement. I cannot give any opinion on the civil disobedience that is going on in the country.

Q. It seems that the movement is not as effective as it should be.

G. I cannot say that. I am not in a position to say anything. I cannot rely on the information gathered from the newspapers. You should contact the workers outside.

Q. What do you say about Delhi resignations from Anti-untouchability League?

G. I am not surprised. However, I do hope there is nothing very significant behind it all. The foundation of the League is quite strong. It has an ideal President and a more ideal Secretary.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. II, pp. 225-7

ADDENDUM

INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

November 10, 1932

Gandhiji had read in *The Times of India* the statement issued by the Zamorin of Calicut who is the principal trustee of the temple in question. He said :

The Zamorin has not definitely stated that the temple will not be opened to untouchables, and as to difficulties to be overcome so far as I can see, I do not believe that there is a single one incapable of being overcome in the time. If he fails to overcome these difficulties by January 1, then, naturally, a second fast is in store for Mr. Kelappan and myself. Unless I can see an obvious flaw in the claims made, the fast will go on.

The real test is whether entitled temple-goers have any objection whatsoever to untouchables visiting the temple at the same time as themselves. My information shows that they have no objection, or rather that an overwhelming majority of them do not object. The whole movement for the removal of untouchability is based on the assumption that a big majority of so-called caste Hindus are ready for this reform. But for this assumption, Mr. Kelappan's fast and, therefore, mine would be most untimely.

This fast to commence on January 2 does not take in all temples in its sweep. It is directed only to this one particular temple.

Mr. Gandhi continued in reply to a specific question on that point:

The reason for this is that Mr. Kelappan concentrated all his attention on the one temple by way of example and sample. He and a large body of co-workers have been unremittingly concentrating their energies on opening that temple, and Mr. Kelappan, at the time of my fast, decided to do likewise. As he had given no notice of his intentions to fast, I pointed out that this was a flaw, and asked him to suspend it, which he did. It has, therefore, now become a point of honour to join him, and hence the reason for my concentration at the moment on the Guruvayur Temple.

I then drew Mr. Gandhi's attention to the statement by Shrimat Jagadguru Shankaracharya of the Shankeshwar Math in Bombay, who said that there were hundreds and thousands of sanatanists who were opposed to Mr.

Gandhi's views, and were prepared to lay down their lives to uphold their point of view. Gandhiji said :

I think, that his statement is without justification. I should not be dismayed, however, if a thousand people calling themselves sanatanists started to fast unto death. Truth is superior to the lives of millions of people.

My conception of a fast is that it is a process of purification and awakening of the conscience. It should never have coercion at its back.

The fear had been expressed to me that Mr. Gandhi's new fast might subdivide the Hindu community by antagonizing the sanatanists rather than consolidating caste Hindus generally with untouchables. Gandhiji said :

I have no such fear, if I were satisfied that the movement that goes by the name of sanatani had real public backing, I as a warm democrat would not resist it in the manner adopted by me today. The whole of the anti-untouchability movement is based on the assumption that the opposition to it is without any real backing. That it has no moral backing is self-demonstrated.

It was generally felt by those supporting his campaign, I said to Mr. Gandhi, that a great deal more progress would be made if he were with them and not in jail. I asked him, therefore, if he considered that civil disobedience was more important than the anti-untouchability movement. Gandhiji replied:

I do not consider one or the other of lesser or greater importance. For me they are articles of faith, and, therefore, I cannot subordinate one to the other.

Careful at all times not to overstep the limits which had been imposed upon him in regard to politics, Mr. Gandhi said that he referred to civil disobedience as a theory of life, and not to the scheme going on at present in the country. He could give no opinion touching it. I suggested the movement was progressing very slowly, but he was not prepared to admit that, or to say that it was going well, as he was not yet sufficiently informed.

The resignations from the Delhi Anti-untouchability League had come as a great surprise to him, and he was hoping to find that there was nothing much at the back of it.

Concluding, he said that he wished world opinion expressed on the movement as it was bound to have results far beyond the limits of Hindu society, and the confines of India. The deliverance of 40,000,000 human beings from a terrible crushing burden by means absolutely free of violence, and by simply the quickening of public conscience cannot but restore the faith of a sceptical world in the living presence of God, and, therefore, also in the innate goodness of human nature.

From Pyarelal's Papers

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CHRONOLOGY

(*September 1, 1932—November 15, 1932*)

September 1: Gandhiji in Yeravda Jail.

September 9: Wrote to Ramsay MacDonald that his decision to fast unto death against Communal Award was final.

September 13: Gandhiji's correspondence with Prime Minister and Sir Samuel Hoare regarding fast released for publication.

September 15: Gandhiji sent to Bombay Government for general release to the Press statement giving reasons for his impending fast.

Government announced its decision to release Gandhiji conditionally during his fast.

September 16: Gandhiji wired to Government expressing himself against his conditional release.

Issued statement to the Press giving reasons of his impending fast.

September 18: Deputation of Bombay Hindu leaders consisting of Purushottamdas Thakurdas, Mathuradas Vissanji Khimji, Sir Chunilal Mehta and G. D. Birla met Gandhiji.

September 19: Hindu leaders' deputation again met Gandhiji and discussed conditions for his abandoning fast.

September 20: At noon, Gandhiji commenced his fast unto death against the British Government's announcement regarding separate electorates for Depressed Classes.

Called his first Press interview and explained motive of his fast.

At night Hindu leaders and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar approved of tentative scheme based on joint electorates.

September 21: Deputation consisting of M. R. Jayakar, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad and G. D. Birla discussed with Gandhiji scheme based on joint electorates. S. M. Mate, P. N. Rajbhoj and Limaye met Gandhiji in prison.

Gandhiji declared that he would break his fast when the British Prime Minister agreed to change Communal Award.

September 23: Informed Press reporters that his fast was not political move but spiritual effort and penance.

September 24: Discussed with the correspondents of *The Times of India* the scope and implication of resorting to fasting by political leaders.

Hindu leaders and suppressed class leaders signed the Agreement in the presence of Gandhiji who also gave his assent.

The terms of settlement were communicated to the Government of India and the British Premier with the request to expedite revision of Communal Award.

September 25: Gave interview to Ellen and V. K. Krishna Menon.

In his second Press Conference announced that he would break his fast only if the Premier accepted the settlement *in toto*.

September 26: Fast broken at 5.15 p.m.

Gandhiji issued statement to the Press describing the settlement as generous gesture on all sides.

On or before *September 27:* Issued statement to the Press on chances of Congress co-operation in work of Round Table Conference.

September 27: Asked Government not to withdraw facilities extended to him during fast.

September 29: Gandhiji was informed at 12.30 p.m. that special facilities allowed to him during fast regarding interviews and correspondence had been withdrawn.

Wrote to M. G. Bhandari strong letter resenting this change.

September 30: Wired to K. Kelappan advising him to suspend his fast.

October 1: Again wired to K. Kelappan to break his fast.

October 2: K. Kelappan broke his fast in the morning.

On or after *October 2:* Gandhiji issued statement to the Press on temple-entry.

October 17: Dr. Ambedkar and Sarojini Naidu saw Gandhiji in jail.

October 18: Gandhiji wrote to H. F. Hudson, seeking Government's definite reply regarding interviews and correspondence for untouchability work.

October 19: Gandhiji was removed to the cell in which he had lived before the fast.

October 20: Started taking bread.

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October 23: Punjabhai Shah passed away.

October 24: Gandhiji suspended correspondence on untouchability till the Government removed restrictions on correspondence and interviews relating to untouchability work.

October 26: Col. Doyle saw Gandhiji in jail.

October 31: Gandhiji declined to take special food from November 1, as a protest against restrictions on correspondence and interviews relating to untouchability work.

November 1: Stopped taking special diet.

November 2: Suspended restrictions on diet in response to message from Government.

November 3: Government lifted all restrictions on visitors, correspondence and publicity for untouchability work.

November 4: Gandhiji issued his first statement to the Press on untouchability.

November 5: Issued second statement on untouchability.

November 7: Issued third statement on untouchability.
Gave interview to Associated Press on temple-entry question.

November 8: Issued fourth statement on untouchability.

November 11: Dissuaded P. N. Rajbhoj and his friends from starting any satyagraha or fast for temple-entry.

November 12: Gave interview to *The Hindu.*

November 13: Replied to Lord Sankey's public appeal to him.

November 14: Issued fifth statement on untouchability.

November 15: Issued sixth statement on untouchability.

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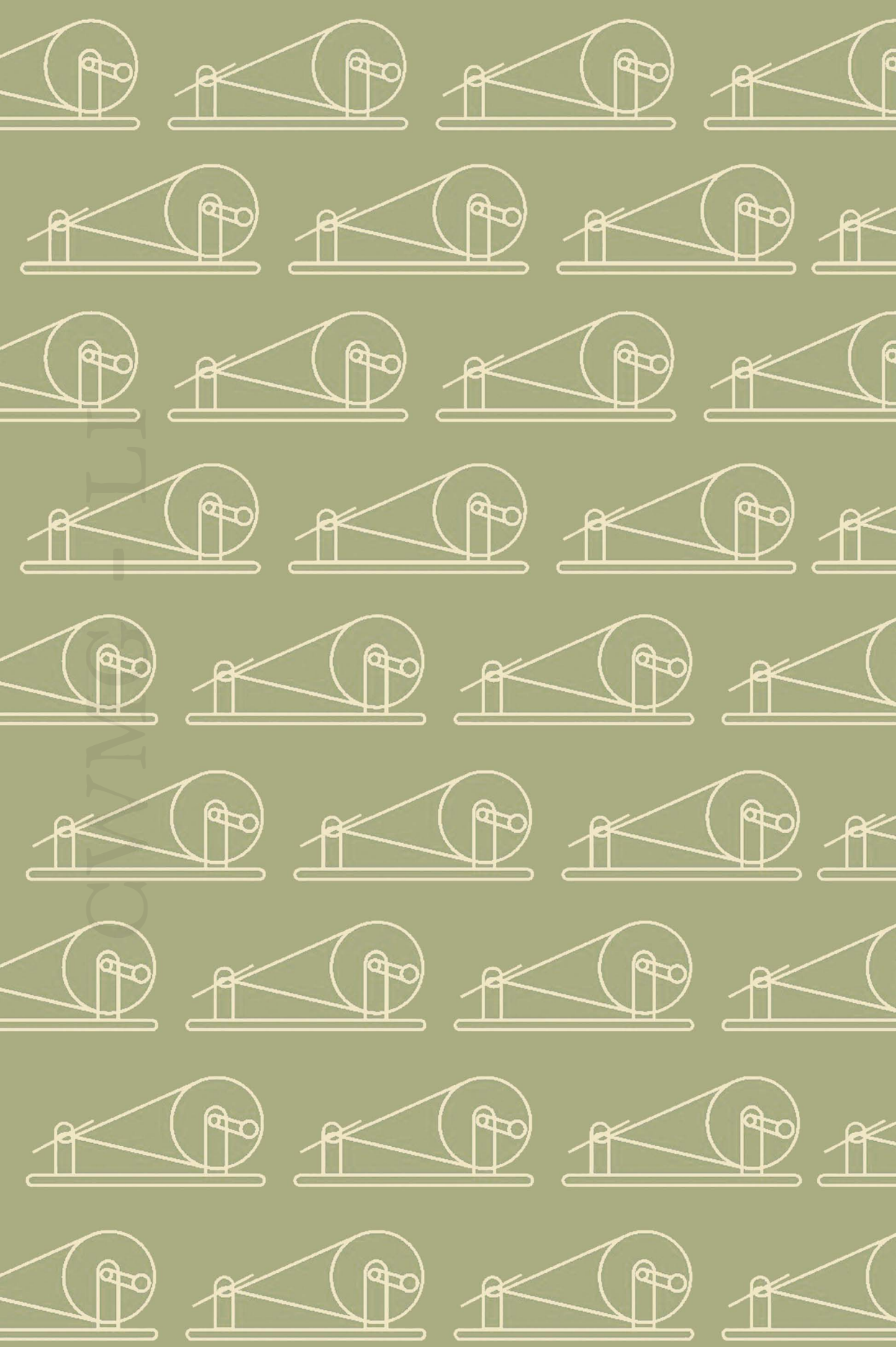
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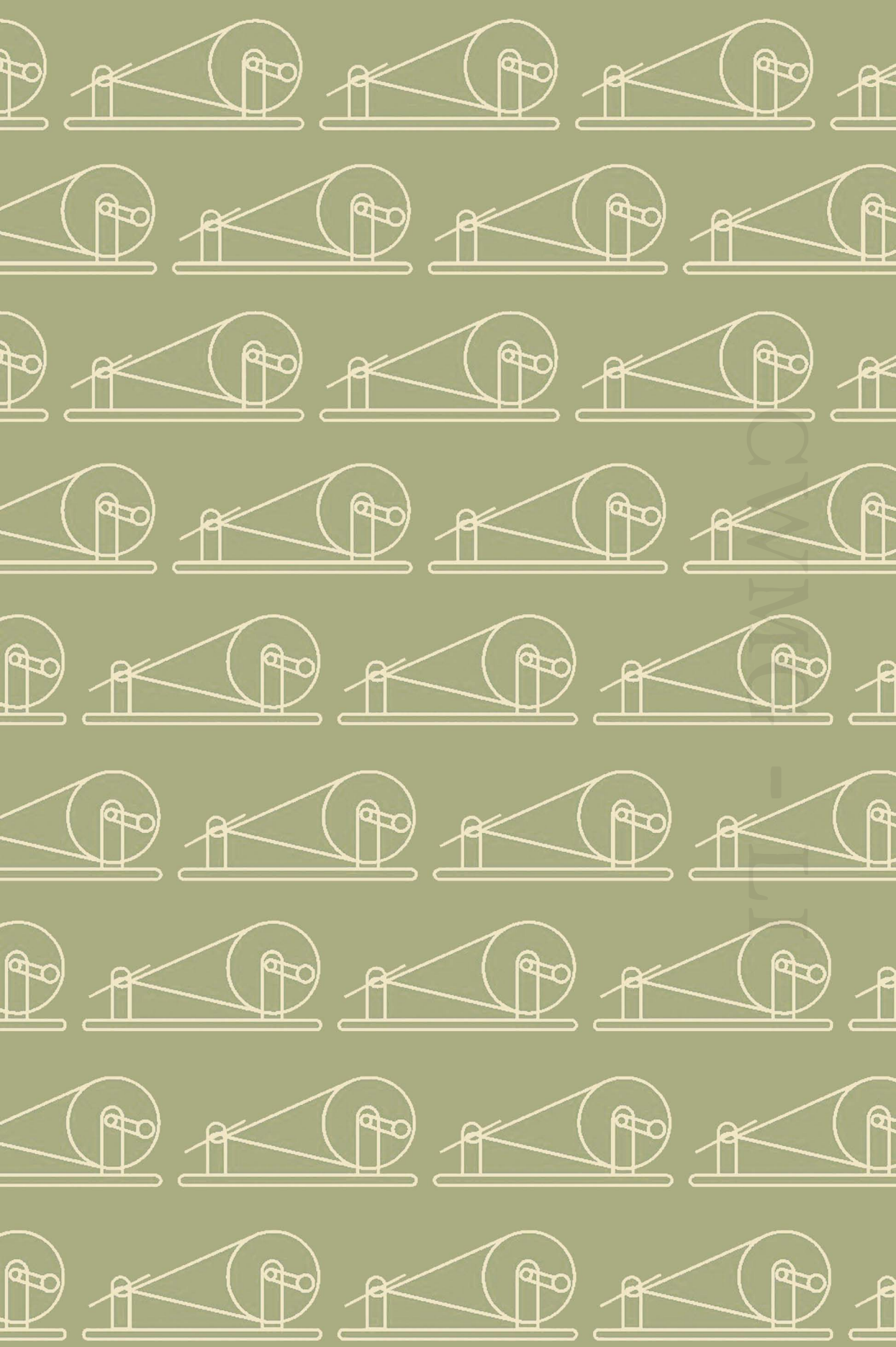
PAGE		FOR	READ
9	Item 16, source-line	[From Hindi]	to be omitted
24	* Footnote 3	in Durban	at Pardekoph
151	Item 231, title	*IYER GOPALA*	*IYER AND GOPALA*
252	* Footnote	pp. 102-4	pp. 293-8
310	Item 507	to be omitted from this volume	
451	* Para 3, line 10	called me	called on me

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