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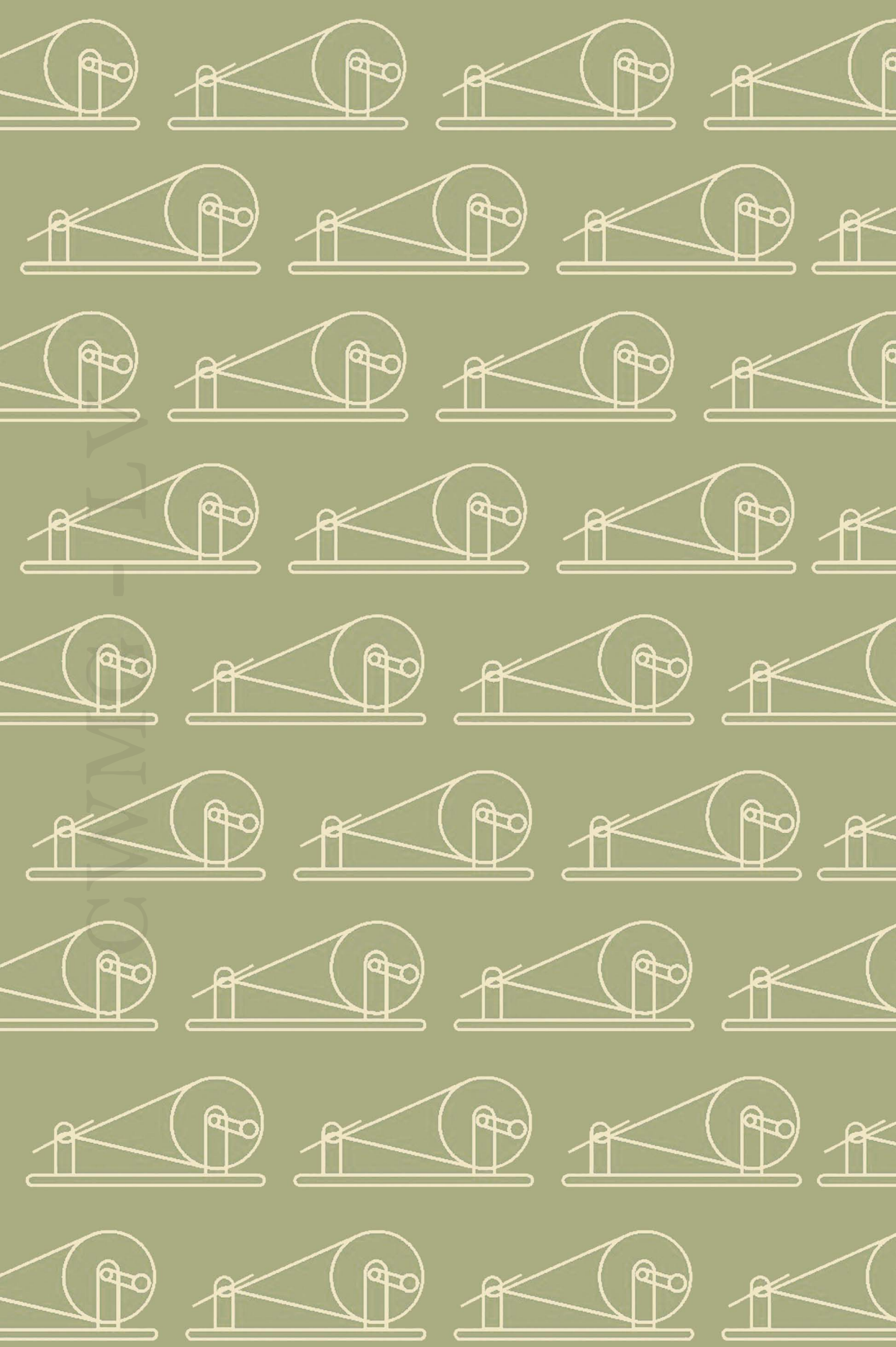
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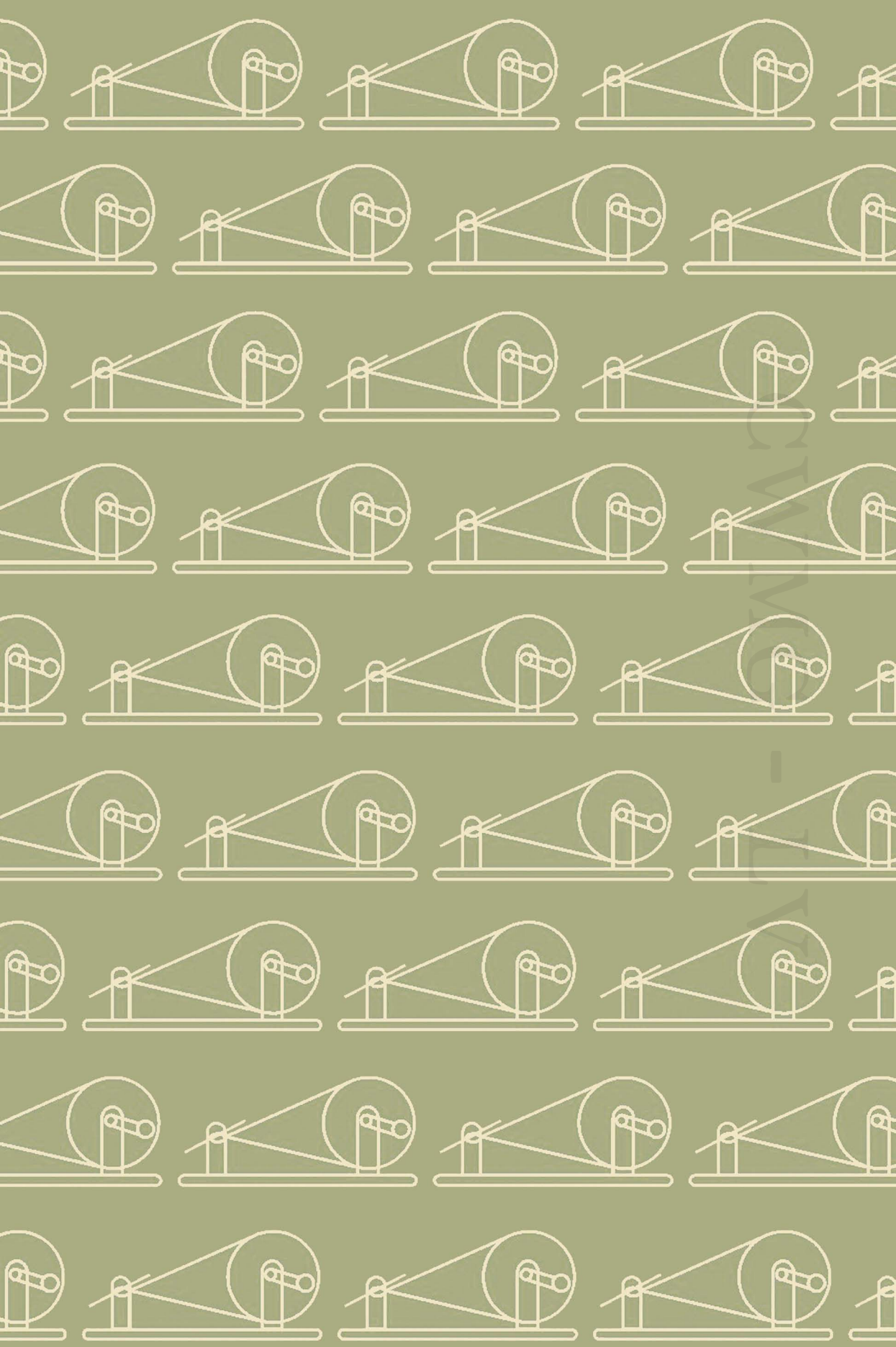
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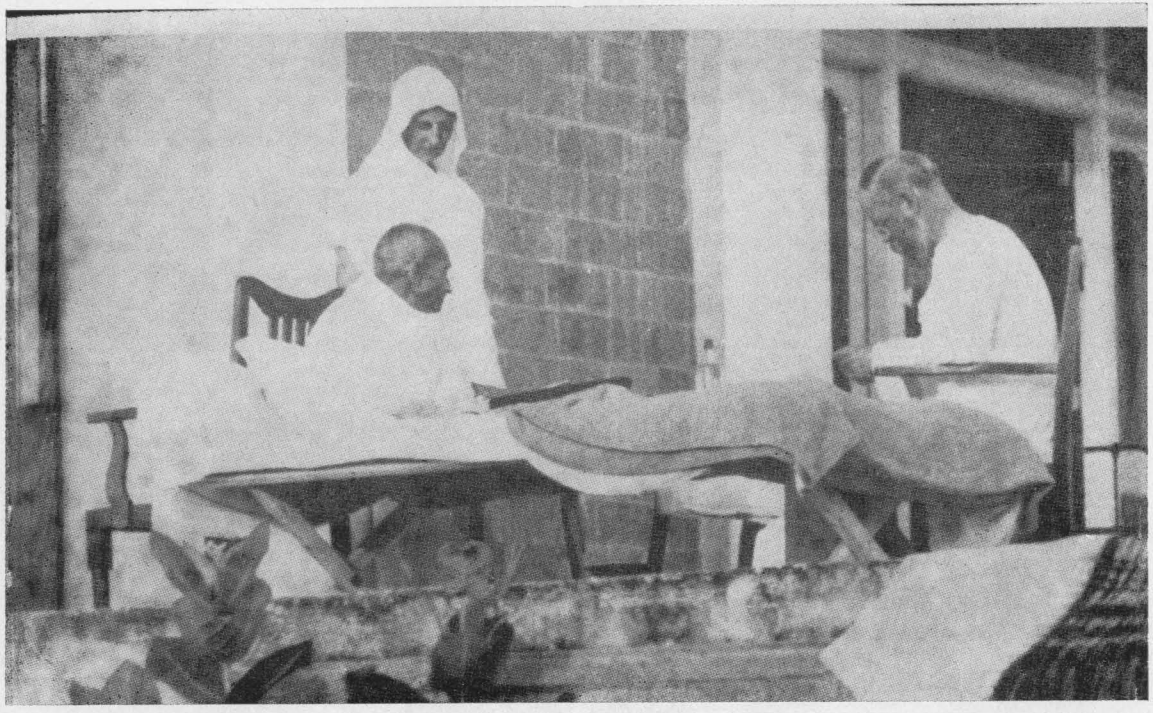
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WITH ANDREWS AND MIRABEHN DURING FAST

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

LV

(April 23 – September 15, 1933)

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PREFACE

The tide of patriotic fervour and moral idealism which swept the country with the launching of the civil disobedience movement on March 12, 1930, had, after a temporary wave caused by Gandhiji's fast of September 1932 (*vide* Vol. LI), begun rapidly to ebb away, and this volume (April 23 to September 15, 1933) shows Gandhiji searching for a way of quickening the conscience and strengthening the resolve of the people who had to sustain both the religious movement against untouchability and the political struggle against foreign rule. Shocked by increasing evidence of insincerity or moral lapses on the part of workers engaged in Harijan service, Gandhiji attributed their weakness to imperfection in himself (p.132) and undertook a self-purificatory fast of 21 days to make himself, through prayerful communion with God, a worthier instrument of service. On being released from prison at the commencement of the fast, he first suspended and later withdrew mass civil disobedience and replaced it by individual civil disobedience, which he planned to inaugurate on August 1 with a march to Ras, a village in Gujarat, after having first disbanded the Ashram at Sabarmati as an act of sacrifice by him of "that which is nearest and dearest to me" (p. 303). Unwilling to play the undignified "cat-and-mouse game" (p. 425) of arrest and release which followed, Gandhiji decided not to court imprisonment during the unexpired portion of the one-year sentence awarded to him on August 4, but, if left free by the Government, "to devote this period to Harijan service and if possible to such constructive activities as my health may permit" (p. 426).

The decision to undertake a self-purificatory fast came to Gandhiji with dramatic suddenness in the early hours of April 30. "A tempest" had "been raging" in his heart for some days (p. 74) and for three days prior to the decision he had been unable to sleep (p. 76). "The night I got the inspiration", he explained later, "I had a terrible inner struggle. My mind was restless. . . . The burden of my responsibility was crushing me." Then, suddenly, after more than an hour of tossing in the bed ". . . the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased" (p. 255). Gandhiji could not clearly explain the precise cause of this painful agitation. Some shocking cases of moral impurity had come to his notice, it is true, but though he admitted that they "must have subconsciously pre-

pared the ground for the fast'' he was unable to lay his ''finger on any one of those single incidents as having been wholly or principally responsible for this sacrifice'' (p. 134). Probably things had become unbearable to him because he realized his helplessness in the face of the extremely slow progress of the anti-untouchability reform. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru on the day after the fast was announced, he vividly described the pain in his heart. ''There is nothing so bad'' as the practice of untouchability ''in all the world'', he said. ''And yet I cannot leave religion, and therefore Hinduism. My life would be a burden to me, if Hinduism failed me. . . . Take it away and nothing remains for me.'' And unable to ''tolerate it with untouchability, the high-and-low belief'', he applied the ''sovereign remedy'' of the fast taught by Hinduism itself (p. 96).

Having fixed the date and hour of commencement, Gandhiji sat down to draft the statement which was released a few days later. The fast, he explained, was ''against nobody in particular and against everybody who wants to participate in the joy of it''. It was ''a heart-prayer for the purification of self and associates, for greater vigilance and watchfulness'' (p. 74). He had come to realize the magnitude of the evil of untouchability; the fight against it, to be effective, required ''inward wealth, inward organization and inward power, in other words, self-purification''. But this ''can only come by fasting and prayer. We may not approach the God of Truth in the arrogance of strength, but in the meekness of the weak and the helpless'' (p. 74). For Gandhiji, the Harijan movement was, no less than the movement for temple reform, a religious movement and ''what the reformer should be concerned with is a radical change more in the inward spirit than in the outward form. If the first is changed, the second will take care of itself'' (p. 62). Such a movement depended for its success not ''on the intellectual or material resources of its sponsors'', but solely upon the spiritual resources and the best known method of adding to these resources was fasting (p. 84). Indeed the fast should have come, Gandhiji explained, ''at the time of the inauguration of the Harijan movement after the sealing of the Yeravda Pact'' as a kind of ''preparatory *yajna* (sacrifice)''. Having been thus overdue, it had also become ''a purificatory *yajna*'', a penance. But all this, he admitted, was ''argument after the fact. When I felt that I had received a peremptory call, I had no such reasoning in front of me. The call simply came and overpowered me'' (p. 133). When appeals were made to Gandhiji by Vallabhbhai Patel, who had tended him for 16

months in jail with "a mother's love" (pp. 159 and 166), by Rajaji and even by General Smuts, to abandon the proposed fast, he could only assert that there was an overpowering force which prevented him from responding (p. 120). Repeating his claim that the fast was prompted by God, Gandhiji said: "His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy" (p. 121). The decision had the effect of lifting a great weight from Gandhiji's heart. Writing to C. F. Andrews on the day of commencement of the fast, he said: "I stand or seem to stand calm in the midst of the events that would but for the approaching fast have rent me in twain" (p. 150). In the public statement issued on the same day, Gandhiji confessed that whatever the fast "may mean for the cause, it will certainly be my saving. . . . Without it I would, in all probability, have been useless for further service of Harijans, and for that matter, any other service" (p. 156).

The fast, the object of which was self-purification and purification of Hinduism from the filth of untouchability (p. 135), was also a means of developing the spirit of *anasakti*, of non-attachment to the body. Advising Mirabehn against carrying a "load of anxiety" which was "something radically wrong" and "incompatible with a living faith in a living God", he wrote: "As days pass I feel this living presence in every fibre of my vein" (p. 187). But Mirabehn was much upset and so was Devdas, Gandhiji's "youngest son and valued comrade" (p. 120), and for a few days even the fountain of Vallabhbhai's humour "seemed to have dried up" (p. 132). It must have been an agonizing situation for Gandhiji, but he was sustained by his faith in God and in the *Gita* teaching of surrendering the fruits of works to Him.

Though the fast was addressed to nobody in particular, Gandhiji expected "most from the Ashram" (p. 88), for he looked upon it as chiefly his handiwork and loved it in spite of all its shortcomings (p. 33). He was, indeed, painfully aware of frequent tensions among the workers and so many shocking things had happened that he told Narandas Gandhi, "there is little room for being more shocked than I have already been" (p. 126). Narandas himself felt the burden of his responsibility too heavy and wrote to Gandhiji a "heart-rending" letter about it (p. 89). But Gandhiji was determined not to lose heart, "To leave the Ashram or to close it down", he told Narandas, "would be

nothing but cowardice'' (p. 113). He had striven ceaselessly to raise the Ashram inmates to the ethical ideal he had set for them and on this occasion, too, he sent detailed instructions for the purification of the Ashram (pp. 86-91) and hoped that some of the inmates ''will have cultivated sufficient fitness'' to join the chain of indefinite fasts which he visualized as a form of *yajna* for the eradication of untouchability (pp. 90, 143 and 146). The fast, Gandhiji said, was a part of his striving to deserve the love of Ashram workers for him and acquire the strength to carry them forward. ''If I fail in this, I cannot hope to succeed in anything else'' (p. 113).

This strong attachment to the Ashram, however, did not prevent Gandhiji from sacrificing it when political considerations made it necessary to do so. Gandhiji saw that the individual civil disobedience which was to replace the mass movement would be a prolonged struggle and called for much greater sacrifices than the people had hitherto undergone. Being the author of the movement, he felt that he was expected to make the greatest sacrifice and decided, accordingly, to hand over to the Government the Ashram ''for the building of which'', he said in the letter communicating his decision to the Government, ''I and many members have laboured with infinite patience and care all these eighteen years. Every head of cattle and every tree has its history and sacred associations. They are all members of a big family. . . . It will not be without a tear that we shall break up the family and its activities'' (p. 303). The disbandment of the Ashram, Gandhiji thought, should lead to greater effort and greater dedication on the part of the inmates each of whom would now ''constitute a walking Ashram'' (p. 310). The Government refused to take charge of the Ashram and it was handed over to the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

The political circumstances which called for the sacrifice of the Ashram tested Gandhiji's non-attachment as severely as the problems connected with the anti-untouchability movement. His sudden release from jail on the day of commencement of the fast put upon him, ''as a seeker after Truth and a man of honour, a tremendous burden and strain'' (p. 158). He, therefore, assured the Government that he would ''not abuse the release'' and would not take ''a single step secretly or openly in furtherance of civil disobedience'' (p. 159), and also advised the Congress President to suspend the movement for six weeks. This latter step was necessary for the purpose of the fast, too. He had intended the fast to be ''an uninterrupted twenty-one days'

prayer" (p. 257) and did not wish his brain to be occupied by any thoughts unconnected with Harijan work (p. 158). If the civil disobedience had continued, Gandhiji explained later, he would not have been able to bear calmly reports of arrests, lathi-charges, etc. (p. 265). His conciliatory gesture, however, found no response from the Government. With the help of Ordinance Rule it had cowed down the masses and imposed "a kind of dead calm" which, Gandhiji said in a letter to C. F. Andrews, "even in my bed, isolated though I am from contact with people through the orders of doctors, I can't help sensing" (p. 197). When, therefore, after an informal conference held in Poona of Congress workers, he sought an interview with the Viceroy, hoping to put up some proposal "that would have been acceptable both to the Government and the people" (p. 309), and the request was curtly refused on the ground that "the civil disobedience movement was "wholly unconstitutional, that there can be no compromise with it and that Government cannot enter into any negotiations for its withdrawal" (p. 264), Gandhiji was not prepared for the complete and humiliating surrender which the Government demanded. "I would rather be reduced to dust than surrender", he said (p. 265). Satyagraha, he explained, "may not be given up either because of the weakness of the people taking part in it or . . . the seeming victory of the opponent" (p. 295). He, therefore, decided to renew the struggle in the revised form of individual civil disobedience with effect from August 1. Though the withdrawal of the mass struggle was an admission of failure, inasmuch as the masses were not able any longer "to suffer the prolonged torture of the Ordinance Rule" (p. 296), "individual civil disobedience", Gandhiji contended, was "an invincible force" (p. 282), It would be confined to individuals who were "prepared to brave all the risks . . . including uttermost penury and the loss of all their possessions . . . or physical torture . . ." These men and women "will represent the national spirit and the nation's determination to win independence . . ." (pp. 296-7). The decision to replace the mass civil disobedience by individual civil disobedience did not thus "proceed from a sense of despair, or defeat"; Gandhiji had neither (p. 297). As he had explained in a letter to C. F. Andrews written long before the decision was taken: "Time does not count . . . there is a certainty of the final triumph of truth, so long as there is some living representative of it." And there were, he was sure, many such representatives of truth in India who would "count no cost too great for the vindication of truth" (p. 197).

Gandhiji was arrested on the midnight of July 31, taken to Yeravda Central Prison and there served with an order to confine his movements to the Poona City municipal limits and take no part in civil disobedience activities. On his refusing to obey the order, he was re-arrested and sentenced to a year's imprisonment on August 4. His request for the usual facilities to carry on Harijan work from jail was refused on the ground that on this occasion he was a convicted prisoner and not a prisoner of State as before. Gandhiji thereupon went on an indefinite fast with effect from the noon of August 16. He was unconditionally released on the 23rd after his condition had taken a serious turn and was sent to the Sassoon Hospital. For a while there, his life seemed to hang in the balance. He felt that he would not survive for long, that he "could no longer battle with death" and even gave away whatever he had (p. 393). "It has all been like a dream" (p. 370), he told Vallabhbhai Patel in a letter dictated on that day from his sick-bed in "Parnakuti", the Poona residence of Premlila Thackersey, where he was taken after being discharged from the Sassoon Hospital. It took him some time to recover from the feeling of unreality by which he was overwhelmed and to decide on the next step. "I have been used", he said in a brief statement in *Harijan*, "to the most unexpected things in the course of a very long public life," but this was the most unexpected of them all. "How I shall use this life out of prison, I do not know", he confessed. But he was sure of one thing, namely that "Harijan service will be . . . the breath of life for me . . ." (p. 366). For some days Gandhiji felt himself surrounded by darkness and could not clearly see the path of duty before him. At last, after "hard praying and thinking", he decided not to "court imprisonment by offering aggressive civil resistance" up to the period of the termination of his sentence, a self-imposed restraint which was a bitter cup to him (p. 425).

Doubts had begun to grow about the correctness of Gandhiji's policies from two opposite points of view. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, the Liberal leader, felt that the country was losing faith in Gandhiji's political method and "another answer" was taking shape in people's minds. It was that civil disobedience, both mass and individual, should be replaced by a new policy "aiming at constructive national good in legislation, finance and administration". He, therefore, appealed to Gandhiji to retire from the Congress and leave it free to evolve a new programme (Appendix XIII). Gandhiji was not at all averse to the suggestion. "I would",

he said in reply, "gladly retire from the Congress and devote myself to the development of civil disobedience outside the Congress and to Harijan work". But he did not know how to do it. Performance of duty, he said, was always to him "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. The awful fact, however, has often been to know where duty lies" (p. 382).

From the opposite point of view, Jawaharlal Nehru urged Gandhiji to give a more radical accent to Congress policies and to remove the confusion which his and M. S. Aney's statements on the question of civil disobedience seemed to have produced (Appendix XIV). Gandhiji's reply was unambiguous and firm, in perfect keeping with the bond of affection and mutual understanding which subsisted between them. While agreeing with Jawaharlal that "without a material revision of vested interests the condition of the masses can never be improved" and about the necessity of relating the Indian national movement with "progressive internationalism", he admitted that despite this "agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us". He, therefore, concerned himself "with the conservation of the means and their progressive use" (p. 427) and justified all his recent decisions from this point of view. And, finally, he assured Jawaharlal that he had no sense of defeat in him and that "the hope in me that this country of ours is fast marching towards its goal is burning as bright as it did in 1920 . . ." (p. 430).

Replying to a correspondent who had pointed out the inconsistencies between Gandhiji's views in 1921 and 1932 on the questions of inter-dining and intermarriage, he offered the famous apologia: " . . . I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. . . . What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment. . . ." He would therefore advise readers who found two of his statements at variance "to choose the later of the two" (p. 61).

As the aim of the anti-untouchability movement was the purification of Hinduism as a whole, the Harijans had to make their own contributions by clean and pure living and by self-reliance in working out their own salvation (p. 278). While shaking off their sense of helplessness, they should magnify their own faults and "make constant efforts to overcome them" (p. 364).

Chastizing the sanatanists whose behaviour belied their philosophy, Gandhiji had this to say on the self-revealing power of love: "Love is made of innumerable suns. When one small

sun cannot remain hidden, how can love? Does a mother ever have to go about saying that she loves her child? A child who cannot yet speak looks into the eyes of his mother. When their eyes meet we can tell from their looks that they are in communion with something divine'' (p. 171). To social scientists who assert the interpersonal non-communicability of inner experience this may be a hard saying, but Gandhiji and his people, even as a mother and her child, knew how to be ''in communion with something divine'' through mutual rapport at a level deeper than the verbal.

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NOTE TO THE READER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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CWMG - LV

1. *ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS*[1]

More about Temple entry[2]

There is no doubt whatever that anyone who has no faith in image-worship is not entitled to participate in the movement for temple entry. No purpose would be served by allowing Harijans a right to have *darshan*[3] from the spots you have indicated in the maps. Only those restrictions should be applied to Harijans as are applied to the other Hindus. If the public has any objection to it, it would be better not to permit Harijans to enter the temples just now. If the trustees are keen on performing *shuddhi*[4] of the images, they are entitled to do so. Before Harijans enter a temple they should of course be instructed about the general restrictions. In brief, I am clearly of the view that in the matter of temple entry coercion has no place at all. It is improper to force entry of Harijans into a temple where a majority of the worshippers are opposed to it. If the worshippers approve of it, Harijans may certainly visit it. In any case, only those Harijans who abide by the rules applied to the general public are entitled to temple entry.

True Majority[5]

I had recognized the difficulty about the majority at the very time the Bill was placed before me. I had told Rajaji that 51 per cent would not be proper. I had even suggested an amendment to it, for, I am clearly of the view that the great reform we are trying to bring about cannot become universal so long as there is no clear majority. And all of you would have noticed that for that very reason I have tried to accommodate the sentiments of even a lone opponent. For, what looks like a superstition to me may be a matter of life and death to him. His temple may be so dear to him that he regards it his all and it may be his honest belief that the *darshan* might have no efficacy if he

[1] This appeared under the title "From the Mail-bag".

[2] A correspondent had asked several questions regarding temple entry, and had offered some suggestions.

[3] Sight of a person, place or thing

[4] Purification

[5] The correspondent, C. F. Andrews, had proposed a 66 per cent majority for the Temple entry Bill. For Gandhiji's original letter, *vide* Vol. LIV, p. 389.

were to have it standing by the side of a Harijan. Hence my suggestion that he may be given a separate time and the temple may undergo *shuddhi* for his sake.

I have made this and many other suggestions, but I do not wish to discuss them any more just now. When the Bill comes before the committee, no reformer would hesitate to accept the amendment regarding the strength of majority and any others that deserve to be introduced. Of course, he would not compromise on principles on any account.

Inter-dining and Inter-caste Marriages[1]

These two measures are not at all related to untouchability. No one is an untouchable in my eyes. But, for that reason, is there any justice in suggesting that I should either sit down for a meal with one whom I do not regard as untouchable or marry my son or daughter to such a one? Both these things are a matter of personal preference and individual right. But it is not a matter of right to regard any man as untouchable because of his birth. That is a gross injustice and heinous sin.

Harijans Don't Care[2]

The question is not what they demand. The point is what we owe to them and what we have promised them in the open convention[3] of the Hindu world in Bombay held under the presidentship of Malaviyaji. We have made a promise to admit Harijans into temples and Hindus have pledged to lay down their lives to that end, if necessary. Do you remember the statement in *Mahabharata*? "Place truth in one scale and a thousand *yajnas* in the other. The scale of truth will always be lower." It is unbearable that we should break our promises to the Harijans and to God. I shudder at the mere thought. We can be patient with the sanatanists, we can plead with them, implore them, but how can we give up the matter of temple entry?

You say that things would sort themselves out once we educate the Harijans. But then caste Hindus themselves need to be educated as much. Not that there is no education today. But the great misfortune is that it is wrong education that is being given. The wrong education has given us wrong lessons. It

[1] A correspondent had suggested that inter-dining and inter-caste marriages would remove untouchability.

[2] The correspondent, Moti Lal Roy, had argued that Harijans did not care for temple entry. For Gandhiji's original letter, *vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 440-2.

[3] Held on September 25, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

teaches us that *adharma* is dharma, that sanctimoniousness is religion, that superstition is knowledge, that intolerance is kindness, that indulgence is restraint. And that the interpretation of the Shastras consists not in understanding their simple and straightforward meaning but in arbitrarily forcing on them a far-fetched and perverse meaning. First of all this wrong education will have to be wiped out.

The Same Thing over Again[1]

Have you forgotten that at Bombay we made a promise to the Harijans without their asking for it? And what is the sense in saying that Harijans have not demanded? In many places, the poor, downtrodden, crushed Harijans do not ask for schools, they have no courage to ask for wells; nor do they demand any other rights. And so, does it behove us to say that we will grant them nothing till they ask for it. We have been riding on their shoulders. It would be enough if we got off. These poor creatures have been so oppressed that even if we got off they would not find the burden gone. But is it any justification to continue to ride on them?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

2. *WARNING TO ME*

I do not wish to give the name of the author of this[2]. But everybody knows him. He is one of the sincere servants of the country and has rendered exceptional service to the cause of Harijans. I, therefore, wish that everybody should read this letter carefully. I read it twice over, and pondered over it. The correspondent's warning is justified, and timely. The fear he has expressed may even prove true.

If that happens, I will not repent. It will not be the first time that "Man proposes, God disposes" will have been proved true. God, though He ordains everything, takes responsibility

[1] The correspondent, P. N. Sankaranarayana Iyer, had stated that Harijans were not bothered about temple entry at all and that he was only concentrating on educating them. For Gandhiji's original letter, *vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 445-6.

[2] The extracts from the correspondent's letter preceding Gandhiji's comments are not translated here. The author had stated that the anti-untouchability movement being carried on in Gandhiji's name was in effect perpetuating the Harijans' separation from the Hindu fold.

CWMG - TFV

for nothing; otherwise I would throw all responsibility on Him and disclaim any for myself. At the most I would accept responsibility only for approving of a suggestion made by an *Antyaja* friend to substitute the word '*Antyaja*' by the sweeter one 'Harijan'. I will not mind if the slogan 'Jai to *Antyajas*' is replaced by 'Jai to Harijans'.

The sanatanists assert that the *Antyajas* have been a distinct class from time immemorial and say that they will sacrifice their lives to keep them so. I have been praying to God, and persuading others also to pray, to grant me the strength to sacrifice my life to secure their assimilation into the Hindu fold and end their separation. The sanatanist friends have been striving to perpetuate the separation of *Antyajas* and are prepared to accept responsibility for the consequences. The question of responsibility, therefore, does not arise.

It would be far better that Harijans should fight *savarna* Hindus than that they should for ever remain wretched slaves and dependent on *savarna* Hindus, living on their goodwill and eating their leftovers. Neither Dr. Ambedkar nor Rao Bahadur Srinivasan needs my help to prepare for such a fight. Time has been doing its work. It has brought forth these two friends and will bring forth many more like them, if, that is, *savarna* Hindus do not do their duty.

What had been happening before our eyes would not have ceased to happen by our pretending that it was not happening. A snake in the house will not run away by our pretending that it was not there. A disease does not get cured by our ignoring it. I look upon myself as a wise vaid in this matter. My diagnosis is quite correct, and the remedy I have prescribed is also the most appropriate for this particular disease. I have no doubt at all that if it is applied the disease is bound to be cured. What can the vaid do, however, if the patient does not apply the remedy? At the most he may start an indefinite fast at the patient's residence. Indeed the vaid is getting ready to do so. Only, he must make himself fit to undertake such a fast. The moment he becomes so he will not be held back by anybody.

It is not the Harijans who have got the disease; if they have got any, the cause of it is the *savarna* Hindus. It is the latter who have got the disease. But they deny that they have and threaten the vaid for his diagnosis. But the vaid will not hold his tongue. He has been shouting at the top of his voice, 'Take care, the house is on fire.'

What is ordained, however, cannot be prevented. Nobody has been able to do so. If Hinduism is ordained to perish, what

can anybody do? One's sense of right and wrong is conditioned by one's past karmas. And past karmas mean the future. *savarna* Hindus will be prompted to do what is in keeping with the future that is ordained for them. How can one, therefore, blame them either?

I would, therefore, suggest to this servant of the country that he should not lose patience, nor his appetite or sleep, but should go on doing his duty with single-minded devotion. He will probably say, and rightly, that he felt it was his duty to warn me and that having discharged it, he felt relieved. In that case there is no need for me to console him. He has done well indeed to warn me. I will be and remain more vigilant. As to my path, I see it clear before me and will take care not to stray from it. My aim is the same as that of this servant of the country. Like him, I, too, do not want the Harijans to become a separate sect. I do not wish even in my dreams to be the Acharya of such a new sect. I wish to become and die as a true servant of the Hindus and, therefore, of the Harijans, of India and, therefore, of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all others.

The warning, however, given by this servant of the country is as much for the sanatanists as it is for me. Will they heed it?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

3. *HARIJAN SCHOOLS IN KATHIAWAR*

Shri Mulchand Parekh, secretary of Kathiawar Harijan Committee, had suggested to me that I should write something about Harijan schools, etc., in the *Harijanbandhu*. Thereupon I asked for a report of their activities. He has sent the following report[1]:

[1] Not translated here. Under the auspices of the Kathiawar Harijan Samiti, 23 Harijan schools were functioning at various places in Kathiawar and giving education to 1648 Harijan pupils. But due to paucity of funds, the Samiti had decided to close down the schools. Gandhiji had then instructed them not to do so and on his advice the Samiti had issued a public appeal for funds. They had collected Rs. 7,000, but still needed another Rs. 3,000, to run the schools for a year.

I have already expressed my opinion. Not a single one of those schools and ashrams which already exist should close down for want of funds. If there are only a handful of workers, they should sell their property and sell themselves even to keep the institutions going. If there are such financial difficulties, they indicate that the people of Kathiawar have no interest in Harijan welfare or they do not trust the workers. Whatever the truth, the only way to create such interest or trust is the workers' self-sacrifice.

I hear suggestions of collecting funds from outside Kathiawar, from a place as far off as Africa. It is shameful if we have to do that. Those Kathiawaris who reside abroad should keep themselves informed of such philanthropic organizations and they should send contributions without being asked. Organizations like Kathiawar Harijan Samiti can easily subsist if every rich Kathiawari puts aside 10 per cent or whatever portion of his earnings he thinks proper for rendering such help.

The proper thing is that the local Kathiawaris should take interest in such organizations and identify themselves with them. It is really shameful on our part to have to trouble an old man like Abbas Saheb to help us collect funds. I, therefore, hope that after reading Shri Mulchand Parekh's statement people will send their donations unasked and ensure the survival of the organizations.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

4. *COMPLAINT AGAINST WOMEN*

I give below the gist of what a Harijan from Karachi has written to me, retaining his broken language as far as possible:

> The sense of pollution through touch is much stronger among women. More so against the Dhed Harijans. They throw down to them stale, dirty, rotten left-over food. The women believe that only stale and rotten food should be given to the Bhangis. They are convinced that this is proper. The Bhangi men and women as a matter of course believe that they are getting their morning meal in return for their scavenging work. If the Hindu society stops giving rotten food to the Bhangi and the other communities, I can humbly say that pollution will disappear from the women.

You will have to plead further with women to shed the superstitious notion of pollution through touch.

I have given the above as the substance of a long letter. Untouchability will not be eradicated merely by women giving good food to the Harijan brethren instead of left-overs, but if they did that, certainly it would be said that the women had some compassion in their hearts. The complaint against women is a genuine one. If they wish, they can forthwith effect this reform. This does not involve a question of money but only a change of heart. The woman in whose heart God dwells can readily accept a Harijan as a fellow-being. The students of Dehra Dun had raised the same question and what I wrote[1] in reply to it applies here also. By controlling their palate, the women can give a clean share of food to the Harijans without adding to the expense by a single pie. I have a childhood memory. Many times my mother ate after feeding a sadhu. She would serve out lovingly what she herself was to eat and having fed him thus she would take her meal and feel rewarded. Similarly, how nice it would be if women took out the share for the Harijans first and then served the others! In this case, a Harijan ceases to be a beggar but becomes a family member or a guest. She would feed him lovingly and merely by doing this she would make that Harijan clean. Instead of proudly throwing food from upstairs, she would hand over the food herself to the Bhangi and, if she found his hands dirty, she would ask him to clean them. If he does not have clean clothes, she would provide them. She would buy utensils for him or would give him only dry and uncooked food or would increase his wages. When a Bhangi develops self-respect he will, like others, accept payment only. Before such a time comes, I have suggested only interim reforms. Many reforms will occur to women themselves when they have had a change of heart, when the ghost of untouchability has been exorcized and when the feeling that Harijans are inferior is removed. Without waiting for anyone to take up this work on a large scale, a woman who feels the need for this reform should make a beginning with herself and then invite her neighbours to join her.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 23-4-1933

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 264-6.

5. LETTER TO M. V. S. RAMAN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON[1],
April 23, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter together with your pamphlet. It is a most difficult thing for me to apply my mind to anything outside my present work which takes up the whole of my time. You will therefore please forgive me, if I cannot give you any opinion about your project.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. M. V. S. RAMAN
DIRECTOR, UNIVERSAL U. UNIFORMITY
30 KAMAKSHIJOSYAR STREET, KUMBHAKONAM

From a photostat: C.W. 9678. Courtesy: M. V. S. Raman

6. LETTER TO B.[2]

April 23, 1933

MY DEAR . . . ,

Your letter of 18th April. It is utterly unworthy of belief. N.[3] was with me when I read your letter and I asked her whether in her opinion when she was playing with fire you were untouched by it and she said point blank 'No'. I know of no young man—and I have known hundreds, if not thousands— who having strayed had not deceived himself as you seem to have. For I gather from your letter that all the time you were with N. you were unmoved by any animal passion whatsoever. This is impossible for any person who is not utterly impotent or who is not a God, and I suppose that you are neither the

[1] Also called by Gandhiji Yeravda Mandir, that is, Yeravda Temple. This place-name is not reproduced in subsequent items.

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] An American woman who later stayed at Sabarmati Ashram for some time; the name in this and the subsequent items, however, has been omitted.

one nor the other. You should get rid of this self-deception altogether, if you will be a true man. You were no baby, nor was N. playing the part of mother when she forgot herself and the limitations of sex that God has imposed upon us human beings.

I would therefore strongly advise you to give up all sentimentality, to become a practical man and give yourself truly to Harijan service, whereas you were before now merely playing at it.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: S.N. 19035

7. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

April 23, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your postcard and your letter, both received the same day. What correction would you send me now about your wire?[1] I think the thing is all forgotten, and for the sake of truth what is now necessary is not a correction which is unwanted, but mental alertness which will not be satisfied with unsifted facts or loose arguments or expressions based upon those facts. It is not possible for me to prove with perfect logic that the extent of untouchability in Madras is much greater than in Bengal. But for our purpose, i.e., for the reformer who wants to get at the root of the evil and to serve only truth, it is a completely proved proposition that untouchability is by far the greatest in the South, because there it is not the caste Hindus on the one side and untouchables on the other, but Brahmins on the one side and non-Brahmins on the other. Non-Brahmins include all Hindus and all the non-Brahmins are undoubtedly untouchables, not perhaps in accordance with the definition of the Franchise Committee or the Census Commissioner, but most decidedly according to our definition. There is untouchability as to water, as to food and as to temple-going between Brahmins and non-Brahmins. But there are grades of untouchability, the bottom list containing the unseeable, who not only must not be seen but whose voice even must not be heard by the Brahmins. The temples are not arranged in the South as in the North. There, there are barriers

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 116-7.

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for all the divisions. I do not even know the actual barriers created, but there they are, and what you and I want to remove is those barriers. I am just now to go through the illuminating chapter on untouchability in the Bengal Census Report, but you see now my point. No correction that you may make will answer the purpose, but let us understand the position thoroughly for ourselves and I would just now suggest to you: 'Dismiss the South from your mind altogether. Don't go in for any comparison.' It is bad enough wherever we go and if we go by the mental state, then perhaps the comparatively more sensitive Namasudra feels the comparatively lighter untouchability much more than the comparatively less sensitive unseeable feels the grossest form of untouchability. Therefore irrespective of what the South does or does not do, your own work is cut out for you. You have to get rid of the untouchability of Bengal, whether it affects 50 per cent of the Hindu population or 5 per cent.

I understand what you say about Dr. P. C. Ray and Gurudev.[1] I think that the more you study the situation the more you will find, as I have found already, that educated Bengal does want a revision of the Yeravda Pact[2] and so far as I am concerned it may have that revision if it can conciliate the Bengal Harijans and all the other parties interested, provided of course that there is no tampering with the joint system. That they are going about it the wrong way is true and unfortunate. It is equally unfortunate that non-Bengalis are being blamed for what happened. Bengalis should have come in their numbers to the meeting in Bombay. There is a very fine legal maxim in Latin which says: 'Equity serves the vigilant, not the dormant.' But you cannot say anything to a person who is oppressed with grievances and is angry. Therefore I have adopted complete silence. That by itself will produce a reasonable spirit, and I would advise you too to observe absolute silence. You have said enough

[1] The addressee had mentioned that though Dr. P. C. Ray was earlier in favour of the Poona Pact, he had now grown averse to it. As for Gurudev, the addressee had invited him to preside over a meeting on the Yeravda Pact or to send a message. But Rabindranath Tagore had replied that he was surveying things from a higher level and did not like to be mixed up in current politics.

[2] Between the leaders acting on behalf of the Depressed Classes and of the rest of the Hindu community regarding the representation of the Depressed Classes in legislatures and certain other matters affecting their welfare. For the text of the agreement, *vide* Vol. LI, Appendix II. *Vide* also Vol. LIV, pp. 163 and 246-7.

and you have given your word to the Harijans of Bengal that so far as you are concerned the Pact is a sacred thing, not to be altered without the unanimous consent of all parties. Have I made myself quite clear to you?

I see that you are now having a proper ebb in the circulation of *Harijan*. But I do hope that you will not have to run it at a loss, and if it comes to the losing point, you will stop publication. If Bengal does not want 'Bengali Harijan', we may not force it upon it. The circulation of Hindi, Gujarati and English editions is steadily increasing. The English has been self-supporting almost from the beginning, and it is expected that the Gujarati and the Hindi will be, perhaps, inside of a month. Did I tell you that there was also a Tamil edition published by Ganesan? He is a very energetic worker and has given himself entirely to such causes.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19036

8. LETTER TO P. S. RUDRAMUNI

April 23, 1933

DEAR RUDRAMUNI,

I thank you for your letter. It is because you belong to the priesthood of the Harijan community that I have felt so sore about you. I cannot help feeling that you have neglected N. You should not have taken her there. You did nothing in the shape of putting her to the work for which you took her to your village and, if N. is right in what she says, you would not condescend to do any physical work. How I wish you would be an ideal priest to the Harijans and labour with them and for them, avoiding all the weaknesses and vices of the caste Hindu priests ! How I wish you, by the strength of your character and learning, command respect from the most fastidious caste Hindus!

So far as I can understand, you never refunded to Ramachandra the money for the ticket that you should have purchased for N. but for which you were too late. And then N. tells me that you resented her cropping her hair. Surely, it was a matter for you to welcome when a sister who had but till yesterday been leading an unclean life suddenly resolves to throw off all uncleanliness and adopt a life of renunciation,

apart from the economic and the hygienic necessity of removing the hair. Do you not understand, as a Hindu, that as a sannyasini, which according to our notion she had become, she cannot keep hair or any ornamentation that would tempt base human nature?

Lastly, you have not told me that the ticket for her to come to Poona was kindly paid for by a Parsi gentleman. Please let me have his full name and address. You will understand that I have not written this letter to rebuke you. I have no right to do so. I have not known you except through N. But because I consider you to be one of my own and because I feel for you I have written this in the hope that it may serve as a warning for the future. If I have unconsciously done an injustice to you, you will please correct me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. S. RUDRAMUNI
CHITALDRUG

From a microfilm: S.N. 21038

9. *LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA*

April 23, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter with N.'s letter. She and your letter came by the same mail. So you see that I anticipated you.[1] I was anxiously watching her progress at Chitaldrug and I saw that having been instrumental in the sudden revolution in her life it would have been sinful on my part to have allowed her to pine away in Chitaldrug without the Harijans benefiting by her presence. I have therefore no alternative but to have her directly under my care. I know that the experiment is not free from danger. I do not know, I suppose she herself does not know, whether the revolution has come to stay in her life. The break with the past is too sudden and yet I have known people to undergo such apparently sudden transformation. Looking back upon her letters I can trace the invisible working of her mind and the unconscious war between the forces of evil and forces of good that was going on within her. Let us hope that

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 496-7.

the forces of good have triumphed over those of evil.

Please tell me if you are out of pocket on her behalf and if so let me have your account. Did Rudramuni ever refund the money you paid for her ticket to Chitaldrug?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMACHANDRA
DEENA SEVA SANGH
MALLESWARAM, BANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 21042

10. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

April 23, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

You should write to me about your experiences in the villages. Mix with the village people as if you are one of them and talk to them in their own way. You can ask them what work they do, what food they eat, what crops they grow, what manures they use, where they have their pit-latrines and whether they use them, how many heads of cattle they tend and in what condition the cattle are, whether they have any fruit trees or other trees, what facilities they have for water, and so on. You may speak to the village children and mix with them. In short, we should take interest in their lives as if they were our relations and inquire after their conditions with the same curiosity with which we do about our relations'. This is the way to cultivate and strengthen the feeling of oneness with people.

I hope you enjoy excellent health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6756. Also C.W. 6756. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

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11. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

April 23, 1933

CHI. PRAGJI,

I got your letter after craving for one for a long time. I pray that your brother may get well.

Parvati seems to have forgotten me completely. Her sending messages has no value for me. Has she ever written to me even under some pretext? She should not talk about past times. You must have received my letter. If you *really* wish to talk about untouchability, then only can you meet me, otherwise be content with my letter. My advice is that you should be satisfied with the letter.

I still have to reply to you about your complaint against Manilal. I will do that after you have settled down.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PRAGJI KHANDUBHAI DESAI
C/O DR. N. D. PATEL
SEA VIEW BUILDING, QUEEN'S ROAD, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5034

12. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 23, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

The right hand is sufficiently tired. I, therefore, wish to preserve all my strength for writing articles for *Harijan*. I don't think it will require complete rest.

I wrote one letter[1] to you a few days ago. This letter, therefore, can be brief.

I will inquire about books for Parachure Shastri.

Maitri will give you trouble. If she is at all likely to improve, she will do so only if we tolerate her and treat her

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 451-2.

with love. She should not feel the absence of her mother. Women may be exempted during their monthly periods from rules of work as may be thought necessary. If some or most of them abuse this freedom, the Ashram will not be responsible for that. If somebody misuses the time set apart for sleep, we cannot reduce that period on that account.

Do not lose your patience. You must always remember that a reformer or servant of the people can do no useful work unless he or she is patient. Let this be written in bold letters on your wall; inscribe it in an amulet and wear it on your arm.

If she receives permission from the Ashram, N. will come there in a very few days. She has openly led an immoral life, borrowed money and told lies. But now she has become almost a nun. I have not felt any insincerity in this. After she had realized her errors, she has done whatever I advised her to do. If she is likely to get an opportunity to adhere to her praiseworthy resolution, it is only in the Ashram that she will do so. Anywhere else, she will either wither away or relapse into her old ways. She has great ability and wide knowledge. She has read the *Mahabharata*. If she comes there, cultivate her acquaintance and introduce her to other women. Don't ask her anything about her past. She herself will be ready to talk about it, but it would be undesirable to talk about it or make her talk about it. It is harmful to recall memories of sinful pleasures. If she takes interest in talking about her immoral past, you may conclude that she is still not free from such desires. Regard her as your younger sister and point out her faults to her with love. You can ask me whatever you like about her past life. I have written all this today because I may not get time to write much later when she is asked to go there. Her son is a fine boy.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10338. Also C.W. 6778. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

13. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

April 23, 1933

CHI. NARAYANRAO ALIAS BABLO[1],

Before I can answer your question, you should tell me that, when Premabehn asked you, you told her that you were not playing but were trying to save the drowning ant. Reply to this letter and tell me exactly what happened. You and Dhiru[2] spun a large quantity of yarn indeed. Did you not feel tired afterwards? For how many hours did you spin at a stretch?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9481

14. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

April 23, 1933

DEAR HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter.

Your resolve to write to me every Sunday has brought me immense relief. Fixing a time for a job that needs to be done saves time and energy and promotes peace of mind.

The news about Arun gave me pleasure. From what I am thinking and observing, I feel that you and Arun should give up rice and subsist on milk, curds, juicy fruits and salad. Rice is superfluous.

Write to me about the problems that crop up at the Pratishthan. Do not take them as a misfortune. "That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of Him is prosperity."[3] You need no comforting but being a self-appointed father I cannot help it. God is your companion, friend, playmate, father and everything else and we identify Him with Ramanama. It so happened last night that I found sleep eluding

[1] Son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Son of Chhaganlal Joshi
[3] *Vide* Vol. XLIV, p. 390.

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me but it came to me as soon as I started repeating Ramanama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1700

15. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

April 23, 1933

Dr. Ambedkar[2] having received several communications from Harijan friends as to the desirability of altering the panel system in the Poona Pact[3] came to sound my views about the proposal. The substitute suggested is that only those Harijan candidates should be declared elected who succeed in getting a fixed minimum of the votes of Harijans from among the joint electorates. Not having ever applied my mind to this formula, I was unable to give him any answer. I simply told him that he should first see the different Harijan Associations and others interested, and then let me know their views. He asked me, however, to consider the proposal independently, and write to him at London my opinion which I shall try to do.[4]

Asked why Dr. Ambedkar wanted a change, Mr. Gandhi replied that Dr. Ambedkar stated that so far as he was concerned he was quite satisfied with the panel system, and he would not go back on the Poona Pact. But pressure was being brought to bear upon him for securing the above change.

Asked for his views on the panel system, Mr. Gandhi said:

Personally, my opinion is that the panel system is perfectly harmless so long as Harijans do not distrust caste Hindus.

Will you be prepared to accept the alteration if the others also agree?

I would not easily accept the change. I have not yet considered it. Because everybody agrees, it does not follow that I should accept it. I would examine every such proposal solely from the Harijan point of view, because it never crossed my mind that there can ever be a conflict of interest between the Harijans and

[1] According to the source, "Dr. Ambedkar had a forty-five-minute interview with Mr. Gandhi this morning. Messrs K. O. Chitre, K. G. Shinde and other local non-Brahmin leaders were also present. The interview was specially arranged, as Gandhiji did not see visitors on Sundays."

[2] Leader of Depressed Classes

[3] Also known as Yeravda Pact; *vide* footnote 2, p. 10.

[4] For Gandhiji's opinion, *vide* pp. 36-9.

the caste Hindus. My confirmed opinion is that whatever is in the real interest of the Harijans must necessarily be in the interest of the caste Hindus. As I believe I have the capacity of examining such questions from the Harijan point of view, I should not mind standing alone, and defending my position if unfortunately things came to such a pass that, for my opinion, I could not secure a single supporter.

The Hindu, 24-4-1933

16. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 23/24, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was relieved to get your postcard. You must have received the letter which I wrote to you yesterday. Narmada came and saw me yesterday. She seemed to be a very good girl. She is very eager to work. I have asked her to come again with Lakshmibehn.

I will be very glad if the doctor[1] fulfils our expectations of him.

N. has arrived here with her son. At present she seems to be carrying out all my instructions with wonderful promptness. If you have not written and communicated your decision before you get this letter, and if you have arrived at a decision now, send me a wire. If you have not consulted the others, please do so.

If you have copies of the Ashram rules, send a copy each in whatever languages you have them. If you remember the circumstances in which Godavari and Pandurang Choudhari had to leave, let me know. Prema is likely to know more about Godavari.

April 24, 1933

During a discussion among us about N., Chhaganlal[2] expressed a view against her being admitted. I, therefore, asked him to write down his view and also to say what precautions should be taken if she was admitted. I have just read his note after finishing the other letters. If you decide to take her in, we cannot put on her the restrictions which Chhaganlal suggests. They will not be for her good or that of the Ashram. We must utilize her abilities in whatever way we can, conforming to Ashram disci-

[1] Dr. Hiralal Sharma, a naturopath and chromopath

[2] Chhaganlal Joshi

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pline. We should not send a new entrant outside the Ashram for work. But I would certainly put Harijan children in her hands. We should admit her, assuming that she has turned a new leaf in her life, otherwise we ought not to take her in at all. But I should like to explain this point at greater length. If your consent is received, I will certainly send all necessary instructions. It will be enough for the present if you understand that she is not to be admitted as a sinner.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev's opinion also is enclosed.

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

17. LETTER TO RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

April 24, 1933

DEAR RAMANANDBABU,

I must trouble you once more. You must have seen Dr. Ambedkar's alternative[1] to the panel system in the Yeravda Pact. I should esteem your opinion on his suggestion, if not for public at least for my private use.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. RAMANAND CHATTERJEE
"[THE] MODERN REVIEW", CHITPUR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From the original: C.W. 9503. Courtesy: Santa Devi. Also S.N. 21046

[1] *Vide* p. 17.

[2] In his letter dated May 3, Ramananda Chatterjee wrote : "I ought to have stated in my yesterday's letter that, though I prefer Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion to the panel system, I like neither. Joint electorate with reservation of seats in proportion to the numerical strength of the Depressed Castes, would be preferable to both" (S.N. 21149). On May 2, he had written: "Before giving my opinion on it, I may be permitted to say that as I am opposed to the Communal Award, so I am opposed to the Poona Pact to the extent that it has or aggravates the harmful features of that Award" (S.N. 21145).

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18. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 24, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I am going to deal with Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion for the revision of the Yeravda Pact in the ensuing number of *Harijan*.[1] You must have seen it and given your thought to it. Please let me know what you think about it. Please share this letter with Ghanshyamdas[2] and let me have his opinion also, or, you may give me your joint opinion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1120; also S.N. 21052

19. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

April 24, 1933

DEAR MR. CHINTAMANI,

You know by now Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion for revising the Yeravda Pact in so far as the panel system is concerned. I would like you to give me your opinion about the alternative he suggests. If you have discussed it publicly in *The Leader*, do not please trouble to answer this letter. If you have not, I would esteem your opinion. I am discussing the alternative publicly in the succeeding issues of *Harijan*.[3]

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

This is the exploit of my new typist. Please have mercy on him and me. I hope you are well.

From a photostat: S.N. 21051

[1] *Vide* pp. 36-9.

[2] G. D. Birla

[3] In his letter dated April 29, the addressee wrote: "Apart from one's opinion on the merits, it is clear to my mind on the ground of expediency that the Pact should not be reopened" (S.N. 21083).

20. A LETTER

April 24, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

My *Guide to Health*[1] requires amendment in several places. I would therefore ask you not to translate it just now. If I succeed in revising the present edition it would be a good thing to translate the edition instead of a book which in some material respects is not a good guide.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19037

21. LETTER TO MOHAN AND VANAMALA PARIKH

April 24, 1933

CHI. MOHAN AND VANAMALA,

I don't remember who is the elder of you two. If Vanamala is elder, then she should excuse me for putting her name second. We do not follow the rule of the West. There, even if the girl is younger, her name would be put before that of her elder brother. We always respect seniority in age.

I wanted to write about your health but I have written something else. Never mind. Write to me, both of you, how you keep.

Vanamala has done very good spinning indeed.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5781. Also C.W. 3004. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

[1] Published in July 1921 by S. Ganesan, Madras. *Vide* also Vol. XII, footnote 1, p. 4.

22. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I can see from your language that you are unhappy. I am sure your replies[1] are not addressed to me, for I did not want them. I assume that they are addressed to Chhaganlal.

My view about your honesty and your efficiency has not changed. When it changes, I shall not be able to protect you. You should not feel concerned till it changes. I have found your reply to Chhaganlal's complaint convincing, but I feel hidden anger in your language. There is no reason at all for you to be angry. Chhaganlal wrote down what he thought. There was no malice in it, but only his inability to see the truth. You will be able to see this inability in his letter about N. He can have no reason for malice towards her, but he was frightened by her immoral life in the past, could not overcome that fear and so thought as he did. His deficiency, therefore, is of the intellect and not of the heart. However that may be, you should learn to adopt a calm attitude towards such criticism and accept whatever may be worth accepting in it. Such strength cannot be acquired in a day. It will be enough if you keep on trying.

BAPU

[PS.]

Whether or not it is improper for Prema or other girls to walk with their arms round each other's neck, I cannot say unless I see myself what they do. If their behaviour is immodest, it is of course improper, but there can be no harm if it is within limits of modesty. I have discussed this point in my letter to Lakshmidas. Read that letter if you have not done so. If, after reading it, you wish to ask further questions, you may.

I may have to burden you with one more guest. You know Margarete Spiegel who stayed in the Ashram for some time and worked among Harijans. She will probably land in Bombay tomorrow. Will you let her stay in the Ashram? I need not say

[1] Presumably to Chhaganlal Joshi's criticism of him; *vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 434-5.

anything about her. She is a very good woman. She has been writing to me here.

If the sum of Rs. 2,500 has been received from Soniramji, send it to Ghanshyamdas. Add five more to the 25 spinning-wheels [which I have asked you to send]. We shall get Rs. 1½ for each.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8362. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

23. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 25, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You have imagined too much in my letter[1]. It did not contain any such thing. In my letter to Narandas, I had referred to the complaints against you. With them in my mind, I had said how fine it would be if, among your many virtues, you added the ability to tolerate the defects of other people generously. I had to ask Narandas not to show that letter to you. I felt unhappy when doing so and made those remarks. I did not intend to admonish you. Since there is a limit beyond which human nature cannot be changed, I did not think it proper to write anything to you.

I hope you will be satisfied with this explanation. You may now read that letter if you wish.

You yourself may decide whether or not you should go on a month's leave. If N. goes there, I should like you to be there when she arrives. But ask Narandas and follow his advice.

I do worry about your throat. But I am helpless. If its condition worsens, I will blame you. I would be happy if you decide to stop speaking altogether. That will not come in the way of your work. Trappist monks and nuns observe complete silence and still work the whole day. You may eat uncooked vegetables, but you should crush them before eating. If you take unboiled milk and fruits, probably you can do without vegetables.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10339. Also C.W. 6779. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 284-5.

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24. LETTER TO NANALAL K. JASANI

April 25, 1933

BHAI NANALAL,

I have your letter. Tell Prabhashankar[1] that he may certainly come to Poona. I have no grudge against him. I have explained my own position. I wish that I could trust him. But he should not care whether I trust him or not. He should come for the sake of Champa's and Ratilal's good. What more does he expect from me? Or what would you suggest?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9632

25. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

April 26, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I was wondering why I had not heard from you for a long time. I am glad Shamrao is much better and that you were both overhauled by a first class doctor. Of course I shall trust you to give me faithful reports about health and I am so glad that the intestinal ulcer and the enlarged spleen were pure inventions. I hope that your chicken-pox never became 'small' and that it is now entirely a thing of the past. I hope too that you found Mary[2] quite happy and cheerful.

Love to you all from us all.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 343; also S.N. 19046

[1] Prabhashankar Parekh, Ratilal Mehta's father-in-law
[2] Mary Gillett

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26. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

April 26, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I was wondering what had happened to you not having heard from you after your departure from the Ashram. I was therefore delighted to have your letter. I am sorry that Maria[1] had such a breakdown. The fact is that she postponed her rest too long. I hope however that she is now benefiting by the relaxation. For it is not so much the bracing air as the relaxation of mind and body that she needs. She must therefore give herself as much rest as she can both to body and mind, and as a quack doctor I suggest to her that she must eat sparingly restricting herself as much as it is possible to milk and fruit of which there is so much to be had. She may take salad vegetables but she does not need them. If she carries out these very simple instructions to the letter she will find that she will derive the greatest benefit from the change. She must not at present think of writing her book. She may write it when she has completely recovered her vitality and lost the haggard pensive look that she had about her when I met her. I must not omit to add that she ought not to take those two poisons, tea[2] and coffee, so bad for nerves. I suggest a home-made substitute, hot water, Kashmir honey and a few drops of lemon. She will find this to be a complete, effective substitute for milk or coffee or cocoa.

I suggest a novel recreation for both of you. In going about for your walks, make a search for all the Harijans you can find and add to your knowledge of Hindi by trying to make yourselves understood by them and in understanding them. And do not forget the prescription for avoiding cold. Keep yourselves moving as much as possible in the open air.

Mahadev had your letter. We are all doing well and send love to you.

BAPU

C/o POSTMASTER
SRINAGAR

From a photostat: G.N. 6001. Also C.W. 3326. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] Anne Marie Petersen
[2] The source, however, has "ghee".

27. LETTER TO MESSRS DAMODAR SANTIRAM GANDE[1]

April 26, 1933

GENTLEMEN,

Sjt. P. H. Gadre, pleader, Nasik, is interesting himself in Harijan welfare. He is badly in need of cheap Marathi literature regarding the saints of Maharashtra and the like for distribution among Harijans. He tells me that if I wrote to you, you are likely to send him a small parcel of such literature as a present. I shall be obliged if you could kindly send some books of the type Sjt. Gadre wants. If there is any difficulty about making a selection, I would suggest your entering into correspondence with Sjt. Gadre asking him to let you have a list of the books he desires.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19044

28. LETTER TO P. H. GADRE

April 26, 1933

DEAR GADRE,

I have your letter[2]. Please tell me the exact amount of material you require with the purpose indicated so that I can approach people for donations in kind or cash. Do I understand that if the material is supplied, the Municipality will carry out specified improvement at its expense?

I have also your letter giving me quotations from *Narad Bhakti Sutra*, for which I thank you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19049

[1] Booksellers, Bombay

[2] Dated April 25 (S.N. 21058). The addressee had requested Gandhiji to arrange for supply of corrugated iron sheets to be used in schools and lavatories for Harijans.

29. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

April 26, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

I have your letter. I quite understand the difficulty you have in coping with your correspondence whilst your eyes give you trouble. I am therefore not going to put any strain whatsoever on your limited bodily resources. Therefore please do not answer this letter. I shall read your translation when it comes into my possession, but I am not going to say anything about it just now. Of course I know that even though your writing may at times appear to be at variance with the inner harmony, the letter will in the end remain untouched by it. I shall not therefore worry over such things if anyone brings them to my notice.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 11044

30. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PHATAK

April 26, 1933

MY DEAR HARIBHAU,

I have your postcard. I have ordered five more wheels.[1] They are all being specially made in Bardoli. Therefore it is likely they will take a little time.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19048

[1] *Vide* p. 23.

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31. LETTER TO S. PONNAMMAL

April 26, 1933

MY DEAR PONNAMMAL,

I have your letter. You do not need a formal note of introduction to Sjt. Kelappan. You can simply present this note to him and tell him the whole of your story. I know that he will make the fullest use of your services and do whatever is possible to help you in your work.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19050

32. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

April 26, 1933

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

As you were actively connected with the Yeravda Pact, I would like you to let me have your opinion on Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion for the amendment of the Yeravda Pact.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 21062

33. LETTER TO H. N. KUNZRU

April 26, 1933

DEAR HARIJI,

I wonder if you have applied your mind to the amendment Dr. Ambedkar has suggested of the Yeravda Pact. If you have, please let me have your opinion.[1]

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21066

[1] In his letter dated May 6, 1933, the addressee wrote: "As regards Dr. Ambedkar's suggestion, it was evident to me that if it was entertained, it would reopen the entire question dealt with by the Poona Pact. Being convinced of the absolute undesirability of such a course, I did not examine his proposal on its merit" (S.N. 21203).

34. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I very much liked the letter you wrote to me. Whenever we see a wrong being done, one may caution and restrain the husband, the father and even the king. If the person does not listen to one immediately, one may repeat the caution again and again. But this is for the future.

I do not believe that girls who are kept under strict restraint do not feel passion. On the contrary they lose all self-control and when the parents learn the fact they too cover it up. We should try to discover the middle way. We should give freedom to boys and girls and also teach them self-restraint. Do uncovered heads arouse passion where it is not the custom to cover the head? What do you think happens in the Madras Presidency where the girls wear their hair loose? The seat of the passions is not outside oneself, but inside—in one's eyes. The impure eye will see impurity everywhere.

Nevertheless, it is the duty of the senior women to sit together and think about the problem of the girls and draw up instructions for them, which should then be put before the girls and even before the men. I have stated above my own point of view so that all of you may think about the problem. I should like you to call a meeting of all the women and discuss it. Will you take the initiative?

I have written to Purushottam asking him not to go to Rajkot. He should stay on for your sake at least.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 877. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

CWMG LV

35. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

There is no harm in your having gone to Rajkot. Keep me informed about the progress. I have received a copy of the book which first advocated treatment by milk-diet. Its author has laid more stress on hip-bath in warm water than later writers on the subject. He also advises the patient in some cases to live on fresh butter-milk. However, you should follow Gaurishankar's view. There is bound to have been further progress in the science after this book was written.

Let me know about Bhau's health.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 911. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

36. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 26, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote to you yesterday. I forgot to enclose in it a newspaper cutting to be shown to Dr. Sharma. I send it with this letter. These days I have to write with the left hand and so could not write yesterday all that I wished to. I hope to do so today. I felt that it would be better if Chhaganlal replied to your comments on his criticisms of you, and so pressed him to do that. Accordingly, he has given me his reply. After careful thinking I felt that I ought to send it to you, and am doing so. I don't think it proves the necessity of your reforming your method of work in any respect, but I do see in his note his honesty of purpose. I have never felt any malice in him. But he is suspicious by nature and cannot easily put a straightforward interpretation on things. He does not readily see the virtues of the other party, and magnifies the defects. This gives an impression to other people that he lacks generosity of heart. He

[1] *Vide* pp. 22-3.

CWMG - IV

does not wish to be ungenerous nor is he ungenerous by nature. But people who do not understand him can easily see ungenerosity in him. If I have succeeded in convincing you of this, the anger and intolerance which are present in your reply would not be there. Your charge that some inmates of the Ashram realized the necessity of better educational facilities for children after they themselves had children, is unworthy of you. And it is not true, either. It is utterly wrong to believe that Narahari, Chhaganlal and others who subscribe to this criticism are as selfish as that. They also are loyal inmates of the Ashram and are good men. They also care for the good of the Ashram as much as we do. They may be—they are—less efficient, but you ought not to be conscious in the slightest degree of your greater efficiency or be proud of it. Even a mention of somebody else's inefficiency is an indirect form of self-praise. I want you to avoid even that. And suppose that children are born to inmates of the Ashram and some new ideas occur to the parents when the children grow up a little, we should not detect in that their selfishness as parents. This thing is part of human nature and criticism of it is not just. All that we should expect from people is this. One should desire for others' children what one desires for one's own and should make no distinction between one's children and other's children under one's charge. We may say that in the measure that this attitude is absent in the Ashram we are imperfect. However, no inmate of the Ashram should say that the shortcomings are those of others and not his. It is as difficult to know one's shortcomings fully as it is to attain self-realization. And I believe that for a person who can see his shortcomings fully and who ceaselessly strives to overcome them to the best of his ability, self-realization is no difficult task. I, therefore, certainly desire that, if you feel that it was improper for you to make such a statement and that it cannot be proved, you should withdraw it and apologize to your co-workers. However, I don't want you to withdraw it only to please me if you yourself are not convinced of its impropriety. If you sincerely believe that the reason why people make this criticism against you is that they have children now, let your charge remain till in course of time you learn from experience that it is not true. In the Ashram nobody should be asked to apologize merely for the sake of form. Such apology would benefit no one. For us apology can have only one meaning, namely, that it is sincere admission of one's error. All of us must tolerate the charges which our co-workers make against us. I don't ask those who make charges against you to apologize to you, because they

sincerely believe what they say. I can advise them to apologize only when I can change their belief. The same rule applies to you.

Chhaganlal's second objection is against your criticism of him for occasionally requiring food to be sent to his room. Maybe when he had a guest he found it necessary to ask for a *thali* for him in his room. I see nothing wrong in that. If a guest turns up unexpectedly, what else can a person who does not cook in his own house do? And if a guest has turned up just at mealtime, I can understand that one might not like to bring him to the common kitchen, for it might be possible to talk to him only during the meal. I do not know whether or not Chhaganlal had these legitimate reasons, but I do not expect criticism for such things from you. Need there be any limit to generosity? Our ideal examples of generosity are king Bali, Yudhishthira and others like them. The former lost his whole kingdom through his generosity and Yudhishthira stopped the blood from flowing out of his wound in order to save king Virat from Arjuna's wrath and, before the latter arrived, got it all cleaned by Draupadi and waited as if nothing had happened. Our aspiration is that we should be able to do easily in this age all that they could do in ancient times.

I did not read any complaint on your part in your references to Purushottam[1] and Kanu[2], but saw in them only an acknowledgment that things could not be otherwise in the Ashram. Mahadev, on the other hand, supports Chhaganlal's interpretation and says that you nurse a grievance about Purushottam and Kanu having remained without a knowledge of history, geography, etc. Whether it is that or whether it is an acknowledgment on your part of what is inevitable in the Ashram, your own interpretation should be accepted as the only right one. Let me, therefore, know what the truth is. My own view is that we should not regret any boy having not learnt what passes today as history and geography. On the contrary, I believe that the boys could not have acquired anywhere else what they have in the Ashram. Moreover, they have learnt history and geography, too, of the kind to which we attach value. I do feel unhappy, but not by way of complaint against anybody. I feel unhappy about the interpretation of the Ashram itself. I know that we have not been able to give the children all that we were eager to give them. Isn't that my own shortcoming? That people do not regard it as such is another matter. But when we try to draw up a balance-sheet and exa-

[1&2] Sons of the addressee

mine the credit and the debit columns, a shortcoming must be recognized as a shortcoming. The Ashram has grown according to the capacities of the persons whom I could attract and the ideas which I could implement. I can enumerate no end of shortcomings to be found in the Ashram. And still I love it, for it is chiefly my handiwork. If I had greater ability and the circumstances had been more favourable, the Ashram would be a more attractive place and there would have been no ground for the criticism which it deserves in some respects. My purpose, however, in stating all this is to persuade you not to see the shortcomings of others and not to criticize people who might criticize you, only to point out the error in their criticism and accept whatever is acceptable in it and act upon it. This will save you from many problems.

And now a few words about Chhaganlal's note. Like his previous note, I didn't like this one either. If I wish, Chhaganlal would readily amend it. But in that case you would not be able to know what he really thinks. What is necessary is that you and I should love him despite our knowledge of what he thinks. If we fail to do that, we cannot prove that the Ashram is a large family. And, moreover, if we cut ourselves off from everybody, one after another, for small defects, we would be left alone in the world. Nobody except God can afford that. This is why I have often stated that one should forget oneself completely and become a cypher. Nothing can equal the joy of that state. As for Chhaganlal's note, I see an error in almost every sentence of it.

Chhaganlal's language is offensive and betrays his thoughtlessness and intolerance. Leaving aside your anger and your charges, he has not been able to see at all the effectiveness of your reply. Even in regard to points on which you have given a convincing reply, he has again offered advice.

In writing about Chhaganlal, I have been completely frank. I know that there was no need to advise you. I have explained this to him. I had also let him read what I wrote to you; even then he has written what he has. If I did not know him, his remarks would have seemed utterly mean to me too. But I should like even you not to see meanness in them but only his lack of intelligence. I am sending such a note to you hoping that you will be able to ignore even such criticism like that with a generous heart. I believe that since I am forwarding the note to you, you are completely safe and so is Chhaganlal. It is a great good fortune of the Ashram that we are trying to tell, without any fear, even the unpleasant thoughts which we think about one another.

I will now end this letter. It is I who am loading heavier burdens on you. I don't hesitate to put before you even criticism in which I do not believe and, by doing so, I waste your, and therefore the Ashram's, time. But I think it was absolutely necessary to do this. But now it is enough. You need not at all reply to the accompanying note. If you understand the few points which I have tried to explain to you, you may write a line or two accordingly. This letter, too, contains some good ideas. Do, therefore, show it to others but don't think that it is necessary for you to discuss any point with anybody. Keep on trying to do the best you can. As desired by you, I am also returning your letter.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 836. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

37. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

April 26, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I have your letter. You should experiment under Gaurishankar's guidance. You are taking a long time to get well. You should experiment under some expert's guidance. If not Gaurishankar, let it be somebody else.

I will not forgive you if you do not write to me. An error committed unknowingly can be pardoned. Should negligence or lethargy be forgiven?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3953

38. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

April 26, 1933

CHI. MANI,

I got your letter only two or three days ago. Your letters, no matter how long, will never be too long for us. If, however, you expect Father or me to write very long letters, we cannot satisfy you. But I can understand your desire for such letters. We enjoy quite a number of amenities and even luxuries to which

you in Belgaum are perfect strangers. But we would prove ourselves unworthy servants of the nation and unworthy parents if we used them or asked them for any but public purposes. Nobody would think well of a person who claims to be a father of hundreds of children and lets his mind soar in the clouds. So, then, we enjoy all these luxuries to the full and you or Mridula may envy our good fortune as much as you like. You had already passed a sarcastic remark in regard to Mirabehn, and have withdrawn it also. What is a father's duty? Should he give his children what each needs, or should he give the same to all and thus not only do great injustice but, maybe, make himself responsible for the death of one of the children through his attempt to prove himself just in the eyes of the world or to his immature child? If, suppose, you are suffering from a disease and have to be given *bajra* bread and skimmed buttermilk, does that mean that a girl like Bharati[1], who would require to be nourished on butter, honey and light chapatis, should be given the same food as you? A father is bound to provide all that is necessary for a child's welfare. He is free to indulge the child and give it more in so far as it is consistent with such welfare, but is not bound to do so. It should not be necessary to explain this to you after all these years. But I have to produce a long letter somehow, and so am indulging in all this philosophizing. If you were not at all angry with us, why were you making yourself miserable? Why did you show such lack of faith? Why didn't you rest assured that one of us must have written to you? I agree that both should write if possible. But no one would be eager to write if he found that the fate of his letters was so uncertain. One letter [a week] is regularly sent to you, and, you may rest assured, will continue to be sent in the hope that you will somehow get at least one. Father has undertaken to give a detailed reply to your letter. He will, therefore, give you the replies to your messages, and also give the replies to your queries in detail. I should certainly like to reply to some of them myself, but I resist the temptation. Anandi's operation is an old story now. She left for the Ashram long ago and she is quite well there. She got cold and fever some time ago, but that was only for a few days. . . .[2] came and saw us, . . . 's hands are swollen and looked like pillars. . . . is taking tender care of her. He is a husband, a friend, a teacher and a servant in one. At present at any rate it seems that even her Creator could not have

[1] Bharati Sarabhai
[2] Omissions as in the source

found a better husband for her. Whether . . . deserves him or not, God alone knows. But I myself had pointed out her weaknesses to . . . before the marriage, and had written to him and said that he could break off the engagement without any hesitation if he did not like it. But, trained under . . ., how would . . . go back on his decision? Everyone had showered love on her at the time of her marriage. Everyone gave her some present or the other. They will not have to spend for quite a long time anything on household requirements or clothes. Be contented with this. Our warder is standing before me ready to take me back to my ward. It will soon be eleven and so I am returning to my cage. After I have bathed and lunched, I shall be brought back to the Harijan ward at twelve.[1]

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
P.R. NO. 10249
BELGAUM CENTRAL PRISON
POST HINDALAGA

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 100-2

39. THE YERAVDA PACT

[*April 27, 1933*][2]

Though an agitation has been going on in Bengal for some time for securing a revision of the Yeravda Pact, I have not felt called upon to take part in the discussion, if only not to embarrass the Bengal friends. The Pact is safe so long as even one party interested in it opposes any change. At the same time, any opposition for the sake of it would be foolish, if it could be demonstrated that a particular change was necessary. I do not pretend to understand the local situation in Bengal. Therefore, I felt that it would be presumptuous on my part to take part in the Bengal controversy, till it became absolutely necessary for me to do so and till all the material required for forming a judgment upon it was before me. But I assured the Harijan friends who referred to me for my opinion that I would not do anything without consultation with them and that I had till now seen nothing to alter my view.

[1] The letter was completed by Vallabhbhai Patel.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-5-1933; *vide* also "Letter to B. R. Ambedkar", p. 46.

Generally I have always held the opinion that, when the principle of reservation is accepted, not imposed, the party in whose interest the reservation is accepted should determine the quantum. In the case of Harijans, I have felt further that they could not have too many seats reserved for them, especially if the criterion were not mere untouchability but backwardness. Indeed, if I could have my way, I would throw open the list of untouchable voters to all backward classes under one generic name and permit every Hindu who chose to come under that list. That would at once correct the atmosphere, and untouchability will be banished at least from politics. To this perhaps the sanatanists, too, would have no objection. They have never, so far as I am aware, demurred to the representation of Harijans in the legislatures and they can have no objection to anyone classifying himself as a Harijan. But all this is merely by way of introduction to what I want to say.

Dr. Ambedkar's sudden visit to me has rendered it necessary for me to discuss the Pact. At the pressure and invitation of his friends, he suggested[1] that the panel system provided in the Yeravda Pact should be altered to a single election by the joint electorate providing that the Harijan candidate should secure a fixed minimum of Harijan votes. I was not prepared to give any opinion during the Doctor's visit. I had not applied my mind to the question at all. Moreover, I suggested that he should first secure the opinion of different schools of thought among Harijans and of caste Hindus interested in the question and then ask me for my opinion. He said he would do that, but he made me promise that I should consider his proposal independently and give my opinion on it. The matter being too important for a private discussion, I propose to fulfil my promise by publicly stating my opinion.

The new proposal seems to me to be in no way to the advantage of Harijans. The only objection to the panel system I have heard is that it is costly. This presupposes that there would be a contest almost in every case for coming into the panel. It would have been so if the panel was confined to only two, instead of four, candidates. Selection of four candidates for contesting each seat would make it unnecessary in most cases to have the primary election. Except where Harijan parties are many and are sharply divided, there cannot be more than four candidates for one seat. Indeed, for some time to come it will be difficult even to have candidates

[1] *Vide* p. 17.

enough to fill all the reserved seats and, in the majority of cases, there will be no contests whatsoever. It would be up to Harijan associations not to have bitter rivalries at the very threshold of their political career and it will be the duty of caste Hindus not to foment divisions in the Harijan ranks. I am hoping that the interests of Harijans and other Hindus will never clash. But should they do so, the panel system amply provides for the selection in the first instance of the right kind of the Harijan candidate—right, I mean, from the purely Harijan point of view. And yet so long as there is no bitter strife among Harijans themselves, there never need be any primary election, or, for that matter, even a joint final election.

But the alternative seems to be fraught with grave danger. As the very first choice will be general, unscrupulous political parties will put their own Harijan candidates and create divisions among the Harijan ranks with the greatest ease and demoralize the candidates and the Harijan electorate. So far as I can see and so long as the system of reservation prevails, the panel system is the best adopted for securing the selection only of those candidates who in the Harijan opinion are best fitted to serve their special interests. Whereas I can see nothing but seeds of strife and bitterness in the alternative proposal.

Though I have written decisively, I am open to reason. The argument of expense makes no appeal to me. I hope I have shown that, if anything, the panel system is calculated to avoid all needless expense. I was amazed, however, to see an interview in the Press in which Dr. Ambedkar is reported to have said his proposal made no alteration whatsoever in the substance of the Pact. I venture to differ from this view. Whereas the panel system gives an opportunity to the caste Hindus to have some say in the election of Harijan candidates, Dr. Ambedkar's alternative may well deprive the caste Hindus of any say whatsoever in the election of Harijan candidates and thus create an effectual bar between caste Hindus and Harijan Hindus. It was just to prevent that calamity that I put forth all the force that I could command, and looking back upon the past, I do not regret having done so. I put my difficulty very mildly before Dr. Ambedkar at the Sunday interview. As I think over the difficulty, it appears to me to be insurmountable, and it is this: The candidate who gets the minimum of Harijan votes provided under the alternative need never have a single vote from the caste voters, for any Harijan candidate getting just the number of Harijan votes required under the proposal will defeat his rival

even though he may otherwise top the whole of the list of candidates, Harijan and non-Harijan, if he gets just one vote less than the minimum required from the Harijans. This would amount to an utter negation of the Yeravda Pact.

It is open to Dr. Ambedkar, as it is to the Bengal friends and any other person, to say that the Yeravda Pact was arrived at under the coercion of the fast. I have no sense of shame about it. If they accepted the Pact in order to save my life, surely, they had their consideration, and it comes with ill-grace from them now to repudiate a completed bargain. The use they can make of their mistake, if such it was, is never to repeat it and not to swerve from the path of duty for fear of sacrificing the life of a person, however dear that life may be. I had staked my life not to coerce anybody to do what to them appeared to be wrong. I had staked it for achieving a purpose which I thought was altogether noble. The way to approach the question, therefore, is not to bring in the fast in the controversy but in cold blood to show to the public that the Pact is inherently bad, either on moral or public grounds. It will be time enough to seriously examine the question of reopening the Pact when such a case is satisfactorily made out in the first instance.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

40. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April [*27*][1], *1933*

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

WIRE IF I MAY SEND N. AND DOCTOR SPIEGEL WHO WAS THERE LAST YEAR.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I

[1] The source has "28". The telegram, however, was drafted on this date; *vide* "Letter to D. B. Kalelkar", p. 47; also pp. 50 and 59.

CWMG - LV

41. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 27, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This is Thursday morning before prayer. Your letter came in yesterday with Ba's.

A book on Astronomy is being sent to you. I enclose also a map for the month. You will find herewith also Dr. Saunders's[1] letter. It is satisfactory on the whole.

Letter for Ba will also accompany this.

You may pursue the conduct of the Ashram as much as you like. It won't tire me. It will assist me. It will enable you to understand my viewpoint better. You must not accuse yourself of want of faith in me or my wisdom because you do not see a point of mine at once or because having seen it you cannot agree with me. I am not a perfect being. Why should you see eye to eye with me in my errors? That would be blind faith. Your faith in me should enable you to detect my true error much quicker than a fault-finder. What I would like your faith to do is that when you cannot convince me of my error you should think that it is likely that I see more clearly than you do in matters where I have thought and experienced more. That would give you peace of mind. Therefore you should not paralyse your thought by suppressing your doubts and torturing yourself that you do not agree with my view in particular things. You should therefore pursue the discussion of the Ashram till you have the clearest possible grasp of all my ideas about it.

You need not have argued about the man being the worse sinner of the two. I have always held that view against most, if not all, of my male friends who have expressed their opinion on the point. Of course I agree with you also that man's superiority, if it is that, over the brute creation, consists in his capacity for observing *brahmacharya*. It must therefore be an Ashram ideal to be attained immediately if that were possible.

There is therefore complete agreement between us so far as the fundamental thing is concerned. The difficulty or the difle-

[1] The specialist at London who had treated Mirabehn for tubercular glands in 1907. *Vide* also Vol. LIII, p. 473.

rence comes in when we begin to devise ways and means of encompassing the ideal.

I am becoming more and more confirmed in the view that it must go on as it is now doing, with ample liberty to the manager to regulate fresh admissions. Our life should become daily simpler and not more complex. We should be progressively more self-restrained. But we should remain a composite family that we now are.

The present composition is not the hindrance. The hindrance is that we have so few real complete *brahmacharis*. All were broken vessels, all had their own individual passions to conquer. But I hold that most of them were and are sincere strivers. Therefore we are blind leaders of the blind and ever stumbling. When some of us have, by constant striving, become at least matriculates in the effort, we shall certainly do better. Therefore the problem resolves itself into each one of us striving to the utmost to approach the ideal. Remember my definition of *brahmacharya*. It means not suppression of one or more senses but complete mastery over them all. The two states are fundamentally different. I can suppress all my senses today but it may take aeons to conquer them. Conquest means using them as my willing slaves. I can prick the ear-drum and suppress the sense of hearing by a simple, painless operation. This is worthless. I must train the ear so that it refuses to hear gossip, lewd talk, blasphemy, but it is open to the celestial music, it will hear the most distant cry for succour from thousands of miles. Saint Ramdas is said to have done so. Then how [to] use the organs of generation? By transmuting the most creative energy that we possess from creating counterparts of our flesh into creating constructive work for the whole of life, i.e., for the soul. We have to rein in the animal passion and change it into celestial passion. Read here Chapter II, Verse 64, of the *Gita*. The burden of the Divine Song is not "fly from the battle but face it without attachment". Therefore you and I and every one of us have to stand unmoved in the midst of all kinds of men and women. There is no physical seclusion except temporarily for some. The Ashram is all right where it is but we must branch out for larger growth. But that would be a natural evolution coming in its own time.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 6269. Courtesy: Mirabehn

42. LETTER TO HARRY BOWMAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your long letter[1].

I had one visit from Miss Mayo when she was in India. I have read her book and I wrote also a review[2] on it which at that time had attracted considerable attention. It is my firm conviction that the book is filled with half-truths, innuendos and deductions drawn from stray facts as if they represented a universal situation.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY BOWMAN, ESQ.
BEATRICE, NEBRASKA [U.S.A.]

From a photostat: S.N. 19055; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 379

43. LETTER TO YVONNE PRIVAT

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR BHAKTI,

I was delighted to have your letter which you consider is long and which for us is too short. I see that you are one in your happiness. You are one also in your erosion though you tell me that both of you had the 'flu' at the same time. You still remain the strangest pair I have ever had the good fortune to meet. One reads of such couples in Persian poetry but does not meet them in flesh and blood. May you for ever remain inseparables.

Yes, I know, you in Europe are going through very hard times, both economically and spiritually. But I believe literally

[1] Dated March 12, 1933 (S.N. 19009), expressing his indignation at Katherine Mayo's *Mother India*. The addressee had written: ". . . advise me if Miss Mayo sticks to *truth* in this deplorable book or is she only after publicity money. . . . "

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXIV, pp. 539-47.

in the Biblical saying that 'God would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah so long as there is one good man in them'. I know that you have in Europe true men and women in all the odd nooks and corners of the Continent. I, therefore, feel that in the end all will be well.

I am glad you have got a copy of my little book, *Guide to Health*. It is an indifferent translation and then there are some chapters I would like to revise, and if at all I get the time and permission, I would certainly do so.

Nature cure has made great strides since Kuhne's time, and I should like to incorporate the results of new experiments. We are all keeping well, and all of us send you and Anand[1] our love. I do hear from Mira every week and write to her in return. To correspond with me every week she forgoes the pleasure of writing to and meeting other friends. I will certainly convey your love to her. A letter is going to her today.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

[PS.]

Love from Mahadev who is being released on the 19th May.

From a photostat: G.N. 2336

44. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

I wish that under the coloured chart you had given the figures for the population of the respective castes and divisions and as there is no hurry of publishing the chart, I would like you to give me that information. I could find it myself but I do not know your own figures. They may not be quite what I would find.

In your letter you have said nothing about Narasimhan[2] or Papa[3]. I expect to see Devdas tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

From a photostat: S.N. 19052

[1] Edmond Privat, husband of the addressee
[2] & [3] Son and daughter of the addressee

45. LETTER TO G. R. KHAN

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[1] together with the enclosures. I send you herewith a letter to my son. I have written to him already directly. You will see that in my letter to my son I have asked him to introduce you to Messrs Sorabji & Pather. I am not therefore sending you separate letters of introduction. In my letter to my son I have also mentioned Seth Omer Jhaveri.

Yours sincerely,

MR. G. R. KHAN
H. H. THE AGA KHAN'S BUNGALOW
NESBIT ROAD, MAZAGAON, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 19054

46. LETTER TO HARKISENDAS

April 27, 1933

MY DEAR HARKISENDAS,

Sjt. Sastri, whom the office sent me as shorthand assistant is leaving me at the end of this month. Having got from Advocate Bhulabhai's son his typist, I am disengaging Sastri two or three days earlier so that he can attend to what little things he has to in Bombay, but you will please pay him his pay to the end of the month.

I have not yet heard from Sjt. Dhirubhai how he has sent his typist to me. I shall therefore write to you later about the terms under which the new stenographer is to work. Of course in no case will he cost the Board more than Sastri, but I am expecting that he will cost less.

[1] Dated April 25, 1933, in which the addressee had asked Gandhiji to write to Manilal Gandhi to obtain legal opinion on "whether a Mahomedan making a will against Islamic Law can be held valid in the Supreme Court at Durban" (S.N. 19039).

Sastri is leaving me only because he wants to attend to his old father and family affairs, not having gone there for some years. Latterly, he lost a brother-in-law. But he would gladly like to be able to return if he fails to get something better inside of four months. His wants are much larger than Rs. 100 but he knows that at the present moment even Rs. 100 is a considerable sum. This is merely for your information.

If at the end of four months or earlier I cannot keep the present typist on any account and if Sastri is free to come, I would naturally take him back. He has given me full satisfaction.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19056

47. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS

April 27, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for an inscribed copy of Jeans's *The Stars in Their Courses*. I had a glance at it before, but of course I shall prize the book you have sent me. I see it is interspersed with marginal pencil lines. The passage that you have marked at page 152 had, when I first read the book, made a good impression on me.

As I was finishing your letter and leaving aside the book for the moment, I saw that the copy comes out of your own collection. I shall prize the book all the more for that knowledge.

Yours sincerely,

J. D. JENKINS, ESQ.
HAMMERTON HOUSE
23 KAHUN ROAD
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 19057

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48. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I enclose herewith my opinion[1] on Dr. Ambedkar's proposal to revise the Yeravda Pact in so far as the panel system is concerned. I hope you will agree with me that Dr. Ambedkar's proposal is no substitute for the panel system, and that under the guise of joint electorate it sets up an effective separate electorate. The proposal copies in my opinion all the worst features of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's formula leaving out all its relieving features. In my opinion so long as the Harijans are filled with suspicion, and they have every reason to entertain suspicion, as to the conduct towards them of caste Hindus, they have a perfect right to have the first say in the choice of candidates, and for that, the panel system, in my opinion, cannot be excelled.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure
Copy to Dr. Sapru also

From a photostat: S.N. 21072

49. LETTER TO B. R. AMBEDKAR

April 27, 1933

DEAR DR. AMBEDKAR,

In accordance with my promise I send you herewith my opinion[2] on your proposal. I hope you do not mind my having dealt with the matter publicly. I thought that the issue raised by you was of such momentous importance that if I discussed it at all, I should do so publicly.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat: S.N. 21074

[1] & [2] *Vide* pp. 36-9.

50. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

April 27, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I heard the same news from Chandrashankar[1]. I am happy to know that you are not permitted to read. Let them prevent you from reading, talking and dictating. Dr. Porter has emphasized this to a great extent and I feel there is a lot of truth in it.

You must be knowing that N. is here. Today one German lady Dr. Spiegel has arrived. I have asked for permission to send both of them to the Ashram. Today I sent a wire[2] to the Ashram. Chandrashankar will give you the details about the German lady and N.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9476. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

51. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

April 27, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter just now. N. Devi and her son are having their meal with me, and there will be some delay in their reaching your place. Kindly forgive me for that. I am asking Dr. Spiegel also to accompany them. I was very glad to read your letter. If you can be frank like this with me, I would feel no hesitation any time. On the one hand, there would be no limit to my begging as I am admittedly a beggar. But, while making immediate demands, I should also like to respect fully the donor's own inclination. I, therefore, always try to put the prospective donor at ease whenever I hold out my begging bowl.

I am first sending Shri Nair to the Servants of India Society and inquiring of them. If they can accommodate him, I will keep

[1] Chandrashankar Pranshankar Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandhu*
[2] *Vide* p. 39.

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him there. In any case a car does have to come daily from there. This will mean only one trip more, and I don't think there will be any difficulty about that. I will not fail to avail myself of your offer if there is any difficulty.

I did not know about the mangoes. I do not eat them regularly, but generally depend on papaya. I will ask Sardar and let you know how the mangoes were. However, I do not want you to worry about such small matters. None of us has a delicate palate. We eat what we get and offer thanks to God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4829. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

52. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 27, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the big post yesterday. You must have received the long letter which I dictated for you yesterday. I very much liked your letter which arrived in the big post. You have exercised good restraint in your language. There are signs of impatience here and there, but not much to speak of. Your reply is pointed and brief. I did not require it at all, but, since I have received it, it will help me to pacify Chhaganlal. It will not be necessary for me now to send his complaints to you. I will struggle with him in my own way, and try to remove his error. I will not waste your time, I have wasted enough of it.

I suppose you have read Shri Rajbhoj's[1] letter. I liked it very much. He says in it that we have used more logic than the heart in dealing with Ramji[2]. Since you have welcomed his suggestion, the problem is over. Rajbhoj may be mistaken in his view. But it is also possible that we have been at fault. We should be able to prove to an impartial Harijan the correctness of our treatment of Ramji in all respects. I am writing this not to find fault with anybody, but only to suggest how we should behave in future. How can I blame anybody without knowing all the facts? Read the letter[3] to Rajbhoj which I am going to write. He has suggested a change in the hour for the prayer.

[1] P. N. Rajbhoj, a Harijan leader
[2] A Harijan weaver in the Ashram
[3] *Vide* pp. 51-3.

That suggestion also deserves careful consideration. His argument is that everybody should get time to answer the call of nature immediately after getting up. He has, therefore, suggested that 45 minutes should be set apart for this purpose instead of 20 as at present. This is what he says:

> Before answering the call of nature one is less likely to be able to concentrate at prayer-time. People also feel very sleepy. If the prayer is kept at 4.45, lassitude, the feeling of uneasiness arising from not having answered the call of nature and restlessness, all these three things will disappear.

This suggestion was made even before. But Rajbhoj has put it in a new way. He seems to be a thoughtful man. He is a fresh worker and is alert, and I also see in him good power of observation. He has discrimination, too. You should, therefore, have a long talk with him first and if you see some point in his suggestion, make the change suggested by him. It was I who insisted on the prayer being kept at 4.20—and I still insist on it—but the lesson of experience should prevail. If so many persons require to answer the call of nature before coming to the prayer, 45 minutes should be allowed for the purpose. Anyone who does not feel the need may use the time in any way he likes. If you decide to make the change, I will make some suggestions about the prayer. The chief thing is that you should have a detailed discussion with Rajbhoj.

His other suggestion is as follows:

> A meeting of all new workers should be held at least twice in a month. In these meetings there should be discussions as to how they should work, how they should serve meals, what the *Mangalprabhat* discourses are about, the significance of the vow of silence, etc. I have often observed that the volunteers who serve meals do not do their work courteously and patiently, they throw the vegetables down so carelessly that they fall outside the plate and they let the milk spill over, or serve these items in more than, or even less than, the required quantity. Those who are entrusted with washing the floor are so impatient to finish their work that they show no regard for slow-eaters and drops of water splash on the latter. It is the duty of the chief of this section to explain to the volunteers from time to time how they should work.

To save time in dictating I have given a Gujarati translation of the sentences instead of the original Hindi. However, the translation is literal. The complaint which Rajbhoj makes could also be made with equal justification when I was in the Ashram and

used to take my meals in the common kitchen. I had thought that there would not be much ground for such a complaint now. But since that has not happened, I can easily guess the reason. The volunteers change frequently, and it is very necessary that they should do so. But if that is necessary, supervision over them is equally necessary. I myself have observed vegetables being served in greater or lesser quantity than required. I have also observed too much hurry when serving. I have observed *rotlis* being thrown into the plate as if at a beggar, and milk being spilled on the floor. And even while a fairly good number of people were still eating, the volunteers used to start washing the floor.

Inquire about this and do whatever is possible. I had a letter from . . .[1] and I have replied to him. He is not likely to come round as quickly as I had thought. He also feels troubled about . . .[2] and I have, therefore, replied to him that all of them have decided to leave the Ashram of their own accord. Even now they can stay on if they are ready to observe the Ashram rules. I have even advised that . . . should come and stay in the Ashram for some time. Have a talk with . . . . The key is held by him. If he comes, I will be relieved. But I certainly wish that, if he comes, he should do so with a full sense of his responsibility.

I am eagerly awaiting your reply regarding N. If she is to come to the Ashram, I don't wish to detain her here longer. If you have not written to me about this before you get this letter, send me a wire.

You say in your letter that Narahari has written to me. But the post received from you did not contain any letter from him. Did he post his letter separately? Or is it that he intended to write but forgot to do so?

I have found Narahari's letter in the post received today after I had written this letter.

I am sending a wire[3] about N. and Dr. Margarete Spiegel.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8364. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] & [2] The names have been omitted.

[3] *Vide* p. 39.

53. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

April [27][1], *1933*

CHI. NARAHARI,

What is the matter with Mohan? What is wrong with his hands? What is the cause, according to the doctor, of their becoming powerless? I did not worry about him so far, thinking that he suffered from ordinary fever; but now I feel a little worried and want to understand what exactly is the trouble with his hands.

I have read your letter to Narandas. I liked some of the suggestions you have made in it. I suggest that you should discuss the subject with Narandas. It was of course good that a meeting was held, but the person who is expected to execute them should understand them fully. I should like unity of hearts between you, if that is possible. I fail to notice it at present. Try your best to bring it about. Do not give up the attempt in despair.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9059

54. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

April 27, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

Your letter I find is very much to my liking. I have written[2] today to Narandas about this matter. Enquire from him fully and then write to me. It is bound to pain me if Ramji has not been treated generously. Do make yourself well acquainted with Mathuradas[3]. Mathuradas is gifted with great tolerance, he does not at all believe in untouchability. If in spite of this there has been some shortcoming in the treatment meted out to Ramji it shall of course be rectified. Mathuradas is a gentle, sacrificing

[1] From the reference to addressee's letter to Narandas Gandhi; *vide* the preceding item.

[2] *Vide* pp. 48-50.

[3] Mathuradas P. Asar

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and sensible man. He is quite capable of realizing his own mistakes; open out your heart to him too.

Now let me give you my experience of R.[1] I was responsible to a great extent in bringing him to the Ashram. I am very fond of him and Gangabehn; he has earned well in the Ashram. To my knowledge he has been paid adequately for his living. I have always instructed that people like R. should be paid liberally; but R. is greedy, hot-tempered and suspicious. It is extremely difficult to disabuse him of a notion once it gets into his head. You may take it that Lakshmidas[2] has become a Harijan. Someone asked his daughter Anandi as to her identity and she called herself a Harijan girl. This happened only recently. I know it that R. harassed Lakshmidas badly. I am not writing this to point out R.'s faults. He is just like a son to me. But you have evinced such interest in the well being of the Ashram and because I have found you to be simple-hearted, I am writing all this so that you may reach the correct conclusion and guide me.

I have replied[3] to several of your questions in *Harijan* [*Sevak*], which you must have seen. I now answer the rest of your questions. Spiritual progress is possible only through incessant effort. The study of philosophical works is helpful in the endeavour but I do not regard it essential because spiritual progress does not depend on the intellect but on the heart. The people were unlettered in ancient times but nobody holds the view that none of them could be spiritually advanced. We have had hundreds of saints, they were not all learned men. Jesus, Mahomed and others were unlettered. It should not at all be taken to imply that I am opposed to formal learning but the importance given to it today is beyond proportion. Hence I express my opinion whenever questions about learning are asked.

In my opinion Malaviyaji's and Dr. Moonje's aim in teaching the *mantras* and so on is the same as that of the Arya Samajists, but untouchability has become so deep-rooted in the Hindu world that mere teaching of the *mantras* would not suffice. They may teach the *mantras*, or do whatever they please, but who can bring round the Hindus? We have not yet reached the stage when this act will necessarily carry conviction with the public. Even the *shuddhi* performed by the Arya Samaj does not go very far although there is certainly some effect. Now we notice that the poi-

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Lakshmidas P. Asar
[3] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 468-70.

son of untouchability has spread among the Indian Christians too. God willing, we shall, by strenuous effort and even more strenuous penance, remove this widespread poison. The *yajna* started in September last[1] has not come to an end but is still continuing, it can end only when untouchability is eradicated and no one is considered touchable or untouchable, high or low by birth.

It is good that letters from Thakkar Bapa and Kakasaheb keep coming. Do ask unhesitatingly whatever doubts arise in your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 785

55. WHY NOT 'ARYA'?

A friend writes:[2]

Perhaps the correspondent does not know about the origin of the term 'Harijan'. I must ask him to go through the first number[3] of *Harijan Sevak* and see how the term originated. The term 'Harijan' was suggested by a friend who is a Harijan himself and I accepted it. The term has not been coined with a view to perpetuating the separate identity of Harijans. They have a separate identity today and a separate label to describe them. The term 'untouchable' savours of contempt. We wish to eradicate untouchability and it is not right to go on using the term 'untouchable'. But in so far as untouchables have a distinct identity we must have a name by which to call them. Having accepted the necessity for such a name, what name to choose? In my view we can find no better name than 'Harijan'. 'Arya' will not do because it is the name of a sect. A general name 'Hindu' is already there. The pity is that today a separate identity of the so-called untouchables is necessary. In Government offices they have a separate list. Everywhere they are kept separate. Let us pray that this separateness may be done away with so that all of us may become fit to be called 'Harijans'—

[1] The reference is to the fast which Gandhiji began on September 20, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI.

[2] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that it would be more appropriate to call the untouchables 'Arya' rather than 'Harijans'.

[3] Dated February 23; *vide* Vol. LIII, pp. 374-6.

men of God. A friend rightly said that today caste Hindus have become 'Arijans'—enemies of Hinduism.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-4-1933

56. FIVE QUESTIONS BY A YOUTH

A youth asks the following five questions:

> 1. When it is our claim that there is no caste among the Hindus which can be called untouchables, why should we fight unnecessarily over this word?
>
> 2. When it is our contention that varna is determined by the nature of work, why should we not reform the work of the so-called untouchables? When their work is degrading, what is the point in fighting with the higher varnas by taking sides with the untouchables?
>
> 3. When untouchability can be abolished through inter-dining and intermarriage, why should we not resort to these too?
>
> 4. Can the question of temple-entry by Harijans be not solved by building separate temples for them?
>
> 5. Will the orthodox allow Harijans to enter temples when the temple-entry Bills are passed?
>
> I hope you will be able to set my doubts at rest.

Whether I shall succeed or not, I do not know. But I shall certainly try to satisfy that youth and others like him. Success lies in the hands of God.

1. The claim that there is no such caste as untouchables is made by the reformers, not by the sanatanists. Unfortunately, the caste Hindus have dubbed several Hindu castes as untouchables. And today in Government offices also these castes are entered as untouchables. Therefore, so long as we are not able to convince our sanatanist brothers, it becomes the duty of the reformers to fight for the abolition of this caste-born untouchability.

2. Whether varna is determined by work or otherwise, is a question which does not arise here. Therefore I am leaving it. Those who wish to know my opinion in this matter should please read the previous issue[1] of *Harijan Sevak*. So far as the work of the so-called untouchables is concerned, if by reform of their work it is meant that they should give up their trades, it is not only unnecessary but also harmful, because these trades are of the nature of pub-

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 468-70.

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lic service. The washerman, the barber, the cobbler, the Dom[1], the scavenger are all true servants of the people. If they were to give up their work, the people would be doomed. The reformers believe that in treating these people as untouchables, caste Hindus have made a mistake. It is the firm conviction of the reformer that the work of the scavenger and the Dom is sacred. It is the duty of the caste Hindus to improve their work. The mother removes the excrement and does the washing. The doctor cuts flesh, bone and skin. But the mother and the doctor do their work neatly and wash themselves afterwards. While doing their work they become untouchable. We should treat scavengers, etc., in exactly the same way. Just as mothers and the doctors are not untouchables by birth, so also the sweeper and others are not born untouchables, even though while doing their work they may be untouchable. When we look upon the sweeper and others as our equals, we will not segregate them from ourselves; on the other hand we shall embrace them with love and we will endeavour to improve their work and their condition. Today, in segregating them we perpetrate tyranny on them. We do commit violence against them, offend society and bring into contempt the fundamental principles of Hinduism. Therefore, it becomes our sacred duty to work for the cause of the Harijans.

3. I do not agree that inter-dining and intermarriage can bring emancipation to anyone. Inter-dining and intermarriage are a separate question. It has no connection with caste or untouchability. It has a separate code. In any case, removal of untouchability as we have defined it today does not include inter-dining and intermarriage.

4. When we consider it our duty to remove untouchability, why should we build separate temples for Harijans? They have as much right to worship in common temples as others have.

5. No one ever said that with the mere passing of the Bills the orthodox will permit the Harijans to enter temples. But the existing law is such that even if one Hindu among the orthodox raises an objection, no public temple can be thrown open to the Harijans. When the Bill is passed this obstruction can certainly disappear.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 28-4-1933

[1] The lowest among Harijans working at cremation-grounds

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57. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 28, 1933

DEAR THAKKAR BAPA,

I have several applications for financial assistance from Harijan students but I feel perplexed without an Education Board whose formation I have suggested. Will you please set up one as quickly as possible and announce the appointment, constitution and rules?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19059

58. LETTER TO T. TITUS

April 28, 1933

MY DEAR TITUS,

I cannot recall any letter of yours remaining unanswered. You must, therefore, repeat your questions and I shall gladly answer. I shall search my file and if I discover any letters I shall give my reply without waiting for a copy of your previous questions.

You have missed my point about 'Allopathic' and 'Homoeopathic'. Personally I would prefer Homoeopathy any day to Allopathy. Only I have no personal experience of its efficacy and I have told you so. Perhaps if you have confidence in yourself, and if you can really spare time from the daily work for attending to Homoeopathic remedies, so far as I am concerned I do not mind your trying them. You may discuss this thing with Narandas and if you are interested in the simple treatment of diseases I would like you to understand Dr. Sharma's system. He has great confidence in his own method and if his experiments in the Ashram succeed it will be a great gain.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19060

59. LETTER TO MRS. A. S. CHAUDHARY[1]

April 28, 1933

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

It is very difficult for me to say anything on the strength of the scrappy letter that you have sent me. I would, therefore, advise you to see Seth Jajuji of Wardha and secure his recommendation. Then I will have to send your papers to the Central Board and your application will be considered by them. You will give Seth Jajuji as much information as you can about yourself.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. A. S. CHAUDHARY
NAWI WASTI, NAGPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 19061

60. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA

April 28, 1933

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter of the 25th instant.

You are asking me to do something which I cannot do at the moment. I would ask you, therefore, to study carefully the pages of the *Harijan* and I think you will understand from them my idea of 'Reformed Hinduism'. I always believe in a concrete programme. We have this in the big untouchability work. If we succeed in tackling that root of all evil in Hinduism, the rest will be incredibly simple and easy. The work of reformation will proceed apace as soon as many of us realize that we must concentrate our energy on that single reform. You will see how I have dealt with your question about a model temple[2].

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19062

[1] Presumably in reply to the addressee's letter (S.N. 21061) dated April 25, 1933, requesting grant for higher studies at Delhi

[2] *Vide* pp. 61-3.

61. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

April 28, 1933

I have your letter.

I understand and appreciate all you say. I shall look forward to the report of your impressions. Let it be as critical and exhaustive as you can make it. So far as I am concerned there is no limit to your stay there. Indeed the longer you stay the better for the work that I would have from you whether under my direct guidance or in association with me.

I do not mind that you are not likely to go to Madanapalli. As you have reduced your wants to uttermost simplicity, there can be no dearth of work for you to your liking.

I am glad you visited the Harijan quarters with Bhagwanji[1]. I have seen many. No description, therefore, staggers me. I know how Herculean the task is before me but then I have an excuse because I am one of the many tools in the hands of God. My concern is, therefore, to keep myself a fit instrument to be found ready to do His command at a moment's call. Dr. Sharma's idea always has been mine and that is why I took charge of Lakshmi[2] so many years ago, almost inside of an year of my arrival here,[3] and I have been teaching as many Harijans as I could lay my hands on. Several have been already fixed up in life but that too is a big job. It is so difficult to keep them even though they are given to you by their parents. I am not surprised at all these untoward results in several cases and, as you very properly say, it is all due to the sin of the caste Hindus.

Of course it does not do to go for the dirty boys. Neither they nor their parents know any better and those that have some notion of hygiene and cleanliness have no convenience for conforming to the laws of hygiene. I am glad you are there during Dr. Sharma's visit. I would like you to know him and his message. If it is substantial it would be a great thing for serving public institutions. I am a fanatical believer in nature's

[1] Bhagwanji P. Pandya
[2] Daughter of Dudabhai Dafda
[3] In October 1920; *vide* Vol. XVIII, p. 328.

methods and I never missed an opportunity of having a training. Whatever I know has been picked up from books. I was never able to read from page to page but I made copious experiments on myself and my companions, and have very much benefited from those methods. I have been always anxious to secure someone who would share my idea and develop the method in the interest of the poor. Dr. Sharma is reported to be the man and so he is at the Ashram. I would therefore like you to study the method in so far as he would let you do so.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21078

62. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 28, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I do not have time just now to write a long letter. I got your postcard. N.'s son is five years old and is mischievous. Were he not so, he is capable of looking after himself. If, therefore, you hesitate to admit her because of him you need not hesitate. Personally I hope that both the mother and the son will be able to adapt themselves to the condition there very well. If N.'s sinful life in the past has a share in your hesitation, have no fear in taking her in. Vallabhbhai has interpreted your postcard to mean that you are not against admitting her but have merely expressed your fear. I have interpreted it to mean that you do not wish to take her in. However that may be, I must be cautious. If, therefore, I do not receive a clear reply to my yesterday's wire[1], I will await the reply to this letter. Reply by wire. Read all the accompanying letters before passing them on.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters for Kusum, Parachure, Duncan and Titus.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8365. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* p. 39.

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63. *NOTES*

INCONSISTENCIES ?

A correspondent who is a diligent student of my writings finds it difficult to reconcile my recent writings about inter-caste dining and inter-caste marriage and corresponding writings of some years ago.

He quotes from my article[1] on "Hinduism" contributed to *Young India* of 6th October 1921. I give the quotation below with his omissions:

> Though, therefore, varnashrama is not affected by inter-dining and intermarriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage inter-dining and intermarriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self-restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh, so that the spirit may be set free. . . . By restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. . . . Prohibition against intermarriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul.

And then he quotes from my statement[2] dated the 4th November last year, which was circulated to the Press. I give the quotation again with his omissions:

> 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. . . . Today these two prohibitions are weakening Hindu society, and emphasis on them has turned the attention of mass mind from the fundamentals which are vital to life's growth. . . . Dining and marriage restrictions stunt Hindu society.

As I read them with a detached mind, I find no contradiction between the two statements, especially if they are read in their full context. In the statement of 1921, I wrote on Hinduism and gave the briefest outline of it. On the 4th of November, I had to apply myself to the innumerable castes and caste restrictions. The mode of life in the Ashram in 1921 was absolutely the same as it is now. Therefore my practice has undergone no change. I still believe that restriction imposed by oneself upon

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 245-50.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 341-5.

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inter-dining and intermarriage is an act of renunciation of the flesh. There is one word that perhaps I would change if I was writing the article of 1921 today. Instead of 'prohibition', I should repeat the expression used in the same article just a few lines before and say 'self-imposed restriction against intermarriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul'.

In spite of my statement of 4th November last, I would say that inter-dining and inter-caste marriage are in no way essential for the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood or for the removal of untouchability. At the same time, a super-imposed restriction would undoubtedly stunt the growth of any society, and to link these restrictions to varnadharma or caste is undoubtedly prejudicial to the freedom of the spirit and would make varna a drag upon religion. But having said this, I would like to say to this diligent reader of my writings and to others who are interested in them that I am not at all concerned with appearing to be consistent. In my search after Truth I have discarded many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment, and therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

64. A MODEL TEMPLE

It was impossible that side by side with the movement for temple-entry by Harijans there should not be a demand for temple reform. The modern Hindu temple is a hot-bed of superstition, as are more or less other 'Houses of God'. I published[1] the other day a letter from an American friend, gently pleading with me not to have anything to do with the temple-entry movement. A friend who is a devout follower of Islam has carried on a long correspondence with me, trying to do with me in his own way what the American friend did in his own. There is undoubtedly a great deal of substance in what they have said.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 49-51.

But I have not been able to subscribe to their corollary that the remedy for the abuse lies in the destruction of temples.

But by far the largest number of persons believe in the reform, not destruction, of temples. I mentioned only the other day an ambitious scheme set on foot for a model temple in Rajkot.[1] Several correspondents have taken me to task for advocating temple-entry for Harijans without emphasizing the necessity of temple reform. There is no doubt that temple reform is necessary. But here, again, there is need for caution. Some of them think that it is possible to replace all the existing temples with new ones. I do not share that view. All temples will never be alike. They will always vary, as they have done in the past, with the varying human needs. What the reformer should be concerned with is a radical change more in the inward spirit than in the outward form. If the first is changed, the second will take care of itself. If the first remains unchanged, the second, no matter how radically changed, will be like a whited sepulchre. A mausoleum, however beautiful, is a tomb and not a mosque, and a bare plot of consecrated ground may be a real Temple of God.

Therefore the first desideratum is the priest. My ideal priest must be a man of God. He must be a true servant of the people. He should have the qualifications of a guide, friend and philosopher to those among whom he is officiating. He must be a whole-timer with the least possible needs and personal ties.

He should be versed in the Shastras. His whole concern will be to look after the welfare of his people. I have not drawn a fanciful picture. It is almost true to life. It is based on the recollection of my childhood. The priest I am recalling was looked up to by the prince and the people. They flocked round him for advice and guidance in the time of their need.

If the sceptic says such a priest is hard to find nowadays, he would be partly right. But I would ask the reformer to wait for building the temple of his ideal till he finds his priest.

Meanwhile let him cultivate in himself the virtues he will have in the priest of his imagination. Let him expect these from the priests of existing temples. In other words, by his gentle and correct conduct, let him infect his immediate surroundings with the need of the times and let him have faith that his thought, surcharged with his own correct conduct, will act more powerfully than the mightiest dynamo. Let him not be impatient to see the result in a day. A thought may take years of conduct to evolve the

[1] *Vide* also pp. 72-3.

requisite power. What are years or generations in the life of a great reform ?

Now, perhaps, the reader will follow my view of a model temple. I can present him with no architect's plan and specification. Time is not ripe for it. But that does not baffle me and it need not baffle the reformer. He can choose the site for his future temple. It must be as extensive as he can get it. It need not be in the heart of a village or a city. It should be easily accessible to the Harijans and the other poor and yet it must not be in insanitary surroundings. If possible, it should be higher than its surroundings. In any case, I would aim at making the plinth of the actual temple as high as possible. And on this site I should select my plot for daily worship. Round this will come into being a school, a dispensary, a library, secular and religious. The school may serve also as a meeting or debating hall. I should have a dharmsala or guest house connected with the temple. Each one of these will be a separate institution and yet subordinate to the temple and may be built simultaneously or one after another as circumstances and funds may permit. The buildings may or may not be substantial. If labour is voluntary, as it well may be, with mud and straw a beginning may be made at once. But the temple is not yet built. The foundation was laid when the site was procured, the plot for the temple was selected and the first prayer was offered. For the *Bhagavata* says, "Wherever people meet and utter His name from their hearts, there God dwells, there is His temple." The building, the deity, the consecration, is the province of the priest. When he is found, he will set about his task, but the temple began its existence from the time of the first prayer. And if it was the prayer of true men and women, its continuous progress was assured.

So much for the temple of the future. The reader who cares to study the Rajkot scheme will find that the outward form of my model temple materially corresponds to that in the scheme. Indeed, there is nothing new in my idea or the Rajkot scheme. The village temples of yore had almost all the adjuncts suggested by me.

But we must also deal with the existing temples. They can become real Houses of God today, if the worshippers will insist on the priests conforming to the ideal presented by me.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

65. *HUMAN MANUFACTURE* [*–I*]

The section regarding Depressed Classes in the Bengal Census Report, Part I, is an illuminating document, from which at the moment I reproduce only paragraphs 2 and 3 below, and I hope to occupy the reader's attention over this portion of the report for a week or two longer.

Meaning of the Term 'Depressed Classes'

The expression 'Depressed Classes' is of comparatively recent coinage and is in many respects unfortunate. It does not translate any actual vernacular term in common use in Bengal, nor does it describe any class the members of which can be defined with accuracy. It is a term in itself indefinite. In European countries it is applied to the chronically indigent portion of the population and connotes an economic condition. It can be applied anthropologically in a psychological sense to describe that state of mind engendered in a primitive people when it finds itself in contact with a dominant society based upon principles entirely different from and disregarding the traditionally accepted sanctions of tribal life. This psychological condition has been convincingly put forward as one at least of the elements leading to the depopulation of Melanesia and it has an interesting counterpart in the 'discouragement' from which Mr. George Bernard Shaw makes visitors to the island die off in contact with the civilization of the ancients in "Back to Methuselah". In general use, however, the term in India, though not applying to exactly similar strata of population in different parts, is used to describe those members of the community who in common social estimation are considered to be inferior, degraded, outcaste, or not fit in any way for social and religious intercourse on reasonably equal terms with members of the clean or higher castes. It represents a problem which arises only within the fold of Hinduism, namely, the problem of those Hindu groups who by the accident of birth are denied and never can by any individual merit achieve social consideration or spiritual benefits which are the birth-right without consideration of personal merit equally of all persons born into the higher castes.

The Criterion of the Depressed Classes

It is, however, by no means a simple matter to devise a satisfactory criterion by which to distinguish the Depressed Classes. The problem itself

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being essentially social and religious, the criteria, which have been at various times suggested, themselves depend upon social observance or social precedence. During the census of 1901 the castes in Bengal were distinguished into seven groups upon an elaborate classification. The first group contained Brahmins only as the acknowledged superiors of all other classes in the caste hierarchy. In the second group were placed castes whose respectability was never in question and who are either twice-born or were held to be superior to all other Shudra castes. A third group consisted of the so-called *navashakha*, or nine branches, now indeed containing more than nine groups but all characterized by being held worthy to offer water the drinking of which would not pollute the higher classes. Below this third group were distinguished a fourth containing clean castes with degraded Brahmins; a fifth containing castes lower than group four whose water is not usually accepted, a sixth comprised low castes abstaining from beef, pork and fowls, and seventh embracing castes by whom forbidden food were eaten and who pursue the most degraded occupation as scavengers, etc. In 1911 the Census Commissioner for India directed provincial superintendents to enumerate castes and tribes returned as Hindus who do not conform to certain standards or are subject to certain disabilities, "leaving the reader to draw his own inferences". They were asked to prepare a list of all but the minor castes which qua castes:

1. deny the supremacy of the Brahmins;
2. do not receive the *mantra* from a Brahmin or other recognized Hindu guru;
3. deny the authority of the Vedas;
4. do not worship the great Hindu gods;
5. are not served by good Brahmins as family priests;
6. have no Brahmin priests at all;
7. are denied access to the interior of Hindu temples;
8. cause pollution (a) by touch, (b) within a certain distance;
9. bury their dead; or
10. eat beef and do not do reverence to cow.

The enquiry was intended to furnish material, if possible, from which an answer could be given to the difficult question: 'Who is a Hindu?' Up to 1916 in Bengal at least the expression 'Depressed Classes' was unknown. In 1916 however the Bengal Government was invited to prepare a list of the Depressed Classes and submitted a list including certain criminal tribes and aboriginals and amounting in all to 31 groups. This list was used by the Commissioner for Education in writing his quinquennial report on the progress of education in India for the years 1912-17. The term thus introduced remained and both the Calcutta University Commission (1917-19) and the Census Report for 1921 con-

tained lists of the Depressed Classes. In neither of these last instances, however, was any clear criterion set forth to show on what grounds the groups were included. The Indian Statutory Commission, without giving any definite criterion, referred to them as the "lowest castes recognized as being within the Hindu religious and social system . . . . Their essential characteristic is that according to the tenets of orthodox Hinduism, they are, though within the Hindu system, untouchable—that is to say, that for all other Hindus they cause pollution by touch and defile food and water. They are denied access to the interior of an ordinary Hindu temple (though this is also true of some who would not be classed as 'untouchable'). They are not only the lowest in the Hindu social and religious system, but with few individual exceptions are also at the bottom of the economic scale and are generally quite uneducated. In the villages they are normally segregated in a separate quarter and not infrequently eat food which would not be touched by any section of the Hindu community."

At a later date the Franchise Committee, driven to lay down simple criteria, adopted No. 7 and 8 of the distinctions made in the Census Report of 1911. For Bengal these distinctions have been elaborated on behalf of the Depressed Classes Association as follows:

(a) castes from whose hands the three high castes or even the *navashakha* (that is, the caste Hindus) would not accept water and whose presence either in the kitchen or in the room where water and cooked food are kept would pollute the same according to their estimation;

(b) castes who would not be allowed into any public temple and whose presence there would defile articles of worship;

(c) castes who would not be allowed to enter or to have their meals inside the dining room of an hotel or eating-house run by caste Hindus;

(d) castes at whose socio-religious functions Shrotriya Brahmins (that is, the priests) officiating in such functions in the house of the caste Hindus would not officiate; and

(e) castes who would not be served by the Shrotriya Napit (that is, the barber) whose services are necessary in various socio-religious functions of the Hindus.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

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66. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

April 29, 1933

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter. I hope you are better now. It will help you if you live only on milk. You may certainly drink fruit juices with it. If the milkman brings the animal to your house and milks her in your presence, you should drink such fresh unboiled milk without heating it. Keep me informed.

Why were you upset about that one rupee? It was a mistake on Chandrashankar's part to have mentioned it, but you should not pay any attention to the matter. There is no reference to the sum of Rs. 500. Never mind if anybody who reads about that one rupee says that Khambhatta has now become a miser or beggar. On the contrary, wouldn't it be a good thing?

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
KEKUSHRU COTTAGE
LORDWICK PARK, MAHABALESHWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6604. Also C.W. 4394. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

67. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 29, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your postcard. I will ask Devdas about Manilal's bill. Panditji and Lakshmibehn came and saw me. Narmada also was with them. I was pained to hear about Amina. I will write to her. Read that letter and give it to her if you approve of it. If I cannot write today, I will write later when I get time. Meanwhile, manage as you think best. They told me about Ramabehn also. I intend to write[1] to her too. Show as much

[1] *Vide* pp. 79-80.

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love as you can. But human love must have some limit also, for how can we know when love may become *moha*[1]? One's love, therefore, should never be at the cost of one's duty, no matter even if such conduct seems cruel. If anybody who looks at the matter superficially were to believe that I am being cruel to . . .[2], I would not blame him. At present . . .[3] is bound to think me cruel. But what can I do? My regard for dharma will not let me adopt any other course. What is true of me is also true of you. You should, therefore, follow what seems to you to be your dharma even at the risk of being accused of cruelty or inviting my criticism.

I got yesterday your letter about N. It proved that Vallabhbhai's interpretation was correct. I am, therefore, making preparations for sending her. I shall probably be able to send her on Monday. Assuming that she will arrive on that day, send a cart to the station. Probably Dr. Margarete Spiegel also will accompany her. Even if I don't receive your consent about her, I will assume it. At the [Ahmedabad] station they will get into the metre gauge train which connects with the Gujarat Mail. You should remember that both the ladies are to be trained for Harijan work. You must strictly follow the rule that neither they nor any other European whom we may admit should be permitted to have any connection with the civil disobedience movement. I am specially writing to the Government about those two women. They and others who may join the Ashram should strictly follow the Ashram rules and you should see that they do so. If they do not observe the rules or become a source of trouble to you, I don't at all intend that you should still let them remain. If that happens, inform me immediately. The food requirement of both is simple. I very much doubt if they will be able to digest *jowar* and *bajri*. You will have to provide fruit and milk to both in fairly good quantities, otherwise they will not be able to keep up their strength. N. does not include milk and ghee in her diet at present. Both eat with relish thick wheat *rotlas* without ghee or butter, nine inches in diameter and baked twice till they are crisp and without ghee or butter. They eat these *rotlas* and chew them without the help of any liquid. N. does not drink milk or eat ghee at present. Her food is such *rotlas*, papaw, oranges, and uncooked vegetables like cucumber, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, etc. She will, however, drink milk there if necessary. Her son gets three pounds of milk daily. He also eats toasted *rotli* and

[1] Ignorant attachment

[2] & [3] The names have been omitted.

fruits. If we coax him very much, he eats a little uncooked vegetable. He doesn't care for sweets at all, but greatly enjoys drinking fresh unboiled milk. He eats every article one by one. I hope nobody will spoil this child by teaching him to drink tea or coffee or eat sweets. His energy is boundless. We have in the Ashram other children who are as self-willed as he is, but he does not cling to his mother all the time. He has produced on me the impression that he can live with anybody. It is very desirable that nobody there should, out of false love, tempt him to eat unwholesome things. For the rest, we should trust to his and our fate. I am sending N. there with great hopes. I have cherished her like a daughter for the last three or four months. I have preserved many of her letters. There is nothing in her life which she wishes to hide. I have advised her to bury the memory of all persons who had fallen under her spell. But she has assured me that she does not wish to hide from me a single guilty action or thought of hers, and thereby won my initial confidence. But I can give no guarantee about her future conduct. I am acting on the basis of complete trust in her. Give her suitable work from time to time within her capacity. She has great ability. She is extremely active and wants to do good. If she can reduce herself to a cypher, she will be able to do much. If she becomes proud of her ability or her noble intentions or good work, she will fall. For the present give her such manual work as she can do. Make arrangements to help her to pick up Hindi quickly. Her power of grasping is very good. She already knows a little Hindi.

Margarete is of a different type. She is 35 years old and, therefore, her character is practically formed. She is a woman of great learning and is quick in learning things by heart, but she is not very intelligent. She is obstinate, but her motives are pure. I think her life has been blameless. She has great love for the Ashram. But she has no sense of proportion when she speaks. Ever since she has been here, she has been talking about the Ashram in season and out of season. She has left the country and come to India because of the movement in Germany against her but she has no plan before her. I am sending N. there willingly and with great joy. I don't feel such joy in sending Margarete, but we cannot turn her away. She has come merely with the intention of living in the Ashram. What can we say to her? She will of course do whatever work she is physically capable of. She has been a teacher for some years and so you can immediately give her the work of teaching English. She is eager to do teaching. Even as a teacher, however, N. is more capable.

But since she is joining the Ashram to atone for her past life, I feel slightly doubtful whether you should immediately give her such work. If you do wish to give it, you may certainly do so.

No other instructions seem necessary.

I have become fairly frightened about Kusum[1]. They are now talking about tuberculosis of the intestines. I can put no faith in these amateurs. I cannot guide you or Kusum very much from here. At present you are her guardian for every thing. Kashi cannot take any decision, and I am afraid Kusum is not fit now to decide for herself. Even as her relation, therefore, you are in the place of her father. Personally I think that, both from the point of view of our ideals in the Ashram and from a practical point of view, we should not think of taking Kusum somewhere else. We should do whatever is possible in the Ashram itself. Carry out without any hesitation whatever decision you come to, after discussing the matter with Kusum and Kashi. I can make one suggestion from here. Tell Talwalkar that he should now obtain the opinion of some other doctor. He should have a joint consultation with Haribhai[2] and Kanuga and prescribe treatment according to the opinion of all three of them. If he does not agree to do this, have a talk with Dr. Kanuga and Dr. Haribhai and, with Dr. Talwalkar's permission, get their advice and follow the treatment which they suggest. If, after the experience that you have had about Dr. Sharma, you think favourably of him and if he agrees, put Kusum in his hands. If he agrees, however, he should not leave the Ashram till Kusum begins to respond to his treatment. My first suggestion is such as will meet the approval of practical people. The second will not, but it is consistent with my attitude in such matters. You probably remember that when Manu was practically on death-bed, ignoring the advice of doctors I put her under the treatment of "Ice Doctor"[3]. I have experimented with such impractical treatments on many others, so I don't hesitate to make the foregoing suggestion in this case. However, since I am not on the spot, you should not attach any weight to my opinion. You should decide independently. I will accept any decision which you arrive at. I will have no objection at all if you decide to cling to Dr. Talwalkar's treatment and trust Kusum's life completely to him. I have no doubt at all about his goodness of heart, nor about his careful attention. Only, he

[1] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi
[2] Dr. Haribhai Desai
[3] Dr. M. S. Kelkar

has not been able to impress me by his methods of treatment and other doctors also do not follow these. However, we are dealing with the human body which is a thing as brittle as a glass bangle. Its fate is not in the hands of any doctor, but rests on the will of one Power alone, so that there is no harm in believing that ultimately medical treatment is for our satisfaction only and makes little difference to the result. Don't we, moreover, sing every week ?—

> Lukman[1] on being asked, "How many days he had lived",
> Wringing his hand sorrowfully answered, "A few".

And the Muslim world believes that there has been no hakim in the world the equal of Lukman, but even he could not save himself. If that is so, what can Talwalkar or other doctors do?

This part of the letter is positively not for Kusum. It is only for you to think over. Even if Kashi and others read it, they will unnecessarily become nervous and get frightened to death. I have written such alarming things in the full confidence that not a hair on your body will turn.

The two European ladies will hardly have any letters to write. Dr. Spiegel will drop a postcard to her mother. N. is not likely to have any person to whom she might want to write. All the same, you should personally help them in all such matters.

BAPU

[PS.]

[Letters for] Dr. Sharma, Keshu[2] and Parnerkar enclosed.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8367. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

68. A SACRED ACTIVITY

I give below an interesting but touching account[3] from a Harijan worker's experiences which I have been giving from time to time in these columns.

I will not spoil the picture by writing more on it. It is possible that because of a long-standing bad habit some may feel

[1] Unani physician

[2] Keshav Gandhi, son of Maganlal Gandhi

[3] This is not translated here. The correspondent had described the process of skinning animals.

disgust on reading this. Medical books are full of such descriptions. He who does not read them will not master the science of biology. Moreover, no one should be shocked because I have described the activity as a sacred one. That activity itself may appear dirty like that of removing filth. But just as removal of filth is for purposes of purification, this activity is meant for cleaning or purifying society. Innocent city dwellers do not realize that they won't be able to live for a moment if these workers do not perform many activities which we despise.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 30-4-1933

69. A MODEL TEMPLE

When Smt. Vijayalakshmi Pandit set foot in Kathiawar for Harijan welfare work, a scheme to build a model temple in Rajkot was discussed. I have already made a reference to this. Shri Parashuram Gopal Masurekar, the well-known lawyer of the place, had taken a leading part in the deliberations. Under his signature a public appeal has been issued in connection with the scheme. The following point[1] claims our attention.

It is mentioned in the statement that even some from among those who believe in untouchability have welcomed the scheme and have also agreed to give financial help. Shri Masurekar deserves congratulations on this scheme. I hope that he will translate it into reality.

It should not be that the beginning would be made only when many people join the scheme. To my mind, a model temple means an ideal priest. Bricks and mortar do not make a model temple. If the priest is good, even a rough hut will shine forth and earnest devotees will find solace there. And when there is no such priest, even a marble temple inlaid with mosaic would be a desolate structure. There are today a number of such famous ruins in India. There are such ancient places in Mysore which at one time must have been great temples. The caves of Karla,

[1] This is not translated here. The scheme proposed a temple devoid of any decorations or jewellery and one which was meant for the entire Hindu population, irrespective of caste or community. The priest would be a person who did not believe in untouchability. And as the aim of the temple was to be service, there should be a night school for adults, a library, a free dispensary, and a religious school attached to it.

Ajanta and Gharapuri were temples once. God has disappeared from there because of want of the priest and instead of devotees connoisseurs of art go there to see the works of art. Hence I hope that the proposed temple at Rajkot will get a good priest.

But whether such a priest is available or not, the scheme for the temple can be taken up for execution from today. The first task is to obtain a vast plot of land in the open. I would regard it as advantageous if it is at a little distance from the village. After selecting a plot for the temple, other institutions mentioned in the scheme can be constructed there. To my mind, the foundation-stone of the temple will have been laid if the people working in this institution get together in the plot reserved for the temple and repeat the name of God, because there is a dictum in the *Bhagavata* that God dwells where five people get together and repeat the name of Vasudeva. And where He dwells, there the temple stands.

The Rajkot scheme for the temple is an excellent one whether it materializes or not, whether it materializes early or late. Everyone can help implement it to a certain extent. The existing temples can come alive if the devotees and the priests are in harmony. These days most of the temples are lifeless. Other institutions can be started around them. The foundation-stone can be laid of the new kinds of temples suggested by me for the villages. Ancient temples appear to have come into existence in this very way. Each temple embodies the conception of a devotee. They built the temples in accordance with their faiths. The history of some of the temples of Madras is available today. These temples have *Agamas* of their own in which we can find the plan of the temple, the shape of the idol, its size, the ritual of worship and rules of purification. And the faith of the Hindus recognizes these books or pamphlets as divine scriptures.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 30-4-1933

70. STATEMENT ON FAST[1]

[*April 30, 1933*][2]

A tempest has been raging within me for some days. I have been struggling against it. On the eve of the 'Harijan Day' the voice became insistent, and said, 'why don't you do it?' I resisted it. But the resistance was vain. And the resolution was made to go on an unconditional and irrevocable fast for twenty-one days, commencing from Monday noon the 8th May and ending on Monday noon the 29th May.

As I look back upon the immediate past, many are the causes too sacred to mention that must have precipitated the fast. But they are all connected with the great Harijan cause. The fast is against nobody in particular and against everybody who wants to participate in the joy of it, without for the time being having to fast himself or herself. But it is particularly against myself. It is a heart-prayer for the purification of self and associates, for greater vigilance and watchfulness. But nobody who appreciates the step about to be taken is to join me. Any such fast will be a torture of themselves and of me.

Let this fast, however, be a preparation for many such fasts to be taken by purer and more deserving persons than myself. During all these months since September last, I have been studying the correspondence and literature and holding prolonged discussions with men and women, learned and ignorant, Harijans and non-Harijans. The evil is far greater than even I had thought it to be. It will not be eradicated by money, external organization and even political power for Harijans, though all these three are necessary. But to be effective, they must follow or at least accompany inward wealth, inward organization and inward power, in other words, self-purification. This can only come by fasting and prayer. We may not approach the God of Truth in the arrogance of strength, but in the meekness of the weak and the helpless.

But the mere fast of the body is nothing without the will behind it. It must be a genuine confession of the inner fast, an

[1] This was published under the title, "Fast for Purification".

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-5-1933; also A.I.C.C. File No. 429

irrepressible longing to express truth and nothing but truth. Therefore, those only are privileged to fast for the cause of truth who have worked for it and who have love in them even for opponents, who are free from animal passion and who have abjured earthly possessions and ambition. No one, therefore, may undertake, without previous preparation and discipline, the fast I have foreshadowed.

Let there be no misunderstanding about the impending fast. I have no desire to die. I want to live for the cause, though I hope I am equally prepared to die for it. But I need for me and my fellow-workers greater purity, greater application and dedication. I want more workers of unassailable purity. Shocking cases of impurity have come under my notice. I would like my fast to be an urgent appeal to such people to leave the cause alone.

I know that many of my sanatanist friends and others think that the movement is a deep political game. How I wish this fast would convince them that it is purely religious.

If God has more service to take from this body, He will hold it together despite deprivation of earthly food. He will send me spiritual food. But He works through earthly agents, and everyone who believes in the imperative necessity of removing untouchability will send me the food I need, by working to the best of his or her ability for the due and complete fulfilment of the pledge given to Harijans in the name of caste Hindus.

Let co-workers not get agitated over the coming fast. They should feel strengthened by it. They must not leave their post of duty; and those who have temporarily retired for much-needed rest or for being cured of ailments are as much at the post as healthy workers serving in their respective quarters. No one should come to me unless it be for necessary consultation on matters connected with the movement.

It is, I hope, needless for me to pray to friends that they will not ask me to postpone, abandon or vary the approaching fast in any way whatsoever. I ask them to believe me that the fast has come to me literally as described above. I, therefore, ask friends in India and all the world over to pray for me and with me that I may safely pass through the ordeal and that, whether I live or die, the cause for which the fast is to be undertaken may prosper.

And may I ask my sanatanist friends to pray that, whatever be the result of the fast for me, the golden lid that hides Truth may be removed?

Harijan, 6-5-1933

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71. DISCUSSION WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

April 30, 1933

For some time now, I have been vacillating between twenty-one days and forty days. After all, does one express, can one express, all one's thoughts to others? Three days have passed since I lost my sleep. Could it be that I cannot sleep? But, for the last three days I have not been getting any sleep for hours at a stretch; I might get up at two in the morning and start work but not once would I doze while I dictated in the morning, nor even would I want to stretch my limbs, as if for the last three days I were preparing myself for the great deluge! It is difficult to say since when the excitement started. On many occasions, however, thought of a fast would repeatedly come to my mind and I would drive it away. In the night when I retired I had no idea that something was coming up today. But after eleven I woke up, I watched the stars, repeated Ramanama but the same thought would persistently come to my mind: 'If you have grown so restless, why don't you undertake the fast? Do it.' The inner dialogue went on for quite some time. At half past twelve came the clear, unmistakable voice: 'You must undertake the fast.' That was all. Now having resolved to make it a twenty-one days' fast, I took no time in deciding that as a prisoner I should undertake it after eight days' [notice]. Without it the task of Harijan service is just impossible. If I don't do this much the rot in Harijan work will reach the heart and destroy it altogether. I, therefore, got up and immediately began to write out the statement[2] and I had just finished the last sentence when you came up for the prayers.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-5-1933

[1] Extracted from the Gujarati "Sparks from the Sacred Fire"

[2] *Vide* pp. 74-5.

72. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, HOME DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

April 30, 1933

SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
SIMLA

FOR REASONS WHOLLY UNCONNECTED WITH GOVERNMENT AND SOLELY CONNECTED WITH HARIJAN MOVEMENT AND OBEDIENCE PEREMPTORY CALL FROM WITHIN RECEIVED ABOUT MIDNIGHT I HAVE TO TAKE TWENTY-ONE DAYS' UNCONDITIONAL IRREVOCABLE FAST WITH WATER SODA AND SALT BEGINNING FROM NOON EIGHTH MAY NEXT ENDING NOON TWENTY-NINTH MAY. FAST MIGHT HAVE COMMENCED AT ONCE BUT FOR MY BEING PRISONER AND MY ANXIETY TO ENABLE LOCAL AUTHORITY RECEIVE NECESSARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARRANGEMENTS DURING FAST AND AVOID ALL POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT TO GOVERNMENT.

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

73. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

May 1, 1933

SATIS DAS GUPTA
15 COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA

YOU HEMPRABHA CONTINUE PROGRAMME WITHOUT INTERRUPTION. GOD MY COMPANION DURING FAST.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 387

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74. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

May 1, 1933

URMILA DEVI
24 RAMESH MITTER ROAD, BHAWANIPUR
CALCUTTA

YOU MUST NOT WORRY OVER IMPENDING FAST. WHY NO LETTER ?

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 389

75. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 1, 1933

SHETH JAMNALALJI
SHAILA ASHRAM, ALMORA

YOU MUST NOT DISTURB PROGRAMME REST FOR IMPENDING FAST. HOPE PROGRESSING.

BAPU

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(3), Pt. IV, p. 391

76. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI PATEL

May 1, 1933

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

The fast which commences from Monday is intended as punishment for those also who believe that they are too weak to fulfil the vow they have taken—not to reproach them but to help them.

Lakshmibehn has complained against you that you have been talking ill about the Ashram. I am sure there must be some error in this.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9000

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77. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 1, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Be happy instead of being sad at the news of my fast. If you have Narandas's permission for whatever you do in the Ashram, you need not fear any criticism. Do not listen to any criticism. If you hear any against your wish, immediately tell Narandas about it. That will give vent to your anger. Try to overcome during the fast whatever shortcomings you have. The fast is being undertaken to help everyone to overcome his or her shortcomings.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9573. Also C.W. 6545. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

78. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

May 1, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter. If you think that Dr. Sharma's treatment worsens the condition of the arm, you should give it up.

I understand about Dhiru.

From my talk with Panditji and Lakshmibehn, I see that they believe that you have a good deal of stiffness in you, that you are not sufficiently frank, that you have a fairly good measure of pride and that you enjoy harassing and, if possible, humiliating Narandas. I have stated all this in my own words. But this is the impression I formed from what they said. If there is any truth in this, you should get rid of that weakness. We may endure that disease of the bone from which you are suffering, but we ought not to tolerate such weaknesses in ourselves. For the bone disease, we require the services of a doctor other than ourselves; for an internal disease, however, we should be our own doctor. In other words, we have to depend upon our own resources. I certainly wish that my intended fast should produce

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this result, namely, that all the impurity in the Ashram may be washed clean.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5350

79. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

My fast will be for all the inmates of the Ashram, including you. You should, therefore, get rid of all your diseases.

I assume that you have kept a copy of your questions[1] and so I give here only brief replies to them. I am hard pressed for time today.

1. If persuasion does not succeed, you may become silent and pray in your heart for that person, whether she is a girl or a grown-up woman. This will help you to overcome your impatience.

2. We should know what is meant by 'necessity' in this question. Suppose that I am reciting Sanskrit verses and leading a prayer, and just then I see a snake. It is necessary that I should catch it, and I may, therefore, stop reciting the verses

[1] Which read: (1) What should one do and how should one overcome one's impatience if someone older, younger or of the same age misbehaves despite persuasion and thereby creates a bad impression on others and time is wasted and work delayed? (2) How would it affect others if a person violated Ashram rule or discipline under some necessity while doing one's duty? (3) How far should we pay regard to social practice or custom in the path of satyagraha? (4) What would be my duty as a satyagrahi when I disagree with a renowned mahatma like you on a certain step which I find to be right according to the voice of my conscience and which might violate the rules of the institution? (5) Should one love the individual for the sake of the institution or the institution for the individual? (6) By what test can one find out that one has bad thoughts about others? (7) If a person is found on every occasion telling lies, or shirking work or being selfish, and others too have complained about it, would it be proper for a satyagrahi to have doubts about him? (8) What is the limit for simple living? To embroider one's sari, to wear fashionable blouses, to adorn the hands and neck with flowers, wear chappals —should this be considered as love for art or breaking the Ashram principles? (9) Would it be slander or violence if in the Ashram one person finds fault with another and commits the same fault himself, i.e., indulges in mutual fault-finding? (10) As those who join the Ashram do so with different motives, should we judge each of them from his own standpoint?

and violate a rule. I may also do that if I feel an immediate call of nature at that time. If, however, I feel thirsty, I should control my desire for some time and go on reciting the verses. You felt something in the throat and yet continued. That was worse than foolishness.

3. We may disregard any social practice or custom which obstructs our quest for truth.

4. If you have absolute faith in me, you should believe that what you regard as the voice of your conscience may not be so. If, however, that voice is so direct as to be more powerful even than your faith in me, you should follow it whatever the cost.

5. It is not possible to reply to this question categorically.

6. I do not follow this question.

7. If a person is often found telling lies or shirking work, even a lover of truth will suspect him of doing the same on another occasion, but will, despite his suspicion, love him and continue to give him opportunities.

8. There can be no one rule for all people in this matter. It depends on one's attitude. However, simplicity should not be sacrificed for the sake of art.

9. Mutual fault-finding is always bad. It is petty-mindedness to retort, 'You are no better.'

10. This is implied in ahimsa.

Thinking that you may have had no time to keep a copy of your questions, I return them with this.

I am sending two women[1] to the Ashram. I hesitate very much to do so, but I send them because I feel that I ought to. I do hope that they will not increase your work but will help you. Make some arrangement to help them to learn Hindi.

I should like Sushila[2] to spend this vacation in the Ashram. That is likely to give rest to both of you. I hope you know the English saying that change of occupation is rest. There is a good deal of truth in it. Treat this only as brain-wave which I got while writing this letter. If Sushila has made some other plan, I certainly don't want her to abandon it to please me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10342. Also C.W. 6781. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] Margarete Spiegel and N.; *vide* also pp. 68-70.
[2] Sushila Pai

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80. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 1, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

You have completely relieved me by your excellent letter. After your giving a certificate to Narandas, I don't require one from anybody else. But I hope you know who can give a certificate. Can a person who does not know how to cook give a certificate to a cook? Looking at the matter from that point of view, you should have a higher degree of yoga, equanimity and concentration, than Narandas. If it is so, it means I have two persons instead of one who may be described as *sthitaprajnas*[1].

If Dr. Purushottam has left, haven't I sent you Dr. Sharma? He seems to have filled you with colours indeed. Even if you do not benefit from his treatment, it will certainly do no harm. Continue it with complete faith. Try whatever changes in diet he may suggest. If the result is not satisfactory, he himself will ask you to give them up. Try to win over Keshu if you can.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 878. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

81. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[2]

May 1, 1933

Almost the first question asked by the Pressmen was, whether it was possible for him under any circumstances to abandon his fast. Gandhiji replied:

Humanly speaking, there is absolutely no possibility of my abandoning the fast.

This was followed by more questions on his statement. Asked, if he could throw light on the "shocking cases of impurity" referred to in his state-

[1] Literally, 'of steady intellect'. For the full meaning of the phrase, *vide* Vol. XXXII, pp. 128-46.

[2] The source had reported: "Gandhiji received Pressmen inside the jail cell, where, for the past few days, he has been holding his office. The mango tree is not providing the requisite protection against the increasing heat."

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ment, Gandhiji said that it was not possible for him to do that; but he had no grievance against anybody in particular and, if he had any grievance at all, it was against himself. Gandhiji proceeded:

I went to bed that night without the slightest feeling that I would take such a step. No single event can be held responsible for this decision, but it undoubtedly is the result of the accumulation of a long series of events extending over a fairly long period. It is not that I was blind to them before. They were producing their silent and unconscious effect on my mind.

Replying to another question, the Mahatma said:

I do expect that my fast is merely a precursor of many such fasts, and if I survive this, I may feel called upon to undertake another fast.[1]

All these twenty-one days I will be sipping *Ramarasa*[2]. If it does not sustain me, how is the juice of *mosambis* going to help? One who wants to destroy the Ravana of untouchability must partake of *Ramarasa* every now and then. And if my devotion to Rama is sincere—and it certainly is—He will not let my body drop for I still wish that Rama will sustain this body dedicated to Him. You Harijans, however, must remember one thing. You should be amenable to the infallible remedy which I have adopted. Realize that for you too there is no other way. And let the 'touchable' Hindus say and do what they like; you on your part should cleanse your body and soul and become true Harijans. Your saviour as well as mine is the Lord above.[3] It would be blasphemy to regard me as your saviour. And I said to you that the love of God is life-sustaining, but then, if you would allow me to say it, what does it matter if the body withers away? Do not dead men continue to do work?

At this stage, it is necessary for the public to understand the very vital difference between the September fast and the impending one. The September fast was a conditional one, made for

[1] The following paragraph is extracted from *Harijanbandhu*, 7-5-1933, which had reported that Gandhiji was replying to some of the questions put by Harijans.

[2] Literally, 'juice of God's name or God's love'. This was in response to a suggestion from a Harijan that during the fast Gandhiji should allow himself the juice of two *mosambis* daily.

[3] This was in reference to a fear expressed in the Harijan's statement that with Gandhiji's death the Harijans would have no protector.

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a particular purpose. But in this case, it is not directed to any concrete purpose at all.

Therefore, this fast can be undertaken at any moment and it is after the manner, common enough in Hinduism. Whenever a great reformation and revival is going on, people in order to ensure purity and acceleration of their object, undertake a fast. Such a fast is universally acknowledged to be a good thing in itself. It is its own justification and my fast claims no more merit. I might have undertaken it without the tussle I was engaged in, but perhaps, I had no courage.

I was weighed down with the tremendous responsibility and, therefore, though the prompting came to me more than once, I resisted it. A religious movement does not depend for its success on the intellectual or material resources of its sponsors, but it depends solely upon the spiritual resources, and fasting is the best known method of adding to these resources. Not every fast brings about the desired result.

I have given some of the conditions in my statement, and it is claimed in my statement, and it is claimed by those who have conducted religious movements that intellectual, material and other things follow spiritual capital but should never be independent of it.

Asked, if he hoped to survive the 21 days' fast, Gandhiji reassuringly said:

Oh! I survived the twenty-one days' fast[1] that was undertaken ten years ago. Weaker men than myself have undertaken longer fasts and survived. Spiritual sustenance has great possibilities.

At this stage, Gandhiji was reminded of his condition during the September fast when six days' fasting brought him almost to the verge of collapse, but he humorously replied:

The age of miracles is not yet over.

He felt more than optimistic about his ability to go through the ordeal. Asked whether he would remain in Poona in case Government released him, Gandhiji replied that it was very difficult for him to say that, because he did not contemplate any release.

To a suggestion that his fast, which coincided with the sitting of the Joint Select Committee, would be taken as an act dictated by political motives, Gandhiji replied that he had not embarked on the fast voluntarily. It had not been in his plan. He had not compassed it. He tried to resist it even that night, but he could not and for three days before taking the decision, he

[1] From September 18 to October 8, 1924; *vide* Vol. XXV.

could not sleep properly. He did not know what was happening to him. Surely, it was not indigestion. But after he took the decision on Saturday night, he slept well.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-5-1933; also *Harijanbandhu*, 7-5-1933

82. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN[2]

[May 2, 1933][3]

TELL BA HER FATHER IMPOSED ON HER A COMPANION WHOSE WEIGHT WOULD HAVE KILLED ANY OTHER WOMAN. I TREASURE HER LOVE. SHE MUST REMAIN COURAGEOUS TO END. FOR YOU I HAVE NOTHING BUT ONLY THANKS TO GOD FOR GIVING YOU TO ME. YOU MUST PROVE YOUR BRAVERY BY SUSTAINED JOY OVER THIS NEWEST OF GOD'S MISSIONS FOR ME. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6271. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9737

83. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 2, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

HOPE N. REACHED. PARASHURAM SHOULD LEAVE NEXT TRAIN WITH CHILDREN SEE ME. GIVE HIM FARE FOR POONA AND FOUR RUPEES EXTRA. NONE SHOULD BE DISTURBED OVER FAST BUT ALL SHOULD DERIVE STRENGTH FOR PURIFICATION GREATER RENUNCIATION AND DEDICATION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I; also S.N. 21132

[1] For Gandhiji's talk with the *Times of India* representative, *vide* Appendix I.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated May 2, 1933, which read: "Got news of fast only today. Ba wishes me say she greatly shocked. Feels decision very wrong but you have not listened to any others so will not hear her. She sends her heartfelt prayers. I am stunned but know it is the voice of God and in that sense rejoice even in midst of anguish. Deepest prayers. Love. Writing" (S.N. 21110).

[3] From S.N. 21110; the original, as delivered, bears the date "May 4, 1933".

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84. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

[*May 2, 1933*][1]

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
GWALIOR

DELIGHTED YOUR TELEGRAM[2]. STRONGLY ADVISE YOU PROCEED CALCUTTA FOR TREATMENT. LET THAKKAR COME IF THOUGHT NECESSARY.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 7936. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also S.N. 21113

85. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 1/2, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got a letter from you today also, along with Duncan's. He should have taken your permission, but how could he know that it was necessary to do so? The best thing would be to have a complete list of the rules to be observed both by newcomers and the old inmates, so that a copy of the rules could be given to every newcomer as soon as he joins. If you draft the rules in Gujarati, I will translate them into English. Or Duncan himself may do that. He is certainly a capable man.

It was very bad indeed for so many persons to harass one person. Since you have already explained that to the people, I will not write anything concerning it. However, read my letter to Duncan and explain its substance to everybody.

[1] From S.N. 21113; the original, as delivered, bears the date "May 3, 1933".

[2] Dated May 2 from Delhi which read: "Have just received news. I fully believe with God's blessings you are sure to survive the ordeal successfully. I assure you, since the September fast there has been wonderful awakening all round which should have given you nothing but immense satisfaction. Yet, I feel nothing but undiluted good will come out of the present fast, although on personal grounds am somewhat nervous. Hope you will write me special information, if any. Am thinking of cancelling Calcutta programme and reaching Poona about eighth. Thakkar Bapa is here."

I have gone through Titus's report. I like his suggestions. I think it would be better if the accounts relating to his work were kept separately, though under your supervision.

Titus should be given one assistant to help him.

It would not be a bad idea to buy a mule or pony for carrying milk. So far as I can see, ultimately there will be a motor-van.

I also approve of his suggestion for buying two machines.

I had never approved of the business in Bidaj. I, therefore, fully approve of his suggestion.

Is cows' urine being utilized now? There ought to be a hut for storing milk as suggested by him. Think over all these suggestions and implement as many of them as seem good to you. Jekibehn's sons will not come to the Ashram. They are studying. I had a postcard today from Mahalakshmi. She says that she will arrange after she is released in two months' time.

My hand has got tired with the effort of writing this much, and so I must be brief with the rest.

I had a long discussion with Panditji and Lakshmibehn. From among the suggestions discussed, the following should be carried if they are not already being followed. If the bread generally remains half-baked, the bakery should be closed. The persons who work in it should not keep changing. If it gets too hot near the furnace, there must be some defect in it. There should be no emission of heat at all. The use of potatoes and other tubers as vegetables should be stopped. They may be served as substitutes for *rotli*.

We must grow the required vegetables in the Ashram even if it is more expensive to do so than to buy them. Tomatoes and one *bhaji* should grow in the Ashram all the year round. Ultimately we shall not incur any loss by doing this. We must buy no vegetables from outside except for persons who are ill. In my view, unboiled milk and wheat is a complete diet. Nothing else is necessary. It is not necessary to have all the items in one's food every day. Sometimes one may have only milk and sometimes only *rotlas*. And it is also essential for physical and spiritual health to eat only one thing during the whole day occasionally. I would not fix any particular days for such mono-diet, but serve it according to convenience. If a large quantity of milk happens to be left over, I would keep the kitchen closed on that day. And if a large stock of potatoes has accumulated, I would not serve *rotlas* on that day.

When no vegetable can be served, I would have tamarind fruits plucked from the trees and serve chutney prepared from their

pulp crushed with salt. Eating tamarind daily may be harmful, but eating it occasionally can do nothing but good. However, nobody ought to pluck even one tamarind fruit to gratify his or her palate.

I will write more about prayers after I get your opinion.

It would be more convenient if diners sit in the kitchen in rows according to the items to be served. There should be one row of people who want rice and another for those who are to be served the normal menu. You may ask a guest in advance what food he will have. Or he should be offered all the items at the time of the meal, and he may accept whatever he likes. I know that this would be a little too complicated.

The news that my fast of 21 days will commence from the 8th will have become old by the time you get this letter. Let nobody be upset by it. On the contrary, all should wake up.

I expect most from the Ashram. There is plenty of impurity in it. This impurity must be banished. This fast is addressed to all co-workers, and the Ashram is naturally included. If we had as much of the spirit of dedicated service in the Ashram as we need, I would be dancing with joy today and be sure that, when the time comes, all the inmates would go and plant themselves on the sands of the Sabarmati with unshakable determination of fast unto death. My impending fast is preliminary to similar fasts by other people.

Everybody should do the following:

The people should either concentrate completely on the prayer or not attend it at all. Those who bring only their bodies to the prayer and leave their minds behind violate truth. Instead of doing that, let them follow their own inclination. The best thing, of course, would be for such persons to leave the Ashram. Nobody should talk ill about others behind their backs. If impure thoughts disturb anybody, he should confess them to you at least if to nobody else. Or he may write a note and inform you. If he cannot control such thoughts and remains pure only outwardly, he should leave the Ashram. Those who do not like any of the Ashram rules must leave. If, moreover, we can fix a code of conduct during this period of self-purification, it should be accepted. An inmate of the Ashram who is ill should be satisfied with whatever treatment is possible in the Ashram itself. At the most he or she may be sent to one of the branches of the Ashram if absolutely necessary.

Nobody should shirk work or steal anything or hide anything. Everybody should be content to eat the food that is served, and

should eat all food as medicine and not for the pleasure of the palate. It should be remembered that pulses, rice and tubers are not essential. Spices, sugar and jaggery also are unnecessary. Wheat or *bajri* or *jowar* and unboiled milk constitute complete food. It will be enough if vegetables and fruits are occasionally included.

Envy or malicious criticism of one another should be regarded as sin. Everybody should do some Harijan work. In short, I will expect the Ashram to get rid of all spiritual maladies during this fast. If it cannot do this, I have no right to expect anything from other people. Show this portion to all the inmates. I have decided to send N. and Margarete. But I will reconsider the matter if I get a letter from you tomorrow conveying your decision against such a step. Give the ladies the clothes, utensils and other things which they may require. And see also that satisfactory toilet arrangements are made for them. In regard to their food, it is not necessary to do anything more than prepare one or two things specially for them in addition to the normal menu. I have already explained other things. The child will easily mix with the other children. It will be enough if he does not learn any bad habit.

Since Jamna herself has given you a testimonial, I am sure you will not worry. Don't let anybody run down here.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Duncan the history of both the ladies and take whatever help you require from him.

May 2, 1933

I wrote the foregoing yesterday, but could not dispatch the letter owing to heavy pressure of other work. N. will have reached the Ashram before you get this letter. I got your letter yesterday too. I have started writing this before the prayer. I got up at a quarter past one.

Your letter is heart-rending. There is no limit to my hard-heartedness. You will have received the wire[1] which I sent today. I have asked you to send Parashuram here immediately on receipt of it. You must have done that. I have called the children too. I have also asked you to give him the railway fare from Ahmedabad to Poona plus four rupees. We need not tolerate such persons in the Ashram, for it is beyond our capacity to

[1] *Vide* p. 85.

reform them. If they are with me, I can get some work out of them too. But that would serve no useful purpose. If there are others like him, ask them all to leave. You may clean up everything. Henceforth, only those who willingly and scrupulously observe the rules may stay in the Ashram. My hope is that in the Ashram itself there will be persons who will have cultivated sufficient fitness and will undertake an indefinite fast when the time comes. I see that time drawing near. Such is the nature of my intended fast. It is the first step in self-purification. If the Ashram will not be the first to bring that self-purification, whom else can we expect to do so? This is a much more difficult task than fighting for salt. Only those who are eager to cultivate fitness for offering themselves as sacrifice may stay in the Ashram.

You will have to think about the old families in the Ashram who may not be ready to join in this. You can stop admitting newcomers. Those persons who joined the Ashram for the specific purpose of learning some work may be asked to leave if they are not without other means of support. Persons who have been living in the Ashram because they have no other means of support may remain, namely, Narmada Rana. But please treat all these as passing thoughts which occur to me in my solitude here. Do only what you think proper and what appeals to you and is within your capacity. I have given you complete freedom. I don't want you to be burdened with too heavy responsibility for the affairs of the Ashram during the 21 days of the fast. Nobody should expect you to humour him or her. If any of the old families living there do not wish to join in this work of self-purification, you may permit them to cook their own meals. An allowance should be fixed for them after careful calculation and they should live within that sum. Any saving they make will be theirs, and, if they overspend during one month, they should meet the balance from the allowance for the next month. If you cannot get a full-time worker for the departments, such as the dairy, which must be continued, engage paid workers and maintain them. Or you may reduce the work in these departments to the extent necessary. Personally, I don't think that will be necessary. However, I cannot dictate the final decision in this matter. Call all the people together and think over these suggestions with them. There should be no coercion in regard to anything. From the very beginning it has been assumed that the Ashram may have to sacrifice itself one day in this manner. Probably some of the inmates will remember that I have often explained this possibility. I am not, therefore, putting forward an altogether new suggestion.

Even those who agree to join should know that, though they may be ready to undertake an indefinite fast with irrevocable determination, they must go on with their work for the time being as if they expected to live for ever. As we always go on working even though we know that one day we shall receive the summons from Death, so should we do now, and with all the greater devotion now since we should be prepared to die of our own free will.

Duncan, being a guest, may be exempted from many things, but that certainly does not mean that he should be free to approach me directly. Tilakam is an unhappy man, and, moreover, he is a Harijan and a worthy man in other respects. I think highly of both these persons. If your experience is different, please let me know.

I feel confused in my mind regarding . . .[1]. I don't like his venture. It is certainly a violation of his pledge. You may give him the capital that he wants, but I suppose it will be on personal security. That doesn't seem to me proper. We cannot assume that he will necessarily succeed in his enterprise. He doesn't seem to have learnt any humility. If he has done so, he should accept a job anywhere. Ambalalbhai[2] would certainly offer him one as fitter. If there is nobody in the Ashram now to utilize the equipment which we have, Ranchhodbhai or Ambalalbhai can remove it to his factory. They will at least keep it safe, if they do not buy it up. But I may be mistaken even in assuming this. I have written this only for your information. You are free to ignore the suggestion completely. It is possible that you have understood . . . better and that I am doing injustice because I am disillusioned with him. If, however, I am right in my view, it is possible that . . . will not immediately be able to earn enough to support the whole family. If so, the Ashram must meet the balance of his expenses. We certainly cannot leave him on the street. I am thinking only of our dharma in this matter. After all, doesn't that family mean . . .[3] himself? Of course I will not abandon it because . . . is no more with us, but I would certainly make it submit to as much hardship as it can endure.

Have I forgotten about Joshi completely? This is known to happen to persons who are nearing their death.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8369. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] & [3] The names have been omitted.
[2] Ambalal Sarabhai

86. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

May 2, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

It is just now 1.45 a.m. and I think of you and some other friends. If your heart endorses contemplated fast, I want your blessings again.[1]

My love and respects.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4638

87. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

May 2, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Dare I ask for your blessings for the coming *yajna*[2]? It is now nearing 2 a.m. I have left my bed among other things to write this begging letter. If the fast does not meet with your approval, I know you are too true a brother to grant my request merely to please me.[3]

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 252

[1] In his reply, Rabindranath Tagore had written: "It is not unlikely that you are mistaken about the imperative necessity of your present vow, and when we realize that there is a grave risk of its fatal termination, we shudder at the possibility of the tremendous mistake never having the opportunity of being rectified. I cannot help beseeching you not to offer such an ultimatum of mortification to God for His scheme of things and almost refuse the gift of life with all its opportunities to hold up to its last moment the ideal of perfection which justifies humanity. My misgivings may be the outcome of a timidity of ignorance" (*Mahatma*, Vol. III, pp. 247-8).

[2] The proposed 21-day fast

[3] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix II.

88. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 2, 1933

BHAI SAHEB,

It is getting on to 2 in the morning. Do send me your blessings for the coming *yajna* if you can. I am only trying to do what I learnt from my parents since childhood. Mother spent almost half her life in fasting. What can I do? I am unable to serve the cause of the Harijans through intellect alone.[1]

Your younger brother,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 9668

89. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI[2]

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

None of you should get upset by the news about my fast. The strength of the Ashram lies in it and it protects dharma. Fasting is an essential feature of Hinduism. I would not be surprised if thousands like me sacrifice themselves in this great *yajna* for the uplift of Harijans. Even if I cannot write again, you should know that none of you will be out of my thoughts even for a moment.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9535. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] The addressee's telegram in reply to this read: "God bless you. As I have said in my fast-day public speech, I am fully convinced that He has guided you in your decision. I have been praying that He may grant you strength to go successfully through your great *vrata* and have faith that He will. Pray become *ananyabhava*. Shut out, as much as you can, all thought except of Him, who is our sole shelter and support. In addition to *japa* or *Dwadashakshar Mantra*, please practise during part of the day '*soham*' with every inhalation and exhalation. This will help to keep up the stream of life within. Some great *tapasvis* are watching you with tender care, and vast millions are praying for you. Please let the atmosphere about you be disturbed as little as possible by any talk except of 'Vasudeva' who dwells in all sentient beings. Remember His injunction and promise: *Matchittah sarva durgani matprasadat tarishyasi* (Fixing thy thought on Me, thou shall surmount every difficulty by My grace). Will meet you as soon as health permits" (*The Hindu*, 11-5-1933).

[2] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi, married to Deepak Dutt Chowdhri

90. LETTER TO NANIBEHN P. JHAVERI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

I hold neither life nor death dearer than each other. Whatever happens will be for good. Be more alert.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9536. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

91. LETTER TO KUSUMBEHN DESAI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

If I survive the fast, I will write to you as I have been doing. Do not be upset by the fast. Life and death are in God's hand. If He does not want to take more work from me, then He will not and the body will perish. Have you understood Chapter XI [of the *Gita*] ? How God devours human beings and destroys them? Sooner or later that will be the fate of us all. Let mine be so for the cause of Harijans.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9537. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

92. LETTER TO RAMJI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

I felt very much pained on reading a summary of the letters. It is difficult to believe their contents. Is this the result of my labour of all these years? I feel pained if all this, or even a part of it only, is true. It would mean that persons like Mathuradas[1] and Narandas are utterly worthless; on the other hand, if these allegations are false, it is a pity that Ramji has not softened in spite of so much having been done for him. However, if your heart does not soften, the fault must be mine and not yours. Was I not born in a community which is among those that have suppressed the Harijans? Let my fast do what I could not do otherwise.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9538. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] Mathuradas P. Asar

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93. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

If your betrothal with S.[1] has not been broken off, you may certainly marry. I will approve of your doing so even during the fast. You will continue to serve even after you get married. After marriage try to observe as much self-control as you can. Continue to write to me. You should not grieve if I die. The 'I' will not die. What will it matter if the body perishes?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9540. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

94. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

Between 1-4 at Night, May 2, 1933

I hope you have fully understood the significance of my fast. Go on working without worrying about me. Request Father and Mother to send their blessings to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9541. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

95. LETTER TO N.

May 2, 1933

May this fast strengthen you. You will entrust to N.[2], even an evil thought if it comes to you. But it won't come if you will lose yourself in Him, the Truth and in His work as it may be pointed out to you by N.

From a copy: C.W. 9767. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Narandas Gandhi

CWMG LV

96. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 2, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

As I was struggling against the coming fast, you were before me as it were in flesh and blood. But it was no use. How I wish I could feel that you had understood the absolute necessity of it. The Harijan movement is too big for mere intellectual effort. There is nothing so bad in all the world. And yet I cannot leave religion and therefore Hinduism. My life would be a burden to me, if Hinduism failed me. I love Christianity, Islam and many other faiths through Hinduism. Take it away and nothing remains for me. But then I cannot tolerate it with untouchability—the high-and-low belief. Fortunately Hinduism contains a sovereign remedy for the evil. I have applied the remedy. I want you to feel, if you can, that it is well if I survive the fast and well also if the body dissolves in spite of the effort to live. What is it after all—more perishable than a brittle chimney piece. You can preserve the latter intact for ten thousand years, but you may fail to keep the body intact even for a minute. And surely death is not an end to all effort. Rightly faced, it may be but the beginning of a nobler effort. But I won't convince you by argument, if you did not see the truth intuitively. I know that even if I do not carry your approval with me, I shall retain your precious love during all those days of ordeal.

I had your letter which I had thought I would answer at leisure. Well, God had willed otherwise. I had talks with Krishna. Of Sarup's work in Kathiawar I think I wrote to you. Kamala has not even sent me her address. There has been no letter from her for many days now. When you see her please give her and Indu my love. Kamala must not worry over the fast. If possible send me a wire.[1]

Love from us all.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 110-1

[1] Dated May 5, the addressee's telegram read: "Your letter. What can I say about matters I do not understand? I feel lost in strange country where you are the only familiar landmark and I try to grope my way in dark

97. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

May 2, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I cannot write a long letter today. Your letter requires no reply. I hope the news about my intended fast has made you happy. Your turn also will come. But that will be after some time. This fast is of a different character from all the previous ones. Our forefathers used to fast without much ado, to remove the cause of external troubles or for self-purification. This fast is exactly of the same kind. Just now I feel that, if people come forward to fast, I should ask them to do that one after another. Now you can certainly come to see me. Come whenever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8803. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

98. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

May 2, 1933

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. Being very sensible, you must have felt happy reading about the fast. Should we not feel happy when anyone does something in the spirit of religion? Consider it an act aimed also at your purification.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9966. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

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but I stumble. Whatever happens my love and thoughts will be with you" (Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933). For Jawaharlal Nehru's letter of the same date, *vide* Appendix III.

CWMG-LY

99. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

May 2, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

You must not get agitated over my fast. Remain there and be prepared for intelligent service. If I survive I shall attempt to use this body for further service but will consider it a blessing of God even if I succumb. My mission will not end with death. The *yajna* of Harijan service that has been commenced can never end. Even the death from fasting of thousands of *savarna* Hindus will not be too much in my opinion. There is little possibility of my writing but you may continue to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 780

100. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 2, 1933

BHAI HIRALAL SHARMA,

Your Hindi letter made me extremely happy. It is astonishing that your first letter in Hindi is in such a clear hand. And your Hindi too is quite good; how is it so? I have read your letter and the prescriptions with care.[1]

The Gandhi family is not unacquainted with nature cure. But this is only a polite statement. Their faith is not much, but that too cannot be said of all. What can they and other poor fellows do? Whatever knowledge and love of nature cure they possess is only because of me. But my knowledge is so incomplete that I become helpless in emergency cases. I have never had the time to make a systematic study of the science. But I have acquired a smattering of it because of my interest in it. Owing to my deficiency I have ever been in search of an expert in nature cure. One such doctor was Hanumanta Rao, a devoted and a good

[1] The addressee had under Gandhiji's instruction sent a report on ailing Ashram inmates. He had also expressed surprise over the sceptical attitude of the members of Gandhiji's family towards nature cure.

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man. He died a victim of his own cures. His knowledge was insufficient but his faith was unique. Next came Gopala Rao. He has established a clinic and settled at Rajahmundry. Pinning my faith on him I conducted a foolish experiment. I gave an account of it in the newspapers too.[1] The acquaintance with Gopala Rao has disheartened me. Gopala Rao is a man of conviction but his knowledge is very limited, and the pity of it is that he is not fully conscious of his limitations. Now I have found you. I do not want you to leave me. I want you to stay on in the Ashram and recognize with humility the extent of your knowledge. First win the confidence of the Ashram inmates and then invite the public for your cures. If you are not urgently required to return, you can cure a few patients at any rate before going away. But you can certainly stay on if you like the Ashram and Narandas takes a liking to you. I am not concerned whether your understanding of nature cure is perfect or incomplete. What I want is Truth. There is no harm if we proceed only to the point within our reach, and remain content with that. There is no reason why your wife should not come and live at the Ashram if she is prepared to abide by its rules. I shall write a letter to her too and enclose it with this.

You did well in going to the Harijans with Bhagwanji. If possible, you should come to see me at the earliest possible opportunity before you leave the Ashram. We can then discuss what should be done about the health problems of the Harijans. You may come on any day except Sunday. We can meet in the afternoon.

I am awaiting your suggestions regarding the Ashram diet. I want to make the diet there complete in respect of health requirements. The idea of keeping Harijan children in the Ashram has always been there but not many such children can be found. You can advise those who conceal their ailments to bring it to light; and those who cannot subdue their passions may leave for good.

I am considering what to do about Kusum. As regards Ramabehn[2] you can prescribe the treatment you choose if you have no doubts as to the diagnosis and the cure of her trouble. The same applies to Jamnabehn[3]. It will be excellent if you

[1] Gandhiji's experiment of subsisting on raw and uncooked food was conducted during the summer of 1929. He frequently wrote about it in *Young India*; *vide* Vol. XLI.

[2] Ramabehn Joshi

[3] Jamnabehn Gandhi

can induce Amina[1] to give up rice and other starchy foods and tobacco. She uses it in the morning to clean her teeth. What you did about the report in Bombay newspapers of your arrival was all right and quite fitting.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, pp. 39-41

101. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 2, 1933

MY GOOD DAUGHTER,

Though you have sent a new *bhajan* for the second fast, it cannot be sung. You know that such *bhajans*, unless they are sung well, fail to make any impression on my heart. I shall sing the same old one[2]. Well, you can now send me the good wishes from Father, Mother, and you girls and boys.

BAPU

From the Urdu original. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also from a photostat: S.N. 9657

102. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[On or after *May 2, 1933*][3]

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You should not be perturbed on hearing of my fast. Now I will be unable to write letters but my heart will be with you. Keep writing to me. May God make you well. Great service is to be taken from you. But God knows better about everything. Whatever He does will be for our good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 283

[1] Amina G. Qureshi

[2] Beginning "*Uth jag musafir bhor bhai*"; "arise, awake, O traveller, it is morning now."

[3] From the similarity in contents of this and the other letters of May 2, it appears that this was written some time between May 2 and May 8.

103. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

May 3, 1933

DEAR MR. NATARAJAN,

I thank you for your letter.

The fast was a call I could not resist. I remember your warning against over-emphasis upon the material considerations.[1] Do please come with Kamakoti before your departure for America where I hope you will have great success. I am glad Kamakoti is to accompany you. It will be good in every way.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NATARAJAN
KAMAKSHI HOUSE
BANDRA, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 19073

104. LETTER TO J. D. JENKINS[2]

May 3, 1933

DEAR MR. JENKINS,

I thank you for your kind letter.

It requires a political argument to show you why I cannot take the step you advise and, as a prisoner, I may not enter into any political discussion. You will, therefore, forgive me.

I hope you received my previous letter[3].

Thanking you for the book you sent me,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 19074

[1] The addressee had pointed out at the Bombay Conference that the workers for anti-untouchability could accomplish more by welcoming Harijans to their houses than by collecting or giving donations for the fund. This remark followed the announcement of Madan Mohan Malaviya to collect Rs. 25 lacs for the anti-untouchability fund.

[2] This was in reply to the addressee's letter (S.N. 21088) dated April 30, 1933, appealing to Gandhiji to give up civil disobedience and to co-operate with the Government in order to work out the constitution outlined in the White Paper published on March 17, 1933.

[3] *Vide* p. 45.

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105. LETTER TO P. R. LELE

May 3, 1933

MY DEAR LELE,

I thank you for your postcard and your good wishes. I know that you will throw yourself heart and soul into the drive against the monster.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. R. LELE
WADEKAR BUILDING, BOMBAY 4

From a microfilm: S.N. 19075

106. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

May 3, 1933

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I was very glad to get your letter. I hope you will write like this from time to time.

I am making inquiries regarding the luggage. I can't understand why you did not get it. A letter is going to the Ashram today itself.

If you work honestly, I am sure you will go forward.

When you say that milk and ghee are not available, do you mean that all of you do without them? What do you eat?

Does Dharma Kumar do anything? Does he play much mischief?

It is very good indeed that Mother works.

You will be happy if you observe the rules.

I suppose Maitri and Durga write to you. They do write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6239

CWMG - LV

107. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 3, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

I got your heart-rending letter. How shall I calm you? It is extremely difficult for me to let you go. I have built high hopes on you. But it would be selfish on my part and harm the ideals of the Ashram if I pressed anybody to stay on in it when it was not for his or her good to do so. The Ashram represents the sum of the good of all its inmates and the means of its achievement, hence your good and that of the Ashram cannot be mutually contradictory. If, however, you feel that this is not so in so far as I am concerned, I have no doubt at all that you should leave the Ashram. If your fast is still continuing, I want that you should give it up. I will accept whatever decision you arrive at. I will not make the final decision; it will have to be made by you.

As I have loaded Narandas with excessive responsibility, he has loaded you. He has not broken down. If you break down, I would be unhappy, for I, too, would be as much responsible for that result as anybody else. Narandas was helpless.

Even if you decide to stay on, you ought to reduce the burden on yourself. It is contrary to dharma to accept more work than one can do; there is pride, too, in doing so. There is greater harm in doing that than in eating more than one can digest. There is of course this difference between the two: 99 out of every 100 persons eat excessively, whereas 99½ per cent people do much less work than they can. Hence one does not always know whether one has taken upon oneself more work or less than one can do. All the same, the ultimate result will be as I have stated. If I eat excessively, I alone would suffer. If, on the contrary, I take upon myself more Harijan work than I can do, not only the four crore Harijans but probably the whole world would suffer.

May God give you peace of mind and show you the right path.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10343. Also C.W. 6782. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

108. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 3, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I hope you will get without delay the big packet of letters which I dispatched yesterday.

Read the letter that I have written to Prema. In view of what I have written in it I will not say anything about the matter in this letter.

Just now I am thinking about the changes which I suggested in my letter[1] yesterday. I have discussed them with Panditji. Even apart from the question whether the Ashram has the capacity or is fit to keep up a chain of fasts, my view expressed in yesterday's letter remains unchanged. The burden on you must be lightened. If that is not done, we shall not be able to cultivate even the fitness that we hope to do. You should, therefore, stop admitting newcomers, ask those who cannot observe the rules to leave the Ashram if they are recent entrants or to cook in their own kitchens if they are old inmates. I don't like separate kitchens at all. But I feel that we have no option but to tolerate the old families.

The view which I have expressed about Keshu also remains unchanged. If you feel that it is your duty, as his guardian-father, to help him from your personal money, I think that that money should not be treated as part of Ashram funds just now. I feel, too, that the money which you possess should be treated as reserved for one single purpose, namely, for the support of your parents, and should be earmarked as gift to the Ashram after their death. It should not become the property either of Jamna or Purushottam and others. If you have not made this resolution till now, you should do so at the commencement of the *yajna* of purification that is about to begin. You should discuss the matter with Jamna. You may consult Purushottam, too, if you think it necessary. But the chief thing is that you yourself should sincerely desire this. Your ability to give private help to any relation of yours will be harmful to the Ashram, to you and to the person whom you may help. I

[1] *Vide* pp. 86-91.

don't see anybody else in the Ashram, besides you, who possesses all the other requisite qualities in the degree required. The fact that, though you have money of your own, you have not misused it and have remained unaffected by it shows your fine sense of justice and your impartiality. But even God will fall if He regards anything as His personal possession. The vows of non-possession and non-stealing seem trivial outwardly but they are as important as the other three vows. The entire plan of [Patanjali's] *Yogasutras* seems wonderful to me. I do not understand its later portion. But it seems likely that every aphorism of his is based on long experience. If God had not ordained my duty in another field, I would have closely studied and memorized such holy books of Hinduism. But who can say what would have been better for me? Even such a thought betrays lack of faith in God. I must be perfectly contented with the ability that God has given me. But all this is beside the point. I am convinced that Keshu's good does not lie in starting an independent factory just now with the help from the Ashram.

What can be done about Kusum? How can I call her over here? If she is eager let her go to Almora. I have stated my own view, and I cling to it. Dr. Spiegel may come there. I am watching her. She is very sincere, but has strong likes and dislikes. We should, however, support her as long as she observes the rules. If she shapes well, she will do very well indeed. Both these ladies are certainly instrumental in persuading me to undertake the proposed fast. Among them N.'s share is probably greater. But all this is my fancy. Who can know beyond doubt whether a certain step is inspired by God or the Devil? I only give probable causes of what is past and over.

I expect Parashuram to arrive here today.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8370. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

109. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

May 3, 1933

I am looking forward to the fast in the happiest frame of mind and with the greatest of confidence in the necessity for it.

Asked what he would have his associates to do during the fast, Gandhiji said:

They should simply conduct the drive against untouchability and that in the gentlest manner possible so that the heart of the sanatanists may be won over.

Asked if he was making his own arrangements for medical and other help during the fast, he said that everything depended on the authorities, nor had he any idea what arrangements he would make if he was released.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-5-1933

110. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[1]

[*May 4, 1933*][2]

DR. ANSARI
DELHI

YOU ARE MAN OF FAITH. I WANT YOU TO BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THIS FAST IS NOT OF MY WILL. IT IS GOD'S PEREMPTORY COMMAND. THEREFORE HE WILL BE MY INVISIBLE MEDICAL ATTENDANT AND IF HIS ATTENDANCE DOES NOT SAVE ME WHAT WILL EVEN YOU A GOOD PHYSICIAN AND DESCENDANT OF THOSE WHO HELPED THE PROPHET[3] IN HOUR OF HIS NEED DO? LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21128 a

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's, which read: "As old friend, fellow-worker and medical man your grave decision has shaken me deeply. Having read statement my difference with you on moral issue persists but you are best judge of it. I do not ask you give up decision but consider unfit to bear strain. Your statement refers to your desire not to die and on basis of its implication I want your promise to break your fast if and when medical attendants regard your life in danger."

[2] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. III, p. 284

[3] Ansaris are the descendants of the Sheikhs who succoured the Prophet in Medina after his flight from Mecca.

111. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 4, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

So you could secure the permission to send me that loving wire[1]. I did not even try. I thought it was better that you suffered in silence than that I should secure special permission to send you a soothing message. Later I shall hope to have the permission to send you and some others daily messages.

You have understood the sacred necessity of the step. Ba has responded magnificently. Her courage has been a source of the greatest strength to me.

Your letter is before me. Though written before you had any knowledge of the step, I trace in it a sorrowing mood. You have to surmount it. If you have a living faith in a living God, you would feel His never-failing presence protecting you. Till that state is reached, even faith in an individual clothed in flesh and bone is not of any avail. It is relying on a broken reed. You should first think this out clearly and then get the heart to co-operate with the intellect.

When your time comes, you will certainly throw yourself heart and soul into the movement. Whilst I would call you a Christian you are sufficiently Hindu to render you eligible for full service of the Harijans. You need not worry about this.

I wish I had time to tell you something about N. and Margarete Spiegel. But I must economize my time and also energy. Naturally the Ashram will undergo thorough cleansing. I have sent proposals[2] to Narandas.

Tell Ba not to worry about me at all. She and I and all of us are in His hands. It is well if we live and it is equally well if we die. We are born only to die and we die only to be born again. This is all old argument. Yet it needs to be driven home. Somehow or other we refuse to welcome death as we welcome birth. We refuse to believe even the evidence of our senses that we could not possibly have any attachment for the body without the soul and that we have no evidence whatsoever that the soul perishes with the body.

[1] *Vide* footnote 2, p. 85.

[2] *Vide* pp. 86-91 and 104-5.

I can go on no longer. Visitors have come in.
I hope you received the book on astronomy.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6270. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9736

112. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 4, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I don't mind your having left school. Since you survived a serious illness, you have lost your power of memory. I don't set much store by your studying. I shall be satisfied if you remain good and pure and maintain good health.

Nobody should be upset by my fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1521. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

113. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

[*May 4, 1933*][1]

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I shall be in God's hand during the fast and, therefore, nobody should worry. It would be excellent if you can arrange to get a cow milked in your presence in a clean utensil after washing the udders. Do not take anything except milk and fruit juice. My blessings to you and Tehmina.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6605

[1] From the postmark

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114. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALJA

May 4, 1933

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter. I am writing this only to reassure you that I cannot forget you. I have no time at all to write more. I have written a letter to Kumi at Bombay. You are a brave woman. Always remain so. I do hope you will get all right. Manu's betrothal is out of the question just now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5056. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

115. A HARIJAN'S QUESTIONS

1. What should be done to unite the sub-castes which exist among Harijans?

2. Wherever, in big cities, sewerage is introduced, the livelihood of Harijans is jeopardized. What should they do in such a situation?

3. In some towns caste Hindus object to Harijans going riding on such occasions as weddings. You have written about what caste Hindus should do. Please be so kind as to say also what the Harijans should do.

The above questions have been sent by a Harijan correspondent. They are all three difficult questions to answer.

So long as caste Hindus remain divided in hundreds of sub-castes, as they are today, it seems unlikely that caste distinctions among Harijans can be done away with. Of course if there is a sudden awakening among the Harijans and they show a marked advance, that would be a different matter. I long to see such an awakening and when it comes they will be far in advance of the caste Hindus. But the question applies to the present context.

In the existing conditions all that can be said is that Harijans belonging to the castes that are considered superior should try to come closer to those belonging to lower castes. Mahars, for instance, should try to draw closer to Mangs, to inter-dine and

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intermarry with them. A Mahar thus mixing with Mangs should be fearless and should be ready to face any hardship that this course may entail.

The second question is a public question. In this transitional period a number of trades are bound to die out. A number of new trades are bound to be born. This has always been going on. This question of sewerage cannot apply to villages. Sewerage is peculiar to the city. It is in cities that Bhangis in any number are to be found. I believe that wherever sewerage is introduced some employment or other is found for the Bhangis. It becomes the responsibility of the municipality to find employment for the Bhangis thrown out of work. My advice also is that Bhangis should train themselves in some other arts, for instance, weaving. In Gujarat I notice that Bhangis, wherever they lost their traditional occupation, have taken up weaving. But there can be no uniform answer for all. Much depends on individual aptitudes.

The third question is a particularly difficult one. The underlying idea behind the question is that Harijans are wholly in the power of others and living in fear. If this is the case the only advice that may be given is that they should seek police help. Dr. Ambedkar told me that the police, coming as they do from caste Hindu communities, often do not help, which is likely to be true. Under the circumstances all that one could say is that where the police are hostile or apathetic, where no one from among the caste Hindus is ready to help, and where the Harijans themselves have not generated enough strength in themselves, the only thing possible is for the Harijans to have patience. The only consolation which can be offered is that for every individual and society a time comes when no alternative is left but to be patient. Otherwise man would become an atheist and forget God. Therefore, where there is no non-violent recourse possible the Harijans should pray to Hari.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 5-5-1933

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116. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 5, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

SHARMA'S EXPLANATION COMPLETELY SATISFACTORY. ADVISE HIS STAY ASHRAM DURING FAST. HOPE PREMA COMPLETED FAST. REPORT N.'S CONDITION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8373. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

117. LETTER TO E. E. DOYLE

May 5, 1933

DEAR COL. DOYLE,

I would like, if you can give permission today, to write daily to and hear from Mrs. Gandhi, Shrimati Mirabehn (Slade, Sabarmati), Shrimati Manibehn Patel, (Belgaum), Shrimati Vasumatibehn Pandit (Thana), Sjt. Pyarelal[1] (Nasik) and Sjt. Surendraji (Visapur), as I used to during the September fast. I have restrained myself up to now. But I know how anxious friends must be as Monday approaches.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10, 1933

118. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[2]

May 5, 1933

MY DEAR C. R.,

You are dearer to me than life itself. I wounded you[3] and Shankerlal deeply yesterday. It is no use my saying "Forgive me".

[1] Pyarelal Nayyar

[2] This appeared under the title, "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–II (Another Interview with Mahadev Desai)".

[3] For Gandhiji's talk with C. Rajagopalachari, *vide* Appendix IV.

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Your forgiveness I have before the asking. But I will do the very thing that I resisted like an ass. I will submit to the examination now and any time you like by any doctor, provided, of course, the Government permit it. I feel that the result of such examination should not be published for fear of political use being made of it. I must say, too, that the medical examination, if it comes, is not likely to affect the commencement of the fast.

More when we meet. This is just to relieve my soul of the impurity that crept in yesterday.

Love to you and Shankerlal.

BAPU[1]

Harijan, 13-5-1933

119. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 5, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

Your impatience for my letters pleases me very much. God willing, I will satisfy your desire fully after the fast. Stick to the doctor's treatment and cure your disease. Let my fast redouble your efforts to cure it. Whether I live or die, you will have to continue to serve. I hope Purushottam writes to you.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 880. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

120. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*May 5, 1933*][2]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wanted to but could not write to you yesterday. I understand what you say regarding Chhaganlal's criticism. Though you have replied as I desired you to do, I see that some of his remarks have hurt you. They were in the nature of allegations

[1] The report in *Harijan* adds: "The next day, however, C. R. came laughing and said 'there was no occasion for the apology, the irritation was more on our side than yours, and we have now decided to have no examination.' "

[2] As given in *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II. Also from the reference in the letter to Gandhiji's talks with C. Rajagopalachari and Shankerlal Banker on May 4, 1933.

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and were prompted by anger. But how can I advise you or anybody else? What right have I to do so? Yesterday, while talking to a friend like Rajaji whom I love so much, I became impatient and lost my temper with him and with Shankerlal. I see now that the matter was of little importance, and that it was I who was foolish. What they said or advised was prompted by their love for me. They had no other thought but my own good. If I lose my temper with them, how can my words of advice to you, when you get angry at Chhaganlal's thoughtless allegations, have any effect on you? It was seen yesterday that the serpent of anger is alive in me and is aroused whenever it is provoked. That is why you have not been able to see the anger in your words which I pointed out.[1] Your faith that it must be there since I say so does credit to your love for me, but it also proves that I do not deserve it. I will not lose heart. I will strive to deserve the love of my co-workers. The forthcoming *yajna* is a part of such striving. I see every moment that this *yajna* is absolutely necessary for my own purification. I cannot forget that the imperfection of the Ashram is a faithful reflection of my own imperfection. If I do not know how to take the Ashram forward, there is no meaning in my living on. To leave the Ashram or to close it down would be nothing but cowardice. I must learn the wisdom how to take the Ashram forward. I cherish the hope that I shall acquire that strength by the proposed *yajna*. If I succeed in this aim, I may hope to succeed in the other things. If I fail in this, I cannot hope to succeed in anything else. That will be the meaning of this *yajna*. I should like you to make your full contribution to it. You need not get ready just now for a fast, but should only cultivate the fitness to undertake one when the time comes. I think you are doing that. Wherever you see your shortcoming, attack it and get rid of it. Do not worry about me. A daily report about what happens there will give me great peace of mind. Such reports will be my food during the days of the fast.

I think Duncan and Sharma have something in their minds which they wish to discuss. Have a talk with them.

Margarete Spiegel may leave for Ahmedabad on Monday. She is a good woman, but not very intelligent. She is very obstinate. She has very little khadi with her. Give her what she needs. She will have to think what dress to wear. At present she wears a sari. If she is not eager to start wearing khadi immediately, you also should not insist that she should do so. Personally I like

[1] *Vide* p. 31.

N.'s dress. I myself had suggested it to her. She knows sewing very well. If she can take interest in it, she can do much useful work in that field.

Margarete does not like that dress. For the present, let her borrow a thick sari from one of the women there and try it. Such sari will not require a skirt. If there is an underwear with it like the one I use, it will be enough. Or she may wear, like Mirabehn, a skirt, blouse and a thick scarf as upper garment. Mirabehn is very economical indeed in using khadi. A skirt is certainly not a complete dress. Anybody who wears it should also use an undergarment. You will now be able to guide Margarete.

She had some money with her, which I have taken away. I have taken away one chain, too. I have handed over both to *Harijan* Shastri[1]. If she comes, she will travel by the same train by which N. travelled. If Ramji wants to leave the Ashram, let him go. If he remains, he must behave properly. Don't press Kusum at all in regard to her hair. Getting it cut will be for her good only if she does that willingly.

I trust Shanti is well now.

BAPU

[PS.]

Parashuram arrived yesterday. There is no sense in what he talks. I have been discussing things with him. If there is anything to write about, I will do so.

I am sending a wire[2] today regarding Sharma. Keep me informed about how N. behaves.

What do you propose to do about the teaching of Hindi? There ought to be some provision for it in the Ashram. N. will have to be taught Hindi.

Letters for Jamnabehn, Dr. Sharma, N. (2) and Shanti are enclosed.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8371. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] R. V. Shastri, Editor, *Harijan*
[2] *Vide* p. 111.

121. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 5, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,

I have your letter. I am sending a wire today.

I would advise you to stay on at the Ashram during the fast and overcome lethargy. Activity is the only remedy for that. The Ashram can provide enough work.

Acquaint Narandas with all that you observe in the Ashram.

I heard of your fast;[1] it was all right but discipline requires that the manager be consulted in such matters.

My faith in nature-cure goes back to forty years ago. What I meant[2] was that my faith in your cure will be strengthened by its success in the Ashram. Do write the pamphlet for the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsha, p. 44

122. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

[*May 5, 1933*][3]

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I have your letter[4]. You are doing good work.

If the question of the Poona Pact comes up, I shall certainly obtain the opinion of other Harijan leaders.

I like your suggestion about the temples that have been thrown open. I will refer to it in *Harijan Sevak*.

[1] The addressee was planning to go back to Delhi and had undertaken a fast in accordance with his practice to fast for a day or two before commencing a journey which involved change of climate.

[2] *Vide* pp. 98-99.

[3] As given in an unknown hand at the end of the letter in the source

[4] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to call a meeting of Harijan leaders to consider Ambedkar's proposals regarding the Poona Pact and had suggested that joint meetings and *bhajans* by caste Hindus and Harijans should be held in temples thrown open to Harijans.

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There is no point in publicizing the Sarada Act among the Harijans at present. We shall be able to do that only when we have done some more work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You must not worry over my fast. Remain absorbed in your duty.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 794

123. MESSAGE TO ARYA SAMAJ CONFERENCE[1]

[On or before *May 6, 1933*][2]

I sincerely hope that God will guide your conference to devise means for banishing untouchability from India.

The Hindu, 8-5-1933

124. HUMAN MANUFACTURE [–II]

I am sorry I shall not be able to analyse, as fully as I had intended to, the able monograph on 'Depressed Classes' in the Bengal and Sikkim Census Report by Mr. A. E. Porter of the Indian Civil Service, from which I reproduced two sections last week.[3] In Section 4 the author points out the defects of the criteria suggested on different occasions by different Census Commissioners and others. Says Mr. Porter:

> They reduce themselves naturally to religious or social disabilities and in not a single instance is there any criterion put forward which *prima facie* ought to attract the attention of the administration.

For they "are entirely matters of social and religious consideration" and, therefore, "they would be entirely irrelevant to any consideration by Government of the problem of the Depressed Classes". He then goes on to the consideration of some of the criteria. Temple-

[1] Held in Delhi under the presidentship of Dr. B. S. Moonje. Among others, the conference passed a resolution expressing concern over Gandhiji's proposed fast and appealed to every individual to eradicate untouchability.

[2] The message was reported under the date-line: "New Delhi, May 6, 1933".

[3] *Vide* pp. 64-6.

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entry occupies the first place. The whole of the Section is interesting. It ends with this significant conclusion:

> Disabilities regarding the right to worship or enter into temples are largely conventional or not immune from change, and in any case do not properly constitute a title to special consideration in the body politic, so long as they are confined purely to the social and religious life of the community.

I must skip over the Section regarding the service of Brahmins and barbers. Even there the author shows that the practice is erratic, in no sense universal and subject to constant change.

Then comes the Section regarding pollution by touch. Says the author:

> There is a similar conventionality and flexibility about the idea of uncleanliness and pollution.

The extent to which members of the higher caste feel themselves polluted differs in respect of the same group from place to place. The same thing is applicable to food and drink taboos.

It should be borne in mind that Mr. Porter has considered the question purely with a view to examining the vexatious question as to who should be included among the 'Depressed Classes'. He, therefore, says:

> As a social question, therefore, the problem of the Depressed Classes is primarily one for Hindu society to tackle for itself. As an administrative problem demanding the cognizance of Government, social and religious disabilities are unsatisfactory as a test of the classes to be included, whilst the extent to which the Depressed Classes are denied participation in the advantages and conveniences maintained by the administration is so small as to be negligible. For the administration, in fact, the problem of the Depressed Classes in Bengal practically does not exist, save in so far as special measures are necessary to improve their economic condition and standard of education. The prominence which it acquires is largely due to the questions raised in comparatively recent years as regards separate representation in the Legislatures for members of the Classes. For Bengal at least, therefore, the attempt to treat any social usage or any civic disability as a clear criterion[1] by which to distinguish the Depressed Classes is bound to fail and some other distinction must be sought. It is necessary to retain the untouchables since the Census Commissioner has explained Depressed Classes as "castes contact with whom entails purification on the part of the high-caste Hindus".

He added:

[1] The source has "contention".

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It is not intended that the term should have any reference to occupation as such but to those castes which by reason of their traditional position in Hindu society are denied access to temples, for instance, or have to use separate wells or are not allowed to sit in schools but have to remain outside or have to suffer similar social disabilities.

The question of preparing a list of the Depressed Classes for each Province was discussed at a meeting of the Superintendents of Census Operations in January 1931. As a result of this discussion the Census Commissioner announced:

"For the purposes of the census of India I propose at present to retain the term 'Depressed Classes' to indicate untouchables, whether of the milder or of the more severe degree of untouchability."

It was decided also that Muslims and Christians should be excluded and that generally speaking the hill and forest tribes who had not become Hindu but whose religion was returned as 'tribal' should also be excluded.

He then goes on to show why the expression 'Depressed Classes' should include not only the untouchables conforming to the various social and religious tests examined by him, but all those of whom

in the terms of His Majesty's Instrument of Instructions to the Governor of the Province it would still be true that from their lack of educational and material advantages they rely specially upon the protection of Government and cannot as yet fully rely for their welfare upon joint political action.

Section 17 contains a most informing comparison between the lists of Depressed Classes in 1921 and 1931. In the British districts only of Bengal, 1,801,712 persons who are included in the list of 1921 have been excluded from that of 1931 and the number belongs to eight castes, the largest being Rajbangshi. Similarly there are some groups who have been for the first time included in the list of 1931. In the group 'A' alone of the 'Depressed Classes', with which for the moment we are concerned, there are 48 castes in the Census Report of 1931 as against only 19 in 1921. The comparison covers other reports also, but I have confined myself to the Census reports only. A careful perusal of the whole of this report dealing with Depressed Classes is necessary for the diligent student. He will be amply repaid for his trouble.

But what I have given is, I hope, sufficient to show that the untouchables are a human manufacture and that, too, by census enumerators, who have nothing to do with religious untouchability, and in accordance with instructions, which were received from their superiors and which varied from time to time, so that an untouchable of yesterday ceases to be an untouchable of today and

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he who was not an untouchable yesterday through these census operations finds himself to be an untouchable of today. I commend this information to honest sanatanists and ask them whether they are satisfied with this state of things or whether they are satisfied with the varying definitions of untouchability or with the fact that the untouchability, in accordance with a particular definition, varies from place to place even regarding the same persons. Can all this be enjoined by the Shastras? It is possible to multiply this suggestive and awkward question, but I forbear.

The one thing that should force itself upon the attention of every thoughtful reader is that the State or the Law should have nothing to do with untouchability and that, therefore, the Abolition of Untouchability Bill is a peremptory necessity. A custom that is repugnant to the moral sense of mankind, that varies from place to place, from time to time, both in its incidence and in its application to individuals, cannot and ought not to have the sanction of the law of a secular State representing those who at the one end believe in untouchability, no matter how capricious, and, at the other, regard it as a negation of religion. Withdrawal of State recognition of such a custom in no way interferes with the personal belief of any single individual or his social practice. It will still be open to a person to regard his fellow as an untouchable at religious and social functions without any interference from law. That should satisfy the most orthodox of people, and the reformer would be crossing the limits of justice if he asks for more.

Another thing that clearly comes out of Mr. Porter's monograph is that the disabilities for inclusion in the term 'Depressed Classes' should not include untouchability. They should be disabilities of a civic, political, economic and non-religious character, of which the State can and should take notice and for which it is not only possible but it is also the duty of the State to find a remedy. That would purge the Depressed Classes list of untouchability and yet enable the State to deal with its incidences that are common to people other than untouchables.

If the Census operations ignored untouchability, as they should, the wind will be taken out of the sanatanists' sail. Happily for them and for mankind, nature has no indelible mark whereby an untouchable can be detected from the rest of his fellows. So far as I can see from my study of various Census Reports and of the general law of the country, there is absolutely no legal difficulty in achieving this end so ably put forth by the author in the monograph under discussion. It should be remember-

ed too, that the definition of 'Depressed Classes' contemplated in the Yeravda Pact has not yet been arrived at.

Harijan, 6-5-1933

125. HIS WILL BE DONE

General Smuts is reported to have made a pathetic appeal to me to desist from the impending fast. Kunwar Maharaj Singh is said to have backed it. I have not yet received the telegram.[1] But there seems to be no doubt about the authenticity of the report.

Dr. Ansari binds me with a tie of love capable of standing the severest strain.[2] When I seemed to be forsaken by the 'Siamese Twins'[3], through whom I came to know the great and good Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and then Dr. Ansari, the latter never wavered in his faith in my supreme regard for Mussalmans of India as if they were my blood-brothers, as in fact they are, born of the same *Madar-i-Hind*. He as "an old friend, fellow-worker and medical man" makes a pathetic appeal to me to vary my vow.

Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, the keeper of my conscience, sends me a long telegram attacking the very basis of the fast.

Add to these the fervent personal appeal, strengthened by a copious flow of tears, of Devdas, my youngest son and valued comrade.

If these typical appeals have left me unmoved, the reader should have no difficulty in perceiving that there must be a force which has overpowered me and prevents me from responding to these and such other appeals.

Underlying them is undoubtedly a distrust in my claim that this fast is prompted by God.[4] I do not suggest that they do not believe in my word. But they believe me to be under self-delusion — a prey to my own heated imagination made hotter by the suffocation produced by the cramping walls of a prison. I cannot deny the possibility of such a thing. But it can make no appeal to me whilst I believe to the contrary. I am a habitual prisoner. Prison walls have never been known to have warped my judgment or induced in me a habit of brooding. All my imprisonments have been periods of intense activity leaving me

[1] For the telegram from Kunwar Maharaj Singh, India's Agent General on South Africa, *vide* p. 122.

[2] *Vide* p. 106.

[3] Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali

[4] *Vide* also pp. 74-5.

no time for brooding. I have undoubtedly brooded over the wrongs of Harijans. But such brooding has always resulted in definite action on my part. The action that I was contemplating on the day preceding that fateful night was certainly not any fast.

My claim to hear the voice of God is no new claim. Unfortunately there is no way that I know of proving the claim except through results. God will not be God if He allowed Himself to be an object of proof by His creatures. But He does give His willing slave the power to pass through the fiercest of ordeals. I have been a willing slave to this most exacting Master for more than half a century. His voice has been increasingly audible as years have rolled by. He has never forsaken me even in my darkest hour. He has saved me often against myself and left me not a vestige of independence. The greater the surrender to Him, the greater has been my joy.

I, therefore, feel confident that in the end these kindest of friends will recognize the correctness of the action I am about to take. And this whether I die or live. God's ways are inscrutable. And who knows that He may not want my death during the fast to be more fruitful of beneficial results than my life? Surely it is highly depressing to think that a man's ability to serve dies with the dissolution of the body which for the moment he is inhabiting. Who doubts that the spirits of Ramakrishna and Dayananda, Vivekananda and Ramtirth are today working in our midst? It may be that they are more potent today than when they were in our midst in the flesh. It is not true that 'the good that men do is oft buried with them'. We burn the evil that men do with their mortal remains. We treasure the memory of the good they do, and distance only magnifies it.

And why should exaggerated importance be given to the services of one single person, however good or able he may be? The cause of Harijans is God's cause. He will throw up men and women as they may be required to do His will.

I, therefore, invite General Smuts and all other friends to believe with me that I am not acting under hallucination and beseech them to send up their prayer to the Almighty that He may give me the strength to pass safely through the ordeal. I feel sure that, if I am wanted on this earth yet for a while for any service whatsoever, He will spare me notwithstanding the fears of medical friends.

Since the above was in type, the cable from Sir Kunwar Maharaj Singh has been received. The Press version omits some words. Here is the text:

The following telegram has been sent to me by General Smuts, in his private capacity, for transmission to you:

"May I appeal to you most earnestly to delay your announced fast? Your work for removal of untouchability has already achieved a measure of success which exceeds highest expectations. With patience you may yet carry complete accomplishment of the greatest reform of our time. Moreover, India stands on the threshold of a new period which makes your wise guidance in future more essential than ever before. Endangering your life might lead to a dreadful calamity and an irreparable setback at the most critical moment. I appeal for old friendship's sake and for the great causes you have championed so successfully."

In forwarding this telegram I wish on my own behalf and, I feel sure, on behalf of the Indian community in South Africa, to endorse the sentiment expressed by General Smuts.

MAHARAJ SINGH
AGENT OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Harijan, 6-5-1933

126. A CONFESSION AND A WARNING

Though I had read about the coming of this lady[1] to India and her acceptance of Hinduism and yearning to go to the Ashram at Sabarmati, she had never corresponded with me till after the September fast. When the possibility of the second fast to start on the 2nd of January last was announced, she wrote to me a long letter telling me that she would join me in the fast. I wrote to her, strongly dissuading her from the course and inviting her to see me, if she was not convinced. I asked her in one of my letters to let me know something about her past. She wrote a long letter in reply. Meanwhile she had started Harijan work in Bangalore with some young men to help her. She wrote to me about it. This interested me more in her. And I wrote back in praise of her work. Thus our correspondence grew.

Suddenly a friend who had just returned from Mysore warned me that my letters were being exploited and that N. was a mere adventuress of doubtful character. Thereupon I wrote to her an urgent letter telling her of the report and asking her to come at once to Poona. I felt that the Harijan work was in danger by

[1] Gandhiji's comments were preceded by a letter from her intended for publication in newspapers.

her association, if the report was true. She came promptly in answer to my letter. Her behaviour was strange as she came in. I straightaway told her what I had heard about her character. She repudiated all the charges. I thought there was an end to the matter and began to enquire more about her work. But as the conversations grew, my suspicion was roused and I frankly told her about it. That led to most painful revelations one after another. Her life was one of lewdness, untruth and extravagance. The lewdness did not seem to repel her. She was brought up in a Bohemian family, where the very name Jesus was taboo. (N. is only 24, was married in Greece at the age of 17 and has a son who is with her.) She seemed now to realize the amazing contradictions of her life. I put it to her that she was doing an irreparable damage to the faith of her adoption, injuring the Harijan cause and corrupting the morals of the youths who had gathered round her. I believe that she saw the force of what I urged. She decided at once to break with the past, run the risk of being prosecuted by her creditors and to live among Harijans for their service and bring up her boy for the same work. She went back to Bangalore. She wrote a brief letter of confession for the Press, which the latter would not publish. She removed to Harijan quarters in Bangalore and, coming under the spell of a vicious man, fell again. She then went to a Harijan village near Chitaldrug. She was neglected by the person who took her there. She very nearly collapsed. During this period she was keeping up regular correspondence with me. She saw that it was impossible to serve Harijans or to hold herself together without proper guidance. I felt that it was my clear duty to work out the logical extent of the advice I had given and that if she was to live the life of service to the lowliest, she must go to the Ashram, where she had dreamt of going long ago. I could not possibly ask any friend or other institution to run the risk of taking a foreign young emotional girl with a black past hardly yet out of sight. With the consent of the manager of the Ashram, therefore, I have sent her there, though not without hesitation. Nor is it without hesitation that I am sharing her letter with the public. It is difficult to believe that all her terrible past is dead for ever. But sudden changes have happened in men's lives before. Let us hope that N. will prove to be one more such case. What is impossible for man is possible for God.

Needless to say that she goes to the Ashram without the slightest intention of taking part directly or indirectly in the civil disobedience movement.

One word to the young men who fell under N.'s spell. She has given me the naked details of her past life. Youth will be emotional all the world over. Hence the utter necessity of preconceived and deliberate *brahmacharya* during the study period, i.e., at least 25 years. Let the youth of the country know that this Harijan service is the most difficult of all humane services. I do not publish one-tenth of what comes under my notice of the moral degradation to which the criminal neglect of caste Hindus has reduced them. The work, therefore, demands the highest purity and the greatest simplicity on the part of the workers. Let the young men and women who are working for the cause take heed from the example of N.

Harijan, 6-5-1933

127. FOR A HEART AWAKENING

I am writing this on the morning of Saturday[1]. I have heard counsel of a number of friends. Through attachment or love they want me not to undertake the *mahayajna* that is in the offing. The inner voice says: 'It will be a sin to draw back. God, in whose name the resolve was taken will fulfil everything according to His wish.'

Outwardly what I see convinces me that I must fast, come what may. Pandit Santhanam has sent me a report of the work in the Punjab. It contains three points which Lala Mohanlal has made. These, in brief, are as follows:

1. In the Punjab the Arya Samaj, the Sanatana Dharmis, the Sikhs, the Mussalmans and the Christians all want to draw Harijans into their respective folds.
2. Harijans have produced leaders who are so covetous that it is impossible to satisfy them.
3. There are rival organizations in the Punjab working for the same cause.

It may occasion some surprise among readers that my proposed fast is an answer to the above situation. The Harijan Sevak Sangh must understand that this work is purely religious and must be carried on in a religious spirit. Once this is granted the above three points are automatically answered. I do not consider as religious the work that people of other communities and sects are doing. If Harijan sevaks work with religious spirit they will see

[1] May 6, 1933

the fruit of service in service itself. They can weigh themselves only in the scales of justice. If therefore Harijan leaders or others use pressure they will not be affected by it. Work done in a religious spirit cannot but have an effect on the rival organizations. What is the definition of such wonderful religion? Religion is what purifies the soul, in which there is no hankering for fruits of action, which generates indomitable faith, and in which there is not an iota of selfishness. Only activities conforming to such religion can be said to be religious. In activities of this kind the service of Harijans takes on the character of purification of the caste Hindus, an expression of their repentance. If this is clearly understood there remains nothing further to ask. Let every individual and organization become pure through the service of Harijans; let no one speak ill of others or bear malice towards others. There can be no place here for considerations of political profit.

But this is easier said than done. It means that religion is to be grasped not by the intellect but by the heart. For an awakening of the heart the only effective means is *tapasya*. *Tapasya* is the extreme form of renunciation. *Tapasya* begins with fasting. *Tapasya* means to take on suffering. Only those who fast know the suffering of fasting. I hope to teach through *tapasya*, that is, fasting, what I cannot teach through arguments.

But whether I succeed or not I see no peace for myself except in fasting. I am convinced that that is what God wills me to do. If in the course of the *tapasya* I succumb I shall understand—and so must people understand—that my work is finished, and my responsibility is over. That will be no occasion for grief and sorrowing. And what can be more fortunate for me as well as for the cause of Harijan service if I give up my life in that cause? If the *tapasya* is consummated without any obstacle it will add to my self-confidence and give me further strength for service. In either case it will become clear that the work of Harijan Sevak Sangh is a religious one, that for caste Hindus it is in the nature of repentance and that those who are not pure have no place in this work.

Let no one think that there is any strength to be derived from merely abstaining from food. Thought and word should collaborate in fasting. Only a fast undertaken in thought, word and deed can be an effective means of self-purification. That is why I have been explaining in a number of articles that everyone does not have the right to fast.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1933

128. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 5/6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had a fairly long discussion with Parashuram. Before explaining the conclusion to which I have arrived as a result of it, I will narrate to you a shocking thing which he told me. I told him that I did not believe him at all, but asked him to give his story in writing if he wished to do so. He did that. What he says is that Dr. Sharma is more busy in criticizing the Ashram than with treating the patients, and that too in talking unclean things about it. Parashuram says that Dr. Sharma had come with certain fixed prejudices against the Ashram and that he had been talking with several people there and trying to induce them to tell him things by talking to them against other inmates or coaxing them in other ways. According to Dr. Sharma, slave mentality prevails in the Ashram and all of you are deceiving an 'old fool' like me by nodding 'yes' to everything I say. You are, he says, under Prema's influence and are guided by her in all things. He calls Prema "Her Excellency" and always uses that phrase when talking about her in her absence. I didn't have time to talk more about this with Parashuram, but I have given you the substance of what he said.

All this has had no effect on me whatsoever. But I have mentioned it because I thought it necessary that you should know. Dr. Sharma has not given me the slightest impression of being a man of this type. In the letters which he wrote to me from Delhi, I saw his humility and his sincerity, and I have always believed that he has come to the Ashram prompted by a spirit of service. I would be very much shocked if what Parashuram says is found to be true, though of course there is little room for being more shocked than I have already been. And from Monday in any case I shall be enjoying supreme peace.

About you and Prema, Parashuram has nothing to say except that there is temperamental incompatibility between him and you two. At any rate that is what he says just now. The word in his diary is not *rakshasi*[1] but *rajasi*[2] and you seem to have read

[1] Monster-like
[2] Imperious

it wrongly. Nor has he charged you with wickedness. He keeps saying that he has got fed up with Prema's temper. However that may be, I have told him that he should exercise the utmost control on his pen and tongue and stop writing such a rotten diary, and that he can return to the Ashram if he is ready to throw himself on your goodwill and promise unreserved co-operation with you in future. I have also advised him to write one letter to you. I have not yet received any such letter.

May 6, 1933

Parashuram says that he does not wish to leave the Ashram with the stigma of failure. He seems to be coming round completely now. Moreover, the fast also is approaching and so he is eager to secure a testimonial from you and return to the Ashram. I am writing this early in the morning. Parashuram will see me in the course of the day. If I think it advisable to send him back, I will do so. Have a talk with him and take him in again if he satisfies you. You are, of course, not bound to do so at all. Take him in only if you yourself feel that his heart has become completely clean. If, moreover, what he says about Dr. Sharma is nothing but a fabrication by him or a complete misreading of the facts on his part, you may think whether it would be advisable to take in again a man of such a confused mind.

If, however, what he says about Dr. Sharma is found to be true, you will have to think a great deal. Whether or not you take Parashuram back, give him enough time and listen to all that he has to say. If he is a good man, we should not let him go. But I also know that, though good, if he is utterly confused in mind, we cannot keep him in the Ashram. You are, therefore, completely free not to take him back again. I am permitting him to come to you only because I don't wish to reject his eager entreaties to do so. But I have made my condition clear to him. He can stay only if he satisfies you.

I continue to get letters from Dr. Sharma and see from them that several people have indeed talked to him and told him many things. He says that he has found some persons to be suffering from even venereal diseases. He should give the names of such persons to you. I also was going to ask for them, but meanwhile came this fast. Hence I leave that job to you. Read the letter which I am writing to him.

Panditji is returning there. Narmada does not intend to return at all. Lakshmibehn has taken a vow, when leaving the

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Ashram, that she will not return for one year. Hence she will not return before that period is over.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8372. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

129. TELEGRAM TO HARILAL GANDHI[1]

May 6, 1933

HARILAL
NIZAMIAH HOTEL
225/26 HARBOUR BUILDING, FRERE ROAD, BOMBAY

YOUR LETTER TOUCHES ME. IF THIS FAST MEANS YOUR RETURN TO PURE LIFE IT WOULD BE DOUBLY BLESSED. SEE ME. I SHALL TRY GUIDE YOU. GOD BLESS YOU.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 21200

130. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

POONA,
May 6, 1933

STRONGLY DISSUADE MR. RAJBHOJ AND OTHERS FROM FASTING. THEY AND ALL SHOULD CLEANSE THEMSELVES IN SPEECH AND DEED. THEY WILL FAST WHEN THEIR TURN COMES.

The Hindu, 8-5-1933

[1] In reply to his letter dated May 5, 1933, which read: "Your fast has posed a question for all, 'what is my dharma?' I undertake to do anything you would ask me to, but please do give up the fast" (S.N. 21175).

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131. LETTER TO SURENDRAJI

May 6, 1933

DEAR SURENDRAJI,

Ramdas told me that you had tears in your eyes when he conveyed my message to you. I am sure that in your eyes there cannot be any tears but of joy. There was no way out of this fast and this was the auspicious occasion. It seems to me impossible to destroy a hydra-headed demon like the untouchability by any other means. Ravana had ten heads only but this demon has a thousand. It is not necessary to explain to you what these thousand heads are. It is impossible to bring about its permanent destruction by ordinary, time-honoured means. We must, therefore, perforce, resort to ancient, valuable weapons. This is as clear to me as a mathematical axiom. Is it possible to change the heart of sanatanists by collecting a crore of rupees? Only a true votary can bring about this reform and not hundreds of so-called ones. The Ashram through which I am hoping to overcome this evil must not stand divided on this question. Harijans are in mortal dread at present. Those who have given up fear have become shameless. If these latter run into a fury, it would be no surprise. To destroy all these evils we cannot too often and too determinedly draw on our spiritual possessions. If it is God's pleasure that I alone can bring about this desired end, I shall only be too pleased for such a sacrifice. But I am not sure that I have so much of purity in me. If hundreds and thousands of persons like me can undertake as many fasts, then alone we can bury the sin that has accumulated through centuries.

I expect a lot from you and people like you. But I must make one thing clear that no one must follow me during my fast. Your duty is to remain peaceful and try to be as pure as possible in mind, deed and word. This letter has been written by Mahadev and he will continue to do so everyday. I shall sign it as long as it is possible for me to do so. I have obtained Government's permission that I can write to you everyday and so also you can.

My blessings to all.

BAPU

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 10, 1933

132. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

Special letter for Mirabehn *May 6, 1933*

CHI. MIRA,

Mahadev is writing this for me, as he will do everyday from now, and whenever possible take my signature. You can also write daily and Ba too. I am enclosing a letter for Ba.

You don't need any argument from me. If any is needed you will read it[1] all in today's *Harijan.* It is clear to me as daylight that the fast had to come. I am only surprised that I did not take the decision earlier. I wrestled with myself all these days. The struggle grew acute during the last three days and a little after midnight the voice came clear to me that I must take the plunge. I see what agony you are going through. I knew Ba would be brave. But your joint telegram and your letters have already begun to provide me spiritual sustenance for the pilgrimage. If you want me to come out victorious in the struggle of the spirit with the flesh, you too have to share in the struggle. I know how agonizing the effort is for you but I know too you will come out triumphant and help me to be triumphant too. But what is *our* triumph? As you have rightly begun your letter and perhaps I wrote the heading of my article just when you wrote those words there—not our will but *His* will be done.

Let me have a line from you both everyday.

Love.

BAPU[2]

From the original: C.W. 6272. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9738

[1] *Vide* pp. 74-5 and 120-2.

[2] For letters to Gomatibehn Mashruwala, Ramji G. Badhia, Anasuyabehn Sarabhai and Lakshmibehn M. Sharma, presumably written on May 6, 1933, *vide* Vol. LIV, pp. 322-3.

133. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

The absence of any letter from N. worries me. She was to write to me daily. I very much hope she will acquit herself well. Keep an eye on her. Send me reports about her even during the fast. I want her also to send a slip to me occasionally. If you find that she is not behaving properly, let me know immediately. You may even ask her to leave the Ashram if you think it necessary to do so. You must have read the letter which I wrote to her yesterday. I hope you have supplied her ink, pen, paper and other things which she will need.

You ask me what I desire during the period of the fast. Our outward activities may go on as usual, but I see the need for inner purification by all. All our activities directly or indirectly bear on the welfare of the Harijans. But see if you can think of a concrete field of work for their service.

But my chief desire is to see the reforms which I have suggested in the Ashram carried out. You should think over my suggestions about persons who do not observe the Ashram rules being asked to leave, etc., and take the necessary steps to implement them. If as a consequence of such action the physical activities of the Ashram have to be reduced to some extent, never mind. Discuss, calmly, the problems a little more still and make the Ashram safe from the point of view of purity of standards. Think over the suggestions[1] made by Rajbhoj and persuade the inmates of the Ashram to get ready to sacrifice themselves by fasting indefinitely.

I cannot think of anything more to say.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./L Also C.W. 8374. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* pp. 48-50.

134. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

May 6, 1933

CHI. MANI,

Like last time, this time too, I am permitted to send you a letter every day during the fast and you too can write to me daily. I may be unable to write or dictate a letter daily but Mahadev will write and, if possible, get it signed by me. Every such letter will be for both you and Mridula[1]. This letter also is being taken down by Mahadev.

Both of you are brave girls. I am sure you will not be unnerved. You need not worry at all on my account. I think that I am fresher and stronger this time than I was at the time of the previous fast. Raja strove hard with me. He is calm now and is leaving today. But he will return in a few days' time. Vallabhbhai is bearing it all very calmly and has promised to Mahadev that he will co-operate with me—maybe by keeping silent—without entering into any argument. I like this attitude of his. For a few days he carried his silence too far. Even the fountain of his humour seemed to have dried up. But it has welled up again.

The fast was absolutely necessary. I have no doubt that this was the best time for it. I have thought about the matter from every point of view and am fully convinced of the correctness of my decision. The fast is not directed against anybody. I do not even know what event pained me and precipitated the fast. Many things had their felt or unfelt influence on me. The point is that if the workers doing Harijan work under my guidance are not perfectly sincere, the cause must be some impurity in me. Moreover, the monster of untouchability is more frightful than Ravana. The latter had only ten heads, but this one has hundreds of them. They cannot all be cast off by any number of organizations or any amount of money collected for the purpose. It is not enough to secure rights for Harijans. What is wanted is a change of heart among caste Hindus if they and Harijans are to embrace one another as blood-brothers. This great spiritual task can be accomplished only if we spend all the

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

spiritual strength we possess. This is an ancient and well-trodden path. The wonder is that I did not think of it before.

Remain calm both of you and contribute your share when the time comes. A fast in sympathy with me is out of question.

Blessings to both from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 105-7

135. MESSAGE ON DECISION TO FAST[1]

May 6, 1933

I am not anxious to die. I will not die. Don't worry yourself about me.

The Hindustan Times, 7-5-1933

136. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[2]

[*May 6, 1933*][3]

Unfortunately for me, God or Truth has sent me this fast, as it appears to me, much later than it should have come. But as I cannot be the judge of God Himself, I have submitted to His peremptory injunctions. In my opinion, however, I should have undergone a fast like this at the time of the inauguration of the Harijan movement after the sealing of the Yeravda Pact. But that was not to be and it came now. It is undoubtedly a preparatory *yajna* (sacrifice) *after* the fact, it is also a purificatory *yajna* and it had to be so because it was overdue. You should understand that all this is argument after the fact. When I felt that I had received a peremptory call, I had no such reasoning in front of me. The call simply came and overpowered me. 'Is it not rather an explosion of grief ?'—you ask. The answer is quite simple

[1] To numerous friends and admirers who called on him from 8 a.m. till sunset

[2] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–II (Another Interview with Mahadev Desai)". On being asked how far this fast inaugurated "a new era in the socio-religious movement", Mahadev Desai explained that he would only repeat "what Gandhiji said in a compact little Press interview".

[3] From *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. III, pp. 293-4

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and easy. Most emphatically it is not an explosion of grief. Penance it undoubtedly is, for impurities as I call them, improprieties as you call them, but it is included in the purificatory part of it. This, too, was inevitable because of the absence of the inaugurative fast. 'Have not the shocking cases of impurity you have referred to in your statement led to the fast?' This is your last rider. I tell you it is absolutely incorrect and I can say this with the greatest assurance, because I can give you the dates on which the shocking incidents came to my notice and at that time I felt there was no warrant for me to fast on account of those individual cases. There were decisive reasons why as a prisoner I should not take up the fast for individual cases, as I have done before now. But in a great movement like the Harijan movement, it would be beyond the power of a single human being to cope with individual cases by fasting in each case. There is, therefore, no doubt in my mind that, whilst these cases must have subconsciously prepared the ground for the fast, I am unable to lay my finger on any one of those single incidents as having been wholly or principally responsible for this sacrifice. It is predominantly an inaugurative fast overdue, and subordinately, because it is overdue by way of purification of self and associates. I commence the fast at 12 noon Monday, if Monday sees me alive.[1]

Harijan, 13-5-1933

137. THE BEGINNING OF THE YAJNA

From my childhood I have been taught that good deeds —religious acts—must begin with the purification of the body and the soul. The fast of September last cannot be described as a *yajna* of this kind. The purpose of that fast was to bring about a change in the Government's scheme. Other service to the Harijans necessarily flowed from it. There was no alternative for me but to undertake it. The purpose was fulfilled with the alteration in the scheme and the fast too was terminated. That fast had a condition attached to it and was, to that extent, inferior to the present one.

The work of Harijan service began later. I now feel that it was a poor beginning. There was no *shuddhi-yajna* behind it. It is possible that owing to lack of that *yajna*, the war

[1] This sentence is translated from the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary.

against untouchability did not take on a wholly religious form.

I was not aware of this when the call to fast came. It is difficult to name any one thing which was the cause of the fast. This fast of mine is distinct from all my other well-known fasts. Its only object is self-purification. If I die during this fast, I would regard it as a welcome, though unforeseen, consequence. And I would like everyone else to regard it as such. If I give up my life thinking of Harijans and with the idea in my mind of doing pure service to them, I would regard it as a good beginning of the work of service. However, in this *yajna*, it is not my intention to render service by dying but by living. If God has willed otherwise, who can prevail against Him? Just as I have the courage to serve in life, so also have I in death. We should therefore look upon life and death as one and the same thing.

Those who tremble at this fast should give up their attachment to the body. Giving up the body does not mean giving up the work. If that were the case, what would be the good of living? The body perishes but the *atman* does not. It is the *atman* which acts or does not act. It lives for ever; it is immortal. Whether we are aware of it or not, whether we wish it or not, all effort is related to the soul—whether it may be uplifting or degrading. At the moment, I have only one burning desire, viz., that we should all realize that this task of abolishing untouchability is a religious one and cannot be achieved except through religious means. The purification of all other Hindus lies in the service of Harijans. Hinduism will not be purified, notwithstanding the improvement in the economic and political condition of the Harijans, if other Hindus are not rendered pure. If the filth of untouchability is not swept away, it will devour Hinduism. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to bring about a change of heart among the countless Hindus.

It should be clear as daylight to everyone that this filth cannot be got rid of except through self-purification. The best way to make this clear is to take up the *yajna* of fasting in thought, word and deed. Mere bodily fasting is suffering in vain. It may be mere hypocrisy. Anyone who does not mentally crave for cereals or fruit, finds that his body readily gives up this craving. Anyone who does not actually partake of these, but who mentally thinks of nothing but these, may be said to be constantly eating despite the fact that his body is fasting. Many fasts are of this nature. From the standpoint of dharma, these are futile and there is every likelihood of their being

harmful. Hence, it is absolutely essential that the mind should be fully prepared when undertaking a religious fast. My soul is witness that I am prepared in this manner. It is possible that many persons may perish during such *yajnas*. Nevertheless, without many such *yajnas*, the abolition of untouchability cannot be accomplished, the filth that has become embedded through centuries cannot be removed. It is only right that I should make a beginning in this *yajna*.

If my physical self does not survive the twenty-one days' fast, the reader must conclude that it was useless for this or any other service. Faith is of the utmost importance here. Blind faith is of course to be found in plenty and, as a result, faith itself has become an object of criticism. But just as a person with sight is not useless merely because he is amidst many who are blind, but rather becomes the guide of the latter, similarly, the clear-sighted faith of one individual can overcome the blind faith of millions. I wish to acquire such faith. Other men and women should also make that effort. In order to do so one or more fasts involving thought, word and deed will be useful.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 7-5-1933

138. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

May 7, 1933

CHI. MARY,[1]

You do not expect or want a long letter. This will be my last for four or at least three weeks. Let not the fast disturb your well-earned rest. I expect you to return to the Ashram refreshed for much concentrated work.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3329. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr. Also G.N. 6003

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

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139. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO PRINCESS EFY ARISTARCHI

May 7, 1933

. . . So you could not help yourself. But I forgive that long cable. Poor Harijans. They say your love for them is not as great as it is for one among many of their servants. Is not their complaint just? I shall tell them that you will do better next time.

I know I have your prayers with me. Such prayers will sustain me. I shall be more than half through by the time this reaches you, if such is His will. If He has willed otherwise, it is also equally well. This body will then cease to function, not the spirit. This fast is God's will, gift. I want you to share the joy of it. May God's peace be with you.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

140. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

May 7, 1933

I treasure your loving message.[1] I seem to have more than enough food to last me during the ordeal. Man does not live by bread alone.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

141. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR CHILD,

I know what you are passing through. I look upon the coming fast as the richest gift God has yet blessed me with. I must not write more. You should know that it is well whatever the result.

[1] Polak and his wife had sent their prayers.

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Love for you both and kisses for the children.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 122. Courtesy: National Archives of India. Also *My Dear Child*, p. 101

142. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR MURIEL,

Just to ask you to be with me in spirit to sustain me during the forthcoming ordeal. This will be in your hands after I am more than half through. That does not matter when spirit speaks to spirit. Then it is a question of asking and receiving in the same breath. My love to you all.

BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL, BOW
LONDON

From a photostat: G.N. 1016

143. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR HORACE,

I know I have the prayers of all of you in the ensuing ordeal. I look upon it as a great gift from God.

My love to you all. I must not attempt a separate letter to Hoyland.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1421

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144. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

You do not expect a long letter from me. I know that I shall have your spiritual co-operation during the coming ordeal.

With love from us all,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1465

145. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

May 7, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

I cannot enter upon the ordeal without talking to you. It is a matter of great joy to me that I have the prayers of many many true friends to speed me on—Truth is God and He will give me all the food I shall need during the fast. I wish I had time to talk more to you.

I must not write separately to Mary.

I hope you are all well.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8929; also *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin*, p. 83

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146. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

May 7, 1933

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I got your letter. Do not worry about me. Cultivate increasing purity and be a true servant.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA
PORBANDAR STATE VAKIL
RAJKOT
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2601

147. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

May 7, 1933

There are more verses than one in the *Gita* which imply that God always helps us to complete whatever work is undertaken in His name and at His prompting. He is the sole author of everything. We, therefore, are responsible for nothing.

If somebody assaults another with a stick, it is the person using the stick and not the stick that does so. Similarly, if we put our body in God's hands and if He uses it to get some work done, it is God who does the work and not the body. Credit for success and discredit for failure will be His.

You should, therefore, understand that He who has prompted me to undertake this fast will enable me to complete it.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, p. 295

148. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN B. MASHRUWALA

May 7, 1933

I know that countless men and women are unhappy. But can there ever be a birth without agony? We are struggling for a new birth. I, therefore, expect nothing but good from this great agony. Remain patient and do whatever service you can.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 294-5

149. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 7, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your two letters at the same time. I got the wire too. I am very glad that you are staying on there. You should always live like this without worrying. I am confident that I shall come through the fast safely.

It also seems advisable that you should consult some vaid or hakim for your complaint. Many persons get discharge from the ear for some time and then it stops of its own. It is nothing to be afraid of. It will be enough if you are careful about your food. If a cow is brought in your presence and milked after washing the udders, you should drink fresh, unboiled milk. Take care about food and eat nothing between meals. Avoid dal and spices, and always include some uncooked vegetable in your food. Tomatoes and salad are good. Dr. Deshmukh strongly advises the consumption of uncooked onions.

How does Janakibehn[1] spend her time? Does she move about? Does Om[2] learn anything? What is Prabhudas doing?

I have written a letter of condolence to Shanti Ruia. Radhakrishna gave me the sad news.

Somebody will write to you regularly and send reports.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2915

[1] & [2] Wife and daughter of the addressee

CWMG - LV

150. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

May 7, 1933

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

I got your letter.

If you observe proper rules about eating and remain calm, your health must improve.

It is very necessary that you should be consistent in any treatment which you try.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3954

151. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

May 7, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. No one should be upset by my fast. Try to do as much more service as you can.

Should my friends wish me to refuse a God-given gift or to welcome it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6687

152. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 7, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You must have got my letters. I hope you have given up your fast and calmed down. But I expect a still better result of your fast. You know what it is.

Cultivate close contact with N. I believe that sincere love will reform her and keep her on the right path. There was no limit to her sins. Likewise, there is no limit to her good aspirations. But she has lost everything as a result of her immora-

CWMG-LV

lity. She has lost control over her mind. I am responsible for having brought about this great and sudden change in her life, hence I do wish that she should be able to bear it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10344. Also C.W. 6783. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

153. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

Your letters are worthy of a woman of understanding and please me very much. Now make a determined effort to improve your health. I will then give you plenty of work. I have no doubt that you can improve your health.

You have convinced Keshu thoroughly well. I never knew that he was so immature. I did discuss with him the question of marriage. I am surprised to hear that he says I didn't. I had even placed before him Sardar's opinion. But he himself refused.

You should continue to write to me even during the fast.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 879. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

154. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

May 7, 1933

Every moment I receive proof of the propriety of my fast. I have already hinted in my article[1] about the necessity of another such fast. That idea is becoming stronger. I feel that an unbroken chain of such fasts should be maintained till untouchability is completely abolished. As soon as one man or woman ends his or her fast, another should start and thus a chain should be kept up. Write to me and let me know what you think about this plan. I see the absolute necessity of such a living flame so that a religious movement may be carried on in a religious spirit. Who else if not the inmates of the Ashram, should shoulder the responsibility of keeping such a flame alive? We must make a

[1] *Vide* pp. 134-6.

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beginning in this matter. If I survive the fast, I will join you and others in discussing this plan. If I die, however, you, Kaka and others who are out of jail will have to think at that time. If you feel that you should see me, you may come.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9543. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

155. LETTER TO NARMADABEHN RANA

May 7, 1933

CHI. NARMADA,

See that you work properly during the fast, and do not let any evil thought enter your mind.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2777. Courtesy: Ramnarayan N. Pathak

156. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA[1]

May 7, 1933

Even if I never fast, I am bound to die one day. And why should we assume that I shall die during the fast? Have faith that whether I live or die, it will be for our good. Is it not better to die performing a *yajna* than to die of a disease? Have courage, lead a pure life and do what service you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9549. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

157. LETTER TO SHAMAL R. RAVAL

May 7, 1933

CHI. SHAMAL,

I got your letter. You should not worry about me. Be good yourself and serve people. That will assuredly help the Harijans. If God wishes to save me, who can destroy my life?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3147

[1] Brother and sister-in-law of Kasturba Gandhi

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158. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

May 7, 1933

During this fast I have decided not to worry about outside affairs, but I will certainly continue to inquire after the health of those who are sick.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9548. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

159. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. CHHAGANLAL AND KASHI,

I couldn't write to you for want of time, but soon I got your reminder. You have my blessings, of course. Your contribution at present is to go on doing your duty devotedly. I am discussing more detailed plans with Narandas. I will write to him and tell him to send you all the information.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9223. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

160. LETTER TO D. V. PARACHURE

May 7, 1933

You cannot fast on my behalf. The person who has started a *yajna* should himself undertake self-purification. It was I who started the *yajna* for the abolition of untouchability and, therefore, it is my duty to make myself fit for it by a fast.

But a time will come when I will welcome your fast. For the present, examine yourself more closely and get a little more settled in the Ashram. Then you may certainly fast. I will help you in taking the decision if I survive this fast. If I don't, then Kaka, Vinoba, etc., will be there to help you. Take the decision with their help. I have already written to Narandas about this. I shall be happy if the inmates of the Ashram carry on the fast in an unbroken chain, one at a time at least. Just now, however, you should only prepare your mind for this *yajna*.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9547. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

CWMG TLV

161. LETTER TO ANANDI L. ASAR

May 7, 1933

The fast is certainly for you, but it is for myself too. Why should you die? Live and demonstrate your purity and strength of mind. I am confident that you will do so. My fast will help you in that effort. You also will have to fast when you have become fit for doing so. Our aim will not be realized by my fasting alone. You should, therefore, start working after you have improved.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9546. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

162. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

May 7, 1933

Go on doing as much service as you can. I am planning for all the co-workers to join in the *yajna* of fasts.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9544. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Joshi

163. LETTER TO SULOCHANA A. SHAH

May 7, 1933

CHI. SULOCHANA,

I got your letter. Go on working hard and doing good service, and observe the rules strictly.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 23369

CWMG - LV

164. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

May 7, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

Ramji suggested that you two should go round among the Harijans in the countryside. I do not like it. In my opinion you should stay at the Ashram, learn whatever is worth learning and immerse yourself completely in the Ashram life. Ramji is in a very unhealthy state, he has no confidence in anyone, and does not want to observe discipline. What good will his touring bring?

Talk him out of it and persuade him to do peacefully what he can in the Ashram. You may do whatever is possible in this matter.

If, in spite of all this, you are set on touring you may do so but on your own, not as representing the Ashram. Speech-making does not fall within Ashram activities at the moment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 793

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wrote one letter to you yesterday. Afterwards Ramji and Dr. Sharma came and saw me. Amtussalaam and Duncan are in Bombay.

Ramji insists that, if he is not permitted to fast, he may be permitted to tour villages and also wants that Rajbhoj should accompany him.

I have asked him to obtain your permission. If you approve, let them both go. But nobody should go in the name of the Ashram. On behalf of the Ashram only what is arranged by you should be done. However, I will respect your experience more than my reason. You may, therefore, do what you think best. Read the accompanying letters and pass them on to the persons concerned. You will have to send a wire, of course.

I knew that N. had fallen in Bangalore. She had written about that, but I grasped the full meaning of her remarks only the day previous to the day on which I sent her there. If she is really pregnant, I will welcome that. That will test her and us too. If her heart has become pure, it is our duty to shelter her. Read my letter to her. Open all letters addressed to her and read them before giving them to her. The letters written by her may be passed and posted only if they are absolutely necessary. Reduce your other work and do some work regularly in a Harijan locality.

The meeting with Dr. Sharma was not a happy one. I did not like the way in which he talked. I found that there was much truth in what Parashuram had said.[1] I see that he had come with a strong prejudice against the Ashram. I could not have a sufficiently long talk with him. I will have a little more discussion with him again tomorrow. He will not return there now. Bhagwanji has praised his work in his letters to me. The letters which Dr. Sharma wrote from there also seemed good. Have you not been able to judge him? Did he come here with your permission? It seems useless now to ask these questions. I will not worry about the Ashram during the fast. You will have to do that. Do what you think best. If you want help, you can call Kaka or Vinoba. You may introduce any changes that you like. If you don't get much time to think, find some. I should like to hear about Kusum, Anandi and N. Give me other news, too. Mahadev will reply as he thinks fit. Do what you wish. You know what I desire.

Even if Parashuram comes there, ask him to leave if you don't want him. Perhaps he may not come. All kinds of unexpected things keep happening here. Nobody, therefore, can foresee what will happen after two hours. That lady, Spiegel, has gone away to Madras. May God give you equanimity and the strength which you require. He who has equanimity will get the strength. That is the Lord's assurance. You may expect one more letter still in my handwriting. And then, if it is God's will, I will write to you after the 29th.

BAPU

[PS.]

N. says in her letter that she is not able to go to the lavatory when she gets up at three. If the gates of the hostel are

[1] *Vide* pp. 126-8.

kept closed at night, there must be some arrangement inside. A removable commode can be kept in a corner of the yard or in a room.

It would be desirable to supply to everybody who wants the green vegetables which can be eaten uncooked.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8374. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

166. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 8, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
SABARMATI

STRONGLY DISSUADE RAJBHOJ RAMJI GO PROPAGANDA TOUR. RAMJI SHOULD CLEAR HIMSELF OF SUSPICION.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8377. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

167. CABLE TO "INDIAN OPINION"[2]

[*May 8, 1933*]

"INDIAN OPINION"
PHŒNIX (NATAL)

REJOICE. DO DUTY THERE.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 19084

168. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

May [*8,*][3] *1933*

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

This is Monday morning. It is not yet 3 a.m. Yours is the first letter I commence. This has come naturally and it pleases

[1] *Vide* also p. 147.

[2] In the source, this and the preceding telegram have been drafted on the same sheet.

[3] The source has "7", but the letter was written on "Monday", which was May 8, 1933. *Vide* also the following item.

me. I treasure the telegram you sent me.[1] I was wondering how the decision would react upon you. I was thankful to God that you had understood it. I did not know except vaguely why I was being made to take the fast. But as time passes, more and more proof is coming to me in justification. I stand or seem to stand calm in the midst of the events that would but for the approaching fast have rent me in twain. I am now able with much greater assurance than before to lay them all at the feet of the great white throne.

I know you and our many friends are praying for me. These prayers will be my food during these days.

I hope your brother is better. Whether he is or not, it must be a great relief to the members of the family that you are so near.

With my love to you and all the friends to whom I cannot write.

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 985

169. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

It is now 3.10 a.m. and I have finished my first letter. That is to Andrews. Not only I but we are all thinking of you. People write to me or speak to me about you suggesting that I should abandon the fast for your sake. It is a great tribute to your love for me but also an unintended reflection. I want myself and everyone who knows you to feel that your love is so deeply true and knowing that it can stand the strain of physical separation no matter of what duration. I know that this will come, is coming. It cannot come through reason. It will come through the heart. Essential love depends wholly on the spiritual part, though it at first comes through the sense perception. I want you to feel with me that this fast is a gift greater than God has ever made to me. That I approach it in fear and trembling is a sign of my weak faith. But this time there is in me a joy which I have not known before. I want you to share that joy with me.

[1] The cable from London read: "Accept your decision. Understand. Love. Charlie."

Do not therefore deprive yourself of any food. Eat your food thankfully and keep yourself fit for service. Time for you may come when you might have to take up a similar fast. Under certain circumstances it is the one weapon which God has given us for use in times of utter helplessness. We do not know its use or fancy that it begins and ends with mere deprivation of physical food. It is nothing of the kind. Absence of food is an indispensable but not the largest part of it. The largest part is the prayer—communion with God. It more than adequately replaces physical food.

Mahadev will drop you a line, as far as possible, daily.

May God give you strength.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letter[1] for Ba herewith.

[PPS.]

I hope you got my letter[2] written on Saturday. One was sent to Ba also.

From a photostat: C.W. 9690. Courtesy: Mirabehn

170. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

May 8, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I got your letter. It overflows with your love. If such a time comes, at the moment I can think only of your house, though as I have already told you, I should like a Harijan locality best.[3] But I see many difficulties in that.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 78. Also C.W. 4830. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

[1] *Vide* p. 140.

[2] *Vide* p. 130.

[3] The addressee had invited Gandhiji to stay in her bungalow in the event of his release. *Vide* also p. 157.

CWMG - IVV

171. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[*May 8, 1933*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I wrote to you on Saturday.[2] You and Mridula too, can write to me everyday if you wish. Let none of the women feel unhappy about the fast. Everybody should try to wash off whatever impurity may be lurking in herself. Someone or other will be writing to you everyday. I enjoy complete peace of mind. We are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 107

172. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Need I write anything more to you? You should defy the whole world and do what you think is for your good. According to me, it will be easy for you to pursue your good in the Ashram. However, that alone which seems right to you will be the best course for you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10345. Also C.W. 6784. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] As in the source
[2] *Vide* pp. 132-3.

CWMG - LV

173. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 8, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have not been sending to Chhaganlal and others summaries or copies of my important letters, please send them. I see that Chhaganlal doesn't know anything. Probably it must be the same with Vinoba. Make some arrangement for copies being made.

You will find enclosed a letter from Mary Barr. If she returns there, welcome her.

The other letter is from Nandlal Bose regarding Dhiru. It seems from it that Dhiru will not be able to go before July. In July he may certainly go. The letter refers to Rs. 15 as boarding charge. I couldn't understand exactly what it means. However, nothing need be done just now. If I come through the fast and if it is necessary, I will write and get a clarification. Otherwise you may do so. I am sending the letter so that Dhiru may have patience. For the time being, let him do what he can in the Ashram. He should purify himself during these three weeks.

You will have to give more time to N. Try and understand what is in her heart. If any letters are received for her, open and read them. She is not likely to hide anything deliberately. But she has little control over her mind. I see that she has had a large share in persuading me to undertake this fast. I did not know this. If there is anything which can give her strength, it will be this fast, and, if I have made any mistake in sending her there, the fast is the only thing which can undo it. I think that it will save many young men. If she is pregnant, the cause is one Harijan priest named . . .[1]. It is difficult to judge as to who tempted whom. According to me, if she is pregnant and if she can accept the prospect calmly, the experience will or can change her life and save her. Shower on her as much love as you can and rear the plant.

Margarete has left and gone away to Madras. She has held out a threat that she will go on a fast there. If she fasts, that will certainly do her health good. She will lose some of the excessive fat on her body.

[1] The name has been omitted.

Duncan's belief is completely mistaken. I will explain the matter to him.

Please carry out my suggestions about the kitchen and the dairy if they have appealed to you.

Even if you don't make changes in the prayer, you should divide it into three parts, namely, the recitation from the *Gita*, the Sanskrit verses and *bhajans*. Only those may attend the recitation from the *Gita* who are ready to join in it. There is no moral obligation at all on the others to attend. However, those who wish to attend should give their names. The *Gita* should be followed by the Sanskrit verses. In this also only those who wish to join and who can recite the verses may attend. Then should follow the *bhajans* and *Ramdhun*. Each of these three things, if done properly, will take ten minutes. Thus the only part of the prayers which all should attend is the last one. If all the persons give their names for the parts which they wish to attend, you will know who keep their resolutions. A lamp, a tall desk and a register should be placed near the gate and everybody who comes should put a cross or sign his name if that is preferred, in the appropriate column. Those who do not have sufficient faith in prayer to join even in the last item should not be eager to remain in the Ashram. Anybody who lacks faith in what is an inseparable part of the Ashram will get no benefit from the Ashram and will be able to contribute nothing to it.

Nobody should stay merely from a wish to be useful to the Ashram. A son or daughter who consciously thinks 'I may be useful to my mother' will not serve her. Only those who look upon the Ashram as their mother or their all in all, should stay in it. If everybody in the Ashram reflects sincerely in this manner and decides to stay, the coming three weeks will be well spent there. It is the Ashram which can make the best use of this period and benefit from it, and it ought to do so. I want everybody to maintain perfect truth. If you feel short of workers for carrying on the activities of the Ashram, you may engage paid men and women, look upon them as your own brothers and sisters, share their joys and sorrows and be one with them. Probably such a relationship will be more natural. Any activity which can be dispensed with may be stopped. However, the cultivation of fruits and vegetables, as also the dairy and the agricultural work connected with it, ought not to be stopped. All the processes relating to spinning are forms of *yajna*. You may stop admitting children. The entire Ashram is a school. I, therefore, cling to the view which I have expressed before. We should be able, and we are

able, to give the necessary training required for living as a labourer. It should be enough to make sufficient provision for this. It is because we have not understood the full significance of this idea that we remain discontented and all the difficulties arise. If we but realize that our children are labourers and that it is our aim that they should grow up as such, I believe many of our problems would disappear. The training imparted for this purpose is bound to be different from the ordinary type of education. This is enough for the present. Even from this, accept only as much as you can and throw away the rest.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8378. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

174. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 8, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

The letter and telegram from Ghanshyamdas said that you were coming.[1] Hence I did not write. I got your letter now. Get the substance from newspapers, you are not likely to get much in them. At least 75 per cent of the newspaper reports should be discounted. The news in the papers should be corroborated by local informants. If we have trustworthy informants at various places and if they send us reports, I would like you to send me the gist. Anyway carry on your own experiments. You will yourself realize that it does not yield any fruit. Since you are there, I am easy in my mind. Rama, Rama, Rama.

BAPU

SHRI A. V. THAKKAR
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES' SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10449. Courtesy: Harijan Sevak Sangh. Also from a photostat: G.N. 1121

[1] *Vide* p. 86.

175. STATEMENT EXPLAINING OBJECT OF FAST[1]

May 8, 1933

Every day brings me fresh justification for the ordeal that God the Truth has sent me. The discoveries I am making would have paralysed me, but for the fast. Whatever it may mean for the cause, it will certainly be my saving. Whether I survive the fast or not, is a matter of little moment. Without it I would, in all probability, have been useless for further service of Harijans, and for that matter, any other service.

Those friends who have sent me urgent wires dissuading me from the step will, I hope, appreciate the fact that for a person built as I am, such fasts are indispensable. This I say apart from my claim, by which I stand, that it was God's call.

The senders of wires will forgive me for not sending individual acknowledgments. The pressure upon my time has been so great that it has been physically impossible for me to cope with all wires that poured in upon me.

Now that the fast will begin within two hours of writing this, I invite all friends and well-wishers to pray for strength for enabling me to go through the ordeal without weakening. I confess that I have no strength except what God may give me. That He has never failed me hitherto gives me the confidence that He will not fail me now.

A telegram was received by me from a Harijan Association that my fast was unnecessary, as the Harijans do not stand in need of assistance from the caste Hindus. From its own standpoint, the Association is right. Only it should be clearly understood that the fast is taken not to oblige the Harijans, but for purification of self and associates.

Harijan service is a duty the caste Hindus owe to themselves. It is a part of the penance they must do for the wrongs they have done to their own kith and kin. I can well understand the indignant repudiation by some of the Harijans. Let me hope that it is not yet too late for the vast majority to accept the penance. The numerous messages I have received from them

[1] The statement was issued at 12 noon, soon after Gandhiji had commenced his fast.

leave no room for doubting such an acceptance.

Sanatanist Hindus scent further coercion in this fast. When they realize that it cannot be broken before its period, even if every temple was opened and untouchability wholly removed from the heart, they will perhaps admit that it cannot be regarded as in any way coercive. The fast is intended to remove bitterness, to purify hearts and to make it clear that the movement is wholly moral, to be prosecuted by wholly moral persons. May God bless the ordeal and fulfil its purpose.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-5-1933

176. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

May 8, 1933

It came upon me suddenly and therefore I was not prepared.

Having seen the *Weekly Times* yesterday, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and I discussed for a moment where I should stay, if I was suddenly discharged. My first thought was to go to Sabarmati and live near the Ashram, and if that was not feasible or advisable then to accept Lady Thackersey's invitation. Of course the invitation of the Servants of India Society is there, as also from the Depressed Classes Mission, but when Col. Doyle gave me the information I felt that the best thing would be to go to Lady Thackersey's, and here I am.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-5-1933

177. STATEMENT SUSPENDING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

May 8, 1933

I cannot regard this release with any degree of pleasure. As Sardar Vallabhbhai rightly remarked to me yesterday, how can I take advantage of this release in order to prosecute the civil disobedience campaign or to guide it? This release, therefore,

[1] The source had reported: "At Lady Thackersey's house, Gandhiji told the Associated Press representative that he was informed of his release only at quarter to seven by Col. Doyle, Inspector-General of Prisons. Asked if he will be staying at Lady Vithaldas Thackersey's house throughout the fast, Gandhiji said that he was not now sure about this."

CWMG - LV

puts upon me, as a seeker after Truth and a man of honour, a tremendous burden and strain. This fast has to continue. I had hoped, and I still hope, not to excite myself over anything and not to take part in discussions of any nature whatsoever. The whole purpose of the fast will be frustrated if I allowed my brain to be occupied by any extraneous matter, that is, any matter outside the Harijan work. At the same time, having been released, I should be bound to give a little of my energies to a study of the civil disobedience movement.

Of course, for the moment, I can only say that my views about civil disobedience have undergone no change whatsoever. I have nothing but praise for the bravery and self-sacrifice of the numerous civil resisters, but having said that, I cannot help saying that the secrecy that has attended the movement is fatal to its success. If, therefore, the movement must be continued, I would urge those who are guiding the movement in different parts of the country to discard all secrecy. I do not care if, thereby, it becomes difficult to secure a single civil resister.

There can be no doubt that fear has seized the common mass. The ordinances have cowed them down, and I am inclined to think that the secret methods are largely responsible for the demoralization. The movement of civil disobedience does not depend so much upon the quantity as on the quality of men and women taking part in it, and if I were leading the movement, I should sacrifice quantity and insist on quality. If this could be done, it would immediately raise the level of the movement. Mass instruction on any other terms is an impossibility.

I can say nothing as to the actual campaign. The reflections I have given, I had bottled up all these many months, and I can say that Sardar Vallabhbhai is one with me in what I have said. One word I would say. Whether I like it or not, during these three weeks, all civil resisters will be in a state of terrible suspense. It would be better if the President of the Congress, Bapuji Madhavrao Aney, were to officially declare suspension for one full month or even six weeks.

Now, I would make an appeal to the Government. If they want real peace in the land, and if they feel that there is no real peace, if they feel that Ordinance Rule is no rule, they should take advantage of this suspension, and unconditionally discharge all the civil resisters. If I survive the ordeal, it will give me time to survey the situation, and to tender advice both to the Congress leaders and if I may venture to do so, to the Govern-

ment. I would like to take up the thread at the point where I was interrupted on my return from England.

If no understanding is arrived at between the Government and the Congress as a result of my effort, and civil disobedience is resumed, it will be open to the Government, if they so choose, to revive the Ordinance Rule.

If there is the will on the part of the Government, I have no doubt that a *modus operandi* can be found. Of this, so far as I am concerned, I am absolutely certain that civil disobedience cannot be withdrawn so long as so many civil resisters are imprisoned. No settlement can be arrived at so long as Sardar Vallabhbhai, Khan Saheb, Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others are buried alive. Indeed, to call off civil resistance is not within the power of any of the men who are out of prison. It is possible only for the Working Committee to do so. I refer to the Working Committee that was in existence at the time I was arrested.

I shall say no more on the civil disobedience movement. Perhaps, I have already said too much, but if I was to say anything, I could say so only whilst I have strength left in me. I would urge Pressmen not to worry me any more. I would urge also would-be visitors once more to restrain themselves. Let them regard me as being still in prison. I shall be unfit for holding political discussions or any other discussions.

I would like to be left in perfect peace, and I would like to tell the Government that I shall not abuse the release. If I come safely through the ordeal, and if I find the political atmosphere as murky as it is today, without taking a single step secretly or openly in furtherance of civil disobedience, I shall invite them to take me back to Yeravda to join the companions whom I almost seem to have deserted.

It was a great privilege for me to have been with Sardar Vallabhbhai. I was well aware of his matchless bravery and his burning love for the country, but I had never lived with him as I had the good fortune to do during the last sixteen months. The affection with which he covered me recalls to me that of my own dear mother. I never knew him to possess motherly qualities. If the slightest thing happened to me, he would be out of his bed. He superintended every little detail in connection with my comforts. He and my other associates had conspired to let me do nothing, and I hope that the Government will believe me when I say that he always showed a remarkable comprehension of the difficulties of the Government, whenever we

discussed any political problem. His solicitude for the farmers of Bardoli and Kaira I can never forget.[1]

A.I.C.C. File No. 429, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

178. TELEGRAM TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT[2]

[May 9, 1933][3]

I NEED YOUR PRAYERS BLESSINGS. I WOULD LIKE YOU AND RANJIT STAY THERE AND WORK FOR HARIJANS DURING SUSPENSION JUST ANNOUNCED.

From a photostat: S.N. 21228

179. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

May 9, 1933

I was sorry that I could not talk with you longer than I did.

This morning I read your report carefully. I do not mind it at all. I like the frankness about it. Some of your suggestions are also valuable, but can you grow in it? In spite of all the good that can be said about the Ashram it strikes me that if the evil described by you is as extensive as you suggest you can only freeze there. If Narandas is a mere business man or even predominantly so, he is like salt that has no savour. If he has not, the Ashram is undoubtedly dead. But my reading of him is wholly different from yours. He has the rare talent of combining business with spirituality. This, however, is one instance out of the many in which your reaction is so hostile that the sum total of the effect left on one's mind is that it is an institution where one's growth is stunted. But you know best your own feeling in spite of your report. If, therefore, you feel that you can remain

[1] The statement, as desired by Gandhiji, was released at 11.30 p.m. after its approval by M. S. Aney, Acting President of the Indian National Congress. For Aney's statement suspending the civil disobedience movement, *vide* Appendix V.

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on May 8, 1933, which read: "Long to be with you. Will await your message. Love from me and Ranjit".

[3] From the reference to the suspension of civil disobedience, which was announced on this date

in the Ashram and grow, by all means it is good. Discuss the whole of your report with Narandas and let him make what changes you can persuade him to make. My faith in him remains unabated. But if you remain there you must go through the discipline consistently with your health before you earn the right to demand a change. Today you can only recommend it as a result of first impression and your experience elsewhere. I wish I had time to correct many of your statements which are not true to fact, but that would be more strain on me. If you have faith in Narandas's *bona fides*, you should exhaustively discuss all those points about which you may feel keenly.

Love.

BAPU

MR. DUNCAN

From a microfilm: S.N. 21260

180. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

C/O LADY VITHALDAS THACKERSEY,
'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
May 9, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have been released a little unexpectedly, otherwise Mahadev would have written a letter and a long one. But now I myself must dictate one. I got your letter. Please go on writing to me daily. Anybody who has something special to write about may also write. I welcome the changes which you say have been introduced, but there is one danger. Read about it in my letter to the women. If all the people have accepted them willingly, there will be no difficulty at all and their health will soon improve. Everybody should eat as one takes medicine, and be fully satisfied with the type and the quantity of the food that he gets. Any item which one does not like should be declined. It is not likely that one will not like anything from among milk, wheat, fruit and uncooked vegetable. If that happens, the only remedy for such a person is a fast. I have not known any person who did not like fruits. Let everybody start drinking fresh, unboiled milk without any fear. The person who is in charge of cooking should take care that every item is well cooked. If anything is not cooked sufficiently well, it should be thrown away. You should make it a general rule to serve only the vegetables which grow

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in the Ashram itself. Totaramji[1] should know that he must supply tomatoes, salad, etc., all the year round. I will not mind if this means more expense just now. Similarly, fruit-trees also should be planted. While everybody should realize the necessity of learning self-control, care should also be taken to see that the fruit-trees are not raided.

I have sent you a wire regarding Parashuram. As he was very keen, I have permitted him to go there. If he does not abide by the conditions which you impose and gives you the least trouble, ask him immediately to leave. He need not come to me again. Give him the railway fare for Delhi or Kanpur or any other place where he may wish to go. Nobody should stay if he cannot feel happy in the Ashram. You should not have the responsibility at such a time of pleasing anybody so that he might stay. It is, of course, your duty to see that everybody receives love and courtesy. However, those who cannot be pleased should be permitted to leave. This rule applies to Dr. Sharma and Duncan also. I have not been satisfied with the former. He has not impressed me as being truthful or polite. I had written a note to him asking him to leave and go to Delhi. But he seems to have returned there. I have expressed my dissatisfaction in my note to him. Even if he remains there, he should not treat N., should not touch her or talk with her. If I get time, I will write to Sharma also and tell him this plainly. Read that letter[2]. I will mention it in my letter[3] to N., too.

Duncan seems to be a really good man, but I have found that he is not very intelligent. I am afraid only of Sharma. I am returning today by registered post the report about cow-protection. Don't let anybody give up milk or ghee. The truth is that those who can willingly accept the changes which I have suggested need not give up anything. It is not a great thing to give up this or that thing. What is necessary is to train one's mind so that one learns to eat as one takes medicine, to eat only to keep the body alive. Moreover, when we give up every article of food which is unnecessary for health, there is no need to practise further self-denial. What I have been begging from the Ashram just now is a big thing. I want inner purity, control of the mind itself. Explain fully to everybody the sixth verse of Chapter III [of the *Gita*].

Those who restrain the sense-organs but dwell in their minds

[1] Totaram Sanadhya, an Ashram inmate

[2] & [3] *Vide* the following two items.

on sense-pleasures are hypocrites. The seventh verse, on the other hand, says that those who keep their minds under control and let the limbs and organs of the body function without attachment, are hailed as karmayogis. These two verses explain the secret of how we should live. If, while fasting, I dwell in my mind on the pleasures of the palate and keep thinking when the 21 days will be over, my fast will be only the outward show of an ignorant man. It would not benefit the world and earn for me a sinful existence in my next life. What is true, in the wider context, about my fast, is also true, in a limited context, about the rules of self-control being introduced and followed in the Ashram. Anybody who stops eating rice and dal but dwells on their pleasure in his thoughts does not practise self-control by refraining from eating them. Such exclusion may be beneficial physically, that is, from the point of view of health. But the various forms of self-denial which are being practised in the Ashram just now are intended as a preparation for undertaking indefinite fasts. Those who cannot join in that need not take their meals in the common kitchen. If anybody who does not eat in the common kitchen but observes as much self-control as he can in his own home in the matter of food, I will regard him as bringing honour to the Ashram. For, his conduct will be truthful and not unnatural. There will be humble confession of his weakness in it. It should be remembered that the self-control which I have advised does not apply to anybody who is ill.

Explain this repeatedly to the women on my behalf. No woman should undertake anything beyond her strength. The women, and others too, should understand that what we are doing at present is to try to prepare the ground for a chain of indefinite fasts. If anybody practises self-control for my sake for a short time and gives it up afterwards when somebody else in the Ashram may be fasting, how bad would that seem! I am far away, but fasts following mine will be going on in the Ashram. Everybody, therefore, should practise only such self-control as he can keep up. Nobody should go further than that at all. I don't expect more from anybody. Let us not attempt too much and fail. It would be better to rise step by step. I don't insist any more now that the old families ought to take their meals in the common kitchen. My fast ought not to result in any kind of coercion on anybody. On my behalf, you should see that it does not. Tell Ramdas that gradually he will understand the complete propriety of this fast. Even if the fast is like a pistol, it is

worth firing. I believe that dharma cannot be saved in any other way.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8379. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

181. LETTER TO N.

May 9, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I can't put you out of my mind. I do not want to repeat what I have said in my previous letters.

Dr. Sharma is there. I have asked[1] Narandas not to ask him to treat you at all. If it does become necessary to procure medical advice a doctor will be called in, but you will tell if his presence and sight excite the emotion you describe. If they do I will have to see what can be done. But I am writing to him about this emotion so that he can be on his guard. I hope you do not mind this. I am interpreting you literally. You have not a single thought in your mind which you want to keep not only from me but from the whole world including about whom you may harbour a thought. However distasteful it may be, I know that that is the only way for a truthful person.[2]

Your letter written in ink has arrived. You should treat poor mother at least as well as strangers. But, of course, children sometimes write to their parents with their fingers, using their blood as ink.

God be with you.

Love to you and kisses to S.

BAPU

SMT. N.
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21257

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] In the source, what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

182. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

May 9, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,[1]

I was surprised when Devdas told me you had gone to the Ashram.[2] I gave Devdas a letter for you, which he had to post. I hope you got the letter. In that letter I told you I had deliberately omitted to say one thing. It has now become my duty to say that to you.

You know N.'s life. I have sent her to the Ashram so that she can be, if at all possible, protected against herself. In her letter received day before yesterday she told me that when she met you you excited in her the animal passion. This need not mean any condemnation of you at all. How can a man help himself if a woman on seeing him have her lustfulness excited? It is given only to the rarest human beings to possess such innate purity that they would never be the occasion for exciting the lust of even the most depraved women. I write this, therefore, not to blame you but to warn you against having anything whatsoever to do with N.

I hope you will take my letter that Devdas had posted to you in the right light. Your letter which you left to be given to me confirms the opinion I formed of you after our meeting[3]. Let me add that somehow or other you created a bad impression on everybody you met here. But all that may be utterly unjust to you, so long as Narandas truthfully guides you and you him and the Ashram in general. If, on the other hand, he does not like you or you do not like him or the Ashram in general, you should shun it, even though you are treating some patients there. If you have developed a dislike for the Ashram, the whole purpose of your being there is frustrated. It would be too selfish for me to have you there for the sake of a few patients.

There was no time to write in Hindi.[4]

From a microfilm: S.N. 21258

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] Gandhiji had sent him a note suggesting that he should return to Delhi; *vide* p. 162.

[3] On May 6; *vide* p. 148.

[4] In the source, this sentence is in Hindi.

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183. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

May 9, 1933

SARDARJI,

I slept well last night. This place is much breezier and cooler than Yeravda. I slept out in the open. Work has accumulated. I shall have to work for two days or so. After that, I have decided, I will not even work. I don't feel any weakness as yet worth speaking of.

Please do not worry about me in the least.

You gave me a mother's love.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 17

184. TELEGRAM TO KASTURBA GANDHI[1]

Express [*May 10, 1933*]

READ YOUR WIRE. HAVING LIVED WITH ME OVER FIFTY YEARS YOU SHOULD BE BRAVE AND NOT APPLY. AM QUITE WELL HAPPY. MAY GOD GIVE YOU COURAGE FAITH PEACE. GLAD MIRA HAPPY. LOVE.[2]

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 21269

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's from Sabarmati Jail received on this date. It read: "It appears from papers prisoners not to be released. I therefore ask your permission to apply Government for two months leave that I may come to you. Very anxious. Wire reply. Mira sends love. She is finding peace courage in prayer."

[2] In the source, the sheet containing the draft of Gandhiji's telegram bears also the following remark in Gujarati: "Do not now stoop to cracking coal with the mouth which you have always used for chewing pan. Have trust in God. Overcome your delusion that we are the body. Repeat Ramanama. Bapu."

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185. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

May 10, 1933

You and Ba will get such reports daily. I hope you are bearing up well.

BAPU

MISS SLADE
SABARMATI PRISON

From the original: C.W. 6274. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9740

186. LETTER TO N.

May 10, 1933

I see that there is more effort in dictating than in writing. As days proceed I may not be able to write or dictate. Then you will know that my thoughts are speaking to you.

But you must write a detailed letter daily giving your bodily and mental condition, your food and S.'s food.

I hope you have understood the moral necessity of avoiding abortion.

Have sun-bath daily on the terrace of your sleeping quarters. And there you can take sewing work for the Ashram. Also do *takli* spinning.

I wish you will forget Pythagoras, Bacchus and *Mahabharata*. Why should you brood over the past when you have to re-enact the *Mahabharata* at the Ashram? Do please fill your mind with the

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains that this was "written by Bapu himself on the letters reporting the progress of his fast". This was added to a letter of even date from Mathuradas Trikumji from " 'Parnakuti', Poona", which read: "Bapuji enters today the third day of his fast. On the first day after his release towards night, he dictated his statement on the situation which meant a considerable expenditure of energy but it was inevitable. Yesterday he worked less and today I hope he will exert still less. The relieving feature is that he himself has made up his mind to conserve energy as much as possible. He sleeps well and remains in bed. Devdas, Brijkishan and myself and other friends do our best to lighten his ordeal as much as is possible for us. I am fully confident that he will successfully go through the ordeal."

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task before you, i.e., to become an ideal member of the Ashram, no matter what the others are.

Love to you and S.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 82

187. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have received my letter[1] regarding Duncan's criticism. His criticism proceeds from complete ignorance, but has no malice in it. Though it proceeds from utter ignorance, there are some good points in it. I will send you his report. If he has a copy of it, get it from him and discuss the matter calmly with him. Devote some of your time to such discussions.

I shall not be able to write or dictate a letter every day. But you should go on writing in detail about everybody, particularly about N., Parashuram, Duncan and Sharma. You have not written anything about Kusum.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8380. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

188. LETTER TO BHAU PANSE

May 10, 1933

CHI. BHAU,

Put your trust in God and have no worry for anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9686. Courtesy: Bhau Panse

[1] *Vide* pp. 153-5.

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189. TO THE READER[1]

All should know that, even though I am supposed to be a free man, the *Harijan* will continue to be edited just as if I was in prison. It will still be solely devoted to the Harijan cause and will scrupulously exclude all politics. It is a matter of regret to me that for three weeks I shall not be able to write anything for the *Harijan*. But, if God spares me, I hope to write for the *Harijan* with better qualifications. I hope, further, that in the mean while the Harijan cause will make rapid progress, that reformers and sanatanists will combine, wherever possible, to serve Harijans, that reformers will work the rest of the programme without wounding the susceptibilities of the sanatanists and that the Harijans themselves will, by vigorously prosecuting internal reforms to which I have drawn attention so often in these columns, make it easier for sanatanists and reformers to recognize that Harijans are truly 'Harijans' and that they are capable of responding to love precisely in the same manner and to the same degree as others.

Harijan, 13-5-1933

190. TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

May 11, 1933

DR. ANSARI
DELHI

SAROJINI MENTIONED YOUR PRESS STATEMENT.[2] DREAD TROUBLE YOU BUT IT IS YOUR RIGHT AND DUTY COME WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE IT. YOU KNOW MY FAITH IN YOU. LOVE TO YOU ALL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 13-5-1933, this was "dictated" by Gandhiji on May 11, 1933.

[2] Under the date-line "Poona, May 11, 1933", *The Bombay Chronicle*, 12-5-1933, had reported: " 'I would love to die with my head on the lap of Doctor Ansari', said Gandhiji, who, though in weak condition, felt extremely happy when he was told by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu of Dr. Ansari's willingness to come

191. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 11, 1933

YOUR BLESSINGS[1] COMFORT ME. HAVE BEEN CARRYING OUT YOUR ADVICE IN SPIRIT. FROM CHILDHOOD RAMANAMA HAS BEEN MY TALISMAN. AM WELL AND AT PEACE. PRAY DO NOT TROUBLE COME.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

192. NOTES[2]

Untouchability is against reason. It is opposed to truth, non-violence and dharma and hence is *adharma*. The underlying assumption is that we are high while others are low. The Brahmin who does not have the attribute of the Shudra—that is, service, is no Brahmin. A true Brahmin is one who possesses the attributes of a Kshatriya, a Vaishya and a Shudra, and has in addition learning. Shudras are not of course wholly devoid of learning, but service is their chief characteristic. In varnashrama-dharma there is no place for the distinctions of high and low. In the Vaishnava cult even Bhangis and *Chandalas* have attained *moksha*. How can a religion that sees the whole universe as a manifestation of Vishnu treat the Harijans as apart from Vishnu?

* * *

If anyone says that his belief in untouchability is prompted by love I just cannot agree with him. I can see nothing of love in this attitude. If we have love for the untouchables we will not make them eat our left-overs. If we have love for them we will worship them as we worship our mother and father. If we have love for them we will dig for them better wells, build for them schools and admit them into our temples. These are the signs

over to Poona and asked whether Dr. Ansari should be sent for. When he was informed of the above, Dr. Ansari replied from Delhi on phone: 'I will never allow Bapu to die on my lap. I will never allow him to die at all. I will be with Bapu as soon as possible.' "

[1] *Vide* p. 93.

[2] These were published under the title "Swarna-Sutra", that is, golden sayings.

of love. Love is made of innumerable suns. When one small sun cannot remain hidden, how can love? Does a mother ever have to go about saying that she loves her child? A child who cannot yet speak looks into the eyes of his mother. When their eyes meet we can tell from their looks that they are in communion with something divine.

[From Hindi]
Harijan Sevak, 12-5-1933

193. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

[*May 12, 1933*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

You will be brave to the end. No joke to be my daughter. Being there you have to pass through a more searching ordeal than [I.][3] But then my children to be worthy have to do better than I. Have they not? God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9691. Courtesy: Mirabehn

194. NOT BY BIRTH BUT BY MERIT

The reader may not know that among the many devotees of the Harijan cause are two lepers. One is a Kshatriya who has caught the infection through service among the poor with whom some years ago he cast in his lot, taking with him almost all his wealth. His leprosy has not deterred him from the self-chosen service. Another is a Brahmin pundit well versed in Sanskrit. He often sends me selections from the Shastras in support of the reformer's position on untouchability. Below is the translation of his latest collection:

1. "One who has purified himself by pure deeds and who has restrained his senses deserves to be treated as a Brah-

[1] The letter was in reply to the addressee's (S.N. 21231) dated May 8, 1933.
[2] As supplied by the addressee
[3] Mirabehn explains: "In the letter reporting the progress of the fast which accompanied this, the following is written by Mathuradas: 'The lines at the back Bapu penned at about 2 p.m. on Friday. He wrote them without using specs, and hence that incomplete sentence.' "

min even though he may be a Shudra", said God Brahma himself.

2. Even though a Shudra, one who is noble of nature and deed should be regarded as the best among the twice-born.

3. Neither birth nor lineage, neither culture nor knowledge of the Vedas, can render one a twice-born. Good conduct is the only deciding cause.

4. It is good conduct alone which makes one a Brahmin. A person of good conduct, even though a Shudra, acquires Brahminhood.

5. He who lives for the performance of dharma (duty), whose dharma is consecrated to God and whose day and night are devoted to good deeds—he is declared by Gods to be a Brahmin.

6. He who is content with whatever food and clothes and bed are offered to him is declared by Gods to be a Brahmin.

—*Mahabharata*: "Shanti-Parva"

Commenting on this, the compiler truly exclaims: "Surely the Harijans of India today fulfil this test."

7. For a Brahmin truth is Brahman; austerity is Brahman; control of the senses is Brahman; compassion for the whole creation is Brahman. . . .

—*Parashara Smriti*

8. A Brahmin is one possessed of self-restraint, austerity, self-control, charity, truth, purity, compassion, knowledge of the Vedas, learning, wisdom, faith. . . .

—*Vasishtha*

9. Only those Brahmins are capable of saving (mankind) who are completely self-controlled, whose ears are full of the music of Vedic chants, who have conquered their senses, who have abjured injury to all sentient beings and who shrink from possession.

(Source unknown)

Harijan, 13-5-1933

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195. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

May 14, 1933

So you have no Ba to look after or to keep company.[2] God is trying you through and through. He will give you strength.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6275. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9741

196. WHAT TO DO?

A Harijan sevak writes:[3]

Obviously even to serve water to Harijans in their *lotas* was considered a sin on the part of the Harijan sevaks though the poor sevaks had cleaned the *lotas* after they had been used. When we buy *lotas* in the market we do not stop to ask as to who might have used them. What peculiar quality does a *lota* come to possess as soon as it falls into our hands so that it becomes useless to us if a Harijan happens to use it? The villagers in question have given their answer. They have declared it a sin to lend the *lotas* to Harijans for drinking water and they are meting out

[1] This was added to a letter of even date from Mathuradas Trikumji to Mirabehn, which read: "Bapuji gets your letter regularly. He completes today six days of his fast during which time his condition on the whole has been satisfactory. Yesterday was held a consultation of doctors who have issued their bulletin which must have appeared in today's Press. They are not pessimistic. A very useful suggestion came from Dr. Deshmukh; he recommended the Vichy water in lieu of ordinary water. Bapuji after ascertaining facts about it readily agreed to take it and it has wonderfully suited him. It is expected to keep acidity under check. From yesterday the full text of the *Gita* is being recited to him. In the evening he has music. He remains cheerful."

[2] Kasturba Gandhi was released from Sabarmati Jail on May 13, 1933.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that three Harijan sevaks of his village had invited Harijans to dinner on the Ramanavami Day and served them drinking water in their own *lotas*. As a result of this the orthodox sections of the village had ostracized them and the barber and the washerman had refused to serve them. He had sought Gandhiji's advice about taking the matter to the court.

rough treatment to the three young Harijan sevaks for having committed this sin. What should they do? What the villagers have condemned as a sin I consider a meritorious deed. They must therefore suffer in patience even if corporal punishment were to be meted out to them, to say nothing of denying them the services of the washerman and the barber. They may wash their own clothes and cut their own hair. If they cannot do the latter they may let their hair grow. But they must never give up.

One must not however under any condition be angry with the villagers. What after all can they do? They have been taught *adharma* in the name of dharma They are, if anything, to be pitied. That the removal of untouchability is a religious act has been realized by no more than three young men there. The rest of the villagers continue to languish in the well of ignorance. Under the circumstances, it becomes the duty of the three young men by their firmness, purity, *tapasya*, sacrifice, patience and generosity to change the hearts of these villagers lost in darkness and at the same time to teach the Harijans the habits of cleanliness. They can under no circumstance take the matter to a court of law.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 19-5-1933

197. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

May 19, 1933

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI

JUST FINISHED GUJARATI TRANSLATION OF "BHAGAVATA" PORTIONS PRESCRIBED BY YOU.[1] MISSING YOUR VOICE AND RUNNING COMMENTARY. YOU ARE EVER WITH ME. AM QUITE AT PEACE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

[1] Malaviyaji in his telegram (S.N. 21302) of May 15 to Devdas Gandhi had suggested that "'Dhruva Katha' (Bhagavata: fourth *skandha*—eighth, ninth *adhyayas*); also 'Gajendra Stuti' (Bhagavata: eighth *skandha*—second, third, fourth *adhyayas*)" should be read out to Gandhiji.

198. TELEGRAM TO KHAN SAHEB AND ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

May 19, 1933

KHAN SAHEB [AND] ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN
HAZARIBAG CENTRAL JAIL

DEEPLY TOUCHED BY YOUR WIRE[1]. GOD IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 19085

199. TELEGRAM TO BAPAT

[*May 20, 1933*][2]

JUST HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAST. DEEPLY TOUCHED BUT PLEAD WITH YOU TO DISCONTINUE THE FAST. LET GOD HAVE HIS WILL WITH ME. IT WILL BE A GREAT COMFORT TO ME IF YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME. PLEASE REPLY.[3]

The Hindu, 21-5-1933 (Special Supplement)

[1] Dated May 19, it read: "We both brothers congratulate you Mahatmaji on your noble fast for a noble cause. Our daily prayers for your long life to ever serve the depressed of India."

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-5-1933

[3] Bapat who was on a sympathetic fast from May 8 in Ratnagiri Jail had replied: "Deeply grateful. I am in God's hands as you are. Please don't worry. Death or life, let God decide."

CWMG - LV

200. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

POONA,
[*May 21, 1933*]

CHI. MIRA,

You are showing wonderful bravery. There is no true bravery to be had apart from complete reliance on God.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6276. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9742

201. TALK WITH DEVDAS GANDHI

POONA,
May 27, 1933

If God desires to take me away on the twenty-first day of the fast, even after keeping me alive for all these twenty days, this will be my last sacrifice. But if God gives me a further lease of life and desires me to work more, a new epoch will begin in my life.

My future plan lies in God's hands. I have driven away all thoughts from my mind except of Ramanama. What God wills will be just and reasonable.

[1] Gandhiji had added this to the letter dated May 21, 1933, from Mathuradas Trikumji to Mirabehn which read: ". . . It is not yet 7 a.m. Bapu is fast asleep in the porch facing the Yeravda Central Prison. And I am writing these lines from a corner from where I constantly have a look at him. He lies in his cot like a sweet child; beaming with brightness. None who looks merely at his face can believe that he has not touched food all these 13 days. All is going on smoothly. He is now taking Sinhagad water—a place famous in the history of Maharashtra. He himself stayed for a few days in that fortress in 1920. He likes it very much and the historic associations of the place have drawn him towards it and its water. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta who nurses him has a branch of his clinic there and it is he who is responsible for securing water from there. He with his fiancee is rendering splendid service to Bapu. Bapu enjoys peace of mind and is attaining more and more the spirit of detachment. Mahadevbhai has gone yesterday to the Ashram. Bapu has added himself these lines without specs and hence duplication of letters. The letter was about to be posted when he asked for it. N.B. I am writing you daily without fail, and Mahadev wrote to you yesterday. Your last letter is dated May 19, 1933."

CWMG - LV

When Mr. Devdas thanked God for His mercy in sparing his father, the Mahatma remarked:

Yes, that is so. It is due to God's mercy that I am living, but I don't think that God's mission is so circumscribed as to only save me. Even His taking me away must be regarded as an act of mercy.

The Hindu, 29-5-1933

202. NOTE TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

May 28, 1933

Ishavasya will not do tomorrow. Instead, *shuddhoyam buddhothava* should be recited, and Amiya or Mahadev should sing something from Tagore. The former is a verse in the *Bhajanavali*. Mahadev knows it. I need not tell what song from Tagore should be sung.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 127

203. MESSAGE BEFORE BREAKING 21-DAY FAST[2]

May 29, 1933

Within a minute or two I am going to break the fast. In His name and with faith in Him was it taken, in His name it terminates. My faith is not less today, but more.

You will not expect me to make a speech on this occasion. It is an occasion for taking the name and singing the glory of God. But I may not forget the doctors and other friends who have poured their affection on me during these days of privilege and grace. I cannot help referring to their service because it is part of God's mercy. I have nothing but thanks to give them. God alone can give them a fitting reward.

I am glad that Harijans are here with us today. I do not

[1] For Mahadev Desai's account describing the breaking of the 21-day fast, *vide* Appendix VI.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–IV". Gandhiji had dictated the message to Mahadev Desai, who read it out.

know exactly what work God expects from me now. But whatever it may be, I know that He will give me the strength for it.

Harijan, 3-6-1933

204. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 29, 1933

CHI. MIRA,[1]

I have just broken the fast. The next task commences. He will find the ways and means.[2]

From a photostat: C.W. 9692. Courtesy: Mirabehn

205. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

[Before *June 1933*][3]

CHI. KAKA,

I got your two letters at the same time. You have gained good weight. Milk is bound to increase it. The idea of making you fast for some days in between is good. There is a difference between the method described in the book which you have given me and the treatment that is being given to you there. This indicates that Dinshawji[4] has taken some suggestion from other books or introduced changes on his own. For you, however, he is the final authority.

I am aware that massage of the back is highly recommended. I shall see what can be done.

Can Bal[5] and others stay with you all the time? I got Bal's letter. I will write to him later. If I get time, I may write even today.

I don't feel happy that those who come to see me stay at Trivedi's. In doing so, they do not consider his circumstances. Such persons must stop staying with Trivedi, nor should they visit you. And, besides, see how much they spend in coming.

[1] In the source, the superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] This was supplemented by an account by Mahadev Desai of the breaking of the fast; *vide* Appendix VI.

[3] From the reference to the milk treatment (*vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 21-6-1933) and the proposal to meet the addressee in June

[4] Dinshaw Mehta, a well-known naturopath of Poona

[5] Bal Kalelkar, addressee's son

Last week there was a whole army of visitors. I think that was absolutely unnecessary. . . .[1] Don't think of coming down at present at all. It is desirable that you should derive the utmost benefit from the treatment there. It will be wise to do so. We shall certainly meet when you come down, that is, in June. Don't be in haste to come down. If your health improves completely and you learn something about these methods of treatment, that will be a great advantage.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9474. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

206. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 3, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Mahadev must give you all the news and I shall just add a line or two at the end.

I ought to have written to you, but could not for heavy pressure of other work. Bapu is steadily progressing and gradually adding to his nourishment. He took milk for the first time yesterday, having taken 14 oz. during the day. In all he takes about six feeds during the day composed of fruit juices and honey and now milk. Yesterday over and above the milk, he took eight spoons of honey, four oranges, one grape fruit and a pound of mango juice. This is quite good and if he continues to add to this nourishment the doctors expect that he will regain his normal weight and strength in about two weeks' time. But their instructions are very strict and Bapu has promised to observe them. This means that until the fourteenth of this month he should not do any writing, should not be worried about problems, should take part in no discussion, etc. Bapu's weight taken on the morning of the 1st was 84 lb.

The future is in the lap of gods. He was just asking me this morning about the date of your release. I confessed I did not know it, but that I was told at the Ashram that you had still two and a half months to do. Please let me know if I am correct, and now do let Bapu have one of your usual full, long, detailed letters so that he may know everything about you. He was practically under a vow of silence but if his thoughts were with any of us, they were most with you.

[1] In the source some portion is scored out.

Rajaji[1] left last evening and expects to be back by the 11th or 12th. Jamnalalji was here, but saw Bapu only for a second and refused to engage him in a conversation until he was quite well. No one from the Ashram came excepting little Babla[2] who wanted to have the most out of me, lest I should go back to my haunts very soon!

Mathuradas has occupied my *gadi* during these days and is likely to continue for some time. Devdas has been ill due to strain of work and exhaustion but is now convalescing. Among the 'nurses', good Brijkrishna[3] is still there, also Bal, and Harihar Sharma[4] who will now be going. Ramdas might take his place. He is here. Ba is quite happy and giving all her time to Bapu nursing him and massaging him and preparing his feeds with all her devoted and loving care. I have left space enough for Bapu to write a line.

CHI. MIRA,

You must try to wean yourself from this longing for physical meeting. I hope the fever is off.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6277. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9743

207. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 4, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

You should be patient and take part in all the Ashram activities.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] For his talks with Gandhiji on June 1 and 2, *vide* Appendix VII.
[2] Narayan Desai, Mahadev Desai's son
[3] Brijkrishna Chandiwala, a Congress worker of Delhi
[4] Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

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208. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

From today I have started writing a little. The burden on you seems to have proved unbearably heavy, but I hope that it will become somewhat lighter now. I myself shall not be able to write much, but I will dictate. You may, therefore, write to me now about important matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8381. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

209. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 4, 1933

Are you undergoing the same treatment yet? Write to me regularly now. How is Purushottam?

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 881. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

210. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 4, 1933

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have written some letters today, hence one for you. Now give me all the news. How are you keeping?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 285

211. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

June 5, 1933

PRECIPITATE ACTION WILL BE SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21442

212. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 5, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

This recurrence of fever disturbs me. You ought to learn real self-control. It does not come by reading. It comes only by definite realization that God is with us and looks after us as if He had no other care besides. How this happens, I do not know. That it does happen I do know. Those who have faith have all their cares lifted from off their shoulders. You cannot have faith and tension at the same time. Do relax your mind.

Love.

BAPU[2]

From the original: C.W. 6278. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9744

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressee's received on June 4, 1933, which read: "My dearest love Ansari. Take absolute rest. Doing utmost obtain release prisoners. Hope issue remains unprecipitated. Time essential this end."

[2] In the source, this was followed by Mahadev Desai's note, which read: "Bapu is getting on very well indeed. The weight accurate to an ounce taken today was 88 lb. 26 *tolas*. That is very good. He looks very bright and quite ready to take up 'problems' and thrash them out. But the doctors will not allow him to do anything of the kind and have ordered him to take complete rest until the 14th. He can just sit up and stand up for a second on the weighing machine (of course, if supported). Otherwise everything is all right. He is worried that you have brought on the fever by constantly think-[ing] of and worrying about him and sleeplessness and irregularity. Do get well soon for Bapu's sake."

CWMG-IV

213. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

June 6, 1933

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

It was only yesterday that I was able to see your letters to Mahadev. Of course, when your time comes, you will certainly take part in the sacrificial and purificatory fast. Whether it should be 21 days or less or even more, need not be determined now. You seem to have fixed up your mind on 21 days. But you should dismiss that from your mind. I would urge you also not to be in a hurry. The first thing that is needful in your case is to see whether, as a whole, the Ashram has a message for you and in considering this, you will please not separate the Ashram from its ideal. It is the easiest possible thing in the world to set forth on a piece of paper the highest ideal. But if there is no living representative of that ideal it is worthless. Therefore, I have always insisted that those who know me and my interpretation of life should do so through the Ashram, and if the latter makes no appeal to the examiner he should unhesitatingly reject me. I do not know whether I have made myself clear to you. So far as I am concerned, I want you to the extent of your ability to share the life I am living and the sacrifice I am endeavouring to perform.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19089

CWMG - LV

214. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 6, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letter. You are with me when you are at the Ashram doing the Ashram work. I am sure you understand this very simple truth. There were many prisoners occupying the same yard, sharing the same verandah. Do you suppose that they were living with me?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19090

215. LETTER TO N.

June 6, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

I was able only yesterday to read your letters which were with Mahadev. Surely there must be some misunderstanding about white flour. There is no white flour used in the Ashram. All the flour that is used in the Ashram is specially ground and it is always wholemeal. Sometimes it is sifted after it is ground and sometimes it is not. You should, therefore, enquire and then let me know. What I told you about food applies merely not to you, but certainly to all. That all may not follow that dietary, is a different question. But in the common kitchen in the Ashram, generally that method is followed with more or less the same exactness. It is not possible to do away with rice and dal altogether. But every encouragement has been given to those who avoid rice and pulses. I do hope you are finding more and more peace at the Ashram and that both you and S. are keeping well.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19091

216. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 6, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

You may write to me now. How is the condition of the arm? Is the pain still as bad as it has been? How is your study going on? What is the condition of your mind?

How are the children? How is Dhiru's health?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5351

217. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 6, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I see that not only will it be some time before I am able to move about, but also before I can work with my hands. I heard from Mahadev yesterday the report of developments there. I have also read the letters which he gave to me. There seems to have been some misunderstanding. What I meant was that the ultimate stage, whether in the quest of truth or in the path of ahimsa, must be a fast by every seeker, and that the changes about food, etc., which were introduced in the Ashram in connection with my fast should be understood as a preparation for this. It is necessary to understand this. Those who do not see the truth of this need not adopt those changes. I did not intend that everybody should join in the chain of fasts or leave the Ashram. I welcome your intention to come here as soon as I pick up a little strength. You can come on any day during the next week. I will not talk much, but I shall be strong enough to explain my ideas and answer your doubts. Nobody need feel troubled. My dharma is limited to explaining truth as I understand it. All of you may accept what you can from my suggestions. I don't wish to create a new world. You may ask me any questions you like

CWMG TV

from there. When you decide to come, you may also bring with you any others whom you wish to.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8382. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

218. TELEGRAM TO SITLA SAHAI

June 7, 1933

SITLA SAHAI
16 LATOUCHE ROAD, LUCKNOW

YOU MAY COME WITH PADMA[1] AFTER 15TH BUT DISSUADE THAKURSAHEB FROM COMING JUST FOR DARSHAN. BESIDES NO MORE GUEST-ROOM ACCOMMODATION BUT IF HE MUST HE SHOULD BE PREPARED STAY HOTEL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21456

219. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

PARNAKUTI, POONA 6,
June 7, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I must not write. The last letter that I wrote to you caused much strain upon the hand. I am, therefore, dictating this letter, in reply to yours of the 5th instant.

You say that the brief sentence[2] I wrote at the end of the letter written by Mahadev, gave you pangs. It is wonderful how we create misery for ourselves where there is not even the slightest cause. My sentence had reference to your fever, which you yourself had said was due to over-anxiety on your part. You had explicitly mentioned that you were ill able to bear the separation. It was in answer to this that I wrote that sentence. It had reference only to enforced separation. There was no thought whatsoever that you should live out of sight even when it was possible for you to be with me, that is, if we were both not imprisoned. Of course, in that case, you would be most naturally with me. But

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* p. 180.

CWMG - IV

to be out of prison is not my natural life. My natural life is that of a prisoner and therefore I suggest that you should learn to do without my physical presence. Is not this as clear as daylight?

I do not like this loss of weight by you. There is something radically wrong in your carrying this load of anxiety on your shoulders. It is incompatible with a living faith in a living God. As days pass I feel this living presence in every fibre of my vein. Without that feeling I should be demented. There are so many things that are calculated to disturb my peace of mind. So many events happened that would, without the realization of that presence, shake me to the very foundation. But they pass me by leaving me practically untouched. I want you to share that reality with me. Then you would not be disturbed because you cannot be physically near me. Remember that no heroic effort is necessary in order to be able to bear such enforced separation, as you and I have to put up with. Millions of human beings do so without any effort. Do not make the mistake of thinking that they bear such separation because their nature is not sensitive to such things. If we would examine them we would find that they are just as sensitive as you and I are likely to be. Only they have a natural faith in God of which they have not even the knowledge. Ours is, beside theirs, a laboured faith. Hence we have to put forth a Herculean effort to bear separation. Anyway that is my analysis of your mentality. If it is not true you will make your own analysis and somehow or other cure yourself of the terrible anxiety. Carefully ponder over Krishna's discourses in the second chapter of the *Gita*. Then go to the twelfth chapter, and see whether you cannot find real peace and calmness of mind. Do not try to give me a detailed reply to this argument of mine. I do not want you to go through that strain. I have advanced the argument simply to soothe you, if at all I can. I know that argument is vain when one's whole being is in rebellion against itself. Perhaps the painful process through which you are passing is preliminary to the coming realization of the living presence of God. May it be so. Anyway do not again allow the thought to cross your mind that there is any question whatsoever of your having to live in separation from me when we both find ourselves out of prison.

Now about myself. I am flourishing. Rebuilding the body at the age of 64 must be a slow process, and I see that it will be slower than I had expected. Yet recovery is steady. I am taking easily 24 oz. of milk. I am trying to go to 2 lb. and may, under Dr. Dinshaw Mehta's care, do even better. I am entirely

satisfied with the way I am progressing. Besides milk I take oranges and juice of three to four pomegranate[s]. I am taking also a fair quantity of honey, perhaps 4 oz. Up to yesterday, I was taking vegetable soup. Dr. Mehta has stopped it from today in order to increase the quantity of milk. So you see that there is nothing to grumble about my food, and the way I am progressing.

You complain of sultry weather there. Here we have delicious cool weather. Of course, Poona is ideal in the rainy season.

Devdas will be married to Lakshmi on the 16th; that is the date when the religious ceremony will be gone through. But as this will be a marriage in breach of the present Hindu usage, there will be also a civil registration on the 21st. Jamnalalji is trying to fix up a match for Prabhudas also. If it comes off, he too would be married about the same date. Ramdas is here; not at all keeping well. His body largely depends upon his mental state and he has not yet found his peace of mind. Jamnalalji is going to mother him. Probably that will pull him through. He will be living in Wardha with his wife.

N. seems to be shaping well. Margarete Spiegel, who is named Amala, is as mad as a mad-hatter. But what was one to do? She simply came and one had to take her. She is a good woman. But it remains to be seen how she shapes. Both N. and Amala are to do Harijan work.

I think I have now given you enough for the week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6279. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9745

220. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

June 7, 1933

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Of course I have been having news about you and now I have your letter before me of the 31st ultimo.

Yes, God has been good to me. He has been a friend in need. He never forsook me during all those very wonderful 21 days. But I must not dictate a long letter, after having dictated one long letter to Mira who stood in need of one. I do not want you to come here merely for the purpose of meeting me.

The temptation to say 'come' is there but I know that I must resist it. You have your work cut out for you and you must not be disturbed.

I am glad you all seem to be keeping well. I hope Mary is quite at peace with herself. Do send my love to Mother, Eldyth and the Italian sisters when you write to them. I am flourishing.

Yours sincerely,[1]

From a microfilm: S.N. 19092; also *The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin*, pp. 83-4

221. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 7, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I was happy to learn that you had gone to the Ashram. Do you feel happy there? Your tonsils must have been removed now. I suppose you do know that after the operation one must not speak for a few days. Even the food should be liquid for some days. It is only if these post-operation rules are carefully observed that one can derive the utmost benefit from the removal of tonsils.

Write to me a detailed letter.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1522. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

222. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 7, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had wanted to post this letter today before the clearance, but after writing a long letter[2] to Mirabehn I had no energy left to write another immediately. Thus the improvement is rather slow, but it is satisfactory.

[1] The printed source has "Love. Bapu".
[2] *Vide* pp. 186-8.

CWMG - LV

Let me know how you find N. and Amala. You must have read N.'s complaint concerning white flour. Personally I think that there has been some misunderstanding about the matter.

I will call Parachure Shastri's son here when I get Parachure Shastri's letter. I will not let that burden remain on you.

I have not been satisfied about Kusum. Does she want now to find a vaid or another doctor? Please explain to me how the matter stands.

It is also necessary to do something about Ramabehn's shoulder. Either show it to Manekrao[1], or let her come here so that something may be done here. Please think what would be the best course. As regards the other matters, Mahadev must have written to you and so I don't write anything.

How is Amtussalaam? She seems to be exercising strict self-control about writing to me.

Let me know what your experience of Dr. Sharma was. Does he write to you? Did you ask him to leave or did he leave of his own accord?

I assume that Prema will come and see me.

How is Kanu's health now? What is the news about Purushottam ?

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8383. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

223. TELEGRAM TO GIRIJA SHANKER ROY CHOWDHURY

[On or after *June 8, 1933*][2]

GIRIJA SHANKER ROY CHOWDHURY
253 BALLYGUNGE AVENUE, CALCUTTA

THANKS. D[EATH] ANNIVERSARY NO BAR TO MARRIAGE. CONTRARY-[WI]SE REGARD HAPPY COINCIDENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21458

[1] Professor Manekrao, well-known bone-setter and founder of a gymnasium at Baroda

[2] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's received on June 8, 1933, which read: "I beg to bring to your notice that your son's marriage comes on sixteenth June which is Deshbandhu's death anniversary day."

224. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 9, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letters. Do become steady. It is not good to be constantly thinking of being with me. On the contrary you will be constantly thinking of the duty in front of you. Do become a wise woman of 35 instead of being a child of 5 years.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also from a microfilm: S.N. 19094

225. LETTER TO N.

June 9, 1933

MY DEAR N.,

You must not expect from me just now any reply to your letters. Strength is not coming to me as rapidly as I had expected. But my expectation had no justification. The regaining of strength is really as rapid as is possible for an old man of 64. When I built my castle of expectation I had forgotten that I was 64 and not 46.

What you say about the monthly business is quite true. But it is not likely to be true of you. To reach the state you have described, you need to attain perfect purity not merely in act but in thought also. Then undoubtedly the sex symptom goes, mere form remains. I do fervently hope that you will soon reach that state, but you have not yet done so. That you can do so, I have not a shadow of doubt. You have in you the making of such a woman. I know your aspirations and I know that you want to be true through and through. You are, so far as I can read your letters, making a Herculean effort. May you succeed soon. Meanwhile, I am not just now building any high hope upon the scarcity of the monthly symptom. I have not, therefore, lost all fear of conception. [If] it is there, I want you not

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to mind it but to regard it as a blessing of God. Whereas if there is no conception we would regard that too as equally a blessing and a narrow escape. Either way let it serve as a warning, final and unforgettable.

I am glad you like Abbas and Govindji as tutors. I know that they are all very fine workers. They have their hearts in their work. Of course, Lakshmidas you will look up to both as your first teacher and in the place of a parent. He is one of the staunchest of men in the Ashram. I want you to pick out all that you may find to be good in the Ashram and cling to it.

As to the name, you will see that I have adopted your suggestion. You may ask everybody in the Ashram to cut out Devi in any case. And let them address you as N. or N. behn just as they wish. But having done this forget all about the name, and its meaning and significance. After all nothing hangs by it. Everything is based upon what we think and what we do.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19095

226. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I took no time in coming to a decision after hearing Mahadev's report of his conversation with Dr. Patel[1]. You should now get yourself operated upon as quickly as possible. From what has been told me, I clearly understand that the operation is neither very painful nor risky in any way. It would be wise, therefore, to get the operation performed without delay. You need not have any fear. I have expressed this view after the most careful thought. Write to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5352

[1] Dr. Motibhai D. Patel, an eminent surgeon of Ahmedabad

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227. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I got your letter. I did not read your previous letters. It is only since a few days that I have been having letters fully read out to me. One day I actually read them myself, but the doctors advised me against doing so and, therefore, they are now read out to me by somebody else.

If you send me the substance of your previous letters, I will dictate a reply.

Have faith that your health will definitely improve if you patiently cling to nature-cure treatment. I was over-hopeful when I wrote in my previous letter that I would soon be able to write letters without any difficulty, but I find that, leave alone writing, I am not even able to dictate as much as I should like to do. It will take some time before I can dictate or write without difficulty.

I am following the same regimen as Purushottam did, that is, complete rest and nothing but milk in food. If this agrees with me, I shall soon get stronger.

You need feel no hesitation at all in writing to me.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 882. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

228. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

June 9, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I have heard that the operation for the removal of tonsils was very painful. But I am sure that by the time you get this letter you will be completely all right. You must have got my previous letter[1].

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1523. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

[1] *Vide* p. 189.

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229. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

June 10, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had put your letter under my mattress. I could reach it only today. If you can come away and if Narandas permits to do so, do come, so that we can talk and understand each other's point of view. If you cannot come, you may ask me whatever questions you may wish. But assuming that you will come, I don't write anything in this letter.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 358. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

230. CABLE TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY AND OTHERS[1]

June 12, 1933

THANKS. MAKING STEADY PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21464

231. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 12, 1933

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI,

Only today I heard that you were quite ill. Get well soon. Do write to me or get someone to write for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bhulabhai Desai Papers, File No. 1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressees' received on June 10, 1933, which read: "Rejoice you have been spared to continue work for Indian untouchables and social and national freedom. Fenner Brockway, James Maxton, John McGovern, Members Parliament, Girdharilal Puri, Gurditsingh Dara, Secretary, 33 Staldates Oxford."

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232. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[1]

June 14, 1933

GLAD COLIC SHORT LIVED. DELIGHTED YOU WILL COME 22ND. DEVDAS LAKSHMI WEDDING FRIDAY. WANT YOUR BLESSINGS IF YOU CAN CONSCIENTIOUSLY GIVE.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21470

233. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA[3]

June 14, 1933

RELIGIOUS CEREMONY DEVDAS MARRIAGE FRIDAY. REGISTRATION NECESSARY FOR UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21473

234. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 14, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has just arrived. I shall have to be very brief this week, because from 8 o'clock what is called the milk diet commences and lasts till half past three or four. During this period perfect bodily and mental rest is required. Yet if I must write this letter in time I must do so during this milk feed.

[1] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's dated June 13, 1933, which read: "Thanks attack short lived. Am quite well. Only weak. Hope to meet you twenty-second. Praying you may soon regain full strength."

[2] Malaviya had sent a telegraphic reply which read: "Though I do not approve the *sambandh*, I wish Devdas and his spouse all happiness."

[3] The telegram was in reply to the addressee's to Devdas which read: "Papers say your marriage to be registered civil marriage. Can it be correct? Wire."

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What this feed is will be described later on by Mahadev.[1] Under it, though I cannot be said to be yet putting on weight, my energy is distinctly on the increase. There is therefore no cause whatsoever for worrying on my account. As far as I can see I may be said to be making steady progress.

I understand what you say about your own health, and about the mistake you made in reading my letter. I do hope that your weakness has left you and that there is no fever now left. I am assuming that you will not stint yourself for fruit. Whatever the body needs you should procure and get well and strong.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6280. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9746

235. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
June 15, 1933

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

As soon as I was able I wanted to deal with two of your important letters. Your telegram and your letters[2] have helped me greatly, but I must not deal with the past for I have still to be miserly in the expenditure of my energy. I am glad you are there able to look after your brother to a certain extent.

You were quite right[3] in thinking that, if I thought that your presence was necessary here, I would at once write or cable as the occasion required. But I am more than convinced that your place is essentially there. I am not so sanguine as you are, as to your influence. The meaning I put upon the India Office listening to you is that they are much more courteous than they used to be. I want you there for a higher purpose and a higher influence. You being there are able to hold

[1] Mahadev Desai's postscript to this letter read: "There is just a minute to add a postscript. The milk treatment consists of feeds of 6 to 8 ounces every three quarters of an hour. The milk is unboiled. Goats are milked early morning after the udders are properly washed with permanganate of potash and the milkman's hands washed with hot water. The milk is then kept in a nice refrigerator and keeps wonderfully cool and tastes very nice. From today Bapu has been allowed to add two dates to each feed. 6 lb. each day."

[2] *Vide* pp. 149-50 and 182.

[3] The source has "write".

together all those who are friendly to the cause and what is more you must be silently and imperceptibly permeating the best English mind with the truth that is in you. All this will tell in the end. Whilst God is great and omnipotent and works in mysterious ways and therefore all things are possible for Him, humanly speaking I see not the slightest immediate cause for hope of improvement in the present position which so far as I can see is as bad as it can possibly be. This Ordinance rule has struck the people dumb. The ignorant mass have become terror-struck. They do not know what is in store for them on the morrow. The well-to-do are trembling in their shoes simply through a vague fear of their being overtaken by some Governmental Act. They feel that their only safety lies in an abject surrender to the will of what to them is a power which seems even to override Providence itself—a power that will compel subjection to its will at any cost. And so there is a kind of dead calm which even in my bed, isolated though I am from contact with people through the orders of doctors, I can't help sensing. It is the peace of the cemetery as Lord Irwin once or twice said in 1930 when he refused to make further use of the terrible powers which it was possible for the Government of India to use whenever they liked. Though therefore I see no hope in the near future, whilst you and I do not ignore it, we have in view the distances in working for and at truth. Time does not count, or if it does, it counts in our favour. For here there is all hope, no cause for despair, for there is a certainty of the final triumph of truth, so long as there is some living representative of it. Thanks be to God, so far as I can see there are certainly several, if not many, representatives of truth today in India who will count no cost too great for the vindication of truth.

Having got this immovable faith in me in the rightness of the cause, there is no danger on this side of any precipitate action. Every step that is necessary will be taken with the greatest deliberation. I shall personally leave no stone unturned to secure an honourable peace. So far as I can judge I shall fail, but that does not worry me. The harder General Smuts became the harder and the oftener I knocked at his door till it was banged in my face, but patience was rewarded and so it will be in this case. Abdul Ghaffar Khan cannot be sacrificed. Khorshed Naoroji over 30 years in age, a woman free of hysterics, full of faith and spirituality, went to the Frontier, lived with Abdul Ghaffar Khan, came in intimate touch with people. Devdas next went and both these told me that they

were convinced that there was no guile about Abdul Ghaffar Khan, that he always said what he meant and meant what he said. They admit that he is hot-tempered, hasty in action, but has no belief in violence, is in secret league with neither Amanullah nor anybody else. His sole ambition is to see his people happy and free from terrorism. My own personal experience is that he is amenable to control and discipline. I do not remember his having ever refused to carry out his promises. He has come to me whenever I have wanted him. My own firm opinion is that he is much misrepresented in the official circles and that what they do not want is his influence among his people. This he undoubtedly has, because he is self-sacrificing, simple and brave. It is once more a repetition of the old policy of cutting off tall poppies. If what is insinuated about Abdul Ghaffar Khan is true, that must be proved by an impartial tribunal and neither the Congress nor I personally would have anything to say if the charges against him are true. But the tribunal must be an acceptable tribunal. I do not want a second edition of the Meerut Case[1]. As you know full well I have no sympathy with Communism, most of the Meerut prisoners were daggers at me. They missed no occasion to vilify or insult me. But that is of no consequence. They have been punished for holding particular opinions, not for any act that they have done! And what a punishment! But that is merely symptomatic of the deep-seated disease. There is no intention whatsoever on the part of the Indian Civil Service to give up power and all it means, nor for that matter is there any intention on the part of Mr. Baldwin or Sir Samuel Hoare to do otherwise.

Now for your important argument about untouchability. But there is this initial flaw about it. My life is one indivisible whole. It is not built after the compartmental system—satyagraha, civil resistance, untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity and several other things I could name are not different things to be taken and handled. They are indivisible parts of a whole which is truth. I can't devote myself entirely to untouchability

[1] Meerut Conspiracy Case, in which Justice Yorke found the Communist International in Russia responsible for armed risings with a view to overthrowing existing Governments for establishing Soviet Republics by means of inciting antagonism between capital and labour, conducting strikes, etc. The judgment pronounced the accused guilty of taking part in this conspiracy, which aimed at depriving the King of the Sovereignty of British India, and convicted 27 out of the 30 accused to sentences ranging from transportation for life to rigorous imprisonment for three years.

and say: 'Neglect Hindu-Muslim unity or swaraj.' All these things run into one another and are inter-dependent. You will find at one time in my life an emphasis on one thing, at another time on other. But that is just like a pianist, now emphasizing one note and now other. But they are all related to one another. Therefore you see how it is utterly impossible for me to say: 'I have now nothing to do with civil disobedience or swaraj!' Not only so, if I attempted any such thing, I could not do it. Full and final removal of untouchability I can show you to your satisfaction, is utterly impossible without swaraj. This letter will be too long and unnecessarily so, if I gave you chapter and verse to prove my statement.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1300; also S.N. 19097

236. TELEGRAM TO SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND

June 16, 1933

SHEWAKRAM KARAMCHAND
SERVANTS UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, OLD SUKKUR

PLEASE TELL NEVANDRAM MY BEHALF NOT FAST REGARDING SADHU BELLA TEMPLE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21478

237. TELEGRAM TO RAMAKRISHNADAS CHANDIWALA

June 16, 1933

RAMAKRISHNADAS CHANDIWALA
KATRA KHUSHAL, DELHI

READ YOUR WIRE BRIJKISHAN. HE IS MAKING DAILY PROGRESS. NO FEVER SINCE YESTERDAY. I WANT HIM TAKE FULL TREATMENT FOR HABITUAL CONSTIPATION. NEITHER YOU NOR MOTHER SHOULD COME. I SHALL KEEP YOU INFORMED.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21478 a

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238. SPEECH AT DEVDAS-LAKSHMI WEDDING[1]

POONA,
June 16, 1933

You have just heard our familiar hymn of "The True Vaishnava". I hope you both will ponder over it, and try to live as the true Vaishnava described by the poet-saint Narasinh Mehta.

Devdas, you know my expectations about you. May you fulfil them, and I assure you that if you do so all the objections raised against the match will melt away. Since I reached the age of discretion, I have tried to understand the meaning of dharma and live up to it as best as I could. I do not think that in celebrating this marriage anything has been done against the dictates of dharma. Had it been so, you should not have had my blessings and presence at the ceremony.

You are taking upon yourself a grave responsibility, which is proportionate to the great good fortune that has fallen to your lot. Who knew that your wedding would take place under the roof of the pure-souled Lady Thackersey? Who knew that a man of great learning and spotless character like Lakshman Shastri would be found to act as priest? Perhaps, at some future and convenient date, the ceremony would have taken place at the Ashram. But the fast has brought this about. Let the fruit of what was an essentially religious act be also religious. Let the memory of it inspire you to take every step with a full sense of dharma. You know dharma is Truth, and if you keep it as your pole star, it is sure to protect you. What a piece of good fortune for you that you should have so many friends and elders to bless you on the occasion! May you prove worthy of all these blessings! You have today robbed Rajagopalachari of a cherished gem. May you be worthy of it! May you treasure it! She is real Lakshmi. Guard her, protect her as you would Lakshmi, the goddess of the good and beautiful. May you both

[1] This appeared as reported by Mahadev Desai, who had stated: "Gandhiji addressed a few words to the bride and bridegroom. He took over five minutes to gather sufficient strength to speak. The part addressed to Mr. Devdas was in Gujarati, and that addressed to the bride was in Hindi. I summarize the substance below."

live long and tread the path of dharma! May you live for dharma and have the courage to lay down your lives, when the occasion comes, for dharma! Let your life from today be a further dedication to service of the country, and may you never give yourselves to idle pleasure. This is my blessing and my cherished hope and desire.

Devdas, you have always looked upon Rajagopalachari as a respected elder. From today, he is as good as your father. Tender to him the same loyalty and obedient devotion that you have been tendering to me.

To you, Lakshmi, I need not say much. I believe that Devdas will prove himself a worthy husband to you. Ever since I have seen and known you, I have felt that you have justified your name. Let your marriage strengthen, if possible, the bond of affection that has ever been growing between Rajagopalachari and me. I need not emphasize the unique auspices under which the wedding is being celebrated. It is essentially a religious thing, and may it prove to you both a means for the better performance of your duty! I should have had nothing to do with the marriage, had I not known it to be in consonance with religion, and the fruit of the pure *tapasya* undergone by both of you in order to gain our sanction and blessings, which you have now amply deserved.[1]

It has been a great effort on my part to say these few words. But I thought it was essential for me to bless you, and warn you of the great responsibility you are taking upon yourselves. May God protect you! Only He protects, for He is the father, mother, and friend, everything rolled into one. Let your life be a dedication to the service of the motherland, and of humanity. May you both ever be humble, and may you both walk in fear of God always!

The Hindu, 17-6-1933; also *The Hindustan Times*, 17-6-1933

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, 17-6-1933.

239. CABLE TO AGATHA HARRISON[1]

June 17, 1933

AGATHA HARRISON
119 GOWER STREET, LONDON

WHEN HEALTH PERMITS COURTING INTERVIEW FOR MY PART THERE WILL BE NO CONDITION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1466

240. MESSAGE TO SOUTH INDIANS

June 17, 1933

One should feel pleased to hear Pandit Harihar Sharma's[2] report about the Hindi work in the Provinces of the South. But I shall get real pleasure only when Hindi is spread in every village. I would wish all those who can to contribute their maximum to help this sacred work.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 24-6-1933

241. MESSAGE TO ASHRAM INMATES

[Before *June 18, 1933*][3]

Mr. Narandas Gandhi, manager of the Satyagraha Ashram, who had gone to Poona to see Gandhiji, returned this morning. With the Mahatma he had discussion on the significance of his fast which, according to the Mahatma, was the last resort in pursuit of truth and non-violence.

Gandhiji is understood to have told Mr. Narandas that his last fast had convinced him that thousands of similar ordeals would be necessary, and

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressee's (S.N. 19096), received on June 15, 1933, which read: "If two men meet without conditions might not a way of peace be found?"

[2] One of Gandhiji's four 'nurses' during the fast

[3] The message was reported under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, June 18, 1933".

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the inmates of the Ashram should as on previous occasions, take the lead in observing fasts. They should, therefore, prepare themselves for the purpose by leading purer lives than heretofore.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-6-1933

242. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

While observing silence

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
4 a.m., Sunday [June 18, 1933][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Soon after I wrote that letter to you, I had to stop writing letters with my own hand. I saw that I had not regained enough strength for that. I feel like trying whether I have it now, and I think I can't do better than try to write a letter to you to find that out.

Please do not get frightened by the doctors' reports or by the delay in the recovery of strength. "God's will prevails", as the poet says. I had thought that I would be on my feet in three weeks' time. But my expectation has been belied. However, there is no cause at all for worry. Except for the delay in regaining strength, there is nothing else. Really speaking, what else could I have expected at the age of sixty-four? Please rest assured that I am perfectly all right. I am bathing in Premlilabehn's love. I have turned her home into a dharmashala. She herself made arrangements for the marriage of Devdas and Lakshmi, and with what love she did that! God's kindness is boundless. Do we deserve it? May He make us worthy of it.

What has been done regarding your nose?

Tell Joshi that I have given instructions that the operation on Ramabehn should be performed. But Dr. Patel himself has asked her to wait till the rains come and the weather is cooler. It is he who has been insisting on the operation and he is positive that it involves no risk at all. He thinks the operation is absolutely necessary. Chhaganlal should not worry. The matter has not been out of my mind even for a moment.

Writing this much has not tired me. All the same, I don't wish to uproot a tree which bears sweet fruit and will not, therefore, write any other letter today.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", p. 206.

Prabhavati has arrived here today. I suppose somebody must have written to you about that.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
YERAVDA JAIL, POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 17-9

243. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1933

SATYAGRAHAASHRAM
AHMEDABAD

RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHRY SAYS JNANADEVI GIVES FULL CONSENT MARRIAGE PRABHUDAS. CONFIRM THIS AND LET JNANADEVI WRITE ME FULLY STATING HER POSITION.

BAPU

From a microfilm: M.M.U./I; also S.N. 21485

244. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 19, 1933

SHREE
BOMBAY

RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHRY WIRES JNANADEVI AFTER TALK WITH HER FATHER GIVES FULL CONSENT. HAVE ASKED NARANDAS CONFIRM STATEMENT AND ASKED ALSO JNANADEVI'S LETTER.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21486

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245. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES[1]

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 19, 1933

All these days I have kept your letter of 8th instant under my mattress in the hope of either writing myself or at least dictating. But I found myself too weak to do it before today. There are yet 55 minutes for the silence to break. I am utilizing what I can of these minutes to reply to your letter. I like it very much. I understand all you say and it satisfies me also. No one can banish you from the Ashram but yourself. So long as it gives you satisfaction and you think that you can grow there, you will stay. If the purificatory fast is resumed[2] as it will be some time or other, your place will undoubtedly be in it without the taint of publication and tomtoming that unfortunately and inevitably accompanied mine. Everyone will judge for himself or herself whether he or she has the qualifications. In theory no one is truly qualified for every one of us has more or less sin in us. Hence I have called it primarily for self-purification. It is enough if one has the inner urge for service, greater dedication and greater purification and confidence in one's ability to go through the ordeal. The ability comes from the intensity of the urge and (which is the same thing) the deep and ever deepening conviction of the necessity of the penance. A seeker after Truth has no strength he can call his own. The necessary strength (and no more) is given or rather sent to him for the moment and for the mission to which he is called.

If the chain is begun whilst I am alive, your turn as everybody else's will be determined by me or in case of death someone whom I may have named. If I have failed to do so the participants will elect the leader from among themselves.

This is as far as I have thought the thing out.

This letter has turned out to be rather important. I am therefore having it multiplied on the typewriter without your name.

[1] Addressee's name has been inferred from the following item.

[2] Gandhiji was contemplating a relay of self-purificatory fasts by Harijan sevaks.

I hope you are keeping well both in mind and body.
Love.

From a photostat: S.N. 19100; also S.N. 21488

246. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I made another attempt yesterday to write letters. I wrote one to Vallabhbhai, and today I started with Duncan. After that I am writing this to you. Duncan's original letter also is enclosed. As I find that I have expressed my ideas rather clearly in the letter to Duncan, I got copies of it made. I have removed his name from them. If there is time, I will enclose one copy along with the original. If there is no time, a copy will be dispatched tomorrow. As regards changes in my diet, anybody who writes to you from here will mention them, and so I don't write anything about them in this letter.

I now expect from you detailed news concerning Deolali. How has Jamna's and Kusum's condition been? Have you had any news about Maitri? If you have decided to consult a vaid for Kusum, let me know his name.

What has been done about Ramabehn? When will Dr. Patel think it is cool enough? How is Amina? She has not replied to my letter.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8384. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

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247. LETTER TO P. N. RAJBHOJ

June 19, 1933

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I have three letters from you, one of May 10, another of June 8, and yet another of May 16. Till now I was not told of all the letters that arrived; even now only a few are shown to me. As full energy has not been regained, my letter-writing is even more uncertain than reading the letters or having them read out. I have been able to write very few letters till today. I often thought of writing to you but it is only today that I have succeeded in doing so. What you have written about Shri Daphtari is correct. Only a Harijan has the right to ask the Harijans to take such a vow, other Hindus can only make a suggestion. The problem of drinking and leading an unclean life is common for the world at large, it does not concern the Harijans alone. I shall write to Bhai Daphtari and also in *Harijan* on this subject when I gain some strength. You can certainly leave the Ashram at the end of three months if you feel confident of having gained what you came for. I would advise you to consult Narandas regarding this, it is all right if he too feels the same. There is no cause at present for you or other Harijans to fast. The penance has to be done by other Hindus, not the Harijans. The occasion for them for atonement and fasting will certainly arise but it will take some time. I believe this answers the main part of your queries.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 792

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248. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

June 19, 1933

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Your letter. Do send for Keshu. Your mother must not be troubled. I have despatched a wire today. Anyway we shall see later on. Yes, the treatment must not be given up now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2400

249. LETTER TO ARUN DAS GUPTA

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 20, 1933

MY DEAR ARUN,

I was delighted to have your note after such a long time. Hardly any letter was read to me during my fast. I was glad that Father and Mother restrained themselves from running down to Poona during the fast and are still exercising restraint and sticking to their respective posts. If I were to travel as I used to before, I would love to take you with me during one of the travels, if you were physically fit to undertake the fatigue of the journey. You have said nothing about your health and your activities. You must tell me something about both in your reply to this letter.

Have you seen Abdul Halim lately?

From a microfilm: S.N. 19101

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250. LETTER TO N.

June 20, 1933

MY DEAR N.

I have kept under my mattress three of your letters among others. But it is only now that I am able to dictate my reply. I take the latest, just handed to me, first. Your letter to the Governor of Madras is being posted today. It might have been worded slightly differently but the change is not important enough to warrant the delay in sending the letter. You need neither worry nor be disgusted with yourself for being late at prayers three or four times in two days. There is such a thing as being disgusted with oneself and yet continuing the wrong. I have seen so many such cases. Therefore, what I suggest to you is to calmly analyse the reason for being late and to avoid it. You have given the reason in these cases yourself for not leaving your work in time for prayer. Therefore you should now be careful and leave the work in time to reach the prayer ground in peace. Constant watch over one's minutes guards one from all such difficulties.

Your long letter of 13th instant is too imaginative and too poetic for me. You have plenty of poetry in you. Your imagination knows no bounds. I want you to transmute these into an inexhaustible power for real service. We have all to aspire after being childlike. We cannot become children because that is impossible. But we can all become like children. In spite of the knowledge gained, we can become simple, guileless, candid and natural like them. Here the word 'natural' has a definite meaning. All the virtues that we may prize should not be an artificial growth, possible only in a hothouse, but they must be as natural to us as perhaps mischief is natural to children. We love their mischief because it is so natural to them. The mischief of grown-up ones lies in their being naturally good, restrained, humble and proof against temptation.

I want to warn you against putting the construction you have put upon the scarcity of the monthly flow. My fear is that the decrease is not, in you, a healthy sign. You are not yet free from the sex emotion, and unless you are entirely from it in thought, word and deed, irregularity on scarcity in your monthly condi-

tion must be regarded as a sign of some internal derangement. I am afraid that ordinarily speaking, you will take a long time to reach that condition, unless you and I and the Ashram are so blessed that you suddenly reach the requisite condition of natural purity that would stop the monthly flow and be a sign of perfect health. When you reach that state you will have no boils, etc., and no other bodily or mental ailment. You will be the happy possessor of the qualities that we pray for every evening at the prayer time. I refer you to the last verses of the second chapter of the *Gita*.

Pray, do not disturb yourself over the milk treatment though I know that 10 lb. of milk is an unnatural diet. As a medicinal treatment it might have great potentialities. These are certainly claimed for it by many people. Dr. Mehta, who is treating me, swears by it. Anyway, for the time being it is suspended, and it may have to be given up altogether. You must trust me to act cautiously and with sufficient restraint. Though slow, my progress is steady. I am just now taking my ordinary quantity of three to four lb. milk a day and a liberal supply of fruit, consisting of oranges, pomegranate juice and grapes. This is meant for both you and Amala who also is disturbed over my diet.

I see that you swear by Kashmir, but let me tell you that it is not the climate that suits every constitution and in any case I cannot go to Kashmir in search of health. I must find my health where my work lies. That is what I did before also and that, too, was after a fast. I happened to be in the Ashram and in spite of importunities of friends I would not stir out of the Ashram. The same God who saw me through 21 days will see me through this convalescence, if such is His will, and the best thing that you, Amala and others can do to quicken the progress is by discharging your respective duties as fully as is possible for you to do.

In your last letter you had said nothing about your boils and nothing about my suggestion as to the ways and means of restoring S. to his normal weight. After all he is not only to reach his normal weight but he is to show an increase in his weight and height, in general development both physical and mental.

I think this answers all your questions.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19102

251. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 20, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your letter.

I see that you will worry about me. As I had to write fairly fully to N. on several matters arising out of her letter I have asked her to share my letter[1] with you, at least so far as my food question is concerned. I am glad you too are getting on well. I shall certainly forget your madness, if I find that you are consistently simple and reasonable.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Who has your passport? Please send me a copy of the main part. Then I shall tell you what to do.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19103

252. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 20, 1933

MY DEAR SATISBABU,

I have been pining to write to you but have not been able to do so. You should now write to me fully about your activities, about the Bengali *Harijan* and all that you know you should tell me about, and how you are keeping your health. I am still obliged to be in bed. I have been permitted to walk a few steps daily in the big room which had been placed at my disposal by Lady Thackersey. I am taking nearly four lb. of milk and plenty of oranges, pomegranate juice and grapes. That is my staple food. Progress is slow but certainly steady.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

CWMG - IV

I sent you a telegraphic reply[1] to your question about the civil registration of Devdas-Lakshmi marriage. So far as we are concerned the religious bond and the religious ceremony was all-sufficing. So far as the outside world is concerned and the social and civil consequences are concerned, the religious tie in what are known as *pratiloma* marriages[2], as this one, is of no consequences and is held to be invalid. In order to avoid these consequences the Civil Marriage Act was passed, I believe, at the instance of Sir Hari Singh Gour, whereby a Hindu is not obliged to declare that he is not a Hindu, but on the contrary he can, as he does, declare himself a Hindu and still claim registration of such marriage. Then it is recognized in law. I had, personally, not thought of this registration, but Rajaji considered it to be the duty of parents in such marriages to clothe their children with as much protection as was possible in the circumstance so as to avoid untoward consequences. I at once agreed with him. If you still discover any flaw in this you will please not hesitate to bring it to my notice.

From a photostat: S.N. 21492

253. LETTER TO JAIKRISHNA P. BHANSALI

June 20, 1933

CHI. BHANSALI,

I was delighted to see a letter from you after so many days, I mean so many months, but I was also pained to read it. I hold that the remedies you are adopting for attaining self-realization are not right. If anybody stitches up his lips in order to observe silence, his silence would not be the real thing. One can observe silence even by cutting off one's tongue, but that also will not be real silence. He is truly silent, who, having the capacity to speak, utters no idle word. The type of *tapas* which you are practising is described by the author of the *Gita* as *tamasi tapas*, and I think that is correct. You eat uncooked flour, but that is against medical science. Shastras never enjoin anybody to do so. If you have decided to eat nothing but uncooked things, you can eat only fruits, etc. You may add milk or curds, that would be com-

[1] *Vide* p. 195.

[2] In which the bride belongs to a higher varna

plete food. I think it would be better if you gave up this unnatural effort completely. Reflect over the *bhajan* given below:

> Oh good man! Natural communion is best. Ever since by the Grace of God it was achieved, it has been growing. Wherever I wander it is a circuit round the Deity, whatever I do is an act of service, every lying down of mine is an act of prostration before God. Every utterance of mine is God's name—I worship no other God—and all hearing is a remembrance of God. Eating and drinking are acts of worship and living in a house or in the wilderness are the same to me. I shut not my eyes, neither do I stuff my ears; to no torture do I subject myself. I open my eyes to find nothing but the beautiful manifestation of God everywhere to greet and delight me. My mind ever intent on Him, all corrupt thought has left me; so very much I am engrossed in contemplation of Him that there is no room in me for aught else. Kabir says—This is a state to be silently enjoyed but I have dared to sing about it. It is a state beyond misery and bliss, I am merged in it.[1]

You should live in peace in the Ashram or anywhere else that you like and go on doing some work of service. You may then, in the course of time, attain self-realization if you are fortunate enough. Probably you know that I completed a 21-day fast three weeks ago. I had a special reason for undertaking the fast. I am still confined to bed, but am gaining strength day by day.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 21491; also *Harijanbandhu*, 25-6-1933

254. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

June 20, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. Only since yesterday have I made some attempts of writing a few letters. Ten copies of the *Ramayana* have reached. I shall go through it after gaining more strength. I am somewhat worried on account of your health but what can I say to you? You have left everything to God. He alone will protect you. Khadi work at present is becoming somewhat difficult day by day. But I have found from experience that even a difficult task becomes easy if one works within one's limits, and the devout never go beyond it.

[1] This translation of the song '*Sadho Sahaja Samadh Bhali*' is reproduced from *Harijan*, 24-6-1933.

The attempt to convert Sodepur into an Ashram can be made only by keeping the original aim of Khadi Pratishthan in mind. The following *shloka* is to be considered in this context:

> "Better ones own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed . . ."[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1701

255. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 21, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter of 18th came into my hands this morning. I have given up the milk treatment as it is called. But I am taking, after my own fashion, four lb. of milk at intervals of three hours commencing from six o'clock and juicy fruits (oranges, grapes, and pomegranate juice). This is likely to suit me better for the time being. My weight has gone up to 93¾ lb. It is a good increase, and I am allowed to walk a few steps daily, three or four times. I had, for the first time after six weeks, a tub-bath. It was very refreshing. So you see that there is nothing to worry about so far as my health is concerned. In the milk treatment, so called, and in accordance with my height I should be able to take 12 lb. of milk per day without discomfort. It is a special method and in many cases it is very efficacious. In my case too, ultimately it was expected to succeed, but I did not want to engage myself in arguing over it, and therefore, for the moment I have dropped it. You will be surprised to know that Kakasaheb is undergoing that treatment and is now taking 10 lb. per day and has to come up to 12 lb. His weight has gone up to 120 lb. Brijkrishna, who has been suffering, as you know, for years from habitual constipation, is also undergoing that treatment. He is taking 12 lb. per day without any difficulty in quantities of 1 lb. per hour. It is a well-tried method. The central point of this method is that whilst you are taking the milk treatment you have got to lie in bed and take perfect rest. You can take plenty of exercise in the morning before commencing the milk feed.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35; *vide* also Vol. XXXII, p. 183.

CWMG - IV

Nothing is certain as to where Devdas is to stay in future or what he is to do. It is enough that both he and Lakshmi are very happy and so is Rajaji, who is both father and mother to his children. He loves them, and he would be satisfied to lose himself in them if he had no other call upon his time. Prabhudas's turn comes next. It is likely that he will be married to a girl who is just now living in the Ashram. She belongs to United Provinces. But nothing is yet certain. Ramdas has gone to Sabarmati and with his wife he will be presently going to Wardha. Verrier continues to suffer from one thing or another. He is now ready for an operation for hernia from which he has been suffering for a long time. As a matter of fact the operation seems to me to be overdue. Radha is still lingering at Deolali where Rukhi has given birth to another son. She is having her treatment at Deolali. Keshu is staying there still uncertain as to what he is to do. Chhotalal is now free from his eczema. Balkrishna is just as weak as before. He too is in Wardha. Santibehn is here with Om[1] for reasons of health. She is not keeping well. Jamnalalji has just left for Wardha in connection with an old business case. His ear trouble is just now under control, but only under control. It has made him very weak. He becomes easily fatigued both in body and mind. N. seems to be shaping well. Duncan, of course, is quite happy and evidently retaining his health. It is not so with N. She has rash and boils. I think I have given you a fairly full budget of family news. I dare say I have forgotten many names, and the little ailments from which the large family is suffering, but the sample I have given you tells its own tale.

The news about your own health is cheerful. I wish and hope that you will now continue to improve steadily without interruption. You will not over-tax yourself by insisting upon going through the daily programme. Take it easily and go through whatever you can without difficulty or strain. Then you will be quite all right.[2]

What you say about boys and girls learning astronomy and the like is of course very true.

Did I tell you that Prabhavati is with me and is standing by my bedside whilst I am writing this?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6281. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9747

[1] Uma Agrawal, Jamnalal Bajaj's daughter

[2] In the source, what follows is in Gandhiji's hand.

256. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 22, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

I have your two stupid and silly letters.

I never knew that you were so unbalanced, suspicious and hypersensitive. What led you to think that I regarded you as a stranger? Or that you were less than a daughter to me? You, nowadays, sign yourself as a disciple. But do you not know that I claim nobody as my disciple? I have one disciple, too many, and that is myself. You suppose I would take additional burden and make my life a misery? I delight in owning sons and daughters, sisters and brothers. Therefore, you are either a daughter or nothing; certainly not a disciple, and what a disciple suspecting her own master at every step! Are you now surprised that I called you mad! And why do you worry about my food? Can you not have trust enough in me and feel that I would not take any risk with myself? In any case, now that I am taking milk and fruit, after my own style, perhaps you will cease to worry. Anyway I am flourishing, gaining weight and strength. Are you flourishing as well as I am?

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19105

257. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 25, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letters. Keshu and Radha came yesterday. Radha stayed with me, and Keshu with Brijkrishna. I had talked things over with Keshu last evening. Radha has gone away to Brijkrishna today, who is taking treatment in Dinshawji's nursing home. Radha is thinking whether she also should try that treatment. It is certain that neither Keshu nor Radha will return to the Ashram.

CWMG - IV

Jamnalalji met them in Deolali and then went to Wardha.

Jnana must have left for Wardha. Prabhudas should see her, then hear your, Kashi's and Ramdas's views and then decide.

Write to me in detail what your experience of Rajbhoj was. I suppose you read all the letters addressed to N. How is Ramji ?

What do you think may have been the cause of Kusum's fever ?

I hope Jamna is better now. I have received a postcard from Purushottam. I will send him a wire after I have a talk with Dinshaw. Most probably there will be no difficulty.

Has there been any rain there?

BAPU

[PS.]

I seem to be gaining strength every day. The weight, too, has gone up to 95. That is certainly good.

All of you know about Bhansali's and Chaitanya's letters. You will read my reply[1] in *Harijanbandhu.*

Letters enclosed for: N., Amala, Anandi, Rama, Amina, Kusum, Jamna, Amtussalaam, Champa and Ramdas (the last is sealed in a separate envelope.).

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8386. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

258. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

June 26, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

There are two ways of doing reparation to your injured mother. The most natural (i.e., return to her) you reject. The other is to lose yourself in the service you have chosen. Then every grown-up woman is mother to you. You should regularly write to her and give an account of your work. That will console her.

Wear that costume which pleases you best and is easily washable. That means a . . .[2] like mine, a petticoat three inches above the ankles and a free blouse reaching the knees. Mira has chosen a labouring woman's costume plus the . . .[3].

[1] To J. P. Bhansali; *vide* pp. 212-3.
[2] & [3] Illegible

CWMG - IV

You need not copy her outward form. Do copy, if you can, her inner beauty of soul. But why think even of her. You have the Ashram ideal before you. Try to realize it to the utmost of your capacity and it will be well with you. And do not try to go beyond your depth.

Please do not worry about my health. God will take care of it, so long as He needs my service in this tabernacle.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

259. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 26, 1933

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

Domestic sorrow dogs your footsteps, no matter wherever you go. I see now that Begum Mahmud is probably suffering from typhoid and that you have taken her to Delhi. A big risk, but I suppose it was worth taking in order to put her under Dr. Ansari's care. I hope that she is making steady progress.

Devdas showed me the presents that you had brought. Whilst I appreciated your and Jalbhai's[1] affection underlying those presents, I felt that silk things ought not to be accepted because consistently with the past profession and practice, Lakshmi could not, if she can help it, wear silken things. Having given that opinion, I left the decision to Lakshmi, Rajaji and Devdas. They all felt like me, as to the use of silken things, but they had some delicacy about returning such gifts to friends who had presented them out of affection. I undertook to perform the task if they agreed that such gifts should be returned. When Mrs. Naidu heard all this discussion, she said that if perchance your gift was not accepted she should take charge of it. I, therefore, took the liberty of returning your sari to her. Jalbhai's sari is being returned to him. Mathuradas is presently going to Bombay for a day or so when he will take it. But the bag and the other contents have been retained and I hope that you will be satisfied that they would be a constant reminder to Devdas and Lakshmi of your affection. The third friend, who sent silken saris, was

[1] Grandson of Dadabhoy Naoroji

Ghanshyamdas Birla. I spoke to him about them. He appreciated our difficulty and gladly took them back. The moral of this, I would like to point out. Next time you happen to make presents to friends you should make yourself acquainted with their capacity for taking and using them. Romain Rolland thought that he should give each of us a memento of our visit to his hermitage, and he seems to have passed an anxious night discussing with his sister what he should give me. He could not think of books, or any other useful articles. Therefore, he parted with a trifling but a most artistic box, meant possibly to be a snuff box. Even that is too valuable a treasure for me. It will, therefore, go to the Vidyapith Museum. Of course, I had no compunction about accepting that little box. I have mentioned this very beautiful incident as it is so relevant and as I know it would please you and at the same time emphasize what I want to say.

I do not know as to what your movement will be. If you are not able to come this way and that pretty soon, I would like you to give me your views on the political situation. What will you have me to do and what should be done by Congressmen in general? Where is Sherwani? If this reaches you in Delhi, I would like you to, at least, share this part of the letter with Dr. Ansari and if he is not likely to see me early next month, I would like him to give me his opinion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SYED MAHMUD
C/O DR. M. A. ANSARI
1 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5089; also S.N. 19106

CWMG - LV

260. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

June 26, 1933

DEAR MOTIBABU,

You will pardon me for not replying to your letter earlier. The fact is that I am still confined to bed and have only limited energy for dictating letters. Much of my time is passed in attending to the bodily needs.

As you will see from the current issue of the *Harijan*[1] a portion of your letter dealing with the opening of temples had already been reproduced[2]. Extraordinary care has been taken to publish only verifiable statements and yet errors will creep in. Thank God, there are watchmen like you who do not fail to draw attention to any error that might creep into the columns of the *Harijan*. It is difficult, in human affairs, to ensure cent per cent accuracy and it is equally difficult to keep out reports of relevant events for fear of inaccuracy creeping in. All, therefore, that we fallible human beings can do, is to be over-cautious about all our speech, action and thought and ever be ready to retrace our steps and confess our errors whenever we meet them.

As soon as I am in a fit state, I propose to write in the *Harijan* on the fast.[3] I, therefore, say nothing about it here. I am glad the affairs with you are shaping well. The doctor about whom I wrote to you, just now happens to be here. As soon as I have had sufficient experience of him I will write to you. You ought to attend to your eye trouble without delay.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. MOTILAL ROY
PRAVARTAK SANGH, CHANDRANAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 11045

[1] Of June 24, 1933
[2] Under the title "Save Us from Our Friends"
[3] *Vide* "All about the Fast", 8-7-1933.

261. LETTER TO M. ASAF ALI[1]

June 26, 1933

MY DEAR ASAF ALI,

I have your long letter for which I thank you. I do not at all mind your having sent it to the Press. You had a perfect right to send me that letter and I appreciate the frankness with which you have expressed your views.

I am, as yet, unable to say anything on the present situation because I am still bed-ridden and have not been able to make an analytical study of it. I want you, however, to understand my fundamental difficulty which constitutes also my limitation. Non-violence for me is not a mere experiment. It is part of my life and the whole of the creed of satyagraha, non-co-operation, civil disobedience, and the like are necessary deductions from the fundamental proposition that non-violence is the law of life for human beings. For me it is both a means and an end and I am more than ever convinced that in the complex situation that faces India, there is no other way of gaining real freedom. In applying my mind to the present situation I must, therefore, test everything in terms of non-violence.

Yours sincerely,

M. ASAF ALI, ESQ., BAR-AT-LAW
KUCHA CHELAN, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 19108

262. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

If Keshu works under your control, he will certainly have my blessings in that. The arrangement will also lessen my worry

[1] This appeared in *The Hindu*, 4-7-1933, as Gandhiji's "reply to the open letter of Mr. Asaf Ali demanding suspension of civil disobedience and fundamental changes in the Congress policy".

CWMG - LV

on his account. He is here at present, as also Radha. Mathuradas will write to you about this. It is not necessary for you to come here for the sake of Kamala. You need not think of joining the chain of fasts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2916

263. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

Have you vowed not to write to me? If anybody who is strong and healthy in body and mind takes such a vow, I would not mind. But is that true about you?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5353

264. LETTER TO AMINA G. QURESHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. AMINA,

How is it that you did not even reply to my letter? I often think about you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6667. Also C.W. 4312. Courtesy: Hamid G. Qureshi

CWMG - IV

265. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 26, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

How is it that you fell ill again?

I will discuss with Dinshawji about Purushottam after the period of silence ends, and then send a wire[1] to you. I remember about him.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 883. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

266. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 26, 1933

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

How is it that the girl who had been writing regularly does not write at all now? Did you get the letter I wrote to you or not? Tell me about your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 286

267. TELEGRAM TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 28, 1933

NARANDAS GANDHI
SABARMATI ASHRAM

CONSULT KANUGA REGARDING S. AND REPORT.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21500

[1] Gandhiji, however, sent a telegram to Khushalchand Gandhi, addressee's father-in-law; *vide* p. 225.

CWMG - IV

268. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 28, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

JNANADEVI HAS WRITTEN FIRM LETTER ASKING PROTECTION FROM MARRIAGE PRABHUDAS. YOU WILL DEFEND HER INDEPENDENCE ALL COST. POSTING HER LETTER.[1]

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21501

269. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

June 28, 1933

CHI. BALI,

I got your letter on Manudi. Who can answer either your tongue or your pen? You know very well how to exaggerate. Probably you don't know that I had dissuaded everybody from coming. I dissuaded Nimu[2] too. Those who cannot restrain themselves despite my persuasion come. I had dissuaded Aunt[3] also. Rami ought not to come. Where can she spare the money from? Kunvarji is barely able to meet his expenses. You, of course, have an inexhaustible mine and know to waste it over the children. If, however, you would listen to my advice, you should overcome your desire to come to me and persuade Rami to do the same. I know your love. If you use it for doing my work, that will be more than coming to see me. What you write is perfectly correct. You two sisters are as near to me as Ramdas and Devdas are. You certainly have a right to come running to me at any time you like without waiting for my permission. It is because you have that right, I can ask you to exercise self-control. If you cannot do so, you may come. I have written the same thing to Ramdas. Kamu's[4] letter is lying before me. I will not

[1] *Vide* also pp. 204 and 215.
[2] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi
[3] Sarojini Naidu
[4] Kamala Patel

write separately to her. I have not regained full strength yet. I hope Kamu is well.

Harilal's letter is enclosed. There is no hope about him at present. Manu ought not to be betrothed as yet. She is a mere child. She has no capacity at all for running a home.

I don't think Harilal is in this place just now. He may be somewhere on that side.

Write to me from time to time.

Manu's weight is increasing. Let her stay here as long as she wishes. I also won't be here for long now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5054. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

270. TELEGRAM TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

June 29, 1933

KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI
RAJKOT

ARRANGED FOR PURUSHOTTAM. SEND HIM. AM KEEPING WELL.

MOHANDAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 21503

271. CABLE TO FRANCIS J. MCCONNELL

June 29, 1933

BISHOP MCCONNELL
HOTEL MORRISON, CHICAGO

THANKS. REGRET INABILITY ATTEND.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21504

[1] Addressee's communication inviting Gandhiji to the Parliament of Religions to be held at Chicago in September 1933 is not available; but a letter (S.N. 21502) dated June 28, 1933 from C. F. Weller provides the relevant detail.

272. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

It is now 5.30 a.m. Thursday. Your letter is before me.

It makes me glad to think that you are well again and daily gaining strength. We have to acquire the faculty for keeping well under all weathers—a difficult task I know. But it is not beyond human reach. The mind plays a great part in it. If we can completely detach ourselves from the externals in terms of the 6th chapter, we can attain that state. That it appears to be beyond our reach for the present need not baffle us. The author of the *Gita* invites us to the effort and says from his abundant experience that it never fails. It may take long but success is a certainty.

Yes, I did not take salt during the fast. It was a virtue of necessity. I simply could not take it. I never attempted it because there was repugnance towards it and there was no necessity for it as there was about soda which therefore I took willy-nilly.

My weight yesterday was 97¼ and I walked altogether 44 minutes in three periods without feeling fatigued. It was therefore a good record. Nor is there difficulty about some conversation.

Radha and Keshu are with me just now. Radha is somewhat better. She goes back to Deolali today. Keshu will be with me for a few days to finish his conversations.

Poor Prabhudas! The contemplated tie is off. Therefore there has to be a further search.[1]

Devdas and Lakshmi and Rajaji with his widowed daughter[2] and his son are still here and are likely to be for some time.

As for the *Mahabharata* reading, you should take down the names of all the persons with their short history and their connection with one another and have an alphabetical index to enable you at once to find the history of any name in your note book. The preparation of such a book will clear your mind and be of great use to others too, if it is accurately prepared.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jamnalal Bajaj", p. 224.
[2] Namagiri Varadachari

You are quite right when you say that a Hindi translation reads better than English however well made. This is natural because Hindi is akin to Sanskrit.

Prabhavati is by me and sends you her love. Radha has today left for Deolali.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6282. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9748

273. TELEGRAM TO PRAFULLA GHOSH

June 30, 1933

PRAFULLA GHOSH
39 CREEK ROW, CALCUTTA
WELCOME ANY DAY.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21505

274. TELEGRAM TO NEVANDRAM

June 30, 1933

NEVANDRAM
SIROO'S CHOWK, SUKKUR
STRONGLY DISSUADE YOU FROM FASTING.[1]

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21506

[1] For securing temple-entry for Harijans; *vide* p. 199.

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275. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
June 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

In spite of your grandmotherly advice I must persist in the course I have adopted about my diet. Most grandmothers, when they give advice, at least make themselves sure of their facts before they begin their unsolicited work but you are a curious grandmother. You begin your sermons not caring whether you base them on facts or affection, and I like your authoritative "we in Europe", Unfortunately for you what is good for Europe may not always be good for India, and do you not see that "we of Europe" means only a few cranks like yourself ? The real "we of Europe" believe in live oysters, lobsters, high game, crawling cheese, fiery champagne, and stout beer. You have begun with carrot juice. I hope you will not end with Port Wine. Both are no doubt juices, but there is a little difference between the two. God forbid that you should ever become a nature cure Miss. It is quite enough and it will be excellent when you can become a proper full-fledged Harijan servant and if you will be that, nature cure will take care of itself.

Do you know that you do not yet know your Hindi letters properly? I hope you did not teach your pupils in the manner you seem to be teaching yourself. You must not satisfy yourself with faulty letters. Do you know that your 'k's are like 'f's, your 'r' is like the numeral number '2', and your 't' is like 'dh' ? There is hardly a letter which I should say is perfectly drawn. In the beginning stages I was not inclined to be critical but really there is no change for the better from the time when you first began to write a few words in Hindi. You should condescend to have your letters corrected before you trace the few words you do in every letter. You will admit that this task is not as heavy as that of washing your needlessly heavy garments. The heaviness of your garments is your own creation, but somewhat pardonable. The faulty lettering, you should regard as utterly unpardonable.

I observe that your passport, according to the copy you say, expires on the 15th March 1935. If that is so, need anything be

done now and if it requires to be extended now I take it that it is the German Consul who has to do it. If you do not know this I must enquire.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19109

276. LETTER TO N.

June 30, 1933

N.,

I have your letters by me. I deal with the last first.

You are going through a terrible but wonderful trial and I hope that God will give you the strength to stand it. If you will but realize that we are an utterly poor family, that we are far away from the ideal of poverty, you will find the burden easy to bear and the illness of S. an ordinary occurrence in the lives of poor people. You will have a doctor, not so the *bona-fide* poor. They do not even know what a doctor can be. They have the utterly incompetent village physician and they have to be satisfied with what services his often selfish nature would permit him to render. You will, therefore, be quite content with whatever relief can be afforded to S. in the Ashram itself. You will not compare yourself to some of the pampered Ashramites whom your keen faculty for observation could not have missed. But when you have a feeling of irritation over this knowledge and resentment that neither you nor S. can be pampered, recall the fact that one whom you have adopted as your father is the first among the pampered Ashramites and if you are prepared to suffer my being pampered, then you will find it easy to tolerate the pampering of others and then, perhaps, you will find why they are pampered, if they are pampered, and then you will make the further discovery that compared to yet others you yourself might also be ranked amongst the pampered for there are degrees in pampering. Anyway, I want you to be happy, calm, and contented in the face of S.'s illness and your own boils.

You and I sail in the same boat in the distrust of doctors, but that distrust has to have its recognized limitations and must be

based upon enlightenment. You are wholly unjust to the doctors who are attending upon me. They have been most careful, conscientious and helpful. They have not stopped oranges as you imagine. What they have said is according to the latest natural healing methods. They know that I am not likely to accept any of their nostrums and therefore they are making an honest effort to suit my peculiarities. I can describe to you what they have prescribed, what exactly I am doing and perhaps you will feel that they have said or done nothing that should offend against the laws of natural healing. The use that I want to make of doctor's presence at the Ashram for S., is to know exactly what is wrong with S. and why he has lost weight. The doctor there would not easily prescribe any medicine but he will give general guidance for which you and I and the Ashram as a whole must be thankful. Then we may or may not accept his advice. But nonetheless it is necessary to have a proper diagnosis of the boy's illness.

As for your boils, you are quite right in giving up even milk for the time being. Take plenty of juicy fruit, hot water and lemon and salt or hot water, lemon and *goor*[1] or honey. If it is *goor*, the water should be strained. The best thing is to dissolve it in cold water and then put the strained *goor*-water on the stove.

It is as well that you have recalled some of the instances of your violent nature. I had detected it and therefore your letter has caused me no surprise, but you are not to get rid of that violence by making a brave effort. Nor must you wreak it on S. and don't insist upon S. eating this thing or that thing. After all he has got to like the things he eats, and remember that we are all largely a mixture of our parents. You may not, therefore, resent S. being a second edition of yourself in many respects.

Tell me whether S. has made friends with anybody else in the Ashram, whether amongst grown-up people or children.

Now for the dogs. You are quite right we ought to be able to find a solution. The European countries have found it by killing the dogs beyond their wants. India would not tolerate that solution and yet has not found an ideal solution in terms of ahimsa. The society for the care of animals takes charge of stray dogs, etc. Unfortunately, these societies are not well-organized. However, the Ashram is in touch with one such society and very

[1] Jaggery

often there is a clearance. Ask Narandas how it is that dogs have not been cleared by the society.

N.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19110

277. LETTER TO B. S. RAO

June 30, 1933

MY DEAR GOPALA RAO,

I was glad to receive your letter, but I was pained over your persistence in the advice that you have repeated in spite of the very bitter experience of your experiment[1] at the Ashram amongst 40 people under the best of auspices. Have you forgotten the complete failure of your experiment? Have you forgotten that Mirabai was at death's door because of her valiant continuance of your experiment in spite of her being death-pale, and in spite of my having almost fallen prostrate with weakness? I had warned you against your failure and ignorant persistence in your prescribing uncooked starch. I also drew your attention to the fact that you had no scientific mind and that you were utterly indifferent to the well-being of those who had the misfortune to be under your care. Your vegetable substitute for milk is poison for babies, and I would plead with you to desist from a practice which you must know to have failed. That in some cases you might have achieved temporary success only shows how kind and forbearing Nature is. She suffers her children to break her laws for a long time and you are taking an undue advantage of Nature's kindness. You will be, perhaps, sorry to learn that I am flourishing on goat's milk and fruit and there is no prospect of my taking the substitute that you would have me to take. I would only plead with you to desist from further endangering the health of simple people who may, trusting you, come to you to have themselves cured. I have written strongly because I know the danger with which your ill-conceived dietary is fraught, and I shall be happy if you could tell me

[1] Of eating uncooked food in the summer months of 1929; *vide* Vol. XLI.

that you would no longer persist in your experiment which has proved to be wrong.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BOLLAPRAGUDU SUNDARAGOPALA RAO

From a photostat: S.N. 19111

278. LETTER TO M. S. WAJID HUSAIN

June 30, 1933

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for the shoes and the chappals you have sent and I am glad that although your descent is high you have taken up the useful calling of a shoe-maker.

Yours sincerely,

M. S. WAJID HUSAIN
SHOES CURIO CHAMBER, VICTORIA STREET, LUCKNOW

From a microfilm: S.N. 19112

279. LETTER TO HILDA WOOD

June 30, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter.

I am transferring it to Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar, the General Secretary of the Central Board of the Servants of Untouchables' Society. I do not think that there will be any difficulty about granting the scholarships for the pupils you have referred to. It will be necessary, however, to forward to Sjt. Thakkar the details of the boys or girls for whom the scholarships may be required.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HILDA WOOD
WOOD BUNGALOW, ADYAR, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 19113

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280. LETTER TO JAMNABEHN GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. JAMNA,

I hope you got my letter. Since I wanted to call Purushottam here, what I wrote to him was different from what I did to you. I have now sent a wire[1] and am waiting for him.

To whom else did I say I would write? I have forgotten.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 884. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

281. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 30, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Why is there no letter from you? How is your health? And the condition of your mind? How is your throat?

What is the news about Sushila?

Dhurandhar had come again to see me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6785. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

282. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I hear that Mahalakshmi was released and came there three weeks ago. It was only by chance that I came to know this yesterday evening. It is possible that you mentioned the fact in one of your letters, but that the letter was not shown to me. I am now sending a wire today asking you to send her here. It seems that she is worried about her children.

I have already sent a wire[2] regarding S. You are right in thinking that it was a mistake to force him to eat. I had

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Khushalchand Gandhi", p. 225.
[2] *Vide* p. 223.

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written against that being done.[1] The fact that he is losing weight requires serious thinking. He has been accustomed to butter and may, therefore, improve if he is given it. Have you been able to do anything regarding the suggestion I made in a letter and also orally concerning wheat flour? I don't know what happened regarding Jnana. You must have read her last letter. Her father seems to have exercised pressure on her. Find out the cause of the opposition of Kashi, Jamna and others to the proposal of marriage with her. Jnana's own opposition may be one thing, but the opposition of Kashi and others is another matter. I think it absolutely necessary to know the cause behind all this.

I am very eager to see Bhagwanji. I think it will be best to let him come. Mahalakshmi also may come with him.

BAPU

[PS.]

Letters enclosed: Bhagwanji, Ramdas, Jamna, Mathew, Prema, Jnana.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8387. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

283. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 30, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

Dr. Aggrawal is an eye-specialist. He has specialized in teaching people how to improve eye-sight and do without glasses. He is coming there to see the Ashram. If he wants to examine the children's eyes, let him do so. Bhagwanji may accompany him when he visits the Harijan children. Request the doctor to explain to the people who wear glasses how they can dispense with them. If he wants a letter of recommendation to anybody outside the Ashram, please do not give any. I don't know anything about his abilities. He seems to be a good man, but he did not succeed in his experiment on me. He will stay there for three or four days.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8388. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* pp. 69.

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284. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 1, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Our letters crossed each other. I wrote yesterday and so did you.

The years of all of us are flying quickly one after another. Would it not be truer to say that we grow younger? Our destined life-span is shortened by each year that passes. Do we not grow correspondingly younger? The lesson which I want you to draw from this is that we should become more vigilant in our lives. The capital given to us is being slowly eaten away. We should learn to make the fullest use of what remains. I pray that you may do so.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10347. Also C.W. 6786. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

285. A CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

July 2, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

As you know Sjt. Aney has invited a few Congressmen for 12th instant[2]. If your health permits, I would like you to come for those two or three days. They will be most eventful for me and possibly for the nation. And I would like you to be present.

Yours ever,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19114

[1] According to S.N. Register, this was sent to various persons.

[2] *Vide* pp. 262 and 265-6.

286. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 2, 1933

MY DEAR AMALA,

You have done well in reminding me of my two promises. The letter to your mother I had in mind but I could not reach it when I had it in mind. Then it slipped my memory. I knew that I had to send you something. Herewith you will find that letter.

As to the yarn necklace I thought that Mahadev had given it to you. You will find it herewith. It is made out of my own yarn.

If you are wearing what Mira wears, surely it is a petticoat. Is it not the petticoat the Ashram women wear? You should remember that Mira's sari is a mere scarf thrown round her body. It is perhaps not even three yards in length. It simply covers her naked back and head and abdomen.

If your Ashram ideal is not there, you are doomed to disappointment some day. Better watch yourself. Your letters betray lack of ballast and responsibility. Take care and be humble.

I have already written[1] to you about your passport.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

287. LETTER TO ABHAYDEV SHARMA

July 2, 1933

BHAI ABHAY,

I read your letter addressed to Rajendra Babu. It seemed to me good and appropriate. The sentiment is beautiful. The occasion does not appear to have arisen so far for a fast unto death which may yet have to be undertaken one day.

There is no doubt that only harm has resulted from under-

[1] *Vide* pp. 228-9.

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ground activity. Let us see what is possible. It all rests with Rama.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9662

288. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN WORKERS, POONA[1]

[*July 2, 1933*][2]

I am not against propaganda of the right kind on the right lines. Temperance propaganda among Harijans would certainly be welfare work, but it should be done with the minimum of expense. If Harijans of spotless character could be found to go to Harijan areas to carry on this propaganda, all the money would go into Harijans' pockets, and propaganda, too, would be most effectively done. A question is asked whether I would prefer an inefficient Harijan teacher to an efficient *savarna* Hindu teacher of character. Here, as on all questions of the character, I would say I would endeavour to secure a Harijan teacher of character and then try to bring him up to the mark, so far as educational qualifications are concerned. I would no doubt think of the children's own good rather than of accommodating a particular Harijan candidate, but all questions would have to be decided on merits. All that I would say is: 'Don't make a fetish of efficiency.'

But we can make one general rule as regards propaganda: Let propaganda charges be voted each time. The more I think the more convinced I feel that, if our work is to abide, we shall have to cut down mere propaganda expenses to a mini-

[1] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–IX" by Mahadev Desai who had reported: "For the first time after the fast, Gandhiji met a fairly large gathering of workers and talked to them. The Servants of Untouchables Society had its General Board meeting in the Servants of India Society, but the members came in a body to 'Parnakuti' to ascertain Gandhiji's views on certain questions. Was it to be propaganda *v.* welfare work, or propaganda *cum* welfare work, or no propaganda and only welfare work? Gandhiji had insisted on strictly limiting 'overhead charges' and administration expenditure. But many points were raised interpreting this rule. For instance, would expenses on village propaganda, say, against the drink evil among Harijans, be considered to be money well spent? I shall try to summarize Gandhiji's views on this question."

[2] *Vide* the postscript to the following item.

mum. Where there is the possibility of recurring expenditure on propaganda, let our expenses be divided into three parts: 20 per cent administration charges; 20 per cent propaganda; 60 per cent welfare work.

You ask whether a Harijan Day should be observed as we have been doing. I would say: Observe it, but if it is properly observed, no expense need be incurred. The Harijan Day should not mean carving a slice out of the little balance you may have. In the same way, I should not spend Rs. 75 to get a donation of Rs. 100, i.e., a net donation of Rs. 25. I do not say that propaganda is bad; propaganda wisely directed is necessary. But I would say that propaganda could be made self-supporting. Do not touch your funds for, say, a reception or a procession; recover the charges from sympathetic local friends and don't burden your accounts with them.

Let us always remember that severe critics are watching us. If we do everything in a religious spirit, without any reward, our work is bound to tell.

Harijan, 8-7-1933

289. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 2, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I hope you got my wire[1] regarding Jnana. Chhaganlal's letter is enclosed. I infer from it that Jnana has not arrived there. If you have been able to know how Jnana had agreed, please let me know.

I don't see any necessity at all for you to put yourself to trouble for attending the meeting on the 12th.[2] You may communicate your views, if you wish to. If I think it necessary, I will read it out. The better course would be to send it to Aneyji.

You need not come for Kamala either. Everything possible will be done. I have been making inquiries. Kamalnayan pays frequent visits. I saw Janakidevi also. Kamala, too, came and saw me. She is still a child. She has grown up in an atmosphere of loving indulgence and, therefore, has not developed a proper sense of responsibility. That is not her fault. Our children naturally

[1] *Vide* p. 224.
[2] *Vide* "A Circular Letter", p. 235.

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take after us. We may change as we grow older, but our children cannot adopt all the changes which take place in us. Harilal is a convincing example of this. He has crossed all limits, and that, too, openly. I craved inwardly for pleasures of the senses but gradually acquired outward self-control. If I had not succeeded in the end in controlling my mind, too, I would have been rightly counted a hypocrite. But how can we expect that the changes which took place in me would have any effect on Harilal? I am afraid I have strayed from the subject and inflicted a sermon on you.

Take care of your health in everything you do. If Prabhudas has come there, let me know what his condition of mind is. What does he intend to do now?

How is the health of Vinoba, Balkrishna and Chhotelal?

Radhika was here for some time. She is in Deolali now. Keshu is still here. He is calm. He has not been able to come to a decision yet. I think he will by and by. I have given him plenty of time for the purpose.

What have you decided to do about the sum of Rs. 5,000 which Sushila, Lakshminivas's wife, has donated for Harijan work?

Devdas and Lakshmi live in Ranchhoddas's bungalow. Rajaji lives with Ghanshyamdas. My health is steadily improving. I walk three times a day and for 45 minutes in all. The weight has reached 97 pounds. It will increase still further. There is no cause now for worrying about me.

Most probably, Narandas's Purushottam will come here and receive training under Dinshawji in nature-cure methods.

When do you expect your work there to be finished? Giridhari will be re-arrested today. He was released yesterday. He was ordered to go to Hyderabad, but he has not obeyed the order.

I hope you are being careful about food, etc. Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I discussed today problems with Harijan workers from 10 to 11.30.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2917

290. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

July 3, 1933

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Both of you have been regular in writing to me. I did read all your letters, but I could not reply. Now that I have gained some strength, I try to write a few letters every day. My weight also is increasing. I eat fairly well. I am on milk and fruit just now. There is no cause for worrying about me. Only God knows where I shall be when you get this letter. Perhaps with Vallabhbhai. We must accept whatever is ordained for us. Can we alter anything even if we wish ?

It will be enough if you go on doing your duty devotedly. I like that Sushila helps you. If both of you lead a life of self-control, Sushila will be able to do a lot. The arrangement you have made for Sita[1] seems good. I see that Shanti cannot be trusted. He is extremely unsteady.

Jalbhai had come and seen me. I understand what you say regarding his daughter.

What you have done regarding Sorabji[2] seems all right. If we adhere to principles, sometimes friends desert us. We need not worry about that. It is, of course, necessary to be sure in all cases that what we believe to be moral is not in fact immoral and that there is no consideration of self-interest in our motives. More immorality is practised in the world in the name of morality than is done openly. Immorality can flourish only under the cloak of morality. This is the reason why so often moral dilemmas arise. In order to learn to distinguish rightly between morality and immorality, the observance of *yamaniyamas*[3] is essential.

Devdas and Lakshmi are here. They are quite happy. I am sure someone must have given you an account of the wedding. Both seem to be fortunate. They have been receiving blessings from unexpected quarters.

Ramdas is unfortunate. He cannot be either happy or at peace, and his health is deteriorating. Nimu also keeps poor

[1] Addressees' daughter
[2] Son of Parsi Rustomji, a co-worker of Gandhiji in South Africa
[3] Rules of moral discipline and religious observances

health. And the same is the case with the children. She now seems to have developed some complaint of the vaginal tract and even an operation may be necessary. But Ramdas is a *bhakta* and of a trustful nature. He is always anxious to know what his duty is and tries his best to do it. I believe, therefore, that ultimately he will be happy. However, it is a fact that God does test his *bhaktas* severely. Ramdas knows that, and so, even if he remains unhappy all his life, he will not cease to be a *bhakta*. Both of you should write to him from time to time. Ramdas and Nimu have placed their lives in the hands of Jamnalalji. But they have not been able to go to Wardha as yet, for meanwhile Nimu's ailments were detected. It will, therefore, be some time before they can go to Wardha. I hope you write to Jamnalalji occasionally. Janakidevi and the children are here. Only Madalasa[1] is at Wardha with Vinoba. Ba is here, of course. Mahadev and Mathuradas also are here. Manu has come and will stay for some time. Harilal remains drowned in casks of liquor, or say rather that his belly is always full of them. Thanks to their weight, how can he shoulder any other burden? I am not complaining against him. I believe that his conduct must be the bitter fruit of my own sins and endure it in silence.

I understand what you say regarding West. Finally, do what seems best to you. If you form an unfavourable impression about him, I cannot remove it. I read West's letters to Devibehn when I was in England. It seemed to me after reading them that he had not changed. Tulsidas has taught us that we should see the good in men and remember that only. We also may have our weaknesses. If people boycott us because of them we pull a long face. We forget that people keep good relations with us despite our weaknesses. I hope this will be enough by way of advice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4810. Also C.W. 1222. Courtesy: Sushila Gandhi

[1] Daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj

291. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

July 3, 1933

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. Your resolution is good. Cling to it now with complete faith. Do not attempt anything beyond your capacity. One should not obstinately persist in doing a thing which is beyond the capacity of one's body. If you remain humble, everything will be all right. Write to me regularly. God will give you peace of mind.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9326; also C.W. 6601

292. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 3, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I assume that Jnana has not left for Wardha. I have sent a wire to Purushottam, but have received no reply from him so far. I have not written any letter to him, but assume that he must have received the wire. If you have not heard from him anything, please write to him immediately after you get this letter. That will save time. Ask him to come here as soon as possible. I can't say how long I shall remain free.

Keshu is still here. He has been talking things over with me. He seems to be calm. I asked him what remains to be decided regarding carding, but he didn't seem to know. I also don't understand.

I have sent a wire asking you to send Mahalakshmi here. If you have not done so, please send her immediately. About Bhagwanji, too, I have suggested that he may come.[1] If he does, I shall be able to pacify him.

Brijkrishna is receiving treatment in Dr. Mehta's nursing home. He is improving. He consumes ten to twelve pounds of milk

[1] *Vide* p. 234.

daily. Krishnan Nair also is here at present. I will suggest to him that he should pay a visit to the Ashram.

We should not mind some of the women having started separate kitchens. I think that is for the good of us all. Rice is not the only reason for their decision, though it is certainly one of them. They cannot do without rice, and will want other things also from time to time. Let not the other inmates grudge them their freedom. We should not criticize what others do. We can cling to our chosen path only if we feel that we follow it for our own good. Nobody should do anything simply because others do it. Acting in that manner does one no good at all. I think that, except for milk and ghee, the food served in the Ashram should resemble as far as possible the food served in jails. Our test is still to come. I don't know when it will come, but I have no doubt at all that it is coming and must come. Those who have trained their bodies and minds for it will come out of it victorious, and those who have not done so will fall on the way. This is what has always happened. Nobody should criticize, or has a right to criticize, the women who have started separate kitchens. There is no ground at all for such criticism. Who can do more than what he or she is capable of? Moreover, nothing is more reprehensible than criticizing other people's food-habits. Nobody can exercise enough self-control in one's own habits, but no person has the right to pass judgment on the measure of such self-control exercised by others. He has no means for passing such judgment, either. I don't set great store by my ability to refrain from chillies and spices. If, however, Harilal could give up drink, I would admire his self-control. For some, giving up spices might be as difficult as giving up liquor would be for Harilal. Revashankerbhai[1] found it a hard task to give up smoking. It is mostly such matters that call for the exercise of non-violence. Explain all this to everybody when you find it convenient.

My dissatisfaction regarding Kusum persists. Will a vaidya never get a chance of treating her? However, as long as she herself is satisfied I need not worry about her.

I suppose Dhiru and Balbhadra[2] have had their lungs examined. Personally, I have no faith in such methods at all. Even after an x-ray is taken, only an expert can read it correct-

[1] Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri, brother of Dr. Pranjivandas Mehta and father-in-law of Shri Rajachandra

[2] Raojibhai Nathabhai Patel's younger brother, a student of the Ashram

ly. You or I can judge nothing. I look upon these things as the luxuries of the rich. They are certainly not within the means of the poor. However, as long as people give us money and we have faith in these methods, we may avail ourselves of them.

I think I have now replied to all your questions.

You will be able to judge about the state of my health from this letter itself.

Purushottam has arrived. I have had a letter from Jamnalal and it seems from it that Jnana had reached there before he wrote it. I am enclosing that letter for you to read.

[PS.]

NARANDAS,

After I had finished the letter above, I received a letter from Kanhaiyalal and one from Maganlal, both of which are enclosed. I don't know anything about the matter in question. Do you? Have you received any letters from Jivaram[1]? How is his health? I have replied to Kanhaiyalal and Maganlal that I can advise only after I hear from Jivaram. It is probable that both have left Bhadrak by now. I got the letters only today. They are dated June 20, and the gentlemen had hoped to get my reply before the end of the month.

I have written to Wai regarding Parachure Shastri's son. I will let you know when I get a reply.

I had a letter from Harakhaji. Perhaps you have read it. He wants to fix up somewhere else. Can you suggest anything?

Letters for: Amala, her mother, Gajra's mother, Valji, Ramji, Kusum, Harakhaji, Lilavati, and the letters of Kanhaiyalal and Maganlal.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8389. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Jivaram Kothari from Kutch who, after giving away one lakh of rupees —all his wealth—to Gandhiji, went to Orissa to work for the poor

293. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
July 4, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. There is no occasion to stop writing to me. But I would like you always, whether I am busy or otherwise, to write sense and not nonsense, as you almost invariably do. But when you write sensibly and have to say much, I do not mind how long your letters are. But a senseless letter is too long even when it contains only one sentence or one word. Do you know how much senseless stuff you have written in your letter under reply? That is why I called you a baby, 35 years old.[1]

Your question about your future is too curious. You have hardly yet commenced your training, in my opinion. After all it is the trainers who have to give the certificate that you have been sufficiently trained. You would not give it yourself. When you are sufficiently trained you will find your work cut out for you, and of course you are being trained for Harijan service. What shape that service will take, it is difficult to say now, but before you can do that you have got to be well-versed in Hindi, well-versed in all the processes through which cotton goes before being turned into cloth. I have mentioned only two things, but there are many other things which you should know in order to be able to render Harijan service efficiently.

I hope you received my letter[2] of yesterday together with the chain and my letter to your mother.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also S.N. 19115

[1] *Vide* p. 191.

[2] *Vide* p. 236. It was sent on July 3, with "Letter to Narandas Gandhi"; *vide* p. 244.

294. LETTER TO N.

July 4, 1933

I hope S. has not typhoid. There is no reason for him to have that. But it does seem to me that the food you gave him should not have been given, and I am not quite sure that Lakshmidas wanted him to have all the food you have described. It is always best to treat every fever as incipient typhoid. In other words the main treatment for all fevers is the same, namely, nothing but fruit juices and boiled water, and, after the fever is gone, diluted milk, that is, milk to which water is added before it is boiled. If you are quite composed and clear in your mind, I do not want any change for S. He will come through all right in the Ashram if he gets proper nursing and a typhoid patient needs nothing more than most careful nursing and fruit juices, principally orange juice and, under certain circumstances, diluted milk. Do not be obstinate about medical assistance. The doctors who come to the Ashram are very fine men. They know the Ashram dislike for too much medicine. If you can possibly do, it would be much better for you to detach yourself from personal affection and treat S. as an Ashram child whom you have been set to nurse. But I know that this is a condition which cannot be forced and if it does not come to you, you will not hesitate to say so plainly. Not everyone in the Ashram has that detachment. Perhaps no one has, but much is expected of you. What is more, you have set before yourself nothing short of the highest ideal, and I want you to realize it. Maybe the illness of S. is one of the many ordeals you have to pass through. May God be your guide, strength and shield.

From a microfilm: S.N. 19116

CWMG - IV

295. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

July 4, 1933

If there is truth in the epigram that in the midst of life we are in death, is not the converse true also that in the midst of death we are in life? That at any rate was my feeling during a friend's interview with Gandhiji the other day.

He had waited some days to tell me that he wanted a few minutes with Gandhiji before he returned to his place. But when the time was given to him, his courage failed him. For a couple of minutes he was speechless.

[GANDHIJI:] Come along, out with it. Mahadev has told me that you wanted to tell me something about the vow or vows you had taken some years ago. I now forget that you took any vow, but come along, speak out.

This was just enough to help him utter a broken sentence: "Five years ago, I wrote down a few words, and—

G. And you have failed to keep your word.

"No, on the contrary", I put in.

G. (Coaxingly) Then, it is tears of joy?

But he was silent and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Gandhiji said:

But perhaps what Mahadev says is not quite right. Then do what I did. I could not open my lips before my father when I made my first confession[2] to him. So I wrote it down. You can write what you want to say.

But the friend was still speechless and signed to me to allow him to go. After a few more tears he pulled himself together.

[FRIEND:] Bapu, a little over five years ago, I wrote down what I solemnly wanted to promise to do, and you corrected one word.

[G.] Yes, but I have forgotten it altogether.

After reminding Gandhiji about the matter, the young man said:

Well, Bapu, it has been a terrible struggle, but by the grace of God I have fulfilled the letter of the vow and to a very great extent the spirit of it too.

[1] Extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–IX" by Mahadev Desai

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 27.

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[G.] That is good. I understand the tears. One is overwhelmed with thankfulness when God helps one to fulfil a vow.

[F.] But now is the question.

[G.] Why? The mother, I suppose, is impatient, as every mother is.

[F.] Oh yes. That vow signed and sealed by you is in her safe custody, and she often has reminded [me] of the termination of the period. But the father and the mother don't worry me. It is myself. Once I make up my mind, there will be no difficulty. But, Bapu, is the struggle worth while?

[G.] Ah sure enough. Is not struggle the law in the natural world? If it is, much more so is it the law in the spiritual world. There is a spiritual law in the natural world and a natural law in the spiritual world. Life is a perpetual striving. There is always a tempest raging in us, and struggle against temptation is a perpetual duty. The *Gita* says this at not less than three places. I dare say there are many more places, but I remember only three. One needs must have the will and then, you know the English proverb, there's the way. And there are those Biblical sayings, "Ask and it shall be given", "Seek and you shall find", "Knock and it shall be open".

[F.] Bapu, bless me.

[G.] Well, you write down what you want and if it is all right, I shall sign it.

He took out his diary and wrote down on the leaf bearing date 4th of July: "Remember the spirit of all that you have said. My blessings are that you might triumph through the struggle." And this he handed me for getting the priceless *imprimatur* 'Bapu'.

And Bapu read the words once, twice and then said:

Shall I just add a word?

He added in his own hand the word 'inevitable' before 'struggle' and signed 'Bapu', his hand shaking. He added:

How I wish the hand was a little more firm. But that's all right. The word 'inevitable' is quite necessary there. Read the end of the 6th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* in this connection.

He bowed in gratitude and slipped quietly away. His tears were infectious. I mingled mine with his, as I realized the truth of what Gandhiji had said only two days ago:

Somehow my faith is ascending every day, in spite of the darkness that surrounds me.

Harijan, 8-7-1933

296. LETTER TO N.

July 5, 1933

N.,

I have your long letter. It does not appeal to me. You are again dominated by emotion. The golden lid hides the truth. If you will dispossess yourself of S., you must possess all the children of the world. Your world just now is the Ashram. If all the children had come from the hills, as poor people's do very often, they flourish in the best manner they can on the plains. It is altogether wrong to think that by suitable changes even little children cannot accommodate themselves to the varying climatic conditions. I do not deny the possibility of S. responding to the hills. But your *tapasya* lies in remaining where you are and risking his life. That is the price that faith has to pay. It is no faith that demands complete insurance against risk. S. will be all right if you will cease to worry about him and will simply do the nursing.

If my argument or opinion does not appeal to you, you will not hesitate to tell me so. I do not want you to feel helpless or under any sort of compulsion. I want you to feel freer than you ever were. The only thing that binds you to me and the Ashram is love and acceptance of the common ideal. I guide you so long as you have confidence in my judgment. I have played sufficiently with the lives of the dearest ones on more occasions than one. But if you are to do likewise, you should do so [only] if you feel the truth of it. You must act out of strength, never out of helplessness. Therefore, you will not hesitate to tell me truly what you feel. I am hoping however that S. has no fever and that he is out of all immediate danger. For his rash he needs a wet-sheet pack.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19117

297. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

July 6, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI
CIVIL HOSPITAL, NASIK

JUST UNDERSTOOD YOU WERE RELEASED BEING SERIOUSLY ILL. PLEASE WIRE TRUE CONDITION. HOPE SPEEDY RECOVERY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21509

298. TELEGRAM TO N.

July 6, 1933

N.
SATYAGRAHAASHRAM, SABARMATI

YOUR LETTER. HOPE S. BETTER. AM CONVINCED YOU SHOULD NOT GO ALMORA. LOVE.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21508

299. TELEGRAM TO URMILA DEVI

July 6, 1933

URMILA DEVI
24 RAMESH MITTER ROAD, BHOWANIPUR, CALCUTTA

YOUR LETTER. AM WELL. YOU MAY COME IF YOU MUST. PERSONALLY I REGARD COMING WASTE MONEY TIME ENERGY. SEND VIEWS REGISTERED POST.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 21510

CWMG - LV

300. TELEGRAM TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

July 6, 1933

BHULABHAI DESAI
BOMBAY

WIRED NASIK EARLY MORNING. DO COME IF YOU ARE WELL ENOUGH. WIRE CONDITION.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21511

301. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 6, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.

My progress is steady. I am now over 98 lb., food continuing as before. I am able to walk three times daily taking altogether one hour 20 minutes—not bad! This gives me no fatigue. I hope you will beat me in competing for good health. No doubt the heat there is against you. But you must have the rains now. And in any case, if you will take the wet-sheet pack when the heat is oppressive, you will at once be cool. You know how the pack is taken. Take your bed-sheet. Dip it in cold water. Wring it well so that no water is left. Spread it on a blanket. Lie naked on the sheet, wrap yourself in the pack. The blanket will cover you from neck to foot. Remain in it for five minutes or longer if you feel comfortable. There should be no chill felt. If there is, you should get out of it at once. This is most refreshing and cooling. You can take this pack frequently if necessary. Try and test it for yourself.

As for the notes suggested by me,[1] it is not so difficult as you seem to imagine. When it becomes a habit, it becomes quite simple and deeply interesting. Do not forget to take down references as you proceed so that through your index and notes you can find out in a moment where a particular name occurs. These

[1] *Vide* p. 226.

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notes may prove of great general use, if they are brief and yet to the point.

Your description of the monkeys is entertaining. Have they not yet snatched your food from you? Of course you know that when they are enraged, they can inflict great injury on you.

Purushottam is here and is learning nature-cure methods und[er] Mehta who has been nursing me with exquisite devotion. Mahadev is down with fever. He will be all right in a day or two.

Gangabehn Jhaveri and Nanibehn Jhaveri are here for the sake of the former's health. Gangabehn elder is at the Ashram. She reached there only two days ago.

Lakshmi seems to be supremely happy with Devdas. Keshu is still here and will be for some time. He will then go to Wardha and work in Jamnalalji's gin. Prabhavati insists on sending special love.

Love from us all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6283. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9749

302. LETTER TO VINOBA BHAVE

July 7, 1933

CHI. VINOBA,

I have put a heavy responsibility on you, but you have the strength to shoulder the burden of any responsibility which may be thrust on you, or, in the words of the *Gita*, can pass on such responsibility to God. I hope all the persons whom I have sent to the Ashram have settled down there properly. Just now, however, I wish to write to you about four European men and women. All the four are to be trained for Harijan work and as long as they maintain connection with us, should keep away from politics completely. Cultivate close relations with all of them and appoint somebody who knows English to look after their needs. Marybehn and Duncan are straightforward persons and are not likely to create any difficulties for you. But that cannot be said about N. and Amalabehn (i.e., Dr. Spiegel). If N. maintains good health, she is likely to be very useful. I am not sure about Amalabehn. She is rather obstinate and her capacity is limited. Her intentions are very good but she is very slow in acting on them. She goes on making all kinds of plans. All four will re-

quire milk in their diet. I think oil will not agree with them. Ask them and ascertain their requirements. Tell them and others, too, that just now I cannot write to them. Whether or not I shall be able to write after some time, God alone knows. Write or dictate a thoughtful letter to . . .[1]. I hope you keep good health. I also hope that Manu is not ill. Balkrishna's and Chhotelal's health does not seem to be satisfactory. I hope Ramdas has settled down there, and that the climate there agrees with Nimu and the children. Vidya Hingorani, who has come there, has delicate health and is rather of a sensitive nature, but she is a woman of very pure character. She has cultivated *bhakti* of a very high order. I am sure Lakshmibehn is looking after her properly, and so I don't write more about her. I hope Vatsala has got over her fear, and that Madalasa is progressing. I also hope your contacts with the Harijans are becoming closer day by day. I have not forgotten the idea of chain-fasts. It is still in my mind. I constantly feel that our atonement will not be complete without such a step. I don't mean to say that it will be complete even with it, but I do believe that, if the right type of men and women join in the fasts, the movement for the removal of untouchability will make rapid progress.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3085

303. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 7, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. I hope you are all right by now. God is testing you from all sides. That your mind is at peace is a great thing. What solace can I offer you? Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1702

[1] The name is not legible in the source.

304. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 7, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have received your letter after a long interval; it gave me immense pleasure. If the word 'dear' has been missed in some letters, it does not mean that you are no longer dear to me.

I was very happy to learn that all is well with you. No other letter from you has reached me. You are, of course, getting all the news about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 287

305. ALL ABOUT THE FAST[1]

It is, perhaps, meet that the very first writing for the Press I should attempt after the fast should be for the *Harijan*, and that in connection with the fast. God willing, I hope now to contribute my weekly quota to the *Harijan* as before the fast. Let no one, however, run away with the idea that I have regained my pre-fast capacity for work. I have still to be very careful how I work. Correspondents will, therefore, have mercy on me. They should know that for a while yet I shall be unable to cope with all their letters. Whatever they may have for my special attention will have still to wait for some time, probably yet another month. Who knows what will happen a month hence? We are short-lived and do not know even what will happen the next moment. Then what can one say about the ambitions of a Harijan worker like myself? To those who buy and read *Harijanbandhu* in a spirit of service, my advice is that they should not wait for my writings and opinions. The way for rendering service to Harijans is quite clear. The field is vast. *Harijanbandhu* endeavours to give an idea of the week's activities. It also attempts to indicate what needs to be done, what can be done and how it is to

[1] This item has been collated with the Gujarati version published in *Harijanbandhu*, 9-7-1933.

be done. From that all could find one or the other way of service. Then where is the need of my writing or opinion? If I am tempted to write about it, it is only for my own satisfaction. I have to write only when I have something to say or explain to the readers. I hope readers won't be disheartened and will maintain their relations with *Harijanbandhu* irrespective of whether I have something to write or not and whether I have the strength and the leisure.

Now for the fast.

The first question that has puzzled many is about the Voice of God. What was it? What did I hear? Was there any person I saw? If not, how was the Voice conveyed to me? These are pertinent questions.

For me the voice of God, of Conscience, of Truth or the Inner Voice or 'the still small Voice' mean one and the same thing. I saw no form. I have never tried, for I have always believed God to be without form. One who realizes God is freed from sin for ever. He has no desire to be fulfilled. Not even in his thoughts will he suffer from faults, imperfections or impurities. Whatever he does will be perfect because he does nothing himself but the God within him does everything. He is completely merged in Him. Such realization comes to one among tens of millions. That it can come I have no doubt at all. I yearn to have such realization but I have not got it yet and I know that I am yet very far from it. The inspiration I had was quite a different thing. Moreover, many get such inspiration quite often or at some time. There is certainly need for a particular type of *sadhana*[1] to obtain such inspiration. If some efforts and some *sadhana* are necessary even to acquire the ability to have the commonest thing, what wonder if efforts and *sadhana* are needed to get divine inspiration? The inspiration I got was this: The night I got the inspiration, I had a terrible inner struggle. My mind was restless. I could see no way. The burden of my responsibility was crushing me. But what I did hear was like a Voice from afar and yet quite near. It was as unmistakable as some human voice definitely speaking to me, and irresistible. I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the Voice was preceded by a terrific struggle within me. Suddenly the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased. I was calm. The determination was made accordingly, the date

[1] Spiritual effort

and the hour of the fast were fixed. Joy came over me. This was between 11 and 12 midnight. I felt refreshed and began to write the note[1] about it which the reader must have seen.

Could I give any further evidence that it was truly the Voice that I heard and that it was not an echo of my own heated imagination? I have no further evidence to convince the sceptic. He is free to say that it was all self-delusion or hallucination. It may well have been so. I can offer no proof to the contrary. But I can say this—that not the unanimous verdict of the whole world against me could shake me from the belief that what I heard was the true voice of God.

But some think that God Himself is a creation of our own imagination. If that view holds good, then nothing is real, everything is of our own imagination. Even so, whilst my imagination dominates me, I can only act under its spell. Realest things are only relatively so. For me the Voice was more real than my own existence. It has never failed me, and for that matter, anyone else.

And everyone who wills can hear the Voice. It is within everyone. But like everything else, it requires previous and definite preparation.

The second question that has puzzled many is whether a fast in which an army of doctors watch and guide the fasting person, as they undoubtedly and with extraordinary care and attention watched and guided me, when he is coddled in various other ways as I was, could be described as a fast in answer to the call of the Inner Voice. Put thus, the objection seems valid. It would undoubtedly have been more in keeping with the high claim made for the fast, if it had been unattended with all the extraordinary, external aids that it was my good fortune or misfortune to receive.

But I do not repent of having gratefully accepted the generous help that kind friends extended to me. I was battling against death. I accepted all the help that came to me as godsend, when it did not in any way affect my vow.

As I think over the past, I am not sorry for having taken the fast. Though I suffered bodily pain and discomfort, there was indescribable peace within. I have enjoyed peace during all my fasts but never so much as in this. Perhaps, the reason was that there was nothing to look forward to. In the previous fasts there was some tangible expectation. In this there was nothing

[1] *Vide* pp. 74-5.

tangible to expect. There was undoubtedly faith that it must lead to purification of self and others and that workers would know that true Harijan service was impossible without inward purity. This, however, is a result that could not be measured or known in a tangible manner. I had, therefore, withdrawn within myself.

The nature of the fast deserves some more consideration. Was it mere mortification of the flesh? I firmly believe that a fast taken for mortification of the flesh does some good from the medical point of view; apart from that it produces no particular effect. I know my fast was not at all meant for the mortification of the flesh. Nor was I ready for it. The time of the fast was beyond my imagination. From the letters then written to friends it is clear that I did not foresee any immediate fast. For me, this fast was a supplication or prayer to God coming from the depth of my heart. The fast was an uninterrupted twenty-one days' prayer whose effect I can feel even now. I know now more fully than ever that there is no prayer without fasting, be the latter ever so little. And this fasting relates not merely to the palate, but all the senses and organs. Complete absorption in prayer must mean complete exclusion of physical activities till prayer possesses the whole of our being and we rise superior to, and are completely detached from, all physical functions. That state can only be reached after continual and voluntary crucifixion of the flesh. Thus all fasting, if it is a spiritual act, is an intense prayer or a preparation for it. It is a yearning of the soul to merge in the divine essence. My last fast was intended to be such a preparation. How far I have succeeded, how far I am in tune with the Infinite, I do not know. But I do know that the fast has made the passion for such a state intenser than ever.

Looking back upon the fast, I feel it to have been as necessary as I felt it was when I entered upon it. It has resulted in some revelations of impurities among workers of which I had no knowledge whatsoever, and but for the fast I would never have gained that knowledge. All the letters that have come under my notice go to show that it has led to greater purification among the workers. The fast was meant not for the purification of known workers only who had been found wanting, but for all the workers, known and unknown, in the Harijan cause. Nothing probably could have brought home to the workers so well as this fast the fact that the movement is purely religious in the highest sense of the term, to be handled in a religious spirit by workers of character above reproach.

The work of removal of untouchability is not merely a social or economic reform whose extent can be measured by so much social amenities or economic relief provided in so much time. Its goal is to touch the hearts of the millions of Hindus who honestly believe in the present-day untouchability as a God-made institution, as old as the human race itself. This, it will be admitted, is a task infinitely higher than mere social and economic reform. Its accomplishment undoubtedly includes all these and much more. For it means nothing short of a complete revolution in the Hindu thought and the disappearance of the horrible and terrible doctrine of inborn inequality and high-and-lowness, which has poisoned Hinduism and is slowly undermining its very existence. Such a change can only be brought about by an appeal to the highest in man. And I am more than ever convinced that that appeal can be made effective only by self-purification, i.e., by fasting conceived as the deepest prayer coming from a lacerated heart.

I believe that the invisible effect of such fasting is far greater and far more extensive than the visible effect. The conviction has, therefore, gone deeper in me that my fast is but the beginning of a chain of true voluntary fasts by men and women who have qualified themselves by previous preparation for them and who believe in prayer as the most effective method of reaching the heart of things. How that chain can be established I do not know as yet. But I am striving after it. If it can be established, I know that it will touch, as nothing else will, the hearts of Hindus, both the opponents of reform and the Harijans. For the Harijans have also to play their part in the movement no less than the reformers and the opponents. And I am glad to be able to inform the reader that the Harijans have not been untouched by the fast. A number of letters received from abroad suggest that even there many hearts have awakened. If an imperfect fast by a man like me could create such awakening, who could then estimate how great and far-reaching the result would be if innocent men and women unassumingly, without any hope of medical or other aid and without one or the other concession, sacrifice their lives in an unbroken chain of fasts?

Harijan, 8-7-1933

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306. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 8, 1933

DEAR "GRAND MOTHER",

Your old age does not permit you to master the simple Hindi alphabet.

For your sake I have looked up the word 'petticoat' in the Oxford Dictionary and it was properly used by me.[1] The Indian woman's skirt is part of her sari which hangs from the waist and covers the petticoat.

The word ballast was properly used. Look up the dictionary. I have not the time just now to give you instances of what I mean. It would be better if you will discover them yourself.

The necklace sent to you is strong enough to last for months. Another can be easily made. Do you want me to send you a spare one?

Love.

BAPU

AMALABEHN[2]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 8, 1933

DEAR SATISBABU,

* * *[3]

If the Bengali *Harijan* does not pay itself you will not hesitate to withdraw it. It should be issued only if it is wanted by the public. You may reduce the cost of production to the lowest limit possible but if even then you cannot get enough subscribers it is clear that there is no demand for it. Harijan service does not depend upon such propaganda. This work has

[1] *Vide* p. 236.
[2] In Devanagari in Gandhiji's hand
[3] As in the source

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to be deeper and intenser rather than extensive. The intensity will insure the extent.

Mail time is up. Therefore no more.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 19119

308. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 8, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

Let me know what is your experience of . . .[1]. Many persons say that she is not worthy of . . .[2]. That is Narandas's view also. Give me your opinion.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10348. Also C.W. 6787. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

309. LETTER TO ALASTAIR MACRAE

'PARNAKUTI', POONA 6,
July 9, 1933

DEAR MR. MACRAE,

I thank you for sending me the first page of your father's letter containing his reference to my fast.

My position in regard to the principal religions of the world has been explained fairly often in the pages of *Young India* and elsewhere. I believe in the truth of them all and I have studied them to the best of my ability, not as a critic but as a seeker after Truth and therefore have received much assistance from their study. So far as I know it, a change in the fundamental position that I hold today is not likely. Whilst I regard Jesus to be one of the greatest religious teachers, I do not believe in His exclusive divinity. You will be surprised to know that my belief in fasting, as a form of intense prayer, began before I knew anything of the teachings of Jesus. But when I came to read the Bible, the Koran and the other scriptures, my position was further

[1] & [2] The names have been omitted.

fortified by the knowledge that they advocated fasting as a help to heartfelt prayer and communion with God.

I return the page from your father's letter.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure

From a photostat: S.N. 19121

310. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 10, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

Do not be in a hurry to know all your limitations. I want your letters giving me your natural state. When I get the time I shall analyse some of them. Meanwhile know that all my criticism is charged with love. And I am hoping that you have sense of humour.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

311. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 10, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Purushottam has resumed work, but his mind is still not at peace.

Keshu is still here. He is calm. I feel that our duty towards Jnana requires us to do something more for her.

Tell Panditji[1] that I understand what he says regarding Gajanan and Dhiru. Ramdas and Nimu are here. Kano[2] has taken ill and so they have had to stay on. Mahadev is completely free. Babla has an attack of fever, but today it is very slight. There is no cause for worry at all.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8390. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

CWMG - IVY

312. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, POONA–I

July 12, 1933

Gandhiji, speaking next,[1] is reported to have narrated to the conference as to why he undertook the fast. After the fast he had received several suggestions regarding the position of the movement in the country. Several Congressmen had urged him to call off the movement and in order to ascertain their views, this Workers' Conference had been called. He said that it had been suggested that Messrs Shastri and Birla should also be invited to the conference but he was of opinion, that if Messrs Shastri and Birla were invited, others of similar views should not be left uninvited. The Conference being of the Congressmen, Gandhiji advised that no invitation should be sent to non-Congressmen.[2]

That he was very keen about establishing peace in the country, and that he would certainly try his best to secure it, Mr. Gandhi is reported to have remarked in the course of his speech.

Mr. Gandhi stated that the necessity for calling the conference had arisen not because circumstances had altered or that the Government had offered terms, but because of the peculiar circumstances created by his fast and his consequent release. He felt ashamed that one man should have been responsible for this, but he could not help it.

Asking the delegates to express their views freely and frankly, Mr. Gandhi stated that he would like to have their views whether they wanted suspension of the civil disobedience movement indefinitely or for a definite period with conditions, as he had gathered that some were of opinion that it should be an unconditional calling off, while others thought it should be a kind of truce and some conditions should be laid down for acceptance by the Government. After hearing their views, Mr. Gandhi said he would give his own considered opinion the next day and advise the Congress as to what action it should take.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 13-7-1933

[1] M. S. Aney, President of the Conference, spoke first.

[2] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 13-7-1933.

[3] The report had added: "Except one or two, the rest of the speakers were unanimous in their view that civil disobedience should be called off, and that it should be done without regard to what the Government may or may not do regarding the question of the release of politicals. . . ."

313. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 13, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter has come. You can imagine the pressure I am working under. I have taken silence to write this and one or two other important letters and to write for the *Harijan*. I have but a few minutes left to keep an appointment for 7 a.m. God is good to me and He gives me just enough strength to pull through the work before me.

The weight fluctuates. Under the pressure of work it has dropped from over 101 to under 99. So it would continue to fluctuate for some time. I am keeping quite fit.

I want you to beat me in competition for health of mind and body without being anxious about it. What is the use of your adopting me as father and mother and not adding to the heritage you may have received from a double parent? I really believe that such should be the case where there is reciprocity. And where it is a case of adoption, you do not adopt a parent for his vices or limitations but the virtues you impute to him. Therefore you not only try to imbibe the imaginary or real virtues but add to them. I would like you to prove the law. And I have faith that you will.

Do you know the notable instance of Gorakhnath having outdone his Guru Machhendranath ?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Prabhavati is standing by me whilst I am writing this and of course sends you her love.

From a photostat: C.W. 9680. Courtesy: Mirabehn

CWMG - LV

314. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY[1]

July 14, 1933[2]

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
VICEROY'S CAMP

WILL HIS EXCELLENCY GRANT INTERVIEW WITH A VIEW TO EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES OF PEACE. KINDLY WIRE.[3]

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), p. 42; also S.N. 21526

[1] The draft in Gandhiji's hand read: "Will His Excellency grant me interview exploring possibilities of peace. Kindly wire."

[2] From the S.N. source

[3] The addressee's telegram dated July 17, in reply to this read: "In reply to your telegram asking for an interview His Excellency has directed me to say that if the circumstances were different he would gladly have seen you. But it would seem that you are opposed to withdrawing civil disobedience except on conditions and that the interview you seek with His Excellency is for the purpose of initiating negotiations with Government regarding these conditions. It also appears to have been decided that unless Congress reaches a settlement with Government as a result of such discussions civil disobedience will be resumed on first August. It is hardly necessary to remind you that the position of Government is that the civil disobedience movement is wholly unconstitutional that there can be no compromise with it and that Government cannot enter into any negotiations for its withdrawal. On April twenty-ninth nineteen hundred and thirty two the Secretary of State stated in the House of Commons that there would be no question of making a bargain with Congress as a condition of its co-operation. The same position has been consistently maintained by Government in numerous subsequent statements. If the Congress desires to resume its position as a constitutional party and to put an end to a movement which has brought grave injury and suffering to the country the way is open to it as it always has been. It is within the power of the Congress to restore peace by withdrawing on its own initiative the civil disobedience movement. As however the Congress is not willing to take that action an interview with His Excellency would be to no purpose."

CWMG - LV

315. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, POONA–II

July 14, 1933

Gandhiji began his speech after referring to the events since September last. He is stated to have said:

I am accused of having committed three sins. They are (1) my fast with regard to the change in the communal award, (2) my acceptance of conditional freedom to carry on propaganda regarding untouchability, and (3) suspension of civil disobedience movement.

As regards change in the communal award I had stated at the Round Table Conference[1] that I would perish in fighting against separate electorates for untouchables.

Consistent with that statement he had to get the communal award changed, and hence had to carry on correspondence with Government. Fast and further propaganda from inside the jail were the natural consequences.

Answering the third charge, Gandhiji is reported to have stated that as soon as jail gates were banged behind him he thought he would not be able to sustain during the fast the hearing of reports of arrests, lathi charges, etc., and hence requested Mr. Aney to suspend the movement.

Speaking about civil disobedience movement Gandhiji is stated to have spoken in the following strain:

I have carefully heard the speeches of everyone, the more so of those speaking for withdrawal; I have heard their arguments, but I am still unconvinced. I would use the very same arguments in favour of continuation of the movement. I was sorry to hear several speakers say that workers were tired and wanted rest. I would have appreciated if they had said they themselves were tired. The workers were not tired. The country was not tired. The country was prepared to continue.

I am sorry at the lack of confidence of certain leaders. I am definite that withdrawal of the movement without an honourable settlement would be a false and fatal [step], attended by deadly consequences. We should be betraying the confidence of the nation reposed in us. The Government wants complete surrender. I would rather be reduced to dust than surrender. How can we call off the movement when Government had not granted the national demand? It is a mistake to say that the movement began

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLVIII, p. 298.

in 1930. The real movement began in 1920, and the fight is being continued, though there was a lull of a few years.

It cannot be withdrawn now. A true satyagrahi will go on fighting till the end, till he got what he had aimed at. I have heard several speakers referring to lack of numbers. Those who say this do not know the A.B.C. of satyagraha. I do not mind numbers. I can quote historical facts where a handful have fought against heavy odds, and won.

The speaker felt sorry at the attitude taken by people who stood for withdrawal. He said the country was not tired but a few leaders were. He gave an example of Kathiawar bullocks. When one of the two bullocks sat down the other also was forced to sit down, but if the one that was standing was strong enough, the other that was sitting would be made to stand up. Gandhiji is stated to have said that due to repression it was not possible to carry on mass civil disobedience, and hence he had prepared a scheme for individual satyagraha, where every worker was his own leader.

Referring to the constructive programme suggested by several speakers, Gandhiji is said to have stated that it was a delusion. It was impossible to carry on any constructive programme in the country if the movement was withdrawn.

Referring to another speaker's suggestion that one crore of Congress members should be enrolled, Gandhiji said that it was an impossible programme. Not even six members could be enrolled in Bardoli if the movement were to be withdrawn.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that he was hankering for peace and he would explore all avenues to arrive at an honourable settlement, before resuming civil disobedience. Certain friends had objected to his writing to the Viceroy. He said a true satyagrahi should not be ashamed to make overtures. He must try his best to arrive at an honourable settlement. Overture was not being made due to weakness, but with a feeling of full strength. He appealed to the Conference that if they thought necessary, he should be authorized to seek unconditional interview from the Viceroy and try to arrive at an honourable settlement.

Gandhiji who opposed unconditional withdrawal of the movement said that the demand of Government for unconditional withdrawal before negotiations was a trap into which he asked members not to fall. After his speech he called upon different members to express their views on his statement. He wanted speakers to be frank, and not support him due to personal loyalty to himself.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-7-1933

[1] After Gandhiji's speech the conference was adjourned for one hour to allow members to discuss and express their opinions. When the conference

316. THE WRONG WAY

The following extracts from the letter of a professor who claims to be a sanatanist will be read with interest:

> I am an orthodox sanatanist Brahmin. I have rendered my humble services to the cause of sanatana dharma in various capacities. I have even written books and published articles concerning sanatana dharma. Various orthodox sanatanist organizations and leaders will bear me out in my statement. So I have proved my *bona fides* to speak for sanatana dharma. Up till now, I was also an opponent of temple-entry by Harijans but my inner voice today, all of a sudden, spoke to me that, unless the so-called untouchables are given the right of having *darshan* of *patita-pavana* Bhagavan in temples, Hinduism is doomed. Bitter experiences of past months have compelled me to revolutionize my views now. I know my statement will surprise many. Most of them may even call me a renegade now, but to me safety of Hindus and of Hinduism is a sacred religious duty for which I will not mind vilification. . . . The plight of Hindus in these days is very pathetic. They have now become a constant prey to untold sufferings and agonies. Whenever I see a Hindu in distress, tears flood my eyes and I try my best to relieve him or her of it. . . . I rather prefer death to seeing Hindus in such a melancholy condition. . . . But, in order to persuade orthodox sanatanists to agree with me, I request you with all the emphasis at my command to accept a condition that only those Harijans may be freely allowed to enter a temple who have taken a solemn vow to bathe daily, to wear clean clothes, and to discard beef and carrion. Poor sanatanists are also not to be blamed. It is these unclean habits that are really responsible for the practice of untouchability itself. Harijans are themselves to be blamed to a great extent for the disabilities under which they are groaning. To ask sanatanists to allow Harijans to enter temples without, at the same time, rebuking them for their evil habits is, I fear, tantamount to putting a premium on them (habits).
>
> So I entreat you to accept my suggestion, and I assure you that I shall leave no stone unturned to see that it is consented to by my orthodox sanatanist friends too. I will also carry on intense propaganda in its favour, and I am confident by grace of Providence I will attain success.

---

reassembled, Gandhiji answered several questions put by the delegates; *vide* Appendix VIII. The Conference authorized Gandhiji to seek unconditional interview with the Viceroy; *vide* the preceding item.

Let not the reader think that the reference to the Inner Voice has any connection with my claim regarding the fast. It is an independent thought. For the letter is dated 25th April last. The Editor has unearthed old undisposed of correspondence which was to receive attention. I do not know whether the learned professor retains the views expressed in his letter or whether he has modified the position taken up by him as to the conditional temple-entry by Harijans. But the position taken up by him is typical. It is, therefore, necessary to show the fallacy underlying it. Whilst I appreciate the conversion of the writer on the temple-entry question, I cannot help saying that the condition he seeks to impose upon the Harijans will frustrate the very end he has in view. He forgets that caste Hindus are responsible for the present condition of the Harijans. We have, therefore, to receive them as they are and have faith that our contact and love will, if we are true, make them shed all those habits that may be repugnant to decent society. To blame the Harijans for their present condition is like a slave-holder blaming his slave for the misery and squalor the latter may be living in. We would ridicule the slave-holder, perhaps even accuse him of insincerity, if he made the removal of squalor by the slave as a condition precedent to the grant of freedom. It should also be borne in mind that the Harijans will enter temples subject to the same condition that is applicable to the rest of Hindus. Nature has not made of Harijans a separate species distinguished from caste Hindus by definite unmistakable signs. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Harijans enter temples without being detected. The studies of census reports published in these columns[1] must make it clear to anybody that those who were not classified as untouchables must have entered temples without let or hindrance. The mere fact of a new enumeration, for the first time including certain classes and excluding certain other classes from the Harijan list, surely cannot be used as any test of untouchability or touchability. Only Hindus can claim no merit for the undetected entry of the so-called State-made untouchables into temples. What is now claimed is that caste Hindus should seek merit, in other words, purify themselves, by deliberately banishing untouchability from their midst as a sin. I cannot repeat too often that by untouchability I mean the thing as it is practised today. Let the professor and those who think like him remember that [what] the reform, the anti-untouchability campaign, stands for is no mere make-shift for placating

[1] *Vide* pp. 64-6 and 116-20.

Harijans. It stands for a fundamental change in Hindu practice, it stands for the total abolition of the practice of high-and-lowness that has crept into Hinduism in spite of its lofty and unequivocal declaration that all life is one and that differentiation is *maya*, is false. Practice of equal treatment of all human beings should be the least direct outcome of that belief not reserved for sannyasis but for the ordinary man in his ordinary dealings with fellow-men.

Harijan, 15-7-1933

317. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS[1]

July 15, 1933

ANDREWS
ISUHOST
LONDON

INFORMAL CONFERENCE[2] FINISHED LAST NIGHT. IN ACCORDANCE CONSENSUS OPINION WIRED[3] VICEROY SEEKING INTERVIEW EXPLORE POSSIBILITY PEACE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21527

[1] The cable was in reply to the addressee's dated July 14, 1933, from London, which read: "Please cable immediately your own language exact present situation" (S.N. 21527).

[2] Of leading Congressmen held at Poona from July 12 to 14; *vide* pp. 262 and 265-6.

[3] *Vide* p. 264.

CWMG - LV

318. LETTER TO KRISHNASWAMI

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
July 16, 1933

BHAI KRISHNASWAMI,

I have your letter. I have also learnt from Rajaji of your acquaintance with him. My blessings on your marriage.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

SJT. KRISHNASWAMI
DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR
TRIPLICANE
MADRAS[1]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6580; also C.W. 4405

319. TESTIMONIAL TO PARASHURAM MEHROTRA

July 16, 1933

Shri Parashuram Mehrotra has been known to me for several years. I have found him to be an enthusiastic, industrious and reliable young man. His bent is towards editorial work. I hope he will soon secure such work and achieve success in it.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5848. Also C.W. 3071. Courtesy: Parashuram Mehrotra

320. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY

[*July 17, 1933*][2]

PRIVATE SECRETARY TO VICEROY
SIMLA

YOUR WIRE EVEN DATE HAS COME UPON ME AS A PAINFUL SURPRISE. I HAD NOT EXPECTED THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE

[1] The address is reproduced from the C.W. source.
[2] From the reference to the addressee's telegram, *vide* p. 264.

CWMG - IV

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF CONFIDENTIAL PROCEEDINGS OF AN INFORMAL CONFERENCE AND ON BASIS THEREOF REJECT REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW. IF INTERVIEW WERE GRANTED I COULD SHOW THAT PROCEEDINGS TAKEN AS A WHOLE WERE CALCULATED TO BRING ABOUT AN HONOURABLE PEACE. CONFERENCE UNDOUBTEDLY FAVOURABLE TO PEACE IF IT CAN BE ATTAINED WITHOUT HUMILIATION. IF HOWEVER GOVERNMENT HOLD THAT THEY CANNOT HAVE ANY CONVERSATION EVEN FOR PROMOTING PEACE WITH REPRESENTATIVE OF AN ASSOCIATION ENGAGED IN ACTIVITIES IN BREACH OF STATE LAWS HOWEVER REPRESSIVE THEY MAY BE UNTIL THAT ASSOCIATION FIRST DISCONTINUES SUCH ACTIVITIES WHICH IT BELIEVES TO BE IN PURSUANCE OF INHERENT RIGHT BELONGING TO HUMAN FAMILY I CAN HAVE NOTHING TO SAY. NEVERTHELESS I WOULD LIKE TO ADD A PERSONAL NOTE. MY LIFE IS REGULATED BY PEACEFUL MOTIVES. I HANKER FOR REAL PEACE BUT I MUST CONFESS THAT I CANNOT BE SATISFIED WITH A MAKESHIFT. IF I RESORT TO NON-CO-OPERATION OR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IT IS FOR ESTABLISHING TRUE AND VOLUNTARY CO-OPERATION AND OBEDIENCE TO LAWS IN PLACE OF FORCED CO-OPERATION AND FORCED OBEDIENCE. I THEREFORE HOPE THAT MY REQUEST FOR INTERVIEW WILL BE GRANTED.[1]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21526; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), p. 42

321. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

July 17, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I shall try to send another chain.[2] Do not worry about anything, not even for me. After all God keeps us all and He is an all-sufficing Protector.

Your Hindi letter was quite nice for you. The alphabet is not yet correctly traced. You should compare it with the original.

[1] The addressee's telegram of even date in reply to this read: "His Excellency had hoped that position of Government was plain. It is that civil disobedience is a movement intended to coerce the Government by means of unlawful activities and that there can be no question of Government holding conversation with a representative of an Association which has not abandoned that movement" (S.N. 21526).

[2] *Vide* p. 259.

You are not going to be unnerved on hearing that I am taken to Yeravda or some such prison.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

322. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 17, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I don't get a single moment free, and, therefore, cannot write to you even though I wish to do so. A copy of my letter to the Ashram is enclosed. My ideas are thus changing fast. I don't know where they will stop. If I am fixed up [in jail] in a day or two, I shall not be able to discuss such ideas with you. But you yourself should start thinking. Give to Narandas whatever advice you think fit. Vinoba also will read my letter. I have had no time to write to him, and cannot get any even today.

Kamala's[1] fast has been going on. Perhaps she may end it today. Mehta is taking proper care of her. He gives me a report every day. She started the fast with great courage.

I hope you keep good health.

You will certainly have to join. But don't be in a hurry. Improve your health a little before joining.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2918

323. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

July 17, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. There has been no letter from Satara. I quite forgot to write to Narandas about you. I remembered today and wrote immediately. He will now discuss the matter with you. The rest you will know from my letter to him.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 360. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Addressee's daughter

CWMG-IV

324. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 17, 1933

CHI. PREMA,

You must have received my letter. You know my expectations. My letter to Narandas need not make you impatient. At present what is necessary is to be ready for such a step. Nobody knows when the time to take it will come.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10349. Also C.W. 6788. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

325. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

KIRKEE,
July 18, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

REACHING ASHRAM TOMORROW. REVA LEAVING TOMORROW. GANGADHARRAO WILL BE BOMBAY TWO DAYS.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 111

326. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

POONA,
July 18, 1933

Asked about his immediate programme, he stated that he was going to the Sabarmati Ashram simply for the sake of visiting the people at the Ashram.

It would be a matter of regret for me if I did not go to the Ashram before being imprisoned. Imprisonment is a certainty whether it comes today or in a few days.

What do you think of the Viceroy's reply[1] ?

In my opinion, the Viceregal reply has created a regret-

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 264.

CWMG - I.V.

table situation fraught with grave danger. The doctrine laid down in that reply, in my opinion, is altogether new. I do not know that civilized States have refused to carry on conversations with their rebellious subjects for the sake of peace. Whilst hitherto they have parleyed with rebels, who have been armed from top to toe, in the present instance the civil resisters are admittedly non-violent.[1] It is also a matter of deep regret that His Excellency should have taken any notice whatsoever of unauthorized Press reports of confidential proceedings in answering a simple request for an interview for the promotion of peace. This again, in my opinion, is a dangerous doctrine. I am not aware of heads of States having taken notice of Press reports in situations such as this. The duty, therefore, before self-respecting Indians is perfectly plain. I cannot imagine greater degradation or humiliation than for one to deny his faith.

Questioned regarding the exact purpose of the conference Gandhiji said it was an informal conference.

Without fear of any contradiction I can say that it was convened solely for the purpose of ascertaining whether Congressmen desired peace or not. I would not have been a party to convening this informal conference had I not been in utter ignorance of the situation in the country. It was, therefore, convened for the sake of guiding me. Having found myself outside the jail, naturally, co-workers expected me to advise them regarding the course of action to be adopted. I could give no decisive advice without knowing the state of affairs in the country. The conference therefore was the only method whereby I could do so and I am glad to be able to say today that, whilst the conference as a whole was not prepared to give up or call off civil disobedience, undoubtedly there was every desire to withdraw the movement on honourable terms. But the Viceregal telegrams are clear proof of the fact that, what the Government desires is not an honourable settlement, but a complete and humiliating surrender on the part of the Congress.

I prophesy that what has been impossible today will be possible tomorrow. When that tomorrow will come, I do not know. That it is coming and sooner than men expect, is to me as much a certainty as the fact of my giving this interview.

Asked whether the majority of the conference favoured withdrawal, and the present decision was forced on the conference, Gandhiji said:

[1] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 19-7-1933.

It is not right, and if it had been right, I would not be guilty of forcing my opinion. But I freely admit that there was at the conference a fair body of opinion that favoured complete withdrawal but not in the sense that the Government would have it.

Asked about the future of Congress policy, Gandhiji stated:

Mr. Aney will be issuing a statement, and I betray no secret when I say that his statement will be found to advise the country to suspend mass movement for the time being. There are causes for this step into which I need not go presently. He will also be advising the cessation of all Congress organizations and secret methods which alone made their functioning possible.

The movement remains under suspension up to the end of this month as announced by Mr. Aney for my sake; and, though the Viceregal refusal has considerably altered the situation, in view of my having regained sufficient strength to do a moderate amount of work, and in order to avoid all possibilities of any misunderstanding, it has been decided to continue the suspension.

Asked if he would be the All-India Dictator, he said:

I am just now in the role of a humble adviser. I do not regard myself as really fully out of Yeravda. My discharge was due to unforeseen circumstances. I have no desire whatsoever to take undue advantage of that circumstance. I am not going to do any act of civil disobedience till after the suspension period, without telling the Government previously about it.

Asked about what would happen to the Harijan movement, he said:

Many people had expected that I would devote the whole of my time to the Harijan movement. These do not understand me and without any disparagement to any of them I would say that they do not understand all the implications of what they thought. In the first instance, my life is not divided into watertight compartments but is one indivisible whole and therefore I could not possibly give up the activities of a lifetime which are as dear to me as the Harijan movement itself. My activities react upon one another. Therefore if I excluded other activities my Harijan service would itself suffer. Then again I could not all the twenty-four hours of the day be doing Harijan work. That is an impossible thing; and if it was suggested that I could give up prison life which the civil disobedience movement implied, for the sake of Harijan work, it means that I should give up a life principle. Therefore I can only render this service to the best of my ability and consistently with the principles that govern my life.

CWMG - IVY

Lastly, as I have already stated, Harijan work requires tremendous individual efforts for self-purification. In that respect, perhaps, it may be distinguished from other movements—social, political or semi-political. The recent fast perhaps best illustrates my point. Therefore I am certain that my attention to other activities does not in any way affect my capacity for serving the Harijan cause.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 19-7-1933

327. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"[1]

BOMBAY,
July 18, 1933

Since the Viceroy has turned down my very simple request, not accompanied by any conditions, there is no present prospect of peace, I made every effort that was humanly possible, but when the door was banged in my face, I became helpless.

The informal conference was favourable to peace. It is difficult to say what would have been the basis of an honourable peace, but it would certainly have been reinstatement, at the very least, of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact[2], in so far as it was possible, for I could show that there was a breach of that Pact not by the Congress, but by the Government.

The White Paper has satisfied no party. It will never satisfy the Congress, but I would not have even discussed the White Paper at the interview. I had a wholly different scheme in view, which could have been acceptable both to the Government and the Congress.

Civil disobedience will certainly be renewed, after the suspension period, unless it is anticipated by the Government taking any precipitate action. But the acting President of the Congress is stopping mass civil disobedience including the no-tax campaign. He is also tabooing secret methods, and since Congress organizations can only function through secret methods, he is scrapping all Congress organizations for the time being. Civil disobedience will, therefore, be confined to individual effort. Individuals will offer disobedience on their own responsibility, without the expectation of financial or other help.

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-7-1933, published this as Gandhiji's "reply to certain questions asked by the London *Daily Herald*".

[2] *Vide* Vol. XLV.

CWMG-IV

You ask what I should do if the movement became violent. I can only say that it had remained non-violent under the gravest provocation. It is not likely now to become violent, but if it does, I know that I have a prompt remedy for it.

The Hindu, 19-7-1933

328. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

SABARMATI,
July 19, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

WOULD LIKE WHILST HERE SEE MIRABAI SLADE PRISONER SABARMATI INSTEAD WEEKLY LETTER SHE IS PERMITTED WRITE AND RECEIVE REPLY. KINDLY WIRE REPLY.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, p. 29

329. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJANS, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*July 19, 1933*][2]

It is for you to suggest improvements in the present methods of your work. It should be done in the cleanest and most hygienic way. I know it. I have done it in South African jails. Baskets are no good for the disposal of the night-soil. You should have strong buckets to be carried by a couple of men. You are so conservative in your ways that you may not like the innova-

[1] This is extracted from "Ahmedabad Letter" by Mahadev Desai, who had reported: "About a hundred of them, many of them in spotless white khadi, gathered round Gandhiji in Sheth Ranchhodbhai's courtyard. The questions that they asked were eloquent proof of the awakening that had come over them and of the intelligence and fearlessness with which they could discuss their problems. Gandhiji addressed himself to the Bhangis' questions first, as the poor Bhangi is the most unfortunate among the unfortunates."

[2] From a report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-7-1933, published under the date-line "Ahmedabad, July 19" which read: "Earlier in the day Gandhiji received a deputation of the local Depressed-Class people."

tion but I suggest to you that buckets are far more convenient, clean and effective. If you like my suggestion, I am prepared to broach the matter to the local Municipal Councillors. You want public baths. I am glad you do, but I may warn you that some of your people have not been ready to avail themselves of the facilities provided in other places. You must bestir yourselves and strengthen the hands of those who are working for your welfare.

Addressing next all the Harijans, he said:

The apathy of the high-caste Hindus seems to worry you. I am dealing with them as best I can, but this is not the occasion to give them a message. How can I convey them a message through you? I would ask you not to think of them, but to think of yourselves. This is a movement for the purification of Hinduism. Think what contribution *you* can make to it. If you bestir yourselves, if you shed your unclean habits, if you reform your way of living, irrespective of what the high-caste Hindus do, I assure you their superiority of birth will automatically disappear. Superiority consists in clean and pure living and I assure you that in spite of your unclean occupations you can live cleaner and purer lives than the rest of us. Yours is a service without which the community cannot do. I want you to be conscious of the dignity of your profession, to learn to practise it in a clean manner and I am sure you will be able to dictate your terms. Depend on yourselves, stand on your own legs and work your own salvation.

But, you complain that your own people are not being made members of the Servants of Untouchability Boards, and you suggest that they should be given a larger share in the administration. If the caste Hindus were over-lords or a bureaucracy ruling over you, I could understand the suggestion. I would then ask them to surrender all power. But they are no overlords, they are servants pledged to atone for the wrongs their forefathers have committed for ages. How can you share in the atonement? They are doing what they are by way of penance. You have no penance to perform. Rest assured that the moment you claim a share in the administration the burden will be shifted on to you and the caste Hindus will declare themselves free of all responsibility. There is no power or pride of possession in the responsibility to collect funds and administer relief. I have made drastic suggestions for cutting down the administrative expenses and they are being carried out. In-

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stead of asking to be appointed on the Executive of the Anti-untouchability Board, you can form your own advisory boards to help the Anti-untouchability Board with suggestions every now and then. That is how you can make yourselves most useful.

You have asked me why instead of staying with you I have accepted the hospitality of Sheth Ranchhodlal. Will you believe me when I say that I am staying with him in your own interest? You do not want me to make a demonstration of my affection for you? If staying in your midst was the only test, I should not hesitate to do so, but I want you to believe me when I say that I can do your work better by living here than amongst you. If Sheth Ranchhodlal was harbouring untouchability it would have been a different matter. I should then have not thought of staying with him. But you can see that he has turned his house into a Harijans' home for me.

A VOICE: We do not mind your staying with Sheth Ranchhodbhai. It is the sanatanists who are twitting us, saying, 'Look even your Gandhi avoids you and stays with mill-owners.'

Well, if you listen to the sanatanists in these matters, you are done for!

Harijan, 29-7-1933

330. DISCUSSION WITH ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY WORKERS, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*July 19, 1933*][2]

Gandhiji also took an opportunity of meeting the anti-untouchability workers in Gujarat and helping them with suggestions. They narrated the difficulties of work in villages. He said he was aware of them, and suggested that work in villages will for some time to come have to be predominantly welfare work. Thus they would have to have schools for Harijan children, wells and temples for Harijans, and so on, the thing to be borne in mind being that they should try to enlist the sympathy of the caste Hindus who may be in favour of reform by asking them to send their children to these schools, and to use the Harijan wells and visit the Harijan temples in preference to those exclusively used by the caste Hindus. Necessarily therefore the schools and wells

[1] Extracted from "Ahmedabad Letter" by Mahadev Desai

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-7-1933; *vide* also the preceding item.

and temples would have to be better in every way than the corresponding exclusive ones.

The task in the towns and cities was comparatively easier. In Ahmedabad they were getting anti-untouchability pledges signed by caste Hindus. The workers must now ask those who sign these pledges to give concrete form to their sympathy for Harijans. To this end they should pay house-to-house visits and collect subscriptions, no matter however small, from each house which may not definitely be opposed to the reform. The coppers thus collected from thousands of homes would be much more valuable than the rupees collected from a handful of wealthy people.

There was a Harijan girls' hostel opened by the local branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society, but the workers were hard put to it in inducing Bhangi girls to enter the hostel. There was also the fear that the girls belonging to other sections of Harijans would go away if Bhangi girls came. Gandhiji's advice was emphatic on this matter. Even at the risk of scaring away other Harijan girls, Bhangi girls should be induced to come.

Gandhiji himself carried out his suggestion for house-to-house collection by appealing to people coming to the evening prayers for giving their coppers for Harijan work. The response was spontaneous.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

331. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

July 19, 1933

I have seen a report of Sir Samuel Hoare's speech in the House of Commons on the India estimates debate. It is another surprise equally painful like the Viceregal telegram.

I may say that since the fast I have not been able to read newspapers regularly, and, during the fast, for ten or twelve days I have not even looked at the newspapers for the simple reason that I have had no time. I, therefore, cannot say whether reports in newspapers are truly reflective of the proceedings of the informal conference. My point, however, was not that the reports are necessarily untrue, but it was that no notice should have been taken of unauthorized reports of confidential proceedings. Surely, it ought not to have mattered to the Viceroy what I or anybody had said at the informal conference. The Viceroy could have judged for himself what I might have said at the interview, had it been granted. The proceedings were kept confidential purposely, in order not to prejudice my request for an interview.

I have been asked even now to deny the accuracy of the reports. How am I to do so without going through the files of newspapers, and how many newspapers am I to read? I venture to suggest that it is not a business proposition. It ought to be sufficient that my request was not fettered by any conditions. It was a mere request for an interview to explore possibilities of peace, and I think that it should have been considered on its merits. But perhaps the proper question to put to me at this stage is whether I personally repent having advised the country to take up civil disobedience and whether I would still advise withdrawal. That question I have already answered[1] before now.

The interviewer then asked if the door for negotiation had been finally closed. Gandhiji readily replied:

Not for me. So far as I am concerned, the door will never be closed, and whenever I see the slightest opportunity, I would not hesitate to knock at the Viceregal door. But I suppose that so far as authorities are concerned, they have finally closed the door, unless the Congress will call off civil disobedience altogether which, I hope, the Congress will never do.

Asked if he was likely to do anything to promote civil disobedience before 31st July, Gandhiji said:

I shall do nothing overt before the end of the month during which civil disobedience stands suspended.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-7-1933

332. INTERVIEW TO REPRESENTATIVE OF "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

July 20, 1933

In mass civil disobedience a large number of people act like sheep, therefore act under leadership and sink or swim together. In individual civil disobedience everyone is his own leader and the weakening of one cannot affect any other person. One million individuals may offer individual civil disobedience but that would mean that each one of them has acted independently of others and on his own responsibility. This again does not mean that the people do not have one mind and that they pull in opposite directions and, on the contrary, if individuals act with

[1] *Vide* pp. 273-6.

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one aim and under one banner although they may act independently of one another, they will pull in same direction. The beauty of individual satyagraha lies in the fact that in it there is no such thing as defeat and it can never be circumvented by an earthly power, no matter how great it is.

Individual civil disobedience includes anything and everything that an individual conceives as proper and is permitted by Congress under the creed of non-violence and truth.

Q. Prison bar helpful country [*sic*]?

A. If I did not think so I would cease to offer civil disobedience. The truth lying behind civil disobedience is that under an unjust system a freedom-loving man considers himself to be freer in a prison than outside.

Q. As a result of Poona Conference don't you feel [that there will be a] split into two or more parties?

A. I do not anticipate any such result at all. Whilst there were sharp differences of opinion among Congressmen, I have never known more cordiality and less acrimony and prompter obedience to the chair as at Poona Conference. Indeed I believe that there will be no split in Congress ranks and it will be found that the revised scheme, when it is published by the acting President, accomm[odates] almost every shade of opinion in Congress.

Q. Call off civil disobedience by instalments [*sic*]?

A. I would never consider admissions of a setback in a movement either as humi[liation] or as weakness and it is for that reason that I have advised cessation of mass civil disobedience which is clearly an admission of setback, and if I had felt that there was no other form of civil disobedience, I would have advised complete withdrawal, had I been the sole representative of that opinion; but in satyagraha individual civil disobedience is the final factor, it is indefensible [*sic*] and it's for that reason that I have contended that it is an invincible force. So far as interview with Viceroy was concerned, it was because I was anxious as was the conference that even individual civil disobedience should be stopped if any honourable settlement could be secured had I got the interview. You will therefore see that there was, behind request for interview, no obstinate refusal to call off even individual civil disobedience under any circumstances whatsoever.

I am here during the pleasure of Government, but otherwise at least up to the end of suspension period [that is] 31st July.

In my opinion, friends in England can do very little at present. I am clear—Viceroy's position [is] wholly untenable. There seems to be no way out but greater, purer suffering by people.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

333. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD,
July 21, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

GRATEFUL PROMPT PERMISSION SEE MIRABAI.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, p. 37

334. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

'AMRIT BHUVAN', ELLIS BRIDGE,
July 21, 1933

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have had no letter from you recently. I had hoped for one. You must have received the letter[1] which I wrote to you from Poona. I am discussing with co-workers a proposal for sacrificing the Ashram in this *yajna*. It is almost certain now. We shall decide finally today. The example of the Ashram's sacrifice need not be copied. Anybody who wishes to regard it as an ideal and act accordingly may certainly do so. It is not necessary just now even in regard to the Ashram at Wardha to copy the example of Sabarmati. If I get time, I will write more.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan's son, who was in England and had gone to the U.S.A. from there, came and saw me in Poona. He is in Bombay at present. He has had training in a sugar factory in the U.S.A. I don't know, though, how much he has learnt. Khurshedbehn and others advise that he should work for some time in a sugar factory. Try him in your factory. He has not

[1] *Vide* p. 272.

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impressed me as being a very intelligent person, but has impressed me as being a good man. Just now at any rate he says that he will do as I advise. You need not pay him immediately. You may fix the pay after one month if he shows proficiency in his work. For the present, you will have only to provide for his boarding and lodging.

My health is fairly good. I am staying with Ranchhodbhai. I go to the Ashram daily. I hope to see Mirabehn today. I had wired to the Government seeking permission to do so, and I have got it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2919

335. AN AMERICAN CRITICISM[1]

The vast majority of letters received from the West on the recent fast have been full of goodwill and appreciation of it and the motive lying behind it. The following letter balances the opinion reflected in the friendly letters and probably represents the majority opinion:

> Now that your twenty-one day fast is ended, as announced in small notices in the daily Press, what did it avail? The world was told that it was for the benefit of the untouchables so called. Just what did it do for them?
>
> (The Mahatma Gandhi is no longer front page news; we must search the inside pages to find him in the daily Press.)
>
> India, whose culture and civilization goes back far beyond record, which was given the new tongue of Christ Jesus by Thomas, the disciple, in the first century, and in the centuries just past has been given many opportunities to face the light, still remains in pagan darkness, its caste system of society the greatest sore spot on the modern world.
>
> What is the answer? Certainly not a fast, of whatever duration, by a lone man, of whatever sincerity, a man who late in life took off his clothes, and walked barefoot through the streets of London. That smacks too much of some of the grosser forms of American publicity methods to be effective.
>
> No one thing can raise the lower classes of India out of their poverty and degradation; if it is ever accomplished, it must be the working of

[1] A summary of the article had appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 22-7-1933 under the date-line, "Poona, July 21, 1933".

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many influences, each contributing to the one end. And the start must be from within themselves.

It must be a mental urge for something better.

No race whose women are subservient—or "without a soul" as you have it—has ever risen high in the scale of human progress.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness; and the nauseating filth in which the millions of your people live would preclude a start upward, until they begin to emerge from this mire.

A clean mind and a clean body will begin to turn their thought to a new life, which can have in it none of the 'persecution of the body' for the 'sake of the spirit'. For instance, your 'Holy Men', sitting for years in some deformed position, publicly torturing the body to liberate the soul, are no longer taken seriously by any enlightened person; I doubt if by themselves. Do they sit and think; or do they just sit?

The pagan religious rites, of sticking the body full of nails, spears through the tongue, and other revolting tortures, now widely known in America and throughout the world, bring nothing but disgust, and the feeling that they are, indeed, 'untouchable'.

I have not read *Mother India* by Katherine Mayo, but am told on good authority (India's resentment to the contrary notwithstanding), that it is a compilation of facts—so horrible that I have known cases of extreme illness from reading it.

If you really want to do something for the unfortunates of India, whose cause you have so nobly championed, why not cease your attempts at cheap publicity, found an educational system, work out a method by which large and increasing numbers may be enabled to take advantage of it; then see the support the enlightened nations of the world, especially America, would give you. It is a big job, with sixty millions to reach, and it is increasing so rapidly because of unwholesome social conditions which education would correct, and tradition of many hundreds of years to overcome. It will take generations but it will work, and this would be a substantial foundation upon which to build your future greatness.

And a united nation of sixty million people, united in knowledge, in progress, in ambition, in spiritual desire for self-government, cannot be held in bondage, either by a minority of their own countrymen, or by another powerful nation.

After all people who are hostile to certain steps taken by a public man do not trouble themselves to express their disapprobation to him. They ventilate it in the local Press. And since in the great Harijan movement I would love to retain the friendliness of the world, it is well to reply to the letter.

But it is a difficult letter to notice. For it starts with a bias and ends with it. The caste system does not become "the greatest sore spot on the modern world". He does not even seem to know what that system is. I have myself raised my voice against the evil that has crept into the system, but the evil of it is foreign to the original, and can be removed as it is being removed. Untouchability is the greatest excrescence, and the world knows what Herculean efforts are being made to combat the evil. The fast which the writer belittles was intended to help the movement. I must be unmoved by the writer's mixing up the fast and my mode of dress with "the grosser forms of American publicity methods". The proof of the pudding will be in the eating.

But one can heartily endorse the opinion that "no one thing can raise the lower classes of India out of their poverty and degradation" and that "the start must be from within themselves".

Almost the very next sentence repeats the exploded libel about the women of India being "without a soul". It is, perhaps, useless to tell the correspondent that many foreign writers of note have marvelled at the comparative freedom enjoyed by the women of India. This is not to say that there is not much to be done for the amelioration of their condition. But this can be said without fear of contradiction that whilst the betterment of the condition of women of the West is of recent growth, the women of India have from ancient times enjoyed in essential matters a freedom which has not escaped foreign observers.

The correspondent has evidently read literature containing ignorant and interested distortions about Indian habits and customs. No one, perhaps, has written more severely than I have done about our insanitation. But to describe it as "nauseating filth" is a gross libel. It betrays violent intolerance of habits other than one's own.

The correspondent would not have been betrayed into the wild generalization he has indulged in about the tortures which so-called yogis undergo, if instead of relying upon ignorant and sensational literature he had seen things with his own eyes. Just as one swallow does not make a summer, so cannot one yogi so-called resorting to self-tortures warrant the libel that self-torture is the general practice of those who seek liberation of the soul through crucifixion of the flesh, a practice general to mankind and indispensable for the subjugation of the body to the soul.

I must pass by Miss Catherine Mayo and "the unknown cases of extreme illness" from the reading of her libellous production *Mother India*. One can but pity the readers, if there were any such,

who made themselves sick by reading a book which opened the drains of India and made the readers believe that they were India.

In the concluding sentences, the correspondent advises the course to be adopted for the amelioration of the lot of the "untouchables". The pages of *Harijan* can tell him what constructive work is being attempted all over India by the Servants of Untouchables Society. It is up to American friends who are giving moral support to the movement to put before the American public a digest of the work reported in these pages from week to week.

Harijan, 22-7-1933

336. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

July 22, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have often wished to write to you but I have been helpless. Every ounce of the energy newly acquired has been spent in attending to the pressing work before me.

I had a nice time with Mother and Kamala. I was not able to see much of Sarup and Ranjit.

Mother is anxious about Krishna. She had long talks with me about her future. If you have any suggestions for me in the matter please let me have them. Of course my movements are uncertain. But that does not matter.

Devdas and Lakshmi, I left in Poona. They are due to come here now. Devdas will most probably settle down in Delhi for the time being. Mahadev, Ba and Prabhavati are with me. They are all soon to disperse, I expect.

I have been slow in regaining pre-fast strength. But I am slowly improving.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 111

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337. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

July 22, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I simply cannot forget your wonderful love. I had never thought I would be the cause of so much trouble to you, but I was helpless. I know that expressing one's feelings in words reduces their value, but I cannot help doing so. Hence this brief note. My health is good. My blessings to all, the grown-ups and the young, and to the servants too. Their service left nothing to be desired. A poor human, what return can I make?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 79. Also C.W. 4831. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

338. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

July 22, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your letter. All your questions are all right. I will reply to them as well as I can. The reason for handing over control of the Ashram is that it is better to hand over ourselves what the Government is sure to take by force in due course. Instead of carrying away our belongings one after another against land revenue, let them take the entire land. Moreover, when thousands of people have been ruined forcibly, it seems desirable, and even necessary from the point of view of dharma, that an ashram which bears the name of Satyagraha Ashram should voluntarily sacrifice itself. But this does not mean that the Ashram there should follow suit immediately. On the contrary, I feel that we should be satisfied with as many inmates as can leaving it and courting arrest. Vinoba, however, must not do so. He should remain outside for Harijan work. I wish to make the fullest use of the Mahila Ashram. Can children also be sent there? Some of the women at any rate will go. I have to solve the problem of N. and Amalabehn. I see no alternative to sending them

there. Both of them should be given Harijan work. For the present, they are to be trained for the work. N. should have as few contacts with men as possible. If the Government does not take possession of movable property, we will keep it somewhere here publicly. The problem of cows is a rather difficult one. I have been thinking what to do about it.

You need not be in a hurry to come out and join. You may do so when the time comes. I hope these details will satisfy you for the present. I am writing under great pressure for time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2920

339. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

July 22, 1933

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your postcard. The decision to sacrifice the Ashram has been made. I think we did have a discussion whether or not you should come here. You may now do what you think best. If you think it necessary to go to Delhi immediately, you may certainly do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2019

340. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

Saturday [On or after *July 22*,] *1933*[1]

CHI. PREMA,

If nothing unforeseen prevents me, I shall arrive there at three o'clock today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10350. Also C.W. 6789. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] In *Bapuna Patro–5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne*, the addressee explains that it was "probably in July 1933", during Gandhiji's stay at Ranchhodlal's bungalow, that she invited him to visit the Ashram library. In 1933 Gandhiji was in Ahmedabad from July 20 to 31.

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341. TELEGRAM TO MRS. SENGUPTA

July 23, 1933

MRS. SENGUPTA
CARE "ADVANCE", CALCUTTA

JUST HEARD SENGUPTA'S SUDDEN DEATH.[1] YOUR LOSS IS ALSO NATION'S. PRAY COUNT ME AS ONE OF COUNTLESS SHARERS YOUR GRIEF.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21530

342. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

July 23, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I get news about your improvement every day. You will soon be completely all right now. I hope to meet you once more before I am arrested.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5354

343. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Copy *July 24, 1933*

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your short, sweet and significant letter. I wish I could send you a long love-letter in reply. But that I cannot do; no time.

Yes, I shall go, and many Ashram inmates. The Ashram is being disbanded and handed over to the Government or left for

[1] Jatindra Mohan Sengupta, a prisoner at Ranchi, died suddenly of apoplectic stroke on the night of July 22, 1933.

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the dumb creation to occupy. The movables will be entrusted to friends, unless the Government want them. In due course, you will have the papers. This was the only course open to me. It is surprising, however, children at the Ashram appreciated the propriety of the step suggested by me. This step does not affect you, the Pratishthan or any other institution managed after the Sabarmati pattern. Their time is not yet; it may never come. You personally are wholly dedicated to the Harijan cause and Hemprabha to khadi. No matter what criticism is levelled at you, there is to be for the time being at any rate no departure from this. You may use this letter if you need to do so. I have not the time, nor is it necessary, to argue why I do not apply the rule that is being applied to Sabarmati, to you and others also.

I hope you will unhesitatingly stop Bengali *Harijan* if its sale does not pay the expenses. Your unique work in *bastis* really leaves you no time for anything else. You should make use of the English edition and of the vernacular Press in Bengal.

I have no doubt that I shall do the Harijan work even when I am locked. But God knows better.

Love.

From a photostat: G.N. 9071

344. LETTER TO A. V. THAKKAR

July 24, 1933

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Harijan Shastri has broken down. He is laid down with fever. The food at Poona did not agree with me. I am carrying on somehow. If you can send Malkani, I will get some help. But don't worry if you cannot send him. I don't wish the work there to suffer.

What has been decided about Malkani's salary? I am certain that he is being paid from the Ashram funds. But the Ashram is being disbanded now. You will read about this in the papers. You should, therefore, arrange to pay him from there. Even from jail I will continue Harijan work. Good-bye.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1123

345. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

July 24, 1933

BHAI NANABHAI,

I got your letter. I also hear from Phœnix from time to time. Sushila and Manilal have become very much devoted to each other and are happy.

I have decided to disband the Ashram. You will read more details about this in the papers. I do not have time to write more.

Take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6688. Also C.W. 4333. Courtesy: Kanubhai Mashruwala

346. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 24, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I got your letter. I have no time to answer letters. I have regained considerable strength but not enough to permit me to do unlimited work. Whatever be my lot, yours is the khadi work. I have explained everything in the letter[1] to Satisbabu and so I am not repeating that here. I trust Arun is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1703

[1] *Vide* pp. 290-1.

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347. INTERVIEW ON M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT[1]

AHMEDABAD,
July 24, 1933

I can say that in some places there is misrepresentation and some material portions have altogether been omitted. I have a copy of Mr. Aney's statement in my possession. It was drafted in Poona, and I am quite sure that Mr. Aney has not altered the statement, as the mutilated version would lead one to suppose.

Asked how Mr. Aney's statement had affected the position regarding Council-entry, Gandhiji said that the position regarding Council-entry remained just the same as it was before Mr. Aney's statement. If Congressmen wanted Council-entry no single individual could prevent it.

The Bombay Chronicle, 25-7-1933

348. LETTER TO A.I.S.A.

AHMEDABAD,
July 25, 1933

THE HONORARY SECRETARY
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION
MIRZAPUR, AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter of 20th instant I have to state that, in my opinion, 'handling' means portable and capable of being housed in a tiny hut, and easily movable by one person from place to place.

With reference to the 5th condition, the price includes the carding attachment of the machine, if special slivers are necessary. But I must state that the meaning I give to the conditions cannot be allowed to weigh with the judges. They must be left wholly uninfluenced by any opinion that I may have on the conditions. This is, therefore, purely for your guidance, in the choice of

[1] *Vide* Appendix IX.

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machines and in directing the inventors as to what they should do.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 19122

349. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

July 25, 1933

Mahatma Gandhi announced to the representative of the Associated Press today that he had decided to disband his Sabarmati Ashram which had been in existence for nearly 18 years. Asked his reasons for taking such a serious step, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The reason is quite obvious for me. Hundreds or thousands who took part in the struggle have lost their all. Having heard the story of the brave suffering of the villagers, I felt that some drastic action was necessary on my part. What was it that I could sacrifice? I have nothing on this earth which I can call my own; but I have some things which are more precious than what might be considered to be mine, and among these precious things, the Ashram is perhaps the most precious and I felt that on the eve of my embarking upon what is to me a fresh and sacred mission in life, I should invite fellow workers of the Ashram to join me and give up for the time being the activities in which they have been engaged all these precious years, and I am glad to be able to say that not one of them had the slightest hesitation in believing that the time had come for the Ashram to make the sacrifice.

Asked what would happen to the many activities of the Ashram, Gandhiji said:

This is a question somewhat difficult to answer; but I can say generally that if the activities were true and fulfilled some of the real wants of India, they will live in spite of the disbandment of the Ashram. For example, the whole of the khadi activity will certainly survive the disbandment. Indeed, the only thing that the Ashram was doing was to make experiments in khadi manufacture by devising new types of spinning-wheels and perfecting those that are in existence, supporting many Harijan families and teaching candidates all the hand processes that cotton goes through before it comes out as khadi. This is undoubtedly an essential work and very important, but I have faith that the

work will be continued even after the Ashram ceases to exist as an institution and this may be said more or less of all other activities of the Ashram.

Asked what he was going to do now, Gandhiji said:

I am afraid I must not at the present moment go beyond what I have stated. I hope to make a further statement[1] in the course of the next few days.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 25-7-1933

350. STATEMENT ON M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT

[*July 26, 1933*][3]

The statement issued by Sjt. Aney closely follows the advice tendered by me at the informal conference. It does not give any reasons for the decision taken. It was left to me to give them. This does not mean that they are necessarily the reasons that guided Sjt. Aney and all those friends who accepted my advice. They must be taken, therefore, to be solely mine.

In my opinion, it would have been disastrous if, in the existing circumstance, civil disobedience had been altogether withdrawn. The technique of satyagraha, as I have known it, requires continuance even by one person so long as such continuance does not defeat the ends of truth and ahimsa. It may not be given up either because of the weakness of the people taking part in it or (which is the same thing) the seeming victory of the opponent. The greater the repression the greater the strength of a true civil resister. The continuance of civil resistance, even by one person, insures its revival by those who might have given it up through despair or weakness.

But radical changes in the programme were absolutely necessary.

Sjt. Aney's instructions taboo secret methods. There is nothing inherently wrong in them. I fully admit the purity of purpose and the great cleverness of the workers in conducting the campaign by secret methods, devised to meet the situation created by repressive measures of the Government. But secrecy is

[1] *Vide* the following item.

[2] This sentence is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 25-7-1933.

[3] From contemporary Press reports and *The Indian Annual Register*, Vol. II, p. 333

repugnant to satyagraha and hampers its progress. It has undoubtedly contributed in a great measure to the present demoralization of the people. I know that a ban on secrecy will stop some of the activities which appeared to keep the Congress before the public eye. But this doubtful benefit will be outweighed by the certain elimination of a method which is foreign to the spirit of satyagraha and which interferes with its efficacy.

Another change made is the stoppage of the mass movement. The masses have acted bravely and suffered much wherever they have responded to the national call. But ample evidence is forthcoming to show that they are not able any longer to suffer the prolonged torture of the Ordinance Rule now crystallized into statute by the so-called legislatures. The Congress as an organization finds it increasingly difficult day by day to render them effective aid. The stoppage of secrecy would prevent even the little relief that it was possible to give them. The masses have not yet learnt to act as one man and without direction. They need more training and experience through the example of individuals.

Civil disobedience is, therefore, to be confined to individuals on their own responsibility although they would be acting on behalf of and in the name of the Congress. Those who will so act may expect no financial or other assistance from the Congress. They should be prepared for indefinite incarceration whether ill or well. They may not come out of jails except by termination of their sentences in due course or through the strength of the people. On termination of their sentences they should seek re-imprisonment on the first opportunity. They should be prepared to brave all the risks attendant upon their action including uttermost penury and the loss of all their possessions, movable or immovable, or physical torture such as lathi blows.

Naturally such action can only be expected from a small number, especially in the beginning. The very enumeration of the hardships is likely to frighten many people. But experience of patriots and reformers all the world over shows that Nature provides us with the capacity for suffering when it is taken up in the true spirit.

It follows that such response, if it comes at all, must come in the first instance from the intelligentsia. Their example will prove infectious in the long run and pervade the whole nation resulting in a mass awakening that cannot possibly be crushed by any repression, be it ever so ferocious. Moreover, individuals from among the masses can certainly act even now. Only they must understand the implications of individual civil disobedience.

I am convinced that these men and women will represent the national spirit and the nation's determination to win independence in every sense of the term. It may be objected that the heroic suffering of a few individuals, however praiseworthy in itself, is of no practical value and cannot affect British policy. I differ from such a view. In my opinion, the seemingly long or almost interminable process adumbrated by me will in practice be found to be the shortest. For I hold that true independence, i.e., independence in terms of and on behalf of the masses, can be proved in India's case to be unattainable by any other method. The method of non-violence which is an integral part of the Congress constitution demands the course suggested by me.

It must be clear to the dullest intellect that British policy cannot change through a constitution which registers the British will and ignores the wish or the welfare of the nation. Any constitution imposed upon India by the British will, unaffected by anything done in and by India, must in the nature of things harden and perpetuate the British policy. It can and will be changed by adequate action taken by India in the face of British repression. In other words, Britain cannot work out our salvation. We must work it out ourselves. Our independence should mean the registration not of Britain's will but of our will. I have suggested the only way that will forge the necessary sanction for the registration of our will, that is, the will of the dumb millions. For individual action must, in the long run, affect the masses.

Let us not forget the uniqueness of India's case. I know of no parallel in history. In India British will is enforced through India's own men and, shall I say, even women. India supplies the civilian and the soldier, India supplies money and other resources for the subjugation and exploitation of the masses. If this terribly immoral state of things is not altered in a day or even in a century, it need cause no surprise.

But our success is ensured the moment we take the right route to our goal. I claim that we took it in 1920. And though it cannot be visibly demonstrated, we have since then taken long strides toward *purna* swaraj. We could not have gone nearer the goal by any other way. Who can deny that during the past thirteen years we have seen an awakening among the masses, never witnessed during the hundred years preceding September 1920.

My advice does not proceed from a sense of despair, or defeat; I have neither. I am filled with joy that the national response has been so great as it has been. The greatest cause for joy is that the individuals as well as the masses have observed

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non-violence in action, in spite of themselves and in the face of almost inconceivable provocation. We are too near the time to judge the merit of the non-violence observed by the Frontier Pathans. They might have used violent language. But they have refrained from violent action in a way they have never done before within living memory. Such is the testimony of several sober independent witnesses. If non-violence becomes rooted in the Pathan heart, it will solve several difficult problems for us. What is true of the Frontier Pathan is largely true of the civil resisters throughout India.

I must not be misunderstood. My claim is humble. Danger of a sudden outburst of violence is always present so long as the violence of the heart is not eradicated. I am sorry to say that there is ample violence in our breasts. We have acted non-violently out of policy, out of helplessness. We would inflict violence if we could do so with effect. I would have India to abjure violence even if it had the power to wield it. I would have it appreciate the fact that if the masses are to work out their own independence, they are so numerous that if they achieved anything through violent means, it would not be independence but a fiendish thing that would devour them and perhaps bring ruination to the whole world. The one lesson that the Western nations teach the world in flaming letters, is that violence is not the way to peace and happiness. The cult of violence has not made them or those who have contact with them any the happier or better. If ever we, as a nation, reach that living faith in non-violence and banish violence from our hearts we would not even need resort to civil disobedience. The latter is required whilst we are trying non-violence as a mere policy or expedient. Even as a policy it is any day far more effective than violence. Under the Dictator's instructions secret organizations naturally disappear. Every civil resister will be his or her own leader. He or she will carry the burden of the Congress on his or her own shoulders. Such civil resisters will be trustees of national honour.

Whilst Congressmen may be counted by the crore, civil resistance, under the new scheme, will be represented only by a few thousand or even less. If these few are true men and women, I am certain that they will multiply into millions. Meanwhile the remaining Congressmen will engage in various other constructive activities of the Congress such as Harijan service, communal unity, khadi production and distribution, total prohibition, boycott of foreign cloth and other goods that compete with indigenous manufactures or are otherwise detrimental to the interests

of the nation, the manufacture of new goods, the improvement of the methods of indigenous manufacture, and in this connection development or resuscitation of village industries, improvement of agriculture and cattle-breeding, organization of labour unions, not for political exploitation but for the betterment of the condition of workers and improvement in the relations between capital and labour. In fact, no branch of national activity may be left untouched by the Congress. This will be possible if we will get rid of the very wrong idea that there is no other Congress activity save that of civil resistance or that the latter blocks all other activities. This will be true, perhaps when there is mass civil disobedience and the campaign has to be swift and sharp. But till that time is reached, due importance must be given to every one of nation-building activities and none should be neglected. Civil resisters represent the non-violent army of the nation. And just as every citizen cannot be a soldier on the active list, every citizen cannot be a civil resister on the active list. And if a soldier may not consider himself a superior being because he fights at the risk of his life for his nation much less may a civil resister who undergoes sufferings for the sake of his nation. Those outside the rank of fighters are equally important limbs of their nation if they regard themselves as national servants dedicating their talents for the nation's welfare, and not engaging in any activity, private or public, that may be in conflict with the national interest.

Moreover, whilst the Congress as an organization cannot openly help civil resisters, and must under my plan avoid all secret methods, it will be the duty of Congressmen and even others who sympathize with the Congress methods and aim, wherever possible to give relief to the indigent families of civil resisters especially to the utterly destitute peasantry who joined the no-tax campaign. For they must be assured that every inch of the land confiscated during the campaign (I think lawlessly and wrongly) will be returned to them or their progeny when the nation comes to her own as it must some day. I have learnt that at great personal risk to the workers engaged in the task the Congress has successfully administered secret relief to the peasants who have chosen for the sake of national freedom to risk their all. Such relief will be impossible of administration in the future, not merely because of the contemplated stoppage of secret methods but also because the Congress has no ceaseless source of income. The burden of reaching relief openly to such families must on pure humanitarian grounds, if no other, fall on the

shoulders of those who are not engaged in civil resistance. The Government cannot have it both ways. If they will stop even private and open relief, they must imprison the dependants of civil resisters or otherwise maintain them. The world would be staggered to know the number of those who once in fair circumstances have courted ruination and are living on doles of three or four rupees per head, per month. I understand that even their houses are in danger of being attached.

I have left the Council programme untouched. To think now of working the reforms to come is, in my opinion, altogether premature. We do not know what they are to be, when they are to come, if at all. It would behove those who are inclined to participate, to wait for the reforms before they commit themselves to a policy. Then there remain the existing Legislatures. I can give no decisive opinion on this question as I can on civil disobedience. My head reels at the very thought of entering Councils for the sake of winning independence. They may give some relief in specific cases but that is the miasma to keep the nation from its goal. They have no temptation for me in spite of my having sought through Sjt. Rajagopalachari and others the co-operation of the Legislatures and the Government in the matter of the untouchability Bills. The primary responsibility for seeking it lies not on his shoulders but mine. I offer no apology for having sought it. It is wholly consistent with the doctrine of non-co-operation.

There is one thing on which Sjt. Aney has differed from me and some other friends. I have felt strongly that the office of All-India Dictator and Provincial Dictators should also be abolished. But he felt equally strongly that the office should be retained if only as a symbol. But I see grave difficulties in our way. Dictators under the new scheme must, like others, offer civil resistance as soon as they are appointed. All the best men and women must quickly find their way to prison. Therefore a time must soon come when men and women who can really dictate will not be available. Then there could only be dummy Dictators as they have been before. These may easily produce embarrassing situations. Lastly, when every civil resister is expected to be his own leader, there seems to be no warrant for having Dictators. Indeed their mere existence may well stop the flow of individual civil resisters. For they may wait for Dictators' instructions whereas the new scheme provides for no further instructions. The Congress as an organization should live in its ideal in the final instructions issued by Sjt. Aney. I, there-

fore, still feel that Dictators should abolish themselves, if my argument appeals to them.

The Viceroy's refusal to see me even for the sake of exploring possibilities of peace, renders it unnecessary to examine the conditions under which even without *purna* swaraj but in furtherance of it, civil disobedience may be discontinued. But I may repeat what I have said so often that all non-co-operation is undertaken to ensure real co-operation in the place of forced one and all civil disobedience of laws is resorted to for the sake of rendering voluntary obedience instead of forced obedience. Therefore, I have no doubt that the Congress would be ever ready for honourable peace.

From a microfilm: S.N. 20025

351. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

AHMEDABAD,
July 26, 1933

TO
THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
POONA

DEAR SIR,

My first constructive act on return to India in 1915 was to found the Satyagraha Ashram for the purpose of serving Truth. The inmates are under the vows of truth, ahimsa, celibacy, control of palate, poverty, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, swadeshi with khadi as the centre, equal respect for all religions and bread-labour. The present site for the Ashram was bought in 1916. It conducts today certain activities mostly through the labour of inmates. But it does need to supplement that labour with ordinary paid labour. Its principal activities are: khadi production as a village industry without the aid of power-driven machinery, dairy, agriculture, scientific scavenging and literary education. The Ashram has 107 inmates at present (men 42, women 31, boys 12 and girls 22). This number excludes those who are in prison and those who are otherwise engaged outside. Up to now it has trained nearly 1,000 persons in the manufacture of khadi. Most of these, so far as my knowledge goes, are doing useful constructive work and earning an honest livelihood.

The Ashram is a registered trust. The funds at its disposal are ear-marked. Whilst the aim has been to make every department self-supporting, it has hitherto been obliged to receive donations from friends to meet all the obligations. Experience has shown that so long as it remains a predominantly educational service (using the term in the widest sense) and not only charges no fees but actually feeds and clothes the learners, it cannot be wholly self-supporting.

The Ashram owns immovable property estimated at about Rs. 3,60,000 and movables including cash estimated at over Rs. 3,00,000[1]. The Ashram takes no part in politics so-called. But it does believe in non-co-operation and civil disobedience as indispensable, under certain circumstances, for the observance of truth and non-violence. Hence, the civil disobedience campaign of 1930 was started by the march to Dandi of nearly eighty inmates of the Ashram.

Time has now arrived for the Ashram to make a greater sacrifice in the face of the existing situation—on the one hand the growing terrorism by the Government and on the other the equally growing demoralization among the people.

The statements that have come under my observation since the breaking of my fast show that

1. methods of torture have been adopted by the police in various parts of India in order to cow down individual civil resisters,
2. women have been insulted,
3. free movement of people has become almost impossible,
4. in many parts of India, village work by Congressmen has become all but impossible,
5. civil resistance prisoners have been subjected to humiliations and bodily injury in many lock-ups and prisons,
6. unconscionably heavy fines have been imposed and gross irregularities committed for their recovery,
7. peasants withholding revenue or rent have been punished in a manner out of all proportion to their offence, obviously with a view to terrifying them and their neighbours into subjection[2],
8. the public Press has been gagged,
9. in short, freedom with self-respect has become impossible throughout the length and breadth of the land.

I have no doubt that these statements will be denied or ex-

[1] "Over Rs. 3,00,000" was later on corrected as "nearly Rs. 2,00,000"; *vide* the following item.

[2] The two words "into subjection" are reproduced from Bombay Secret Abstracts.

plained away in official circles. It may be that they are not free from exaggerations. But in common with many Congressmen I believe in them and therefore they are able to arouse us to action.

Hence, mere incarceration can bring little satisfaction. Moreover, I quite clearly see that the vast constructive programme of the Ashram cannot be carried on with safety, unless the Ashram ceases entirely to have anything to do with the campaign. To accept such a position will be to deny the creed. Up to now I had hoped that the existence of the Ashram side by side with the civil resistance of its individual members was possible and that there was bound to be an honourable peace between Government and the Congress in the near future even though the Congress goal might not be immediately realized. The unfortunate rejection by His Excellency the Viceroy of the honest advance of the Congress through me, in the interest of peace, shows clearly that the Government do not seek or desire peace, they want an abject surrender by the largest and the admittedly most, if not the only, popular political organization in the country. This is impossible so long as the Congress continues to repose confidence in its present advisers. The struggle therefore is bound to be prolonged and calls for much greater sacrifice than the people have hitherto undergone. It follows that the greatest measure of sacrifice is to be expected of me as the author of the movement. I can therefore only offer that which is nearest and dearest to me and for the building of which I and many other members of the Ashram have laboured with infinite patience and care all these eighteen years. Every head of cattle and every tree has its history and sacred associations. They are all members of a big family. What was once a barren plot of land has been turned by human endeavour into a fair-sized model garden colony. It will not be without a tear that we shall break up the family and its activities. I have had many and prayerful conversations with the inmates and they have, men and women, unanimously approved of the proposal to give up the present activities. Those who are at all able have decided to offer individual civil disobedience after the suspension period is over.

It may not be superfluous to mention that the Ashram has for the past two years refused to pay revenue dues and consequently goods of considerable value have been seized and sold in respect of them. I make no complaint of the procedure. But it cannot be a matter of pleasure or profit to carry on a great institution in such precarious circumstances. I fully realize that whether a State is just or unjust and whether it is under popular or foreign control, the citizen's possessions may at any time be forcibly taken away from

him by the State, if he comes in conflict with it. In the circumstances, it seems to me to be simple prudence to anticipate the inevitable in a conflict which promises to be indefinitely prolonged.

But whilst it has been decided to break up the Ashram we want everything to be used for public purpose. Therefore, unless the Government for any reason desire to take charge of any or all of the movables including cash, I propose to hand them over to those friends who will take them and use them for public benefit and in accordance with the earmarking. Thus the khadi stock and contents of the workshop and the weaving sheds will be handed over to the All-India Spinners' Association on whose behalf that activity has been carried on. The cows and other cattle will be handed to a representative of the Goseva Sangh on whose behalf the dairy has been conducted. The library will be handed probably to an institution that will take care of it. The moneys and articles belonging to the various parties will be returned [to] them or kept for them by friends who will care to take charge of them.

Then there remain the land, the buildings and the crops. I suggest that the Government take possession of these and do what they like with them. I would gladly have handed these also to friends but I cannot be party to their paying the revenue dues. And naturally I may not hand them to fellow resisters. All, therefore, I wish is that beneficial use be made of the land, buildings and the valuable trees and crops instead of being allowed to run to waste as I see has been done in many cases.

There is a plot of land with buildings occupied by Harijan families. They have hitherto paid no rent. I have no desire to invite them to take part in civil resistance. They will now pay the nominal rent of one rupee per year to the trustees of the Ashram and be responsible for the revenue due on that portion.

If for any reason, the Government decline to take possession of the property mentioned, the Ashram will still be vacated by the inmates as soon as may be after the expiry of the suspension period, viz., 31st instant unless the date is anticipated by the Government. I request a telegraphic reply to this letter, at least, in so far as the Government's wishes regarding the movables are concerned so as to enable me to remove them in due time if I am to remove them at all.

I am,
Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 21535; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. II, pp. 171-81

352. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

July 26, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
(HOME DEPARTMENT)
POONA

DEAR SIR,

I have to correct a statement in my letter addressed to you today. On page 2, line 3, instead of "at over Rs. 3,00,000" please read "at nearly Rs. 2,00,000".

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 19123; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40), Pt. II, p. 183

353. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

July 26, 1933

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your two letters.

I must not make the declaration that you suggest. No declarations unaccompanied by immediate action are of any value at the present moment. Even action taken under a sense of duty and with the purest of motives is wholly misinterpreted. But I can repeat my conviction to you that I would not care to go to heaven without taking the Mussalman friends with me. The fact is, the more I examine myself the more I feel that deep down in me there is no distinction between Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians and others. I would disdain to thrive at their expense.

As to your other suggestion about the Benares Hindu University, whilst Malaviyaji is capable of immense sacrifice, he will not sacrifice the University. He is philosophic enough to let it go, if he could not retain it, consistently with his notion of self-respect. But, if I know him rightly, he would consider it a great mistake deliberately to sacrifice the University. What is more, those who are its co-trustees would never allow him to take that step and

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what is still more is that the students have no desire whatsoever to suspend their training. Whatever, therefore, you and I may desire, the step suggested by you seems to me to be incapable of being taken.

With reference to your second letter, what you say may be half true, namely that I want some individuals to go to prison in order to keep up the attitude of defiance. But I want them to go to prison in order that out of the imprisonment of a few pure civil resisters may rise a manifestation which would be unmistakable and irresistible.

I am glad Begum Mahmud is better and I hope she will be thoroughly restored. For your own health, how I wish you could take nature cure at Dr. Mehta's sanatorium. I have no doubt that you can be thoroughly restored.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]
Salaams from Mahadev.

DR. SYED MAHMUD
FARIDI MANZIL
DARGAHASHARIF
AJMER

From a photostat: G.N. 5090; also S.N. 19124

354. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

July 26, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

I hope you got the postcard which I wrote to you. You must have read the news about the Ashram being disbanded. I shall have to put some of the girls somewhere. You know Anandi and Mani. I wish to put them and three other girls in your school. One of the latter is Mahadevi's sister, another is Sharda, daughter of the Assistant Secretary of the Ashram, and the third is Narahari's daughter Vanamala. You have seen the last one too. If you think you can take them in without any trouble and if Lilabehn also is willing, please let me know. If I receive your permission, I shall have to send them immediately. I cannot say what will happen to me on the 1st. If possible, please reply by wire. If you send the wire to the Ashram address, it is likely to

reach me earlier. A letter will reach me earlier in Amrit Bhuvan, as I go to the Ashram at 1 p.m.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4832. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

355. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI

July 26, 1933

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I read your letter to Kakasaheb and laughed. You lack sense of humour. If I were in your place, I would have simply laughed at the reply. You should have good-humouredly told Mathuradas that, if he recognized you, he would say that you had as much right as he himself. Mathuradas did not recognize you as a *snataka*[1] and, taking you to be a gentleman from North India, started talking to you in Hindi. You could have ignored him and come to me. I also did not recognize you, but you should not have punished me for that mistake.

It is I who should complain. Your complaining is like a thief punishing a constable.

What is the good of harbouring resentment now?[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9652. Courtesy: Amritlal Nanavati

[1] A graduate
[2] *Vide* also the following item.

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356. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 26, 1933

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter.

Many others may have had to suffer what Amritlal had to. It was certainly a painful affair, but nobody can be blamed, or if at all it was Bal[1] who should be blamed. And next to him, or even more than he, Amritlal himself should be blamed. Mathuradas gave the reply that he did only to protect me from unnecessary trouble. I didn't know anything about the incident at all. I saw that Mathuradas was asking somebody to go away. But how was I to recognize Amritlal? If he gave your name, I don't know that at all. However, had he taken the incident in good humour, everybody would have laughed at the error. I myself treated Kanu in a similar way here. I did not recognize him and pushed him away when he was trying to touch my feet. Amritlal was not treated as he was knowingly. If you ask why nobody recognized him, I don't see how a person can be blamed for that. Amritlal should have laughed at the error and replied in Gujarati instead of in Hindi.

Bal may not have been able to tell Mathuradas anything, but he should have told me. I am not sending the letter to Mathuradas. Sending it to him will only keep alive the incident.

I had no choice but to put you in charge of *Harijan*. Now Anand[2] has been sent. When he is ready you may leave it off. A person like you who has the gift of writing can easily get his English corrected. You do not have a good style in English, but it is not as if your thoughts do not flow in it at all.

I will certainly like it if you can come here. I have asked Bal to write a long letter to you, but seeing the place for yourself will be a different experience altogether.

The pessimism expressed by Mahadev in his letter is unjustified. But I understand your attitude and what you say about staying with me. It is a complete error to believe that you were a burden on me. However, why do you believe that we

[1] Addressee's son

[2] Anand Hingorani

can do anything that we may wish to? I am indifferent as to who will come and stay with me. I do believe that the Government will send Mahadev. They know [that I need him].

If you can come, do come please.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9477. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar

357. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

July 26, 1933

I thought that my words were quite clear and explicit. I had simply said that had the interview been granted, I would have been able to put forth something that would have been acceptable both to the Government and the people. If you ask me what I would have put before the Viceroy, I cannot tell you, not because it is a secret but because I do not know. When I made that statement, I relied upon my resourcefulness, which has up to now not failed me in putting forth acceptable proposals for a compromise.

I did not go to Lord Irwin with any preconceived proposals but in the course of the conversation,[2] I put them before him, as they came to me, and as both the parties had a will for peace, a way was found and so would it have been with Lord Willingdon, if he had shown the will. Thus there is no mystery about any scheme which I had up my sleeve. If I had it, I should have no hesitation in sharing it with the public.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-7-1933

[1] The source had reported that Gandhiji was asked as to "what scheme he had in view to unfold to the Viceroy if the latter had granted him an interview".

[2] *Vide* Vol. XLV.

358. *INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"*

July 26, 1933

The disbandment of the Ashram would mean that every inmate would constitute a walking ashram, carrying with him or her the responsibility for realizing the Ashram ideal, no matter where situated, whether in prison or outside.

Mr. Gandhi added that the impending disbandment would not mean loss or diminution of incentive, but it would be a greater incentive to greater effort, greater dedication and greater sacrifice. He would disband the Ashram as early as possible after the end of the month. He declared:

Every step regarding the Ashram will be taken with the full knowledge of the authorities.

Asked if he was closing the Ashram for want of funds, Mr. Gandhi said:

It is malicious and baseless to say so. The Ashram has plenty of friends who have never kept it in want.

Asked if he was closing the Ashram because of disappointment, Mr. Gandhi said that it was also equally baseless to say so. He declared:

I am not only not seriously disappointed, but I am convinced that the majority of the inmates have made all endeavours, humanly possible to come up to the ideal. This much, however, is true that though the inmates, including myself, have made an honest endeavour to come up to the principles, we have all failed. But that is no cause for disappointment. It is a cause for greater effort.

Asked if the suspension of all Congress organizations would mean the prevailing of anarchy in India, Mr. Gandhi replied:

No. Anarchy means want of rule and discipline. The Congress would be under rigid discipline. Individuals' activities will be within the limits prescribed by the Congress resolution.

Regarding the suggestion to hold a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, Mr. Gandhi said:

I would not mind, but personally I think it is impossible unless the step is taken to give up civil disobedience altogether. Such an intention should be made known to the Government. Whether

it would be advisable or not, is a question the answer to which will depend upon the temperament of each member.

The Hindu, 27-7-1933

359. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

AHMEDABAD,
July 27, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

I have read your Press message[1] regarding the Yeravda Pact, in so far as it applies to Bengal. It caused me deep grief to find that you were misled by very deep affection for me and by your confidence in my judgment into approving of a Pact which was discovered to have done a grave injustice to Bengal. It is now no use my saying that affection for me should not have affected your judgment, or that confidence in my judgment ought not to have made you accept a Pact about which you had ample means for coming to an independent judgment. Knowing as I do your very generous nature, you could not have acted otherwise than you did and in spite of the discovery made by you that you have committed a grave error you would continue to repeat such errors if the occasions too were repeated.

But I am not at all convinced that there was any error made. As soon as the agitation for an amendment of the Pact arose, I applied my mind to it, discussed it with friends who ought to know and I was satisfied that there was no injustice done to Bengal. I corresponded with those who complained of injustice. But they, too, including Ramanandbabu, could not convince me of any injustice. Of course, our points of view were different. In my opinion, the approach to the question was also wrong.

A Pact arrived at by mutual arrangement cannot possibly be altered by the British Government except through the consent of the parties to the Pact. But no serious attempt seems to have been made to secure any such agreement. Your appearance, therefore, on the same platform as the complainants, I, for one, welcome, in the hope that it would lead to a mutual discussion, instead of a futile appeal to the British Government. If, there-

[1] *Vide* Appendix X. Rabindranath Tagore had forwarded a copy of this message along with his letter dated July 28, 1933 to Gandhiji; *vide* footnote 1, p. 349.

fore, you have, for your own part, studied the subject and have arrived at the opinion that you have now pronounced, I would like you to convene a meeting of the principal parties and convince them that a grave injustice has been done to Bengal. If it can be proved, I have no doubt that the Pact will be re-considered and amended so as to undo the wrong said to have been done to Bengal. If I felt convinced that there was an error of judgment, so far as Bengal was concerned, I would strain every nerve to see that the error was rectified. You may know that up to now I have studiously refrained from saying anything in public in defence of the Pact, save by way of reiterating my opinion accompanied by the statement that if injustice could be proved, redress would be given. I am, therefore, entirely at your service.

Just now, I am absorbed in disbanding the Ashram and devising means of saving as much as can be for public use. My service will, therefore, be available after I am imprisoned, which event may take place any day after the end of this month. I hope you are keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

From a photostat: G.N. 4639

360. LETTER TO R. V. SASTRI

July 27, 1933

MY DEAR SASTRI,

I wanted to dictate something for you as soon as I heard of your fever, but it was no use. I have just now a few moments, and I am taking advantage of them to dictate these few lines.

Of course you are bound to go to Madras for recuperation. I hope that, like Mrs. Sastri and her mother, mere change to Madras will produce a miraculous effect upon you and this will find you free of fever. But you ought to make use of the time now yielded to you to learn from Mrs. Sastri the art of simple cookery and return to Poona with a proper quality of rice as part of your luggage. You cannot give up the struggle to live in Poona and to live in perfect health. What hundreds of Tamilians have been able to do you must be able also to do. You should write to me regularly. Mahadev must have written to you already that Anand Hingorani has been sent to fill in the

gap. But you have to return as soon as you have regained your strength and yet there should be no premature return. You should not only regain your strength but learn the art of retaining it. Of course, you will take without reservation from the *Harijan* coffers whatever you need, and if you want me to write to Patwardhan[1] about it I would gladly do so, or to save time you can make use of this letter or the relevant part of it.

Give my love to Mrs. Sastri and the children.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. V. SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 19125

361. LETTER TO S. SADANAND

July 27, 1933

MY DEAR SADANAND,

I have had rough notes for the last two days from Maganbhai whom I had asked to read the file left by you. He says that the headlines often give an impression wholly different from the contents which they describe. Often events appear which have no basis in fact. Just now I have been reading the *Free Press* during the few moments that I have allowed myself for newspaper reading and I want to tell you that I am not happy over my reading. Your reporters seem to thrive more on gossip than on actualities. Therefore, many things reported do not inspire belief. What I would like you to do is to give the public only such news that have a good foundation and when the news consist of a forecast of events to come, the reporters should have substantial grounds for giving their forecast. I have one forecast in my mind. If it comes to pass I shall certainly congratulate you and your reporters. In any case, you know that the ban no longer exists.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. SADANAND
EDITOR, "FREE PRESS JOURNAL"
DALAL STREET, FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 19126

[1] Anant Vinayak Patwardhan, printer and publisher of *Harijan*

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362. A TESTIMONIAL

July 27, 1933

Abbas's work in the Ashram was appreciated by everybody. He taught me many useful things about carding. He has done service in other ways too. It is my hope and my blessing that, wherever he lives, he will observe the Ashram rules and devote himself to service.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6308

363. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

July 27, 1933

CHI. BALI[1],

I have your letter.

I tried hard to persuade Manu[2], but she is very eager to go to Poona and does not wish to return to you. She now wants to study, and wishes to go to Poona because there are better facilities for study in that place. I should, therefore, like you to give your willing permission to her. I don't have the courage to send her to Poona unless you give your consent. Come and see me, if you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1524. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] Harilal Gandhi's sister-in-law
[2] Harilal Gandhi's daughter

364. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"[1]

July 27, 1933

My merely going to jail is not sufficient sacrifice in the face of the sacrifices and sufferings of thousands of men and women of which I have had knowledge since the breaking of the fast. The Ashram has three lakhs worth of immovable property, that is, land and buildings, and movable property worth nearly two lakhs, including a rich library containing 11,000 volumes. We estimate the value of the books at least at Rs. 40,000. The members of the Ashram and I came to the conclusion that we should no longer enjoy these things when others have been deprived of what was just as precious as the things of the Ashram to the Ashram people. Moreover, many members of the Ashram having decided to offer individual civil disobedience, it would be wrong to expect the Government to treat the Ashram differently from other properties similarly affected. Of course, there is a fundamental difference. The Ashram is a public trust, with well-defined objects; and if the members of such a public institution adopt an attitude which brings upon them the heavy hand of the law, good or bad, the property which is the subject-matter of the trust might not be easily affected. It is for this reason that we have decided that we should voluntarily give up possession of the properties to the Government. Hence this step to be taken of disbanding the Ashram.

Replying to supplementary questions, the Mahatma said:

The immovable property will revert to the Government. The movable property, subject to what the Government have to say, will be given to public institutions.

Gandhiji said that he had not finally decided on his method of individual civil disobedience. He added:

I shall resort to no overt act of disobedience without first informing the Government. I shall be ready with my plan on the 1st August.

[1] This was reported as "from a special correspondent".

Asked about the reports current that he is contemplating another march, Gandhiji said:

That is all bazaar gossip. I have not decided on anything yet. It might be another march or might not be. I cannot say yet.

The Hindu, 28-7-1933

365. INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"

July 27, 1933

In an exclusive interview today, Mr. Gandhi told me that N., Dr. Spiegel and another Englishman, Duncan Greenlees, who was also in the Ashram, were bound not to take part in politics in general and civil disobedience in particular. Mr. Gandhi said:

They are all qualifying themselves for Harijan service. I am, therefore, arranging, if possible, to send them to Wardha, where they will continue their work.

The other inmates, who may not take part in the civil resistance movement, will go to their homes and some old workers and their children will be sent wherever it is most convenient for them to reside or train as the case may be. The disposal of the land, building and movable property of the Ashram will depend largely upon the intentions of Government.

Asked how he would first break the law after the period of the suspension of civil disobedience had expired, Mr. Gandhi continued:

No steps will be taken without first intimating Government. What definite steps will be taken, I have not yet been able to decide upon. Of course, Government may frustrate all my plans by anticipating them but that has been my life since the discovery of satyagraha in 1906.

The Times of India, 28-7-1933

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366. MESSAGE ON CENTENARY OF ABOLITION OF SLAVERY[1]

[Before *July 28, 1933*][2]

INDIA HAS MUCH TO LEARN FROM THE HEROES OF THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY FOR WE HAVE SLAVERY BASED UPON SUPPOSED. RELIGIOUS SANCTION AND MORE POISONOUS THAN ITS WESTERN FELLOW.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-7-1933

367. A STATEMENT

[*July 28, 1933*][3]

Mr. Duncan Greenlees, who is now staying in the Ashram, tells me that in bracketing him, a Britisher, with two foreigners, N. and Dr. Spiegel, I did not accurately represent his position.[4] While in accordance with my request under Ashram discipline he does not propose to take part in the present civil disobedience movement, he naturally cannot bind himself in advance to a particular future course of conduct. A time may come, he says, for him to take his due share as a citizen in politics.

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 21544

[1] & [2] Reported under the date-line, "Calcutta, July 28, 1933", this and a message from Rabindranath Tagore appeared in the source as "released by Kalidas Nag, Editor, *India and the World*". The report added that July 29 had been fixed for international celebration in Hull, England, Wilberforce's native town, "in commemoration of the event which synchronized with the death anniversary of Wilberforce".

[3] As given in S.N. Register

[4] *Vide* p. 316.

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368. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

July 28, 1933

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter. What more can you gain by meeting me? If we adopt poverty in earnest we must not possess even a farthing. What should we do under such circumstances? Our dharma lies only in following our duty to the utmost. Your work lies in khadi service and to turn Sodepur into an ashram is a part of that. Your achievement will be complete if you can bring about all this and can find God in this alone.

Can you not keep Arun at some place other than Sodepur? Or are you and Arun content with remaining at Sodepur and taking whatever treatment is available there?

I trust you have understood all the changes I am making. I do not find time to write at length on this matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1704

369. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
July 28, 1933

Asked by a representative of the Associated Press as to how he would vacate the Ashram and who would take charge of it, Mr. Gandhi said that it was a question which could be better answered by the Government than by him, for the simple reason that when the members of the Ashram vacated the property, it naturally would become Government's care, but the question was somewhat premature. They would all know in a few days, what would happen to the Ashram property.

Asked if this referred to the movable property also, Mr. Gandhi said he hoped not. That question too would be decided inside two or three days.

It is understood that Mr. Gandhi has written a letter[1] to the Government of Bombay in this connection, a reply to which is awaited by him.

[1] *Vide* pp. 301-4.

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Asked what he thought of the rumours published in the Press that the Government would not give him this time, if he went to jail, the facility for Harijan work that was given to him before, Mr. Gandhi stated that he did not believe the rumour at all. He had not a shadow of doubt that the Government would not go back upon the policy deliberately adopted by them—a policy which was implied in Yeravda Pact—and for which he had never given, so far as he was aware, the slightest reason.

The Hindu, 28-7-1933

370. NOTES

A Noteworthy Donation

A Brahmin, who has lost his sister and sister's daughter, sends me a cheque for Rs. 1,750 to be invested and the interest to be used for the benefit of Harijans, in any manner that may commend itself to me. In the course of his letter he says:

> I had set apart Rs. 2,000 for charity in connection with the death of my dear sister and daughter. I have used Rs. 250 out of the sum so far for the local charities and I am sending you the balance for Harijan uplift. My own suggestion is that this money should be invested to form the nucleus of a permanent fund whose interest only should be used for the benefit of Harijans. But you are at liberty, if you think it more advisable, to use the capital in any manner you like in connection with the Harijan service. I would like you not to disclose my name.

I respect both the wishes of the donor and I am handing the cheque to the Gujarat Branch of the Servants of Untouchables Society with instructions to invest it and to use the interest for the benefit of Harijans, with my approval, wherever such approval can be easily procured. I hope that this example will be followed by others.

An Overseer's Confession

Letters continue still to come as evidence of the indirect influence that the fast had on several workers. One such worker from Gujarat writes a pathetic letter in Gujarati which I condense below:

> When you were in Poona, I often took up the pen to write to you, but my courage failed me. But today, early in the morning, I said to myself that whilst you were so near me I should disburden myself of my sin and tell you how I had robbed poor people. It happened this way: In 1900, you may remember, there was a big famine. I was in charge

of labourers who were employed at some famine work. I was then a mere lad, and I saw nothing wrong in helping myself out of the wages that were paid to the labourers under my charge. It is likely that I must have taken nothing less than Rs. 100 in this fashion. I was engaged for nearly eight months. The saddest part of the story is that the labourers were all Harijans, whom I was instrumental in engaging. I was otherwise kind to them and they always seemed to be pleased with me. But I helped myself with one pice per head, out of eight to be paid to the full-day labourer. I was so mean that I could not help taking away one pice from the wages of a boy of about 6 years old. The fact that this boy helped me considerably at the time of distribution of wages enhances my guilt. I drowned my conscience and flattered myself with the belief that I could safely steal the money I did from these poor people, because I was instrumental in finding them employment. I had under me non-Harijan labourers also. They did not always relish my taking one pice per head from their wages and I had to threaten them with dismissal if they did not let me steal the pice from them. But the poor Harijans never said a word in protest when I helped myself regularly every day in the manner I have described.

Nor does the recital of misdeeds stop here. I could not even keep my relations with women labourers quite pure.

Though I may not say anything in self-defence I must inform you that the whole atmosphere around me was soul-killing. There was only one Parsi Engineer who, I believe, was incorruptible.

As some penance for my misdeeds I enclose herewith notes for Rs. 250 of which Rs. 50 are marked for the use of Harijans to be distributed as follows:

Rs. 20 towards education.

Rs. 20 towards supply of water to them and Rs. 10 for propaganda.

The other Rs. 200 you can use as you like.

What this young man did in 1900 was undoubtedly the common practice amongst overseers and I fear very much that it still continues. Poor Harijans, unable to find work, otherwise make a virtue of necessity and even feel thankful to those who rob them. They feel that if they resisted the robbery they were in danger of losing the only means of earning a miserable pittance. But such regular robbery of a portion of their hard-earned daily

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wage cannot but leave an unpleasant memory behind. I congratulate the writer of the letter on his frankness and his penance. Let this letter be a warning to all Harijan workers and let it serve the purpose of making them clean.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

371. SOME DANGEROUS BELIEFS

A professor of English writes as follows:[1]

> My reading of the situation in Cochin and Travancore is that there will be a most unhappy split if temple-entry for Harijans is your next step, unless people are convinced that the *tapasya* you have performed has endowed you with the power to understand our temples. Even non-caste Hindus are not convinced that you are completing the work of Shri Narayana Guru, because he built them separate temples. I humbly beg you to visit personally a temple or two in Kerala with Malaviyaji, if possible.
>
> My own orthodoxy borders on superstition. Your fast perplexed me, I fasted and prayed for guidance, and then I felt I must go to Chottanikary temple to pray for your life. There I met the Brahmin devotee about whom I have written once, and after days of discussion we found we could not agree. On the seventh day I had a feeling that you would successfully terminate the fast.
>
> At the temple I witnessed two cures of what new psychology would call hysteria or multiple personality. The cure of mental and nervous disease is common in many temples. . . .
>
> The orthodox people fear that any departure from usage may lessen the sanctity of temples. The Catholic Church at Ettumanur was once noted for such cures. The slackening of caste rules among Catholics is believed to be the cause of the partial disappearance of the power. It is almost impossible to convince people that such explanations are absurd. They live in a narrow static universe. . . .

I am not so much concerned over the feared unhappy split on the temple-entry question as over the dangerous beliefs to which the professor refers. Suffice it to say that I shall leave no stone unturned to avoid a split. But my goal is quite clear. It is not to have Harijans regarded as a separate body in Hinduism or outside it. I shall be satisfied with nothing less than complete removal of untouchability as it is known to us today. The be-

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

liefs, however, to which the professor refers seem to me to be most dangerous. No doubt imagination goes a long way in making us do certain things and to refrain from doing certain other things. People have been known to die of fright because they have mistaken a rope for a snake. But it would be highly improper to cultivate the habit of entertaining such imaginary beliefs.

Therefore, in spite of the professor's testimony about the cures, I am unable to endorse the deduction the professor draws from these cures that the extraordinary beliefs, entertained by people in Malabar about the curative powers of certain idols in certain temples in Malabar, are justified. I feel that it is necessary to educate the people out of such beliefs. They cannot promote healthy thinking. And in any case I do not see how the entry of 'untouchables' can pollute temples or deities installed therein. And it is clear from the very nature of things that the powers, curative or any other, come not from deities but from the imaginary imputing of those powers to the temples or their deities. Surely many 'untouchables' must have entered these temples without being detected and without the efficacy of the deities being in any way affected. In my humble opinion, therefore, it is up to every educated man and woman in Malabar to make a serious effort to rid Hinduism of the beliefs described by the correspondent. Surely it is no matter for joy or congratulation that even the Catholic Church has been affected by the virus of untouchability.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

372. AN EXAMPLE TO COPY

A European correspondent writes:[1]

> . . . My object in writing this letter is not to deal with points in *Harijan* but to draw your attention to (or rather to remind you of—you have surely heard of it) the work being done at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Virginia, and at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, U.S. for the American Negroes. To some extent the problem of the masses of the Harijans of today is the problem of the American slaves on their emancipation in 1865 (I think that was the date). In the *Story of Hampton* . . . is unfolded the story of how noble white American men and women tackled this problem. Again in *Up from Slavery*, *My Larger Education* and *Tuskegee and Its People* by Booker T. Washington . . . is

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

revealed the story of what noble *black* Americans (many of them graduates of Hampton Institute) have done and are doing for their people and not only for their own people but for others. The scientific experiments in farming carried on at Tuskegee, for example, have benefited the country all round. Might I also suggest that it might not be amiss if some of those in charge of Harijan education paid a visit to these American institutions. The advance of American Negro reads like a wonder-tale. Of course, in no case must manual training be emphasized at the expense of higher literary and artistic training. The two should go hand in hand. My ideal is that every shoemaker should have a University degree and that every University graduate should be skilled in some form of manual work. Thus and thus only would varnashrama become without offence to any, but thus also would the whole point of varnashrama fall away.

I note that you suggest that wealthy people might build new temples, but does it require *wealthy* people to do that? Should not the great feature of such new temples be their simplicity? Are not the reformers, the puritans of Hinduism? Cannot Harijans and reformers, with their own hands, build these temples?

Neither the Hampton Institute nor the Tuskegee are unfamiliar to me, but they cannot be familiar to the Indian readers of the *Harijan*. There is no doubt that the work of Armstrong at the Hampton Institute and of Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee is worth studying by all Harijan workers and Harijans. The analogy, however, does not hold good in all respects. The work of the white men at Hampton Institute corresponds to some of the work being done by the so-called high-caste Hindus among Harijans. But I feel sure that the duty owing by the former to Harijans, is far more imperative than that of white men towards American Negroes. For we have made of the artificial and assumed superiority of so-called high-castes over Harijans a matter of religion and therefore the work of the Hindu reformer in India is more urgent than that of the white reformer in America, as it also becomes far more difficult. And yet I have no doubt that we have nothing corresponding to Hampton Institute in India. That Institute is a very great enterprise and a noble monument of the industrious and exceedingly well-informed zeal of a handful of white reformers. The Tuskegee Institute is a model for Harijans. Booker Washington has done to the world what a man of a despised race can do in the teeth of enormous odds. He was able to build that noble edifice at Tuskegee because of his limitless faith and equally limitless application. Indeed, both the Institutes, apart from their special usefulness for Harijans and

Harijan sevaks, have a very high value from the general educationist's point of view. I hope some day, therefore, to give in these pages a gist of the work done by and in both the Institutes. Meanwhile, let it be noted that in both, great stress is laid upon the dignity of manual labour and the endeavour in both is to draw out the best in the students that flock to them.

As to my correspondent's reference to varnashrama, evidently the whole point of it has been missed, for, as I have interpreted varnadharma, there is no bar in any shape or form to the highest mental development. The bar altogether moral is against change of hereditary occupation for the sake of bettering one's material condition, and thus setting up a system of unhealthy and ruinous competition which is today robbing life of all its joy and beauty.

As to the temples, I refer to my description[1] of the model temple! I am trying to think that my model temple more than fulfils the requirements of my correspondent. But my reason for reproducing from the letter the reference to new temples is to emphasize the fact that Western thinkers are watching this movement for the removal of untouchability and that they would have us not merely to be satisfied with the mere destruction of the outward form, but they would have us to carry out a thorough-going reform so as to revolutionize many old-rooted ideas and so to purify Hindu society as to affect the whole of mankind.

Harijan, 29-7-1933

373. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,
July 29, 1933

Asked by a representative of the Associated Press what he had to say regarding the fears entertained in some quarters that the suspension of the Congress Committees would plunge the country into chaos, Mr. Gandhi stated that behind the question there lay a grave misconception of the situation. The question presupposed that there were lawfully working Congress organizations all over the country, which the acting Congress President had dissolved. The fact was that all such organizations had been declared illegal. What was therefore working were secret organizations, and shadow cabinets, and this was calculated to lead to chaos. That condition had been anticipated, and stopped by the action of the acting President. If there was any chaos now, it would be confined to individuals.

[1] *Vide* pp. 61-3 and 72-3.

The more he read the criticism levelled at Mr. M. S. Aney's action, Mr. Gandhi said, the more convinced he felt that, as time passed, people would understand the necessity for his action, as also its beauty. It was the only action possible in order to save the Congress and the national honour and the national spirit that had been awakened among the masses.

Asked if it was true as hinted in the Press report that he had offered to Government to take possession of his Ashram in anticipation of confiscation, Mahatma Gandhi said: "No." He asked the people patiently to await events, instead of anticipating them.[1]

Asked whether he had decided his plan of civil disobedience, Mr. Gandhi said there were undoubtedly many schemes floating in his brain, which it would be purposeless to recount, but as soon as anything took a definite shape, he would gladly share it with the public. But he would share it first with the Government. He said the Harijans were more than friends to him and he might not invite them to join him.

Asked whether he would launch his civil disobedience on the 1st August and call upon anybody to join him, Mr. Gandhi said that, whether it would be 1st August or when, he was unable to say.

The Hindustan Times, 30-7-1933; also *The Hindu*, 31-7-1933

374. STATEMENT ON SENGUPTA DAY

AHMEDABAD,
July 30, 1933

I have received a message from Mr. Santosh Basu, Mayor of Calcutta, and others asking me to announce 6th August as the All-India Sengupta Day. I also have seen Mr. Aney's appeal in the same connection. I associate myself heartily with the appeal made by the acting President of the Congress and I hope that at public meetings that may be convened, striking features of the departed patriot's life will be recalled and endeavour will be made by all to reproduce them in their own lives.

The Hindustan Times, 1-8-1933

[1] This paragraph and the last sentence of the succeeding one are reproduced from *The Hindustan Times*, 30-7-1933.

375. STATEMENT TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

July 30, 1933

On the eve of what is to me an act of greater dedication than perhaps ever before, I would like to urge all Congressmen not to fritter away their energy in debating over the decision of the acting President regarding individual civil disobedience. As an expert I reiterate my opinion that the decision was the only right course to take. In my opinion it is also constitutional. I would urge every Congressman to study my statement[2] carefully and it will be found that if the programme is zealously worked out the Congress will become a much more powerful organization than it has ever been. Without civil disobedience there is no safety and no freedom. Civil disobedience can become impregnable only in the manner pointed out by me.

To non-Congressmen I would say: Help the largest organization in the country in every way you can. It is not a sectional body. It is national in every sense of the term.

To the Englishmen, whether belonging to the services or others, I would say: If you want peace in the land and real friendship with India, Ordinance Rule is not the way, that of the Congress is the only way. I say this as a friend of the English people. Some of you may regard me today as your enemy. I make bold to prophesy that a day will come when the mists will have rolled away and you will admit my claim.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21541

[1] This was published in *The Hindu*, 31-7-1933, and *The Hindustan Times*, 1-8-1933.

[2] *Vide* pp. 295-301.

376. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

July 30, 1933

SECRETARY
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

HOPE VACATE ASHRAM TUESDAY MORNING AND IF FREE MARCH WITH COMPANIONS IN EASY STAGES IMMEDIATE DESTINATION BEING RAS WITH VIEW TENDER SYMPATHY VILLAGERS MOST HIT. NO DESIRE INVITE VILLAGERS MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE BUT INDIVIDUALS WILL BE INVITED OFFER CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE TERMS CONGRESS RESOLUTION. WILL GIVE TALKS VILLAGERS ON TEETOTALISM LIQUOR DEALERS LEAVE LIQUOR TRADE FOREIGN CLOTH DEALERS DEAL EXCLUSIVELY KHADDAR AND ALL OTHERWISE GO THROUGH CONGRESS CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME. HINDUS WILL BE ASKED SHED UNTOUCHABILITY. SELF AND COMPANIONS WILL MARCH PICELESS AND DEPEND ON VILLAGERS FEEDING US. IN EVENT MY EARLIER ARREST COMPANIONS THIRTYTWO IN NUMBER INCLUDING SIXTEEN WOMEN WILL TAKE UP MARCH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21542

377. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF GUJARAT[1]

July 30, 1933

It was no easy thing to decide to sacrifice the Ashram, but it was very clear to every inmate of the Ashram that the sacrifice was inevitable. This sacrifice is nothing before the suffering and sacrifice that has been gone through by the peasants of Karnatak, Midnapore and Kaira, the U.P. and of the Frontier. They have been so far given secret relief which has now been stopped or will be stopped, and should be stopped. But that does not mean that those who are starving should be deprived of

[1] The first and the third paragraphs of this were omitted in the Press reports.

public relief simply because they were satyagrahis. I hope that all the peasants who are in distress will receive the needed relief from the public and, should Government prohibit the distribution of such relief, those who give the relief will have the ability to resist it and take the consequences. But whether they have the ability or not, the way is clear for me. I have sacrificed my all.

On Tuesday morning I propose, God willing, to march from the Ashram with 33 companions. Some of these will be even physically weaker than I, for there are nearly as many women with me this time as men. But I could not resist their desire to sacrifice themselves. It was to them a call they could not resist. We hope and pray that God will help us to carry out our pledge. Our immediate destination is Ras. In case we are allowed to reach there, we shall proceed further. But it is quite likely that we may all be arrested as we proceed on the march. If we are not so arrested, it is our plan to carry the message of fearlessness to every village home.

We will not invite them to offer mass civil disobedience, but we will certainly ask such as may be ready to offer individual civil disobedience, we will ask those who drink to refrain from it, the liquor-dealer to give up his trade, the foreign cloth dealer to deal exclusively in khaddar and we shall carry the message of hand-spinning to every home. We shall ask the so-called high-class Hindus to wash themselves clean of untouchability and to befriend the Harijans. We shall ask the Harijans to observe the rules of hygiene and abjure carrion, and we shall call upon all the communities to achieve communal unity, thus fulfilling the whole of the constructive programme of the Congress.[1]

Let me set out in brief what we shall expect of the villages we visit. We will not have a copper on us, we shall cheerfully and thankfully accept what humble fare the villagers may offer us. The coarsest fare lovingly served will mean to us the choicest treat. As this is the rainy season, we shall be thankful to be put up in a cottage having a roof and we shall march by easy stages, as many amongst us are not physically strong, and our programme will not be rigid. We shall halt whenever our legs cannot carry us further but we don't propose to spend more than a single night at one place.

It is possible that the Government may take me before Tuesday. Even then the march will continue so long as there is any marcher left free. I am confident that if the sacrifice that we are

[1] What follows is taken from the photostat source.

offering is pure, it will generate a power of non-violence that will put us in reach of the swaraj that millions of us are pining for.

From a microfilm: S.N. 21549; also photostat: S.N. 21416

378. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

July 30, 1933

MY DEAR ANAND,

Just a line to acknowledge your letter. I have come very near Vidya[1]. She knows her course of action but has not enough courage to take it cheerfully. But she is struggling most bravely and I think successfully. She sits by me all the time I am at the Ashram. But she is not likely to see me tomorrow. And she will probably leave for Wardha tomorrow night. You need not worry about her.

I do not know what can be sent you next week. If it is at all possible, I shall certainly send something.

Love.

BAPU

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

379. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

July 30, 1933

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

I think about you every day, but get no time at all to write to you. Today I decided to write this anyhow. I get reports about you from time to time and hear that you are all right. I approve of your self-exile. Without it, you would not have got the rest which you are now getting. As for the world, it will go on without caring for us. Make good use of this opportunity which you have got and improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1237

[1] Vidya Hingorani, addressee's wife

CWMG - IV

380. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. MAITRI,

I was pleased to get your letter. Work well now and bring great credit to the Ashram. Bachubhai[1] is a selfless worker. There is very much indeed which you can learn from him. Learn as much as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6241

381. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYADEVI GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYADEVI,

I have your letter. I was glad. Your having taken up work there will certainly benefit you. We are now disbanding the Ashram, and so it has now become the responsibility of you all to keep up its good name. Observe its rules now and do so.

I am sending Durga and Satyavati there. Take care of them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6214

[1] Bachubhai Ramdas, nephew of Gangabehn Vaidya

CWMG - LV

382. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

July 30, 1933

RESPECTED BROTHER,

I request my sister-in-law and you and others to rejoice, instead of being unhappy, that Narandas is joining the movement. In my eyes, this is highly sacred work. I have no doubt at all in my mind that it is your great good fortune that all your sons are taking part in this sacrifice. Have faith that wherever Narandas may go he will come to no harm. Moreover he is not alone; there are many. Women, of whom some are even physically weak, have joined this pilgrimage. Please believe with me that by all of us taking up this work we shall wipe the tears of many and bring some happiness to thousands of homes, and let both of you give your blessings to Narandas and the whole party. Humble greetings to both.

Regards to both of you
from
MOHANDAS

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

383. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

July 30, 1933

CHI. MAHAVIR,

You seem to be working well. Go on improving your efficiency in the same manner and produce a fine impression on everybody with your sincere work. Bring credit to the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6240

CWMG - IGNCA

384. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

July 30, 1933

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

I have received the letter from you and Chi. Hariprasad. I am fully confident that you will live in accordance with the Ashram rules wherever you might be.

Continue looking after the Ashram lands until the Government takes possession, and utilize the fruit and other produce. Also share them with the weaver brethren.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2536

385. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

July 30, 1933

Interviewed by Pressmen, Gandhiji said that there was no truth in the Press report that he had drafted a letter to the Viceroy. He said he knew only one fetish in life and that was Truth, and he was not sorry for having made of it a fetish.

In his opinion, prestige came unasked and unsought from right conduct, right speech and right thought. His endeavour ever since he entered public life was to regulate it by those three golden rules.

Replying to a question whether his request to the Viceroy for an interview was accompanied by a threat of revival of civil disobedience, Gandhiji declared that in no sense was the request for an interview accompanied by threat of any kind whatsoever, whether direct or indirect, open or veiled.

It was for the sake of avoiding the slightest suspicion of threat that the proceedings of the informal conference were made confidential. It was a public misfortune that the present code of conduct of newspapers not only permitted, but seemed even to applaud the gaining of confidential information by hook or crook, and gave it publicity.

That at an informal conference many things were said in connection with the possibilities that might arise if the interview was not granted or if granted, proved infructuous, could not in any way be interpreted as threat. The relevant fact was that his request for interview carried with it no condition.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-7-1933

386. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 30, 1933

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this at the Ashram. It is now 8.45 p.m. I hope you were not over-excited after the interview.[1] You have to put on more weight if you can do so without being ill.

Now that the Ashram is disbanded, you will fall back upon Ranchhodbhai for your needs. I have spoken to him.

I must not[2] write more as I have little time at my disposal and my fingers won't give me much more work for the night.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6284. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9750

387. TELEGRAM TO SILAM

[Before *July 31, 1933*][3]

MR. SILAM
SECRETARY, LOKAMANYA MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

DEEPEST REGRET UNABLE UNVEIL STATUE MYSELF. NO HOMAGE TOO GREAT AT THIS JUNCTURE FOR ONE WHO GAVE US SWARAJYA-MANTRA.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 21417

[1] Gandhiji had met Mirabehn at Sabarmati Jail earlier.
[2] The source has "now".
[3] The telegram appeared in *Gujarat Samachar*, 31-7-1933.

CWMG-LV

388. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

July 31, 1933

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I can say neither yes nor no off-hand. You will have to judge for yourself when you cannot help plunging into the fire. You should therefore always prepare a safe substitute for yourself. Am I clear?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 899

389. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

July 31, 1933

DEAR BH-R-R-R[1],

What nonsense! You had a perfect right to explode as you did. The prolonged discussions were enough to try anybody's nerves. But I never doubted your capacity and willingness for suffering when the occasion arose. Do take full rest and plunge when the time comes. This time it is going to be a long-drawn-out affair. That does not matter. But it gives one breathing time. Once in, however, there should be no rest after. That is the ideal.

Love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Good-bye. I expect to find myself H.M.'s guest before to-morrow dawns on me.

From a photostat: S.N. 9585

[1] This was a form of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

390. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[*July 31, 1933*][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your responsibilities are heavy indeed. But I see that God gives you the strength to meet them.

Bhai Apte's letter is enclosed. I knew that some correspondence was going on with Sharja. She has asked for freedom. Have a talk with her and see if you can take the responsibility. If she observes discipline, I don't see any harm in accepting responsibility for her.

Mahadev is likely to be arrested at the same time as I am. Even if that happens, the programme should remain unchanged. Anybody who is free tomorrow should discuss all the matters with Jamnalalji. He is not to court arrest just now. He should take possession of the Ashram funds. Any secret funds which he finds should be kept openly. I have looked into the accounts and find that there are no sums which the Government can confiscate. All such sums which we had have already been spent. They represented the contributions for satyagrahis. All the same, the Government is welcome to confiscate whatever there is. All sums are earmarked for specific purposes.

If Bali comes there, have a talk with her and come to a clear understanding. If Anasuyabehn shows the slightest reluctance, Manu should go to Wardha. If she is very eager to go to Rajkot, let her do so.

So far as I know, Keshu will definitely go to Wardha. Santok also wants to go there. She wants to take Radha with her and hopes to do to the best of her ability any work which Jamnalalji might give her. Discuss this with her fully.

Send away Balbhadra to Da[kshina] Mu[rti]. Since Rama Joshi has forbidden Dhiru Joshi, make what arrangements you think proper for him. Probably Ramnarayan will keep him till you decide finally. Rama Joshi will have to be given fare to Poona and back. Ask her. See that she is not displeased.

[1] According to *Bapuna Patro–9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. II, the letter was written before Gandhiji's arrest at midnight on this date.

Totaramji should look after the Ashram for some time. After that, even if the Government does not take possession of it he should abandon it.

Prabhavati should be given what she requires for going to Banaras or Bihar.

I don't remember anything more just now. If you wish to ask about anything, you may.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8391. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

391. STATEMENT BEFORE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE[1], *AHMEDABAD*

August 1, 1933

There has never been the slightest desire on my part to disturb the public peace, as I think. In my opinion, I have never done a single thing consciously to disturb the public peace. On the contrary, I make bold to say that I have made the best endeavour possible to promote public peace and I can show several instances in which I have attained very considerable success in preserving and promoting public peace. Being a lover of peace all my life, nothing can be remoter from my thought than to disturb public peace.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11), Pt. II, pp. 263-5

[1] J. B. Irwin; the statement was made under section 3(2) of the Bombay Act XVI of 1932.

CWMG-LV

392. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

CENTRAL PRISON,
SABARMATI,
August 1, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

You must shed your strange and embarrassing manners. Effusiveness is no mark of true devotion. True devotion works stealthily. You will not be fit for Harijan work if you do not concentrate and learn to use your hands well. Your spinning is most clumsy. I hope you do not mind my speaking or writing as I feel. Pure love has to feel harsh at times.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

393. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 1, 1933

I hope you have settled down to work.[1] You will not wait for approach from but you yourself will approach the members of the family and make yourself at home with everybody. I would like you to express your wants to Nalinibehn. You will not on any account endanger your health.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Please share this with Duncan.

From a photostat: G.N. 6004. Also C.W. 3330. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] After the disbandment of the Sabarmati Ashram the addressee had gone to the Ashram at Wardha.

394. LETTER TO ADVANI[1]

August 1, 1933

DEAR MAJOR ADVANI,

You might know that before my discharge, owing to my fast, from the Yeravda Central Prison in May last, I was permitted to do Harijan work and thereanent to see freely visitors and equally freely to receive and send letters, to have a typist and to receive newspapers, magazines and other literature. I hope that I would be given the same facilities now. I may state that a weekly newspaper called *Harijan* is issued at Poona and it is necessary for me to send matter for the paper and otherwise instruct the Editor. I have detained in Ahmedabad the typist I brought from Poona. I have understood from you that you have received no instructions from the Government as yet in this matter. Will you please obtain the necessary instructions by wire ?[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3893; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (14), Pt. V, p. 85

395. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

August 1, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I still feel sorry that I could not meet you a second time. Since there are no women in the Ashram, I have asked Vinabehn[3] to make careful arrangements for looking after you. I hope, therefore, that everything is all right. Your reply to me may be dictated. I am afraid that the message which I sent regarding Dhiru was rather harsh, but I had no option. About your travelling expenses, ask Chimanlal. I don't expect any difficulty.

[1] Superintendent of Ahmedabad Central Prison

[2] This and the correspondence which followed up to August 16, 1933 were published in *The Hindu*, 19-8-1933.

[3] A German lady who was working as a nurse in V. S. Hospital, Ahmedabad

Dhiru and Balbhadra have gone to Bhavnagar. I certainly hope that they will behave well there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have also sent messages to Anandi, Bachu, Sharda and Vanamala and asked them to go and inquire after you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5355

396. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 3, 1933

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

What purports to be an authentic report in *The Times of India* dated the 2nd instant, says that I am to be released after being served with an order[1] which will restrict my movements to Poona and preclude any activities connected with the civil disobedience movement. It then goes on: "Should he ignore this order he will be re-arrested." If the report be true, I would like to say, in order to save Government possible, unnecessary embarrassment, and to conserve my energy, which I am still regaining since the breaking of the fast, that in accordance with my belief in civil disobedience, I shall be unable to conform to the order reported to be under contemplation. If the object be to secure my conviction I have no doubt that the sweeping powers possessed by Government enable them to do so without going through the vexatious procedure described in the above-mentioned report.

I gratefully observe that Government have kept Sjt. Mahadev Desai with me. He therefore desires me to say that civil disobedience is as much a life-principle with him as with me, and that he can no more refrain than I can from preaching or practising it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3894; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800 (40) (14), Pt. V, p. 37

[1] *Vide* Appendix XI; also the following item.

397. STATEMENT BEFORE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, POONA[1]

August 3, 1933

I have already this morning handed to Col. Martin, Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison, a letter[2] addressed to the Secretary, Home Department, on this subject. This gives my view on the subject and I have nothing further to add.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9724; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 75

398. STATEMENT[3] DISOBEYING RESTRAINT ORDER

August 4, 1933

I have received copy of this order[4]. I regret to have to say that I shall be unable to conform to it.

M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 67

[1] After hearing the directions proposed to be issued under Section 4 of Act XVI of 1932 which was read out to him by D. Maclachlan, District Magistrate, Poona

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Given before R. V. Martin, the Superintendent, Yeravda Central Prison

[4] *Vide* Appendix XI. Gandhiji broke the order forthwith and was re-arrested and taken back to Yeravda Jail for trial; *vide* the following item.

CWMG - LV

399. TRIAL AT POONA[1]

August 4, 1933

After the Magistrate had explained the circumstances under which the trial was taking place, Gandhiji suggested that as he intended to plead guilty to the charge, witnesses might not be examined. But the Magistrate informed Gandhiji that the procedure required him to record some evidence.

GANDHIJI: I think in 1922, when I pleaded guilty all evidence was dispensed with.

MAGISTRATE: It is very kind of you. I understand what you say. It will of course simplify matters, but it is my duty to record some evidence. But I shall reduce it as much as possible. . . .[2]

Asked by the Court if he wished to cross-examine the witness, Gandhiji replied in the negative. . . .[3]

Gandhiji declined to cross-examine this witness also saying:

No, thanks.[4]

To a question put by the Court, Gandhiji stated that his age was 64, and that he was a Hindu by caste.

M. What is your occupation?

G. (Hesitatingly) I am by occupation a spinner, a weaver and a farmer.

[1] Gandhiji, on his release at 9 a.m., was served with an order to remain within Poona city limits. He was, within an hour, re-arrested for disobeying the order and taken to Yeravda Jail for trial, which began at 3.15 p.m. before Hyam S. Israel, Additional District Magistrate, Poona.

[2] Then, F. W. O'gorman, District Superintendent of Police, the first prosecution witness, narrated the events which led to Gandhiji's arrest.

[3] Lt.-Col. Martin, Superintendent, Yeravda Jail, the second witness to be examined, stated that it was he who served the order on Gandhiji. Then, Assistant Superintendent of Police, the third witness, deposed that Gandhiji and Mahadev Desai were found at 9.40 a.m. still within Yeravda limits having gone out of the jail in a private taxi. On being told to quit the place at once, they refused to do so. After ten minutes, they were reminded of the order, and on their refusal to comply with it, they were both re-arrested by the witness and brought back to Yeravda Jail.

[4] The taxi driver in whose taxi Gandhiji drove to Golf Links was the last witness. He corroborated the other witnesses.

CWMG - LV

M. Your residence?

G. Yeravda Jail now. (Laughter)

M. Now, of course, but otherwise?

G. Otherwise, Sabarmati in Ahmedabad district.

M. Have you anything to say regarding the prosecution evidence recorded?

G. I think that the statements that several prosecution witnesses have made are quite correct.

Gandhiji, proceeding, stated that he desired to make a brief statement as to why he had committed a breach of the order. The court consenting, he dictated off-hand a brief statement in slow and measured tones. He stated:

I would like to make a brief statement as to why I have committed what must be described as a wilful and deliberate breach of orders of the Government of Bombay. It cannot be a matter of pleasure to me to commit a breach of orders of a constituted authority. I am a lover of peace, and I regard myself a good citizen voluntarily tendering obedience to the laws of the State to which I may belong. But there are occasions in the lifetime of a citizen when it becomes his painful duty to disobey laws and orders of his State. As is well known, such a painful duty came upon me in 1919 and I have not only regarded it as my duty to offer civil disobedience but also to preach it to others.

This law or Act under which I have been tried, is a glaring instance in proof of my contention that the system under which India is being governed today is not merely unjust, but is dragging her down economically and morally.

I have had recently a spell of freedom and was in the midst of people and had an opportunity of coming into contact with a very large number of men and women. I made what was to me a most painful discovery, that men high and low, educated and uneducated, rich and poor, were demoralized, and were living in a perpetual fear of loss of liberty and their possessions.

It was a trial for me to live in the midst of that atmosphere. Being by nature from my childhood a confirmed believer in the methods of non-violence, I sought shelter in self-suffering such as might fall to my lot. That was the only way in which I could relieve myself of some of the agony that was burning in me.

It is for reasons such as this that I am offering all resistance to this system of Government—a resistance that is within my capacity and resistance that a peaceful man like me could offer.

One word more. I think, you, Sir, or Government would, after sentencing me, classify me. I must state that I intensely dislike the procedure of classification of prisoners into A, B and C classes. I have no desire whatsoever to enjoy the special comforts to which other fellow-prisoners might not be entitled. I would like to be classified amongst those whom the Government may consider to be the lowest. I would like, in conclusion, to state that the authorities with whom I had come in contact during these few days have treated me with courtesy and consideration for which I am thankful to them.

After making the above statement, Gandhiji read through it as recorded by the Magistrate and stated that it was all right.

The Magistrate then framed a charge under Section 14 of the Bombay Special Powers Act 1932, for intentionally disobeying an order of the Government under Section 4 of the same Act requiring him among other things to remove himself before 9.30 a.m. outside Yeravda village limits. Asked if he pleaded guilty, Gandhiji replied in the affirmative.

Gandhiji also stated that he did not want to call defence witnesses. At this stage the police prosecutor said that considering Gandhiji's age he did not press for a deterrent sentence.

The Magistrate delivered judgment and observed that it had been proved that Gandhiji disobeyed an order of the Government. As such he convicted him under Section 14 of the Bombay Special Powers Act of 1932 and sentenced him to one year's simple imprisonment. . . .

M. I am passing a light sentence considering your age and the present state of your health and also because the prosecution has not pressed for a deterrent sentence.

This concluded the trial and Gandhiji rose after bowing to the Magistrate and was taken by the jailor to his cell. Gandhiji has been placed in 'A' class.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-8-1933

[1] Mahadev Desai was then brought before the Magistrate. He was sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment and was placed in 'B' class.

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400. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 4, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT

DEAR SIR,

On the day of my admission to the Ahmedabad Central Prison, I applied[1] through its Superintendent for permission to resume anti-untouchability work as before my late fast. There is no reply to it as yet. Government know that I have been controlling the policy of the weekly newspaper *Harijan* and its Gujarati edition, and partly also the Hindi edition. This is only part of the anti-untouchability work I am doing in fulfilment of my promise to myself and the Harijans as an integral part of the Yeravda Pact. This work may not be interrupted except at the peril of my life. I would therefore esteem a reply by Monday next, so as to enable me to attend to next week's *Harijan* and to deal with certain important matters that were left pending at the time of my arrest.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3895

401. ETHICS OF FASTING

A learned correspondent from the West thus writes about my late fast:

> I have read your reply[3] to a correspondent querying the ethics of your fast. I don't quite see your point. You seem to think that the fact of your suffering removes all offence from such a deed; but every man who does wrong suffers—according to your reasoning, then, there

[1] *Vide* p. 338.
[2] *Vide* also pp. 347-8.
[3] *Vide* pp. 284-7.

CWMG-IV

> is no such thing as wrongdoing. If, instead of identifying yourself with your body, you, for a moment, regard your body objectively, is it not then clear to you that violence to or unnatural treatment of that body is as much an infringement of the law of ahimsa as such unnatural or violent treatment of any other extraneous object? The fact that good men in other ages have contemplated and even perpetrated such fasts is no argument.

This argument has been advanced before, but not so seriously as has been done by my correspondent. As I hold that fasting as a powerful means of purification ought to occupy an important part in the life of the human family, it is best to examine the argument.

The fact of a fast even by the offender does not remove the offence from his deed, much less can it do so when it is vicarious. What the fast does is to prevent repetition of evil. Most, if not all, evil comes from attachment to the flesh. If, therefore, the flesh is mortified, attachment to it is likely to decrease. No doubt this is dependent on the motive with which a fast is undertaken. There is a great deal of truth in the saying that man becomes what he eats. The grosser the food, the grosser the body. Plain living is said to go hand in hand with high thinking. But plain living is only a few steps removed from fasting. Plain living may itself be said to be a mode of fasting. Complete fasting is a forcible reminder of the fact that 'man does not live by bread alone'.

'But assume that there is some force in the argument you advance for the offender's fast, what about vicarious fasting?' might say the correspondent. The answer is that just as there is identity of spirit, so is there identity of matter and in essence the two are inseparable. Spirit is matter rarefied to the utmost limit. Hence, whatever happens to the body must affect the whole of matter and the whole of spirit. It is within the experience of us all that often wrongdoers are touched by the loving acts of their friends and relatives especially when they consider the latter to be better than they. Fasting for the sake of loved ones is a forcible and unmistakable expression of love and therefore affects those for whose sake it is undertaken. Those whose love encircles the whole of life cannot but affect the whole creation by a supreme act of love.

If the necessity of fasting is admitted, the argument that it is unnatural or an act of violence to one's own body falls to pieces. Just as a fast for regaining lost health is neither unnatural nor criminal self-torture, so is not a fast for purification of self or others.

But all my argument is useless if it cannot be sustained by practice. And if there is any soundness in it, the unbroken practice of all the sages and others from time immemorial clinches the argument. Sceptics, however, need not rely either upon argument or past testimony. Let them acquaint themselves with the rules and the science of fasting for purification and then test its efficacy themselves. That fasting does not appeal to people brought up in the midst of the dazzling materialism is an additional reason for people like my correspondent not to reject summarily one of the most potent methods of purification and penance.

Harijan, 5-8-1933

402. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 5, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

You were good enough this morning to tell me that according to rules I had to pay for any rations I needed outside the scale ordinarily provided for prisoners and that therefore I should tell you what I considered to be my minimum wants. I may say in the first instance that I do not desire to pay for any extra food that I may need. I was admitted as a convict in 1922 and I was not called upon to pay for anything in the shape of food or otherwise, but I recognize that Government may adopt a different policy this time, and if they do, that would be no cause for complaint by me. I should be satisfied with whatever food was provided so long as it did not interfere with the restrictions that I have observed now for many years. The food that I need and has been provided hitherto by the prison authorities is goat's milk, fresh and dried fruit, fresh vegetables, and, whenever I have needed it, bread.

You have asked me also to tell you what facilities I should like in the shape of newspapers, etc. I do not know that I have any choice in the matter. I must therefore leave it to the Government to decide what they would allow. As to correspondence and visits however, I have to write some business letters in connection with the disbandment of the Ashram, the affairs of the estate of the late Dr. P. J. Mehta and other social and religious obligations and to have visits thereanent. I would like the Government to extend to me the same facilities that they have given me hitherto.

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There are however two things which are vital needs, just as much as food for the body. One of these is the conduct of the anti-untouchability movement on which I have already addressed the Government. The second is humanitarian contact with companions who are fellow prisoners. This last was recognized even during my first incarceration as a convict and has continued ever since. I hope that the practice will be so continued during the present incarceration.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3896; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 87-9

403. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 6, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

Government's reply that my request[1] for permission to resume anti-untouchability work is under consideration but that decision cannot be given by Monday next has been just conveyed to me (10 a.m.).

In thanking Government for the reply, I would like to state that there are three matters which do not admit of delay if my work is not to suffer seriously.

The Editor-in-Chief, Sjt. Sastri, of *Harijan* is bed-ridden and on sick leave in Madras. The paper is in charge of two men untrained for the work. For last week's issue, I had made arrangements beforehand and sent some manuscripts from Sabarmati last Monday. Whilst therefore Government are considering my request, I should be permitted to see Sjt. Anand Hingorani or Kaka Kalelkar—the two persons in charge, and to send manuscripts for next week's issue.

The second is a letter[2] from Dr. Tagore which was given to me on Friday last. I enclose it herewith. It demands an immediate reply.

[1] *Vide* p. 338.
[2] Dated July 28, 1933; *vide* footnote 1, p. 349.

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The third is this: I have four Europeans under training for Harijan service. They were at the Sabarmati Ashram. They are Miss Mary Barr, N. Devi, Dr. Margarete Spiegel and Mr. Duncan Greenlees. They have been sent to Wardha where they would be in unfamiliar surroundings. N. Devi and Dr. Spiegel are comparative strangers to India and otherwise require delicate attention. I should like to be able to write to them and to Sjt. Vinoba who is in charge of Wardha Ashram and who is to look after them.

There are other matters no less important, but which can await a few days' delay. I venture to hope therefore that pending their decision, Government will grant me by tomorrow the facilities requested about the three matters I have mentioned.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3897; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 89-91

404. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 7, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Will you kindly let me have a copy of the Government's reply read to me last night or let me make a copy?

In accordance with the reply to the first request, I am now ready with the manuscript for the *Harijan.* Will you kindly therefore ring up Sjt. Kodandarao, Servants of India Society, and ask him to send Kakasaheb Kalelkar, and if he is not available, Sjt. Anand Hingorani, at 3 o'clock today, so as to enable me to hand over the manuscript and give instructions?

Yours sincerely,

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-XIII, 1933

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405. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

August 7, 1933

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your letter[1] of the 28th July enclosing copy of your cable to Sir Nripen Sarkar on the Yeravda Pact was handed to me here on the 4th instant. Evidently your letter crossed mine which I wrote[2] whilst I was in Ahmedabad. For the time being I am unable however to send you anything but this bare acknowledgment.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4640

406. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 8, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT, POONA

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for the very prompt reply to my letter of the 6th containing three requests. I have thankfully taken advantage, pending orders on my general request about Harijan work, of the permission granted on the first request, and of the very limited permission granted on the second and the third requests. I may however state that in making my requests I have not been influenced by the fact of my being classified as an 'A'-class prisoner. Having lodged my protest at my trial against

[1] Rabindranath Tagore had written: "This is the copy of the message which, with very great pain and reluctance, I cabled to Sir Nripen and from which you will know how I feel about this Poona Pact. I am fully convinced that if it is accepted without modification it will be a source of perpetual communal jealousy leading to constant disturbance of peace and a fatal break in the spirit of mutual co-operation in our province" (Home Department, Printed Political File No. 3/17/33, 1933, pp. 16-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India). For the cable sent by Rabindranath Tagore to Sir Nripendranath Sircar, *vide* Appendix X.

[2] *Vide* pp. 311-2.

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classification, I did not and do not want to make unnecessary fuss about it, and I know that it is open to me not to avail myself of any of the privileges allowed to 'A'-class prisoners. Moreover, I am quite aware that I allow myself to enjoy physical facilities not granted by Government to other prisoners of even 'A' class. I do so not because I have been classified 'A', but because those facilities are of physical or medical necessity for me. But I need other facilities which are higher than these and without which life itself becomes an intolerable burden. They arise from the cravings of the soul. But I am anxious as a prisoner to avoid all controversy with Government. I would ask them therefore to be as considerate in regard to my supra-physical needs, as they have been in regard to my physical needs.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3898; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 93

407. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 10, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

I regret to have to remind you of my letters regarding Harijan work. Kakasaheb Kalelkar whom I met on Monday last told me that there were urgent letters in the matter awaiting me in the post. There are pressing Harijan problems demanding my immediate attention. I do hope therefore that I shall be favoured with the final decision before or on Monday next at the latest.

I attach hereto a copy[1] of the Government of India's orders in the matter. In my humble opinion they are unequivocal.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3899; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 95

[1] Received by Gandhiji on November 3, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI, pp. 336-7.

408. TRUE INWARDNESS

An Arya Samajist writes a long letter in Hindi. Here is the gist:

> 1. Should Harijans in order to rise in the social scale remain Hindus or will it serve the same purpose if they became Christians or Mussalmans?
>
> 2. Is not untouchability determined merely by the name of the caste to which one may belong?
>
> 3. If untouchability is to be removed from Hinduism, why not invite untouchables to join the Arya Samaj?
>
> 4. What is the speciality of Hinduism for which a Hindu need cling to it?

In my opinion these questions betray the ignorance of the questioner about the true scope of the reform that is being attempted. The pages of the *Harijan* make it clear from week to week that it is the so-called higher classes that have to reform themselves by getting rid of untouchability, of high-and-lowness. It is they who have to repent and purify themselves. They have to come in contact with Harijans not for the sake of the latter, not as their patrons but for the sake of themselves and as the servants of Harijans. Therefore the object is not served by Harijans forsaking Hinduism.

And in my opinion religion is a much deeper thing than the questioner would allow. It is not a matter of convenience or of bettering one's social or material condition. People have been known to cling to their religion although they have had to face social ostracism, material ruin and much worse. One's religion keeps one true in the face of the greatest adversity. It is the sheet-anchor of one's hope in this world and even after. It binds one to one's God, to Truth as to nothing else. Therefore, whilst Harijans must know best what is good for them, I, in their place, could not be satisfied by change of religion. From the practical point of view, they seem to me to be so inextricably mixed up with the so-called higher classes that the vast majority simply cannot help remaining Hindus. It is this helplessness which lays a double burden upon 'the higher classes' of doing the much belated reparation by regarding them as respected members of the Hindu family in spite of some of their habits. Indeed, whatever is evil in their

habits is due to the criminal neglect of 'the higher classes'. The quickest way to remove the evil is to remove untouchability and receive them as they are as full-fledged Hindus.

The answer to the second question is in the affirmative. That just shows how precarious untouchability is. If the Harijans would conceal their caste name and simply declare themselves as Hindus they will, as in many cases they do, pass muster except in their immediate neighbourhood. But from the standpoint that I have suggested, such subterfuge can only protract the agony. It cannot cure 'the high classes' of the taint of superiority and touch-me-notism.

As to the third question, what I have said above makes it clear that the admission of Harijans to the Arya Samaj does not solve the difficulty. The hearts of millions of non-Arya Samajists will not be touched by the Harijans' acceptance of the Arya Samaj. It is the 'superior' Hindu heart that has to melt. It is the whole of Hinduism that has to be purified and purged. What I am aiming at, what I hope the Servants of Untouchables Society is aiming at, is the greatest reform of the age. That it may take time to achieve it, does not much matter. The reform is assured, if there are reformers enough who will not be baffled by any difficulty and will not lower the flag on any account whatsoever. They will not, if the conviction has gone home that for Hinduism to live, untouchability has got to go.

The fourth is an invidious question. Perhaps it is also profitless. But I must answer it, if only to show what I mean by religion. The closest, though very incomplete, analogy for religion I can find is marriage. It is or used to be an indissoluble tie. Much more so is the tie of religion. And just as a husband does not remain faithful to his wife, or wife to her husband, because either is conscious of some exclusive superiority of the other over the rest of his or her sex but because of some indefinable but irresistible attraction, so does one remain irresistibly faithful to one's own religion and find full satisfaction in such adhesion. And just as a faithful husband does not need, in order to sustain his faithfulness, to consider other women as inferior to his wife, so does not a person belonging to one religion need to consider others to be inferior to his own. To pursue the analogy still further, even as faithfulness to one's wife does not presuppose blindness to her shortcomings, so does not faithfulness to one's religion presuppose blindness to the shortcomings of that religion. Indeed faithfulness, not blind adherence, demands a keener perception of shortcomings and therefore a livelier sense of the proper remedy

for their removal. Taking the view I do of religion, it is unnecessary for me to examine the beauties of Hinduism. The reader may rest assured that I am not likely to remain Hindu, if I was not conscious of its many beauties. Only for my purpose they need not be exclusive. My approach to other religions, therefore, is never as a fault-finding critic but as a devotee hoping to find the like beauties in the other religions and wishing to incorporate in my own the good I may find in them and miss in mine.

Harijan, 12-8-1933

409. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 14, 1933

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

It is now noon of Monday, and I am yet without any answer to my request for resumption of Harijan work on the same terms as before my fast. This request was first conveyed on the 1st instant from the Central Prison at Ahmedabad and has since been thrice repeated.[1]

The strain of deprivation of this work is becoming unbearable. If therefore I cannot have the permission by noon next Wednesday, I must deny myself all nourishment from that time, save water and salts. That is the only way I can fulfil my vow and also relieve myself somewhat of the strain mentioned above. I do not want the proposed suspension of nourishment in any way to act as a pressure on the Government. Life ceases to interest me if I may not do Harijan service without let or hindrance. As I have made it clear in my previous correspondence, and as the Government of India have admitted, permission to render that service is implied in the Yeravda Pact to which the British Government is a consenting party, in so far as its consent was necessary. Therefore I do indeed want the permission, but only if the Government believe that justice demands it and not because I propose to deprive myself of food if it is not granted. That

[1] On August 4, 6, 8 and 10; *vide* pp. 344, 347-8 and 349-50.

deprivation is intended purely for my consolation.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3901; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 97

410. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 14, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Will you please read the enclosed[1] and forward it as early as you can to the proper quarters? That is of course if no reply has been received to my request regarding Harijan work.

Yours sincerely,

Home Department, Government of Bombay, I.G.P. File No. 20–XIII, 1933

411. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 15, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

With reference to the two communications received by you from Government, I beg to state as follows:

1. As to the reply to my letter[2] of the 10th instant addressed to the Government, whilst I am thankful for the permission to hand over the *Harijan* manuscript to the acting Editor and give instructions, this permission does not meet immediate requirements. It is difficult without being in touch with correspondence from day to day to write usefully for the *Harijan*. Again, to be in touch with the correspondents on untouchability is just as urgent as editing the *Harijan*. For instance a difficult experiment under my supervision is being carried on in connection with a Harijan school. I have to be in contact with the teacher, if the school is to be a success. I have put some Ashram girls and boys in a Harijan boarding house, an experiment probably the first of its kind. It cannot go on without my constant attention. This

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* p. 350.

was started on the eve of my arrest. These are but two out of the many instances I can cite, of matters demanding my personal attention.

The least therefore that I require at once is:

(a) the delivery of all the correspondence in your possession with permission to reply to so much of it as may have any connection with untouchability;

(b) access to, and disposal of, all correspondence received at the *Harijan* office;

(c) access to newspapers received by you or the *Harijan* office so as to enable me to deal with points on untouchability that may have been discussed in those papers.

If the permission is given on these three matters, pending final orders on my request, I shall not need to fast from tomorrow noon, as stated in my letter[1] to Government yesterday. If it can be obtained in the course of the day, I would like to see Kaka-saheb Kalelkar or Sjt. Anand Hingorani today. I should be able then to hand over some manuscript to go on with.

2. What I have said above perhaps answers the Government's letter regarding the disposal of my correspondence in your possession. I have no desire to receive a fortnightly letter under the classification rules. The bulk of my correspondence is likely to have a bearing on untouchability and would demand my personal attention or instructions. If the correspondence is handed to me I would gladly return that which may not pertain to untouchability. There are likely to be letters concerning business affairs. I should take the Government instructions regarding such letters. The fact of the matter is that I have many public activities besides the political, and as I told you personally this morning, in my opinion the just way to deal with me is, after insuring my strict abstention from participation directly or indirectly in civil disobedience, to give me the facilities mentioned in my letter[2] to you of the 5th instant.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3902; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 99-101

[1] *Vide* pp. 353-4.
[2] *Vide* pp. 346-7.

412. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 16, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

Since there is no reply to the request contained in my letter[1] of yesterday, my fast begins from noon today as already intimated in my letter. Will you therefore kindly give the necessary orders for not sending the goats to be milked, and not sending to the market for sweet and sour limes?

Though the fast begins, if there is no objection kindly telephone to Kakasaheb Kalelkar to come to the prison today as early as he can, so as to enable me to hand him the manuscript for *Harijan*, which is already prepared and to give him instructions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3903; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 101

413. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 16, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

I see that I have hastily and stupidly told you to restore the goats to me. It shows how disinclined I am to starve. But on reading the notes of the orders[2] you have left with me, they are so far short of the original orders of the Government of India and of my requirements that I must not be precipitate in breaking the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] "On August 16, Gandhiji was informed that it had been decided that he would be granted the following special facilities for purposes of work strictly confined to anti-untouchability: (1) to receive newspapers and periodicals, but not to be allowed interviews for publication in the Press, whether with Press correspondents or others; (2) to see not more than two visitors a day; (3) to send instructions or contributions to the Editor of *Harijan* three times a week, and a limited number of letters to other correspondents and (4) to have at his disposal a convict-typist, books and newspapers, needed for Harijan work" (*The Hindu*, 19-8-1933). *Vide* also the following item.

fast. If the Government wish to go back upon those orders I shall be sorry, but I may not work under the new orders which are a manifest departure from the original and which seem to me to be grudgingly given. I observe that you cannot even let me have the letters already in your possession and to hand the manuscript to the acting Editor for this week's *Harijan*. It pains me to have to write this letter, but it will give much greater pain if I break the fast now and have to enter upon a prolonged controversy with the Government on many matters that need elucidation. I miss Government response to the meticulous care with which I am endeavouring to observe jail discipline and as a prisoner tender co-operation which as a citizen outside prison walls I consider it a religious duty to withhold. I have read your notes three times and each reading has increased my grief to discover that Government cannot appreciate the desperate need there is for me to do Harijan work without let or hindrance. Much therefore as I am disinclined to continue the fast, I feel that I must go through the agony if I cannot serve the Harijan cause without the tremendous handicap which it seems to me the orders conveyed by you put upon it.

Will you therefore please withdraw the milk and the fruit already received by me, and accept my apology for having hurriedly told you that I would break the fast?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3904; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 103

414. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 17, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

With reference to our conversation of this morning, before I can break my fast the following points require to be settled:

1. I should see Kakasaheb Kalelkar or Sjt. Anand Hingorani before 12 o'clock today for handling manuscript and giving instructions.

2. All the letters and newspapers in your possession should be handed to me, subject to the condition mentioned in my letter[1] of 15th instant.

[1] *Vide* pp. 354-5.

3. The notes[1] you showed me bind me to the non-publication of interviews in the Press. This is a physical impossibility as I can have no control over persons who would see me. It is not contemplated that I would only see those who would be subject to my discipline. I would be seeing hot opponents, perhaps more often, than friends.

4. The notes contemplate *two* visitors a day. I can never conduct the movement if I am thus restricted. I have to see visitors as they come if I am to influence them.

5. As a journalist of 29 years' standing I can say that restriction as to the sending of instructions to the Editor three times per week is wholly unworkable, and it is not clear whether the Editor or Editors are to see me personally or not.

6. The notes contemplate a limited number of letters to other correspondents. I do not know what the Government have in mind by the term 'limited'. I had to send, during the last dispensation, on an average something like thirty letters a day.

7. There is no mention in the notes about letters. I take it that it is an unintended omission and that I shall have all the letters and newspapers, whether received by you or the *Harijan* office, my work on them being strictly confined to untouchability.

You will now see what a gulf exists between my requirements and the concessions the Government are prepared to grant. If the Government would permit me to handle the tremendous movement of anti-untouchability affecting millions of human beings, they should give full effect to the Government of India orders under the last dispensation. There was in them a frank recognition of my submission and therefore a full response to it. I miss it altogether in the notes. So far as I am aware I have given no cause whatever for change of policy. If permission is given as requested by me, I can give my absolute assurance that I shall take no undue advantage of it, I shall confine myself strictly to anti-untouchability work and shall endeavour to the best of my ability to consult the convenience of the prison staff.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I take it that the convict-typist is also a shorthand typist, and that, if everything is satisfactorily settled, I shall have the assistance

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

as before of Sjt. Mahadev Desai and Chhaganlal Joshi.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 3905; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 105-7

415. QUANTITY v. *QUALITY*

There is no doubt that workers in a cause are as a rule tempted more by quantitative than by qualitative results of their labours. And though the volume of work done throughout India, as a result of anti-untouchability movement represented by the Servants of Untouchables Society, is not by any means unsatisfactory as a whole, it looks insignificant when it is distributed over the respective provinces and when it is considered relatively to the goal which is complete removal of untouchability, that is, of the high-and-lowness mentality that pervades Hinduism. There was, therefore, despondence markedly reflected at the meetings of anti-untouchability workers that were called during my convalescence after the recent fast. I did not share the despondence myself. For, I had only quality in mind whereas I saw that the co-workers had consciously or unconsciously quantity in mind.

I would have one good teacher in preference to fifty indifferent ones, I would be satisfied with the constant attendance of five children instead of the sporadic attendance of fifty. I would have five workers concentrating their attention on compact, small, selected areas rather than having them to cover large areas to which they could never give concentrated attention.

If this preference for quality is good, as it is for any movement, it is especially so for an essentially religious movement like that of anti-untouchability. In religion, indifference to quality may even lead to disaster. If teachers are a stop-gap, if school children come when they like and workers go about from place to place without establishing personal contact with Harijans, it may be found that both the Harijans and the caste men may have their hearts untouched at the end, say, of ten years' labours, and the result may be a reaction against the movement on the part both of Harijans and caste men.

In a religious movement faith plays an important part. Therefore many factors are necessarily unknown and unknowable. No one can fathom the movement from time to time as we can most secular movements in which most factors are known and under

control. If I want to manufacture one million yards of khadi, given the hands and cotton I would be able to say when I can deliver the goods. But if I have to touch the hearts of five Hindus and wean them from untouchability, I should not know when, if at all, I could accomplish the task. I have simply to work in the belief that my cause being just, if I am a pure enough person to handle it, I must touch the hearts of the five Hindus amongst whom I have been called upon to work. I may not, therefore, have any despondence over my mission nor may I change the venue of my work, nor ambitiously extend its scope beyond my capacity. On the contrary, I must believe that not only shall I be able by gentleness and patience to affect the five fellow Hindus, but that when I have succeeded with them I shall not be long in succeeding with five millions. This, and no other, is the meaning of the saying, "Faith can move mountains" or "To those who work assiduously and in My name I always grant success".

Therefore, what we need is boundless faith backed by perfect purity of character. An impure mind and a religious spirit go ill together. By purity of character is here meant truth, love and chastity in thought, word and deed. If we have not these we shall neither move the caste men nor the Harijans. If we have not this triple purity, not only shall we fail to steal the hearts of either, but by our failure we shall discredit not merely ourselves but the great cause we represent.

Hence, I have no hesitation in saying that in our campaign against untouchability, if we will take care of quality, quantity will take care of itself. It is hardly necessary to point out that what is said here about quality applies as well to Harijan workers as to caste workers. If the former are to carry out an internal moral reformation, I was going to say, revolution among Harijans, they will do so only by producing workers of unimpeachable purity and integrity, working with single-mindedness in limited areas where they can establish personal contacts.

Harijan, 19-8-1933

CWMG-IV

416. LETTER TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

August 19, 1933

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
HOME DEPARTMENT
POONA

DEAR SIR,

Col. Martin has kindly given me a copy of your reply[1] to my letter[2] of the 17th instant addressed to him. I regret to observe that your reply realizes my worst fears. Where I thought there was a possibility of a more favourable construction on some of the points, your reply now makes it clear that there was no warrant for any such construction. It therefore becomes unnecessary for me to take up the various points in your letter.

But I have now understood through Mr. Andrews that the difficulty in the way of Government carrying out the orders of the Government of India to which I have already referred is that instead of being a State prisoner I am now a convicted prisoner. If that be the cause for a radical departure from a policy explicitly laid down by the Government, not by way of concession, but as the Government of India have admitted, "because it is necessary that he (I) should have freedom in regard to visitors and correspondence on matters strictly limited to removal of untouchability", "there being no restrictions on publicity", I cannot understand how what was considered to be necessary for me becomes any the less necessary now, by reason of my being a convicted prisoner. Just as Government have recognized my physical wants and satisfied them in spite of my being a convict, even so, I venture to submit, do my spiritual wants regarding untouchability demand full recognition from Government.

The last paragraph of your letter grieves me. The reminder contained in it comes as an added injury to my wounded soul, for I have stated to Government more than once that civil disobedience under circumstances like the present is a part of my

[1] For a summary of this in a cable dated August 18 from Viceroy to Secretary of State, London, *vide* Appendix XII.

[2] *Vide* pp. 357-9.

creed. But I recognize that what I consider as a perfectly lawful and moral activity, Government consider as unlawful and probably even immoral. I must therefore be content to be their prisoner not merely for the natural term of the present confinement, but for such time as India comes to her own if I live long enough to see that day—if, that is to say, there is any possibility still left of Government fulfilling their solemn obligation and my coming safely out of the ordeal through which I am going.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3906; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, pp. 109-11

417. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 19, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

For the last three or four days you have been sending me mutilated copies of *The Times of India*. I have surmised that the mutilations are due to references to my fast. If my surmise is correct, I venture to think the mutilation is not fair to me. If anything has been said by or on behalf of Government, I should at least know what it is, so that I could make my submission to the Government if there was anything that I might consider unfair in the statements appearing in the Press. In fairness to all concerned, I would suggest that the full text of the correspondence beginning from my letter[1] of the 29th September 1932 addressed to Major Bhandari, with reference to my request for doing Harijan work, should be published, if it has not already been done.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3907; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), Pt. V, p. 113

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI.

CWMG-LV

418. A SILENT WORKER IN THE HARIJAN CAUSE

In the year 1919, when I lay ill in Mani Bhuvan, a well-built gentleman came to see me. I have a faint recollection that he had brought along some money too. I asked him whose son he was. He replied that he was the son of Hariprasad Desai of Bhavnagar. Hearing this, I was reminded of the days when my father was alive. Even in my childhood, I had heard of this well-known family of Bhavnagar. Hence I said to Bhai Yashwantprasad that our friendship was old enough to entitle me to exploit him, to which he readily agreed saying that all that he had was available for my work. I had come to know about his Barsi mill and other enterprises. The contact then established became increasingly closer and in the end we became like father and son. His contribution was always there in all my activities. Whether for the sake of khadi or any other activities, he always allowed himself to be exploited. I have never had to beg from him. Time and again, of his own accord he put sums of money into my hands.

He was a sincere worker for the Harijan cause. He made no difference between himself and Harijans. When khadi work had just begun, he first thought of Harijans and he had thought of going to Bhavnagar to revive the craft of weaving with the help of Harijans. He was aware that the Harijans of Kathiawar were looking around for a living in Bombay, their craft of weaving having almost died. Here I have spoken of the time when he had just begun serving Harijans. And the end of his career was worthy of this beginning. He has never recognized untouchability. He never had the vanity or the *moha* that he belonged to one of the highest ranking and well-known Nagar[1] families. He never indulged in long arguments, his motto was to quietly render whatever service came his way. I have just received the news of his passing away. His death is certainly a loss to his family, but I myself have lost a true comrade. And Harijans have lost a sincere and silent worker. May God bless his soul and may He give his children and the other members of the family the wisdom to follow in his footsteps and carry on his beneficent work.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

[1] A sub-caste of Brahmins

419. TO THE HARIJANS OF GUJARAT

During my last visit to Ahmedabad, I had a good opportunity to meet Harijan brothers and sisters. I was able to speak to them quite freely. I repeat here what I expect from them.

1. The so-called caste Hindus have a personal obligation to fulfil towards you which they must do unconditionally; it is their atonement. But, whether or not they atone for their deeds you will still have much work to do independently and unconditionally. One does not go to heaven without first dying. Whether in this world or the next, it is for each one to free oneself from bondage by one's own effort. Harijans should not look upon themselves as lowly, weak or crippled.

2. The atonement by caste Hindus is not for your salvation but for their own and it involves service to you. You should be liberal in accepting their services. In this way, you will readily overlook any shortcomings in it. If you are not large-hearted, you will only see their failings. But I am confident you will never be mean.

3. Magnify your own faults so that they appear to be as big as mountains and then make constant efforts to overcome them. In it lies the key to obtaining the rights which you want. Never believe that since others have the same faults we need not mind our own. No matter what others do, it is your dharma to overcome the failings which you find in yourselves. I see no need to recount them all here. I have often shown them to you, but it should not be necessary for me or anybody to do so. You will not be able, at the behest of others, to overcome what you yourselves do not look upon as failings. Hence, it should suffice to say that you should shake off whatever faults you can find in yourselves.

I do not write all this as a caste Hindu; as I see it, varnadharma no longer exists and it cannot be revived by keeping you out of its fold. However, if varnadharma is to be reprieved in my lifetime, know my varna to be the same in which you would be placed, because I claim to have voluntarily become a Harijan. It is by virtue of this relationship that I entertain the above expectation of you. Please do fulfil it. I share your misery and,

believe me, I shall be happy [only] when you become happy.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

420. TO KATHIAWARIS

Generally speaking one province should not be burdened with the work of another, just as in a well-organized society the burden of one family's needs is not borne by another. In accordance with this principle, the needs of Kathiawar should be met by Kathiawaris, whether they happen to live in Kathiawar or elsewhere. Hence the burden of Harijan work in Kathiawar should be borne by Kathiawaris. When I visited Ahmedabad for a few days, I met workers connected with the Harijan schools and ashrams functioning in Kathiawar. Not a single school or ashram should be obliged to close down solely for want of funds. It is a different matter altogether if an institution were to be closed for the sake of better organization, for the conservation of our energies, or, for the prevention of unnecessary expenditure. I have often spoken of my experience that no benevolent work, in fact, stops for lack of funds. Any work which enlists workers willing to serve by offering their all, will find money readily coming its way. I hope workers will regard the service of Harijans in this spirit. It is universal experience that, in the last analysis, every institution and every work depends upon the devoted efforts of one individual. This does not imply that such a person can work single-handed. To entertain such a thought is only a sign of arrogance, but the world is so ordered that there can be only one organizer. The world is not governed by many. The Governor or the Lord of the world, whatever you call Him, is only one. He has countless men and women workers, but He calls Himself a servant of servants and does the work of one. Similarly, it can be said that there can be only one president, secretary or manager for any work. And, if he does not consider himself the master but rather the humblest of servants, the work which he has taken up will make progress. And he should have steadfast devotion to the work. I know there are such devoted workers in Kathiawar and that there is no dearth of money there. Among the Kathiawaris spread all over the country, I see men and women who can, if they would, individually bear the expenditure on service of Harijans in Kathiawar. So I fail to understand the reason why

even a single institution serving Harijans should have to close down for want of funds.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-8-1933

421. THE BREATH OF MY LIFE

God's ways are inscrutable! The most unexpected event of my life has happened.[1] I have been used to the most unexpected things in the course of a very long public life, but this is the most unexpected of all. What is now in store for me? How I shall use this life out of prison, I do not know. But I must say this that whether in prison or outside prison, Harijan service will be always after my heart and will be the breath of life for me, more precious than the daily bread. I can live for some days at least without the daily bread, but I cannot live without Harijan service for one single minute. It is a constant prayer to the Almighty that this blot of untouchability may be removed in its entirety from Hinduism and that the millions of caste Hindus may see the Sun of Truth which shines upon us, if we would only remove the scales from our eyes, as I have repeatedly said in these columns. My life is a dedication to this cause and I shall consider no penance too great for the vindication of this Truth.

'Parnakuti', August 23, 1933, 5.30 p.m.

Harijan, 26-8-1933

[1] On the eighth day of his fast, which began on August 16, Gandhiji was released unconditionally.

422. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

POONA,
August 23, 1933

GURUDEV
SHANTINIKETAN

GOD'S GRACE AM WELL. TOOK ORANGE.[1]

GANDHI

Visva-bharti News, September 1933, p. 17

423. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
August 24, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

KEEPING VERY WELL. NO NURSING ASSISTANCE REQUIRED.[2]

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 113

424. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

August 24, 1933

DEAR COL. MARTIN,

When you sent me to Sassoon Hospital I took with me my clothes and certain other things, but not my books, spinning-wheels, etc. Will you kindly hand these to Kakasaheb Kalelkar,

[1] Addressee's reply dated August 24 read: "Greatly relieved. God be praised. Love to Charlie."

[2] Gandhiji had received a wire from the addressee saying that he had sent Chhotelal Jain, an Ashram inmate, to look after him; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel," p. 370.

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as also books that you might have received whilst I was under your custody and which were not given to me?

Yours sincerely,

LT. COL. R. V. MARTIN, I.M.S.
SUPERINTENDENT, CENTRAL PRISON, YERAVDA

Government of Bombay, Home Department, I.G.P. File No. 20-XIII, 1933

425. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

August 24, 1933

MY DEAR BH-R-R-R,

Well, many strange things have happened in my life, but this discharge is the strangest. However, there it is and I must take it as it comes; only I do not know what to do with myself. God will clear the way for me. Till then I wait on Him. I am as strong as I can be expected in the circumstances and, in a few days' time, I have no doubt, I shall regain my strength, lost during the eight days. I am here for a few days and, then hope to go to Bombay and be there for a few days. I must not write to Raihana separately. Tell her that I entered upon my fast with the *bhajan* that she sent to me.

Love to all.

BH-R-R-R

SJT. ABBAS TYABJI
CAMP, BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 9586

426. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

August 24, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I hope you have not gone mad over my fast and that you have been giving full satisfaction to everybody there and working in full speed. As I am dictating this letter I have your letter, written in Hindi, today. Your handwriting leaves still much to be desired. However, I was delighted to have your letter after such a long time. I have not got any of the letters sent to the

jail. I may get them now. I must not give you a long letter today.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

427. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 24, 1933

CHI. MARY,

I was sorry to part with you without having much of a chat and then not to be able to write to you all these days was a matter of grief to me. Now that I am able to write again I am dictating as many letters as I can. I hope you are feeling quite at home there. I want you to tell me everything about your experience at Wardha and the people there. Of me, you will have gleaned from so many sources. So I need not say anything.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6005. Also C.W. 3331. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

428. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 24, 1933

CHI. MANU,

Write to me regularly. I hope you keep good health there and are quite happy. What arrangement has been made for your study?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1525. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

429. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

For Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel *August 24, 1933*

by kind favour of Superintendent[1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

My health is not so bad that I cannot write with my own hand, but I don't wish to exert myself today. You must have read all the news and known what has happened. It has all been like a dream. But I will live as God ordains. I wish to take only one step at a time. Why should I, therefore, worry? Apart from that, however, this time I don't think I shall be able to see my way easily. In Yeravda, I kept thinking of you all the time. I had not expected to be separated from you in this manner. We remembered you daily on several occasions. We missed your dictatorial orders.

I had carefully selected the best bottles[2] and sent them to you. I hope they reached you safely. The rest of your things were packed separately. If you want any other books or things, let me know. Mathuradas is here with me. Chandrashankar, Ba, Mirabehn and Nair[3] stay with me all the time. Brijkrishna spends the whole day here. Today is Ganesh Chaturthi and so there is a holiday atmosphere. Kaka is here. I have just received a wire from Jamnalal saying that he has sent Chhotelal to look after me. But I am sure I will speedily regain my strength. I experience no difficulty in sitting up in the bed without help. I have eaten fruit in plenty today. I have also had some juice of *tandalja*[4], and that has given me some strength. Dr. Gilder[5] and Dr. Patel[6] came and examined me. They have found nothing wrong. There is, therefore, no cause for worry regarding my health. What about your nose? What is its condition? Write

[1] The source has this in English. Gandhiji continued to write this in all his letters to Vallabhbhai Patel, who was in Nasik Jail.

[2] Out of the empty bottles which contained honey, etc., used by Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel in Yeravda Jail

[3] Gandhiji's typist

[4] Amaranth

[5] Dr. D. D. Gilder, heart specialist; later, Minister of Health, Bombay

[6] Dr. P. T. Patel

to me what you are permitted to. I shall be in 'Parnakuti' for a few days. Then I intend to spend a few days in Bombay. After that, Rama alone knows.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
NASIK

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 20-2

430. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

August 24, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I got news of you from Anand. I hope you are all right in body and mind. I hope Mahadev is keeping well. How are the others? Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

431. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
[After *August 24, 1933*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I got your wire. You probably believe that I require careful looking after. But the truth is that except for serving meals to me I hardly require any other service. This time I have not lost all my energy. That cannot happen in eight days. Whatever energy I have lost, I shall soon recover. It was, therefore, not at all necessary to send Chhotelal. But now that he is coming, he will feel happy, and that is enough for me. Probably you also know that Mirabehn is with me. Brijkrishna always runs up

[1] From the reference to the receipt of the addressee's wire about Chhotelal; *vide* p. 370. The source bears a note that the letter was received on August 26, 1933.

CWMG - LV

from wherever he may be, and so he, too, is here. There are many others besides them. I hope you keep good health. Let me know your experiences of the newcomers. Is your case over? How is Ramdas succeeding?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
Chhotelal arrived just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2922

432. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND[1]

August 25, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Just a word to send my love to you and to the Rishi[2]. Mira will tell you all about the latest astonishing event[3]. I hope that you are both well. Andrews too is here now.

Ever yours,
BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10582. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland

433. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[4]

August 25, 1933

Gandhiji commenced by expressing his thanks to Col. Candy, Civil Surgeon, Poona, his staff and nurses for the very great care with which they had looked after him and also to Lt. Col. Martin, Superintendent of Yeravda Prison and his staff for their kind treatment during the early stages of his fast. Gandhiji said:

[1] The English original is not available. This is a retranslation of a rendering in French.

[2] Romain Rolland

[3] The reference is to Gandhiji's fast and the unexpected release.

[4] *The Bombay Chronicle* had reported: "Looking remarkably well, Gandhiji received a group of journalists at 10 a.m. today in the spacious hall of Lady Thackersey's bungalow. Gandhiji spoke very clearly and often with emotion. Towards the end of the interview which lasted nearly an hour, signs of exhaustion were however perceptible, and at Mrs. Naidu's suggestion Press representatives stopped asking more questions.

CWMG - LV

I would like the public to be assured about my condition. Generally a week's fast is nothing for me, and though this time the fast, whilst it lasted, caused terrible physical agony because of my inability to take the necessary quantity of water, I feel on the second day after the breaking of the fast that I shall be able to regain my lost strength within a reasonable time. There need be, therefore, no cause for any anxiety.

This time my discharge having come upon me absolutely unexpectedly, I confess I have no knowledge whatsoever of how I would shape my movements, after my convalescence is over. So I must repeat what I have said so often before, but this time with much greater force than before, that I shall be constantly praying for light and guidance.

I shall seek peace much more eagerly than imprisonment and a possible repetition of fast. I shall therefore again use this unexpected freedom from imprisonment for the sake of exploring avenues of peace.

One thing, however, I do want to make clear. This discharge is a matter of no joy for me; possibly it is a matter of shame that I took my comrades to prison and came out of it by fasting. The statement made on behalf of the Government in connection with the fast, I have not had time to study at all fully. During the fast and a few days previous to it, I was deprived of all news that was published in the Press[1] in connection with it.

In reply to a question, Gandhiji explained this point further and said that *The Times of India* given to him during this period was mutilated, portions bearing on the fast having been cut out of it.[2] Gandhiji proceeded:

Therefore I do not know all that has been stated in the Press regarding the fast. But what little I had the energy to read yesterday shows that Government have not done me justice.

It should be remembered that when I took my fast in Yeravda in September last, Government gave me fullest facilities for seeing people, giving interviews and writing letters in the matter of anti-untouchability work, not because I was a State prisoner, but because they recognized it was justly due to me to give me those facilities, if they held me in their custody.

[1] *The Times of India*, 26-8-1933, had reported that while answering questions on Gandhiji's fast in Legislative Assembly at Simla on August 24, it was stated that "decision to release Gandhiji" was taken as "Mr. Gandhi was apparently determined to commit suicide. Government were not prepared to allow him to die in jail nor to order forcible feeding to save his life".

[2] *Vide* also "Letter to R. V. Martin", p. 362.

If, therefore, a mistake was made by them, it was made at that very first fast. Had they chosen, they could have unconditionally discharged me as they did at the time of the 21 days' fast or this time. The question of jail discipline was just as pertinent then as now, but they did not do so. They thought it a better policy for them to keep me in custody and give me the facilities I have referred to.

Within two days after the Poona Pact was made, facilities for doing Harijan work were suddenly stopped to my surprise and I immediately sent in a respectful protest; but that protest having evoked no satisfactory response, I had perforce to send a letter[1] saying that unless Government gave me facilities for Harijan work without let or hindrance, life would not be worth living for me and in reply to that on November 3 last the following orders[2] were conveyed to me:

These orders were passed with the full knowledge of my requirements and with full knowledge of what they meant in September.

I say once more that when Government arrested me again after the 21 days' fast, they had to face my request for doing Harijan work without let or hindrance, whether they took me in as a State prisoner or any other. In my opinion, classification is wholly irrelevant to the issue. The sole issue was in September, in November and today is this, namely, my life and the Harijan work in jail or no Harijan work in jail and my death; and so long as I live that will be the issue that will face me, face the Government and face the public. If I am wrong in thinking that, whether outside or inside the prison, I should have the fullest liberty to carry on the programme of anti-untouchability which I have undertaken as a solemn obligation, then my fast should be considered impertinent and should not count either with the Government or the public; but if I am right, then my fast should be treated as a sacrificial seal.

One thing more. It has been said on behalf of the Government that when, owing to the 21 days' fast I was discharged, I gave more attention to political than Harijan work. I cannot imagine a grosser misrepresentation of facts, which are all capable of being proved today. But I will give a few outstanding instances. The whole of the 21 days and the subsequent days, during which I was unable to do anything at all, I could only pray and think

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, pp. 288-90.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LI, footnote. 1 on pp. 336-7.

and not do writing or talking; and I can say that during this period I thought of nothing else but God and God's children, the Harijans. Then when I was at all able to carry on sustained conversation with a group of men, my first act was to address[1] a meeting of Harijan workers in this very hall, whilst I was lying in bed. When I was able to do any public writing, my first writing[2] was for the *Harijan*.

True, while I was in Poona I did attend the informal conference[3] and held frequent conversations with political co-Workers on the subject of civil disobedience. There was no secret about it and I am not ashamed of it. Civil disobedience is an integral part of my life. But the fact is that the bulk of my time was not given to civil disobedience work. As a matter of fact, in view of the advice I tendered to the conference, it was not necessary. Then when I went to Ahmedabad, people may think that the sacrificing of the Ashram must have occupied a tremendous amount of my time, but I am again able to say that tremendous amount of my time was taken up with Harijan service.

Thousands gathered at prayer time and every time, if I spoke at all to these crowds, I spoke on untouchability and I collected funds at every one of these meetings with more or less generous response, every pice of which went to the Harijan Fund. If challenged, I would multiply instances of this character. It, therefore, in my opinion, ill becomes anybody much more a Government official, to recklessly charge me with having done a thing which I have not done and then to justify the procedure which, to a simple mind like mine, appears to be a manifest and gross breach of promise, deliberately made to a prisoner in their custody.

When Gandhiji's attention was drawn to the Home Member's statement in the Assembly that Gandhiji wished to combine simultaneously two incompatible policies, deliberate incarceration and complete freedom to carry on social work as an ordinary man, Gandhiji replied:

I do not consider that there is anything incompatible in it. I would be asking for incompatible things if I had asked for conducting civil disobedience campaign from inside the prison walls.

Mahatma Gandhi was then asked if in his opinion his political campaign during the last few months had done the country any good.[4]

[1] *Vide* pp. 237-8.
[2] *Vide* pp. 254-8.
[3] *Vide* pp. 262 and 265-6.
[4] This and the following paragraph are reproduced from *The Tribune*.

Gandhiji replied that he was unable to reply to the question as he had no opportunity to gauge the reaction of his movement on the people. But, it was his firm conviction that the movement which was the cleanest weapon possible in the hands of self-respecting people to resist injustice could not but have done good.

Asked whether the concessions given by the Government were not adequate enough, Gandhiji replied in the negative and said there still remained tremendous work to be done in connection with the anti-untouchability work. The political part of it formed only very little. The task before the reformers was to bring about a change of heart on the part of the Hindus.

Gandhiji, continuing, said that he could not describe the grief it caused him when on a matter of this character where Government orders had been so explicit in November last, the same officials should have been responsible for goading him on to a fast and then to say that he wanted to become a dictator. This was the unkindest cut of all.

Asked if Mr. Rajagopalachari, for example, who had been a party to the Poona Pact and who was now in jail, could not seek permission for doing Harijan work like himself, Gandhiji replied in the negative and added:

I will side with the Government in resisting Mr. Rajagopalachari because Mr. Rajagopalachari was not present at the Round Table Conference. I was there as the sole representative of Mr. Rajagopalachari and other Congressmen and I made a declaration[1] that I shall resist with my life separate electorates for the Depressed Classes and therefore it became a matter of sacred obligation to me to conduct this campaign even from inside the jail.

Regarding political situation, Gandhiji was asked what form his efforts for peace would take. Gandhiji replied that he did not know what it would be at the present moment. It was still in the lap of future. It was all impenetrable darkness for him just now. But if Government had the will for peace—and he knew that the Congress had the will—then peace could be had. But on what terms, he could not say at the present moment, not having all the strings in his hand today.

Asked if he would be approaching the Viceroy again for an interview, he replied that he could not say definitely, but it was quite on the cards.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that he hoped to be restored to health in the course of a week or more and he was now on milk diet and free from pain or discomfort.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-8-1933; also *The Tribune*, 27-8-1933

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLVIII, p. 298.

CWMG-IV

434. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
August 26, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have now got all the letters from the jail.

Yes, you may write as often as you like, only handing your letters to someone who is writing to me so that the postage may be saved. As a rule, there is a regular post from Wardha for me. The best thing for you, therefore, is to hand over your letters to Dwarkanathji[1] or Lakshmibehn[2].

I wonder what you mean when you say you read the *Gita* every day. You read it to understand and act accordingly. You must now forget the past and look after the present, never mind how you behaved. I have forgotten all about it and I know that it was all out of excess of love. There was nothing immoral about it.

Your letter to Mira has not been received. Vinoba is quite right in asking you to learn cooking, Hindi, and cotton processes well, if you are to do real work amongst Harijans.

I hope you are keeping quite well and fit.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

435. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

August 26, 1933

CHI. RAMA,

I got your letter, as also Nirmala's. I am not writing a separate letter to Nirmala. I was happy to learn that you did not worry. Vinabehn gave me news about your health. Dhiru wrote to me from Bhavnagar. He seems to be quite happy. I could not see Chhaganlal this time at all. This time the conditions were completely different. I was not permitted to write to anybody. My health is improving rapidly. Gradually I am

[1] Dwarkanath Harkare, an Ashram inmate
[2] Lakshmibehn N. Khare

recovering strength. Chhaganlal has been removed to Thana. If you have received any letter from him from there, please give me news about him. Also give me news about Vimu[1], if you have any.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5356

436. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

August 26, 1933

CHI. MITHUBEHN,

I have your letter. Please do not worry about me. I am steadily regaining strength. I can digest milk.

I trust you are in good health. I need not enquire about your work; it must be going on as usual.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI MITHUBEHN PETIT
COLABA, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2705

437. I SHALL DANCE TO HIS TUNE

No one can understand God's ways. I did not even dream that after my twenty-one days' fast, I would have to go on another fast within three months and, as a result, I would be out of jail. Who knows what God meant by this play. I, for one, do not know it. But I know this much that whether in jail or outside, I shall not fail to make any effort, of which I am capable in thought, speech and act, to wash Hinduism of the dross of untouchability. When an attempt was made to thwart the effort, I gave up food. I shall not allow a thing bought so dearly to slip out of my hands. But God knows how I can make that effort. I shall dance to His tune. I shall be guided by Him. I have every hope that all men and women will help me in this attempt.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 27-8-1933

[1] Addressee's daughter

CWMG-IV

438. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI[1]

August 27, 1933

MY DEAR VITHALDAS,

You want a message from me on khadi. What message may I send? When I hear that the love of people for khadi and the spinning-wheel is diminishing, my love for these things is getting stronger.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9784

439. LETTER TO GULAB A. SHAH

August 27, 1933

CHI. GULAB,

I hope you don't feel a stranger there. Write to me regularly. Do you keep a diary? Have you made any friends?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1736

440. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

August 27, 1933

CHI. MANUDI,

I hope you are now completely free from fever and are quite well. Write to me a detailed letter, giving your daily routine.

[1] In *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-9-1933, this appeared under the title "Mahatmaji's Message" with the following introductory note: "On the special occasion of the Gandhi Jayanti, Sjt. V. V. Jerajani, Agent, All-India Spinners' Association, requested Mahatma Gandhi for a message. This he sent in Gujarati which is translated below."

CWMG - LV

Ba is quite well. Prabhavatibehn has arrived here today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 1526. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

441. LETTER TO HIRALAL SHARMA

August 27, 1933

BHAI SHARMA,

Do come after ten days. I have no idea where I shall be. You will learn from the newspapers. Make independent arrangements for your stay. I hope your problems have been resolved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh* (1932-48), between pp. 52 and 53

442. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 28, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I am regaining strength fairly rapidly. I am very eager to see Jnana. I shall be happy if she comes and sees me. Let me know her address.

Kamala seems to have benefited very well indeed. I have advised Janakibehn to stay on here for the present without being afraid of the plague.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2922

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443. LETTER TO DR. MANORAMABAI THATTE[1]

August 29, 1933

Take with you only that which is good in us and bring with you only that which is good in the foreign lands you may go to. May God bless you and make you a fitter instrument of service.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8680

444. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
August 30, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHAGANJ

AM ANXIOUS VISIT WARDHA BUT NOT POSSIBLE REACH BEFORE LAST WEEK SEPTEMBER.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 114

445. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

August 30, 1933

DEAR BROTHER,

I treasure your letter[2].

I do not mind anything you have said. On the contrary, I appreciate all you have said. Having said this, I must say that I utterly dissent from your interpretation of Government orders. If you saw all the correspondence, perhaps you will revise your judgment. I am not given to special pleading consciously. You may not have noticed that the Government have themselves dropped the idea of 'another set of conditions'. On the contrary, they said that they made a mistake in making what you

[1] The letter was written on the eve of the addressee's departure for England.

[2] Dated August 27; *vide* Appendix XIII.

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call 'concession in the first instance', and the mistake made was not one on merits but had reference to their own convenience.

However, I shall not strive with you in connection with your pronouncement upon my statement, but if you will care to study the whole question I would gladly send you the whole of the correspondence. I hope that you yourself do not consider me to be capable of desiring to blame the Government for the sake of doing so or that that performance would be dearer to me than Harijan uplift. I consider myself capable of a just discrimination and therefore of knowing when the Government is in the right. But this is all beside the point. I have taken so much space with what is now immaterial, in order to tell you that I do not plead guilty to the charge you have made against me.

Now for the central point of your letter. I quite agree with you that I am wholly unfit for the constitution building at the present stage. In my opinion that time is not yet. It will come only when the nation has developed a sanction for itself. I would therefore gladly retire from the Congress and devote myself to the development of civil disobedience outside the Congress and to Harijan work. The difficulty is, how to do it? Can I do it by seceding from the Congress? That was the question that troubled me at the time of the informal conference and that is the question that confronts me again. I am seeking light. As soon as I have regained sufficient strength, I shall again sound the mind of Congressmen and if I can possibly retire from the Congress I shall gladly do so. My impression, however, is that the Congress mentality has not changed. Whilst it is true that a large number of Congressmen have got tired, very few would care to subscribe to the White Paper or work for securing certain improvements in it. They want a radical change. But I am in no hurry to come to any final decision. I can give you this assurance that nothing will deter me from taking any steps that might be in the best interests of the nation. There is no question even of self-effacement. Performance of duty I have held always to be a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. The awful fact, however, has often been to know where duty lies.

You won't give me up, but continue to guide me and you will not hesitate to come if you felt like coming. I am not going to hesitate to ask you to come when I feel that I need your personal contact and a constant exchange of thoughts.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 260-2

446. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

August 30, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. I am glad you have taken to Jamnalalji. You should accept his guidance and do as he says. Take gratefully all the nursing that may be offered to you and that may be necessary for the healing of your body. I hope you have now got rid of all your boils and eruptions.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

447. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

August 30, 1933

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have sent a reply[1] to your wire. I should like very much to go there immediately, but I can't do that. I think it will be better to pay a visit to Bombay first and then to Wardha. I wish to acquaint myself with the atmosphere in Bombay. The Harijan work there also seems to have become slack and, if possible, I wish to infuse some life into it.

My health is steadily improving. I can eat with appetite. Take care of your health. Letters for N. and Amala are enclosed. The former seems to have become a little unsettled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2923

[1] *Vide* p. 381.

CWMG-IV

448. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 31, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So you are out before your time. I hope you got my wire. I had thought that Mother was going back to Allahabad. I expect full report from you.

Indu has been with me fairly often. She is to come again this evening.

If it is at all possible, we must meet soon. But of course you will be held up there if Mother remains bad. I shall expect a full letter from you. It would be as well to send it by registered post.

I am slowly regaining lost strength. I say nothing about the fast as I expect you now know all about it. More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

449. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
August 31, 1933

BHAI TOTARAM,

I have your letter. It is our duty to endure even when we see the ruination of the Ashram. God willing, we shall regain its possession and shall reside in whatever structures then remain. I hope the Ashram will certainly serve some purpose or other. You and Hariprasad must be keeping good health. I am regaining strength, there is no cause for anxiety.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2528

450. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO H. K. HALES

[After *August 31, 1933*][1]

I assure you that I have no desire to court imprisonment for the sake of it, but if imprisonment comes in my way even whilst I am seeking for peace, I will accept it cheerfully.[2]

The Hindustan Times, 17-9-1933

451. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

September 1, 1933

MY DEAR AGATHA,

C. F. Andrews has shared with me your letters to him. This is just to press upon you the necessity of taking fair rest for the sake of putting in more work. 'A stitch in time saves nine' has much truth in it.

I need say nothing about my body or the situation created by my unexpected discharge. Deenabandhu has, I know, written to you fully about it.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Poor Mahadev! He is alone now in Belgaum prison. But this isolation will do him good.

From a photostat: G.N. 1467

[1] The addressee's letter under reply was dated August 31, 1933.

[2] Hales, a Conservative member of British Parliament, had written: "It is imperative that you should, at all costs, preserve your freedom in the evening of your life. Every hour is of supreme value and for you, of all men, to be incarcerated for months, at a time when your counsel and advice are so necessary, seems to me almost a crime." He had concluded the letter with a request to "resist the inclination this time for the sake of your friends, if not for yourself".

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452. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

September 1, 1933

DEAR ANAND AND BHAKTI,

This is just to acknowledge your love letter and to tell you that I am keeping as well as I can. The rest you will have from Mira's letter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 8796

453. NOTE

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO

Deenabandhu Andrews wrote last week on the untouchability of South Africa and showed how there was the temple-entry question even there. It is, however, worth noting the distinction between the two untouchabilities. In South Africa, it is based upon colour prejudice and has no sanction either in religion or in law. In India, unfortunately, it is claimed by a large number of Hindus to have religious sanction and we know that it has also the sanction of law. The Indian untouchability is, therefore, much worse than the South African. Both are, no doubt, equally mischievous, so far as the victims are concerned. Both deserve equal condemnation. Only, in India it seems that the fight is likely to be much harder than in South Africa.

Harijan, 2-9-1933

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454. THE TEMPLE-ENTRY BILL[1]

It is sad to think that the anti-untouchability measure has been hung up for one year by the Legislative Assembly and that the amendment to hang it up received the support of the Government. But the reformers may not rest till untouchability is blotted out of the Statute Book. Meanwhile, the process of having temples opened by consent of trustees and temple-goers and the general propaganda in favour of opening temples should continue.

But I observe that a Harijan Conference at Agra has passed the following resolution:[2]

> This Jatav Conference . . . considers that the methods and system of work of the movement is not satisfactory. Harijan movement lays stress on the temple-entry problem more than on economic and educational problems. The former . . . will produce slave mentality, ... Hence . . . great emphasis must be laid on the educational and economic aspect of the progress. Inter-caste marriage and inter-dining must be on the programme of the movement. . . .

The economic and educational uplift is no doubt an essential part of true repentance by caste Hindus. It is a test of the sincerity of their professions. But the uplift will not be complete without the throwing open of temples. The throwing open of temples will be an admission of the religious equality of Harijans. It will be the surest sign of their ceasing to be the outcastes of Hinduism, which they are today.

It is beside the point that tens of thousands of Harijans do not want to enter temples. If it were properly probed, the fact would be found to be quite otherwise. Thousands of Harijans do want to enter temples. Only they have been so accustomed to the prohibition that the very hope of entering temples had dried up in them. They believe that admission to temples on a par with the other Hindus is an impossibility.

But whether Harijans desire the consolation of temple-entry or not, whether, if temples are thrown open to them, they will

[1] Untouchability Abolition Bill. It was introduced by C. S. Ranga Iyer on March 24, 1933; *vide* Vol. LIII, *footnote* 3 on pp. 14-5.

[2] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

make use of them or not, caste Hindus have to perform their simple duty. They have to open their temples for Harijans to offer worship in, precisely on the same terms as for themselves. A debtor is not absolved from the duty of payment because his creditor does not care for the payment, or has forgotten the debt altogether.

And when temples are thrown open to Harijans, schools, wells and many similar facilities will be automatically open to Harijans. It is surely easy enough to realize that untouchability may subsist side by side with economic uplift. Many Ezhawas in Travancore and Namashudras in Bengal possess decent fortunes and are yet treated as pariahs of society. The bar sinister is all the more galling to them by reason of their flourishing condition. Dr. Ambedkar suffers from the curse in spite of his high educational attainments and his superior economic condition. He is naturally more sensitive to the insult of untouchability. But the reproach will be automatically removed, immediately caste Hindus proclaim the banishment of untouchability by admitting Harijans to their temples on terms of absolute equality with themselves. It will not then become necessary for any Harijan individually to go to temples, if he does not desire to do so. The declaration of the opening of temples will cover him with the rest. It will be like the abolition of slavery. It will be a vast and glorious step in the much-needed and overdue purification of Hinduism.

Temple-entry permission, to be of use, has naturally to be a voluntary act on the part of Hindus. It has to be, therefore, a genuine change of heart in the caste Hindus. Legislation is nevertheless necessary because of the fact that in law the entry of Harijans into caste-Hindu temples is said to be prohibited. Legislation will constitute the seal of approval of the vast mass of Hindus. I personally should not want that legislation in the teeth of universal caste-Hindu opposition. My own belief is that caste Hindus as a whole do not oppose temple-entry by Harijans. I should abide by the result of an honestly conducted referendum. Anyway, let the reformers realize that, whatever happens in the Legislature at Delhi, the movement for temple-entry and the necessary legislation must continue.

There are other things in the resolution quoted above which call for explanation or criticism. This must be postponed for a future issue of the *Harijan*.

Harijan, 2-9-1933

455. LETTER TO DR. MOHAMMAD ALAM

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
September 2, 1933

DEAR DR. ALAM,

God is great. He often confounds us. I little knew that I would have to be discharged in the manner I have been. I am now praying for light as to the next step I am to take. I am sorry I have not read your paper, but I must now do it. You must quickly undergo an examination and ensure good health. I am making steady progress towards regaining lost strength.

Letter for Begum Alam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. S. MOHAMMAD ALAM
1 LYTTON ROAD
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 31

456. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

September 2, 1933

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I had your letter of 11th instant.

Lakshmi had already told me how you and your wife were looking after her, and when I heard that she was under your roof I was perfectly at ease. I now see that she has gone to Wardha; I have not quite understood why before Devdas was removed from Delhi. Her first letter had told me that she would be in Delhi so long as Devdas was there. I have written to Rajaji. I can understand his consolation because he has to be both father and mother to his children, and specially to his daughters. But I know also that deep down in him there is dignified peace.

I hope the work there is flourishing. If you have any suggestions to make either regarding the Harijan work or regarding

the editing of the *Harijan*, you must not hesitate to pass them on to me whilst I am yet in a position to receive them.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY, BIRLA MILLS
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 901

457. LETTER TO CHARU PROVA SEN

September 2, 1933

MY DEAR CHARU PROVA,

I was delighted to have your brief note.

I think you are quite right. It is no joke for anybody to be my co-worker. But I know that God gives all the co-workers and me the strength they and I may need. Therefore, you will get no pity or sympathy from me, but you will have to render a true account of your stewardship.

I hope you are doing well. I am slowly but steadily regaining strength.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. CHARU PROVA SEN
RAJBARI, FARIDPUR DISTRICT
(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 8702

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458. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

September 2, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letters. You should not expect frequent replies from me. Whenever I can I will certainly write to you.

I had said nothing to you about my health because I had referred to it in some other letters.[1] I am getting on as well as possible. I am regaining strength steadily. Therefore, there is no cause for anxiety. I am taking milk, fruit and vegetables.

I hope that you are steadily qualifying yourself.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

459. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

September 2, 1933

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

I was happy to get your letter. Proficient and paid teachers should be employed for propagation of Hindi in Bengal. There is no doubt that Ramanandbabu has done immense service to Hindi. Please accept my felicitations on making *Vishal Bharat*[2] self-supporting. I have seen the account of the Madras tour, it is good. I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

PANDIT BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
EDITOR, "VISHAL BHARAT"
120/2 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2564

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", p. 383.
[2] A Hindi monthly published from Calcutta

CWMG-IV

460. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

September 2, 1933

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. I feel that for the time being you should stay there. Later on we shall see. Anand will stay here for the present. I will try and go over to Wardha by the end of this month. Keep mind and body fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

461. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

September 2, 1933

I am unconscious of any error in giving my previous advice. However, I admit that this unexpected release has produced a situation that demands special treatment. At this stage I can only say that I am giving the matter my earnest and prayerful consideration. I have no ready-made plan before me. I shall consult all friends, listen to all advice and come to no hasty decision. I reiterate my earnest desire for peace. Therefore I shall leave no stone unturned to bring it about in so far as it lies within my power.

Home Department, Political, File No. 4/11/33, 1933, p. 4. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] The source had this extract from the *National Call*, 3-9-1933, which had reported: "Interviewed by the Associated Press, Mahatma Gandhi replied to the comments of the National Labour Party's fortnightly organ, the *News Letter*, which hoped that he would respond to the Government of India's conciliatory action."

462. *ADVICE TO FRIENDS*[1]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

It is nothing less than a new life for me. On my part I had given up all hope. On the 23rd[2] night after the nausea, I felt I would not survive for long, that I could no longer battle with death. On the afternoon of the 24th I even gave away whatever I had with me.

Things which are more or less routine for us neither fascinate nor pain us, however they may be, pleasant or unpleasant. And whether or not I wish, fasts have become almost a daily occurrence for me. Why should they pain you? You should understand that fasts have become a part of my life and for this reason ought to give up the ignorant attachment to my body. No doubt I had to undergo some privation, but then who has attained Krishna without great suffering?

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

463. *DISCUSSION WITH A PARSI GENTLEMAN*[3]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

Q. I am very much pained to see that in many places Harijan work is carried on with a feeling of obliging the Harijans rather than in a spirit of service.

A. That is true. That is why I go on telling the caste Hindus that whatever they do, they must do for their own sake. That is their atonement, their purification.

Q. But the work is not being done in the manner you desire. The feeling of high and low pervades every vein.

A. I admit it. Untouchability cannot be said to have disappeared so long as this feeling persists. It is not enough to "touch" Harijans.

[1] This and the following three items are extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter". This appeared under the sub-title, "New Life".

[2] Of August

[3] This appeared under the sub-title, "For the Whole World".

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Q. Such a feeling of high and low prevails even among us, Parsis. We have amongst us the first, the second and the third which do not mix with one another.

A. You are bound to be influenced by us since you have lived with us for so many years. Once a Parsi gentleman came to me and told me that the differences of high and low were created by God. I told him: "You are a Parsi and yet talk like this. But you have been influenced by us and now you have come to repeat it."

Q. This feeling prevails among Muslims too.

A. The same is true of Christians as well. Recently, there was a conference of Christian untouchables in Madras. Has the world ever heard of anything like this?

Q. I think the feeling of untouchability has to be banished from our hearts, is it not?

A. Everything would be incomplete without it. If untouchability disappears from Hindu religion, many other problems will be solved. I also expect the Hindu-Muslim problem to solve itself, because it also has its root in the feeling of high and low.

Q. As a matter of fact, Zoroaster himself never intended to establish a religion. The religion came to be established later. Now the feeling of distinction between themselves and others has gone deep in the minds of Parsis.

A. It has been taken from the Hindu religion. It comes from the Indian atmosphere. If it disappears from the Hindu religion, it will disappear from elsewhere too. Do you think that I would be convinced that untouchability was wiped out just because some wells had been dug for them or some temples had been thrown open to them? These are only indications. If even this much does not happen, all our talking would be in vain. But we shall have to go much further.

Q. For Harijan work, do you have only Hindus in mind or the other people as well?

A. The thought of others is of course implied—in the same way as India's independence is for the good of the entire world. But I do not go on harping on that point; I talk only about swaraj for India. Similarly, I am absolutely confident that there are going to be widespread consequences of the solution of the Harijan problem. It would affect the whole world. Unless I had that hope, why should I get involved in Harijan work? It is al-

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ready implied in my writings. I have asserted that I wish to serve the whole world through it.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

464. ADVICE TO A HARIJAN WORKER[1]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

I do not need any scheme. I want a person who would act. What purpose would a scheme serve without a person to carry it out? What can we do with a scheme if we did not have the capacity to implement it? You are planning to take up leather work. I like leather work very much. But you have not learnt it. It is not enough that you can make slippers. We have also to take up the work of tanning. If you have that ability, your work and mine would become easy. We do not want to set up big factories. We have to see how better tanning of leather could be done in the villages. What did Madhusudan Das do? He gathered the tanners of Utkal and studied how they did their tanning. He was not satisfied with it, and he went to Germany and learnt leather work there. He brought a German [expert] with him and set up a factory. It is in Cuttack. It is no longer under him. I do not know its present condition. Many Harijans learnt the work during the days of Madhusudan Das. Like Madhusudan Das you too should first master the craft. It cannot be done in one month's time. You can do very well, if you learn it properly. I can make arrangements for your training.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, "Training for Service".

465. *DISCUSSION ON FASTING*[1]

[Before *September 3, 1933*]

What we regard as dharma, they [the orthodox] regard as *adharma*. It is ignorance; but you cannot undertake a fast unto death to counter it. It is not a matter for fasting unto death. Such a fast can be undertaken on very rare occasions. It is a very strong measure. This problem is very complex. A conditional fast can be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances. That is why I thought of an unconditional fast[2], a fast without any conditions, for the purification of the Hindu religion. It would be good to have a relay fast just as Ganga-water *kavad*[3]. If the right persons undertook a right fast for the purification of religion, it is bound to have its impact on the people. It is not an *asuri*[4] act, but a purely *daivi*[5] act. No one can call it coercion if somebody resorted to a 21-day or a 50-day fast for ridding the Hindu religion of the evil that has entered into it, because that fast would not to be broken, whatever the people might do.

Q. How do you see coercion in my proposed fast unto death?

A. You are not concerned with the trustees of the temple. What appears *adharma* to you is regarded as dharma by them. How can you undertake a fast in protest against it? Can you make anyone give up his dharma by resorting to a fast? Let me explain to you when a conditional fast can be undertaken. Suppose my brother is a drunkard. He considers drinking an evil but is not able to give it up. It would be justifiable if I went on a fast till he gave up drinking. But when he declares his intention of renouncing his Hindu faith and embracing Christianity, my fast to prevent him from doing it would be coercion. So, for the time being, your duty is to meet the trustees, argue your point with them, convey your stand through their friends, create public opinion. If public opinion is favourable it must

[1] This appeared under the sub-title, "Limitations of Fasting".

[2] From May 8 to 29, 1933

[3] Ganga water used to be transported by a relay of runners in a *kavad*, i.e., a pole carried on the shoulder with pots at the ends.

[4] Demoniacal

[5] Godly

be demonstrated to the trustees, as was done in Guruvayur referendum[1]. If public opinion is found to be favourable, maybe the trustees might agree. Such a poll cannot be conducted by just asking people to raise their hands at a public meeting; you should go from door to door to collect the votes.

Q. In spite of all this, if they are not convinced, what should I do except going on a fast unto death?

A. Even then it cannot be said that a fast unto death may be undertaken. This is not going to purify the Hindu religion. There are many features of the Hindu religion that call for reform, but people are still not agreeable to it. I have said that the Hindu religion would be wiped out unless untouchability is removed. And it is literally true. But what are we going to do if God Himself has willed that the Hindu religion should perish? We must be prepared to lay down our lives; but there should be an occasion for it.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 3-9-1933

466. NO EXAGGERATION[2]

The following is the gist of a letter from a Gujarati correspondent:

> I have read in the *Harijanbandhu* of the 27th August an article[3] by you in which you say, "I can live some days atleast without the daily bread, but I cannot live without Harijan service for one single minute." I have observed an exaggeration of expression in many of your writings. People are often confused by utterances like this. If every moment of your life is occupied in Harijan service, how can you find time for other activities? You cannot serve two masters at one and the same time. I realize that for you life is an indivisible whole and your various activities are only different phases of it. But the masses cannot comprehend this thing. They would naturally infer from the foregoing sentence that you are going to devote the rest of your life to Harijan service. But that is incorrect, for you will no doubt take up other activities also as occasion arises. This exaggeration of expression has, I believe, even in the past created a confusion in

[1] In December 1932; *vide* Vol. LII.
[2] The original Gujarati appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-9-1933. This was published as "condensed from Gujarati".
[3] *Vide* p. 366.

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people's minds. Therefore, if you keep more sense of proportion in your speech and writing, chances of misunderstanding could be reduced to a minimum. I have written this out of regard for you and ask to be forgiven if I am found guilty of presumption.

It is not clear to me whether the correspondent is himself confounded by my 'exaggeration' or whether he represents the confusion of others only. I should be pained, if it is true that many are confounded by my writings. For I believe I have a keen sense of proportion. As a worshipper of Truth I must eschew all exaggeration. What I have written about Harijan service is, I believe, literally true. But Harijan service does not exclude all other service. One can devote oneself simultaneously to several things which are connected with one another. What I have said of Harijan service can, for instance, with equal truth be said of the service of *Daridranarayana*[1] also, for that service is not inconsistent with the service of the Harijans. Human life is not mechanical. To every one of us there are things as dear as life itself, and one can say that life would be impossible without them. The measure of the truthfulness of such statements would depend on the intensity of one's devotion to the causes espoused. While in the case of some people separation from a cause claimed to be dear as life itself will not kill them, with others such a separation will be nothing less than a sentence of death.

But it would be wrong to take such devotion to imply that outward activity connected with the object of devotion must go on from moment to moment. It certainly does imply that outward action must be taken whenever occasion demands it. The seed we sow in the ground does not sprout immediately, but if it is not dead, it grows every minute, though we see it as a plant or tree only after many days or months. The process of growth we see in the physical world we should expect to see in the mental and spiritual world also.

The truth of my statement about Harijan service can be measured, if at all, only after my death. The full measure is known only to the all-knowing God. For He alone knows our intentions. I can, therefore, try to satisfy the correspondent, and others who think like him, only by repeating that there is no exaggeration in my claim that Harijan service is the breath of my life and that, therefore, I cannot live for one moment without it.

Harijan, 30-9-1933

[1] God in the form of the poor

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467. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

September 3, 1933

It is needless for me to redeclare my absolute faith in non-violence and[2] utter disbelief in violence as a means of[3] gaining political rights or political freedom. I deeply deplore the assassination of the Midnapore Magistrate[4]. But at the same time it is impossible not to regret that the rulers will not only not redress the wrongs which lead to such assassinations but[5] insist on ruling by counter-terrorism, which the Ordinances undoubtedly mean.[6]

The Hindu, 4-9-1933; also G.N. 1469

468. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 3,1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. Evidently your presence has served as a tonic for Mother. If she remains free from fever, you should be free to move out for a few days. If so, you should come to me as early as you can. I am anxious to leave here on Friday or Saturday next for Bombay and be there for about a week and then go to Wardha.

I do not know the young man[7] you mention. I know the family well. I must have met him too. But I could not identify him, if I saw him. The family has liberal traditions. Krishna is therefore likely to be quite happy with them. I have written to Anasuyabehn about him. She of course knows all these people

[1] According to G.N. version, a copy of this statement with slight verbal variations was sent to Agatha Harrison.

[2] The G.N. version here adds "my".

[3] The G.N. version has "method for" instead of "means of".

[4] B. E. G. Burge, who was assassinated by three Bengali youths on September 2. The sentence in the G.N. version reads: "I therefore cannot but deeply deplore the assassination of the District Magistrate of Midnapore."

[5] The G.N. version here adds "will".

[6] The G.N. version here reads: "which the Ordinance Rule undoubtedly means".

[7] Gunottam Hutheesing

intimately. But meanwhile I see no harm in your sending for him and seeing him and presenting him to Mother if you find him acceptable. On hearing from Anasuyabehn, I shall wire to you, if necessary. Of course, I am otherwise keeping the matter quite secret. I take it that you have not minded my writing to Anasuyabehn.

Kamala needs freedom from excitement and worry. I am inclined to think that she is the least unhappy in Bombay with Naoroji sisters. I therefore feel that you should bring her when you come here and then leave her here.

In the expectation that we must meet soon, I say nothing of the political situation or of my fasting exploits. I am steadily regaining lost strength.

Poor Mahadev is in Belgaum. It is good to go through the fire.

Do please tell Mother that she is continually in my thoughts. She has to live long enough to see the clouds lifting.

My love to you all.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

469. LETTER TO RUKMINIDEVI BAZAJ

September 3, 1933

CHI. RUKMINI[1],

I was wondering whether you would even write to me, when I got your letter. I do get reports about you from time to time. You have given a rather big name to the child. Before him, poor Madhav[2] will seem plebeian. I hope you and Devendra keep good health. I am fairly well. Mirabehn, Brijkrishna and Prabhavati look after me. Most probably I will go to Bombay on Friday and from there to Wardha.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

SHRI BENARSIDAS BAZAJ
THATHERI BAZAAR, BENARES CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9154

[1] Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

[2] Gandhiji had suggested Madhavdas and Gopaldas as names for the addressee's son, Devendra, which means 'the Lord of gods'.

470. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[Before *September 4, 1933*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

N. is off the rails again. I can see signs of her unsettled mind in her letters. Till now she was all for Hinduism, and now it is Christianity. That also will be good if she is serious about it. But it doesn't seem to me that she is. Her imagination tosses her from one thing to another. The vow of silence seems to have unsettled her mind all the more. Read the accompanying letter and then give it to her. If you can find time, also have a talk with her. Or Vinoba may do so. If Dwarakanath can do anything let him try to calm her.

You must have received my wire[2]. I certainly have many things to discuss with you, but I don't wish to drag you here. At first I felt that I should pay a visit to Bombay for a few days and then go to Wardha. But for the last two or three days I have become a little undecided. Perhaps it may be better to go to Wardha first and then to Bombay. But I am thinking. Since Jawaharlal has been released, it is necessary that I should see him also. I can do that even in Wardha, however. Ultimately, what is decreed will happen. I, therefore, don't make any plans.

My health is improving day by day. I can drink two pounds of milk and eat vegetables and fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2924

[1] According to the source, the letter was received on September 4, 1933.
[2] Dated August 30; *vide* p. 381.

471. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 4, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your postcard. There has been no letter after that. I wrote one postcard to you. I hope you have been able to keep up your health. I have made you all prisoners and escaped myself. How strange!

I don't worry about you, for I believe that your equanimity will help you to remain unaffected by anything.

I am improving now. I intend to leave for Bombay next Friday. I shall probably stay there for about a week. After that, I intend to go to Wardha.

I had Jamna's letter. Let me know your plans. I had a long letter from Chimanlal[1].

At present, Ba, Mira, Prabhavati, Mathuradas, Chandrashankar and Nair are with me. Brijkrishna spends the whole day with me. I get more service than I need.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I. Also C.W. 8392. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

472. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

September 4, 1933

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have read your letter to Chandrashankar. If you have come to know what made the Hindus of Vina abandon their boycott unconditionally, please let me know. Have they realized their folly?

I hope necessary steps are being taken regarding the problem in Bhalada. If the caste Hindus do not change their attitude, and if it is possible, the Harijans may even have to be removed from such

[1] Chimanlal Shah

CWMG - IV

a village. If there is anything else which is worth knowing, please let me know.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3997

473. LETTER TO SHOORJI VALLABHDAS

September 4, 1933

BHAI SHOORJI,

I was thinking of writing to you, when I got your letter. I hope to reach Bombay on Friday. I will not, therefore, give you trouble by asking you to come here. I am certainly eager to see you, but I will have patience for a few days. I hope the girl's health is improving, and that you are well, too.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4095

474. A LETTER

Silence Day, September 4, 1933

CHI. . . .[2],

I got your letter three or four days ago and felt pity for you. I am observing silence today and so I have found the time to write this.

You cannot ride two horses at a time. If you wish to observe the vow of *brahmacharya*, you should never be alone with your wife or any other woman, leave alone sharing the same bed. If you cannot control yourself and avoid being alone with her or stop sleeping in the same bed with her, you should give up the vow of *brahmacharya*. You should leave the Ashram, too, and lead an honest householder's life as others do. There is no disgrace in doing so. Everybody should live with due regard to his strength. If anybody attempts more than that, hypocrisy is bound to creep in. I would, therefore, advise you to reflect carefully and come to a definite decision. Your present way does not do justice to your

[1] *Vide* also "Congratulations", p. 421.
[2] The name has been omitted.

wife either. She cannot satisfy passion when she feels it, but you satisfy yours whenever you please and, thereby, increase her suffering. We accept the women's independence, but your conduct does not show that you know it. Think carefully about this and then do what seems best to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9511

475. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

September 4, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I had been waiting for one. Do write to me occasionally. If you have any problem, let me know about it. Don't worry about me. I am regaining my strength now. I don't know how long I shall be out. I intend to go to Bombay on Friday, and from there hope to go to Wardha after a week. Ba, Mirabehn and Prabhavati are with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. DUDHIBEHN VALJI DESAI
C/O DAKSHINAMURTI, BHAVNAGAR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3134. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

476. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 4, 1933

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

How are you now? Ba told me that you were not well but I hope you must have recovered by now. There is nothing to worry about me. So long as God wishes to protect me nothing will happen to me. And when He wishes to take me away no one here can keep me back. Give up, therefore, all fear for me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 288

477. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

POONA,
September 5, 1933

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter together with the one from your mother. You do not want me to write to her again, do you? If you wish me to, I will write with pleasure.

The date of my reaching Wardha is not yet fixed, but it would not be before the last week of the month.

While you say that chapatis are a nuisance and while you consider them to be unwholesome, chapatis take no time in preparation and are quite wholesome if they are made with whole wheatmeal.

You say that Hindi is the first language you will know. Give me the list of the 11 languages.

I am getting on well.

Give me your day's diary.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

478. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

POONA,
September 6, 1933

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

GOING LUCKNOW BENARES UNNECESSARY. DO TAKE TEN DAYS HILL STATION AT ONCE. JAWAHARLAL REACHING HERE PROBABLY SATURDAY. I GO BOMBAY NEXT WEEK. STAYING ONE WEEK. REACHING WARDHA NOT EARLIER TWENTY-THIRD. AM KEEPING QUITE WELL. DISTRUST NEWSPAPER REPORT.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 116

479. STATEMENT ON HARIJAN DAY[1]

[*September 7, 1933*][2]

The Servants of Untouchables Society has declared 24th of this month to be the Harijan Day. It is the anniversary of the Yeravda Pact, miscalled Poona Pact. It is a happy coincidence that 24th is a Sunday. It is to be hoped that the day will be celebrated in a manner befitting the occasion. Each person, each Harijan organization, should take stock of his or its year's activity and contribution to the removal of the canker of untouchability. Societies and individuals can make a budget or resolution for the year to follow. Subscriptions can be collected from door to door for the work to be done. All the various activities that have hitherto been followed on Harijan Days will, I have no doubt, be taken up with greater emphasis on the 24th instant.

I hope that Harijans will also take stock of their contribution towards their own purification and, therefore, the purification of Hinduism. But there is no doubt that by far the greatest responsibility rests on the shoulders of caste Hindus. Reformers should make it a point of winning over the orthodox people to the movement by gentleness, humility, self-sacrifice, and increasing purity of character.

M. K. GANDHI

Harijan, 9-9-1933

480. INTERVIEW ON GOSEVA[3]

September 8, 1933[4]

GANDHIJI : I don't have sufficient enthusiasm to give a message,[5] because nobody does *goseva* in accordance with my views.

[1] This appeared under the title "Harijan Day".

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 9-9-1933

[3] This is published as "Introduction" in the source.

[4] The interview was concluded on a subsequent date, which is not ascertainable.

[5] The interviewer, a representative of an institution, had asked Gandhiji for a message for his monthly.

I had explained these views to your President. I had also suggested the lines along which improvements could be made in the present movement. The President had agreed to implement my suggestions and had even assured me that he would do so. But he didn't keep his promise. What is the use, then, of my giving a message?

INTERVIEWER: This refers to only some of the workers engaged in *goseva*. Many other persons and goshalas are doing this work. They all can know your views on this movement only through a message. If you wish you can in the same message point out the shortcomings and suggest improvements.

G. I may dispose of you with an ordinary message in the same way as when a *goseva* worker approaches one for contribution; one usually disposes of him by paying him a few coins. But I don't think that any useful purpose will be served by such a message.

I. Well, leaving aside the subject of message, may I ask you whether you would like, after all these years, to revise any of your views on *goseva* expressed earlier? What you had said was: '(1) *goseva* alone will bring swaraj nearer. (2) As long as cows are being slaughtered, I feel myself being slaughtered. My efforts to save cows are going on uninterruptedly. All my efforts are directed to stopping cow-slaughter. Anyone who is not ready to give his life to save the cow is not a Hindu. (3) My deepest aspirations are, eradication of untouchability and service of the cow. We shall achieve swaraj only when we succeed in these two tasks. I see *moksha* lies in their achievement.'

G. I wish to make no change in this statement of my views. But in interpreting them, the context of the circumstances in which I expressed them and the wide meaning which I give to *goseva* should be kept in mind. In *goseva* of my conception, I include all living creatures. Probably you do not know that I have said much more than the remarks you have quoted. For instance, I had also said that the ideal of cow-protection was the most important gift of Hinduism to mankind. But this remark of mine referred only to *goseva* of my peculiar conception.

I. I see what you mean. I will now ask one more question relating to the same aspect. Some people say that while doing cow-protection work in a disinterested spirit, one need not make any distinction between truth and untruth, and that any means can be adopted for cow-protection. What is your view in this regard?

G. To sacrifice truth for the sake of cow-protection would amount to sacrificing the cow herself. Similarly to betray truth for the sake of a public cause is to betray that cause itself.

These peculiar views of mine have not commended themselves to the people, and they are not convinced by them. I have, therefore, no desire to interest myself in the present cow-protection movement. In fact, even today I am doing my utmost for cow-protection. How that is so is a riddle. What appears in newspapers will not help you to solve it. But I myself am convinced about it. Maybe you have found the solution.

I. Yes Sir, I understand what you mean.

G. I have made a deep study of the problem of *goseva*. Very few would have visited as many goshalas as I have. I have carefully studied the working of every institution I visited and have even written down my opinion of them in the visitors' books.

I. Will you then describe the defects that you have noticed in the present cow-protection work?

G. Those are mostly of the nature described in what you read out.

I. Well, then, according to you how can the cow be protected?

G. I will explain all that, but now the time allotted for this interview is over. So please come once again after fixing an appointment. I will certainly grant an interview. We will discuss the problem further then, and if you are really enthusiastic about this work, then either I will co-operate with you or you will co-operate with me and we will do this work together.

II

[After *September 8, 1933*]

I. If I have properly understood you, then the distinctive feature of your idea of cow-protection is complete adherence to truth and non-violence, absence of communal ill will, utmost forbearance and love, and attention to the economic aspect, that is, increasing the number of dairies and tanneries and thereby the value of cows. Isn't this your particular point of view regarding *goseva*?

G. Perfectly true. Those who slaughter cows are ignorant people. Their ignorance cannot be removed by killing them. To remove their ignorance efforts of a different kind, love and sympathy, are required. And from the economic point of view also, there is no other way but to increase the value of cows.

I. Surely it is not your view that, while doing all this, we need not share or try to preserve the peculiar religious sentiment, that is, the feeling of reverence for cows?

G. No, no. On the contrary, this sentiment or feeling of reverence will be kept alive and preserved only by implementing all the items in my plan of *goseva*.

I. If we accept your idea, what should we do in future for the progress of the work? Would you suggest a yearly or three-yearly plan?

G. Whether you have a yearly or a three-yearly plan, you must do these things:

1. Stress should be laid on consumption of cow's milk and consumption of other milk should be stopped;
2. efforts should be made to utilize all the parts of the dead body of a cow and to see that no part is wasted, and propaganda should be carried on in this regard;
3. efforts should be made to improve the breed of cows;
4. the cow's yield of milk should be improved, etc.

I. Do you expect *goseva* workers who are engaged in these activities to work also for removal of untouchability and for Hindu-Muslim unity?

G. Not at all. It would be enough if they realize the wider significance of *goseva*. Much can be done through such awareness itself. It would only mean that you had taken up one special aspect of *goseva*. It is in this sense that I claim to be doing *goseva* work while working for the removal of untouchability.

I. If we wish to work in the manner suggested by you, what help or co-operation from you can we expect?

G. I believe that certain virtues are essential for public workers. If you or anybody from among you pass that test, then I can free them from financial worries.

I. Do you think it necessary that a paper like *Harijan* should be started for this work?

G. To start a newspaper is the next step, or rather the last step. First of all an organization should start functioning, inspired by a particular ideal. Only then would it be proper to start a paper. That has been my attitude in regard to *Harijan*.

I. At present we lay great stress on the unification of all institutions engaged in *goseva*. How far do you approve of this?

G. It is a very difficult task, but I totally approve of it. If you succeed in it, I will congratulate you.

[From Gujarati]
Goseva, pp. 5-9

CWMG INDIA

481. WAS IT COERCIVE?

In the current number of *The Modern Review*, amongst the notes which are always worth reading, there are some paragraphs on my most recent fast[1]. The writer of these notes quotes the following from my letter[2] to the authorities dated 14th August last and then remarks[3]:

> . . . But we . . . are constrained to observe that, though fasts undertaken solely for one's own purification and consolation are the exclusive concern of the individual fasting, fasts undertaken directly or indirectly to bring about political or social changes have coercive effect, even though coercion may not be intended. Like other coercion, this sort of unintended coercion . . . does not lead to universally sincere conduct and lasting reform.

I propose to deal with this criticism because it affects a matter that is by no means closed. Fasting has been for years past an integral part of my life and I may have to resume it whether outside or inside prison walls. I cannot, therefore, write too often on the science of fasting, if I may use the sacred word 'science' in connection with my fasts. It is necessary to write on this matter as well for those who would thoughtlessly imitate me, as for those who criticize me sometimes without being in possession of full data.

With much of what the writer says I can readily agree. I do admit that my fast of September[4] did unfortunately coerce some people into action which they would not have endorsed without my fast. I do admit also that my last fast coerced the Government into releasing me. I admit, too, that such coercion can and does sometimes lead to insincere conduct. This is about the extent of my agreement.

These admissions do not cut at the very root of fasts. They only show that there is great need for caution and that special qualifications are necessary for those who would resort to fasting as a method of reform or securing justice.

[1] From August 16 to 23, 1933
[2] *Vide* pp. 353-4.
[3] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[4] September 20 to 26, 1932; *vide* Vol. LI.

In any examination of moral conduct, the intention is the chief ingredient. Being concerned with the morality of my action, I asserted that the intention behind the fast was not to exert coercion or pressure upon the Government. I wanted the Government to take me at my word and let me die in peace, if they could not see the justice of granting me the facilities I desired. The production of my letter would have absolved them from the charge of heartlessness, if I had died in prison. I did, indeed, know that my fast was likely, in spite of the declaration of my intention to the contrary, to influence Government to some extent. But one may not be deflected from the right course for fear of possible but unintended consequences. If one were to be so deterred it could be shown that hardly any great action could be undertaken.

To make my meaning clearer, let me take the September fast. It is a better illustration for examination seeing that it was unconnected with the Government. It *was intended* to influence both the caste and the Harijan Hindus. But there the intention was most decidedly not to induce, irrespective of merits, the decision I desired, but it *was* to stir the Hindus to action on my submission. The intention was completely fulfilled and to that extent the fast was not, therefore, from the practical standpoint, open to objection. That it went beyond the intention and coerced some people into giving a decision against their conviction was unfortunate. But such conduct is of daily occurrence in the ordinary affairs of life. People do not always act independently of others or of surrounding circumstances. But I am able to say that vast majority of people concerned with the Pact would not accept it without a full and free discussion, and that what they accepted was accepted because they considered it to be on the whole just and fair. They did not sacrifice principle for saving my life.

And now whilst I am on the Pact I may observe parenthetically that, if any injustice was done, it is not yet beyond repair. If injustice can be proved to the satisfaction of the parties concerned, it is not too late to redress it. And I need hardly give the assurance that I should regard it as my sacred duty to exert myself to the best of my ability in helping to secure redress of any real injustice.

To revert to the issue under examination, I may say that I began my experiments in fasting on any large scale as an instrument of reform in 1913.[1] I had fasted often enough before, but

[1] The reference is to the fast undertaken to atone for the moral lapse on the part of an inmate of the Phœnix Ashram; *vide* Vol. XII, p. 410.

not in the manner of 1913. My definite opinion is that the general result of my numerous fasts was without doubt beneficial. They invariably quickened the conscience of the people interested in and sought to be influenced by those fasts. I am not aware of any injustice having been perpetrated through those fasts. If Bengal proves injustice, it will be an exception. In no case was there any idea of exercising coercion on anyone. Indeed, I think that the word coercion would be a misnomer for the influence that was exerted by the fasts under criticism. Coercion means some harmful force used *against* a person who is expected to do something desired by the user of the force. In the fasts in question, the force used was against myself. Surely, force of self-suffering cannot be put in the same category as the force of suffering caused to the party sought to be influenced. If I fast in order to awaken the conscience of an erring friend whose error is beyond question, I am not coercing him in the ordinary sense of the word.

The writer of the notes says that there can be fasts that have no "coercive effect", but if the expression 'coercive effect' can be lawfully used for my fasts, then in that sense, all fasts can be proved to have that effect to a greater or less extent. The fact is that all spiritual fasts always influence those who come within the zone of their influence. That is why spiritual fasting is described as *tapas*. And all *tapas* invariably exerts purifying influence on those in whose behalf it is undertaken.

Of course, it is not to be denied that fasts can be really coercive. Such are fasts to attain a selfish object. A fast undertaken to wring money from a person or for fulfilling some such personal end would amount to the exercise of coercion or undue influence. I would unhesitatingly advocate resistance of such undue influence. I have myself successfully resisted it in the fasts that have been undertaken or threatened against me. And if it is argued that the dividing line between a selfish and an unselfish end is often very thin, I would urge that a person who regards the end of a fast to be selfish or otherwise base should resolutely refuse to yield to it, even though the refusal may result in the death of the fasting person. If people will cultivate the habit of disregarding fasts which in their opinion are taken for unworthy ends, such fasts will be robbed of the taint of coercion and undue influence. Like all human institutions, fasting can be both legitimately and illegitimately used. But as a great weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, it cannot be given up because of its possible abuse. Satyagraha has been designed as an effective substitute for violence. This use is in its infancy and, therefore, not yet perfected. But as the

author of modern satyagraha I cannot give up any of its manifold uses without forfeiting my claim to handle it in the spirit of a humble seeker.

Harijan, 9-9-1933

482. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

'PARNAKUTI',
September 9, 1933

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I like your letter.[1]

I want you to continue to strive with me and believe, as Gokhale used to believe of me, that whilst I often appeared to be uncompromising, I had a compromising and accommodating nature. I have always prized the certificate that he gave me and have endeavoured to live up to it. If the freedom that you desire for the Congress was in my giving, I assure you that I would give it today, but it is not such a simple performance. When at Patna I surrendered all powers to the Swaraj Party,[2] Motilalji handsomely admitted that, though I was always ready to give, the party was only then to take them. The fact is that I do not want power. I look upon it as a privileged service. The moment I feel that I can get out of it to the benefit of the Congress, I will not fail. However, you may depend upon me that I shall strain every nerve to adopt your advice. A great deal will depend upon Jawaharlal, whom I expect here on Saturday.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 264-5

[1] On September 4, the addressee had among other things written: "I was touched by your reply. It was full and reasoned. Neither of us forms an opinion in a hurry or drops it in a hurry. But there is a satisfaction in knowing the other side. In all circumstances, we shall carefully understand and make allowances for each other. . . . I plead for Congress being freed from your rule. If you wait for its consent to the course, a very long delay is inevitable. Grant the freedom immediately. Must you, like the British Raj, put off the consummation till it becomes inevitable?"

[2] At the All-India Congress Committee meeting held in September 1925; *vide* Vol. XXVIII, p. 211.

483. LETTER TO DHIRU C. JOSHI

September 9, 1933

CHI. DHIRU,

I would be happier if you write with ink and improve your handwriting. Pay careful attention to your studies. Write a letter to Chhaganlal[1] and send it to Rama[2] who will pass it on to him along with her own.

Take plenty of exercise. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5813

484. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

September 9, 1933

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

You have done well in going to Rangoon. I hope your trip will bear fruit and there will be complete understanding among the brothers.[3]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5818. Also C.W. 3041. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

485. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

September 9, 1933

CHI. MAGANLAL[4],

I had hoped to get a letter from you and Manjula[5]. She must have got my previous letter. I had written it to the Mogul Street address.

[1&2] Addressee's father and mother

[3] The reference is to the dispute among the sons of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta over their ancestral property; *vide* also the following item.

[4] Youngest son of Dr. Pranjivan J. Mehta

[5] Addressee's wife

CWMG-IV

I enclose Jekibehn's[1] letter, which I received today. Think over it and reply to her.

Write to me a detailed letter. I can work well enough now. How is your business? Do you continue your study? Do you go out for walks? Urmila[2] must have grown quite a bit now. I would be very happy indeed if an understanding is reached.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5819. Also C.W. 3042. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

486. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

Saturday, September 9, 1933

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I had both your letters. You do not seem to have received mine. I am sure by and by you will decide to stay permanently in Vadaj. For the present, if you find it convenient you may stay in the Parsi bungalow and cook your own meals. If you find a Harijan who can cook to your taste, train him. Do your work with due regard for your health. I have also explained to Chimanlal that it should not be at the cost of health. If Liladhar himself treats Shanti, I am helpless. There will be no harm, however, if he has the necessary knowledge. Write to me regularly. I shall be leaving for Bombay next Thursday or Friday.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHAGWANJI
C/O DR. LILADHAR DHARAMSHI
OLD VADAJ, AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 362. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

[1] Jayakunwar Doctor, addressee's sister
[2] Addressee's daughter

CWMG-LY

487. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

September 9, 1933

CHI. MANU[1],

I got your letter. It is better to use pen for writing. I think I owed you a letter. And now you will owe me one. You seem to be making good progress in your study.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3159. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

488. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN V. DESAI

September 9, 1933

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I got your letter. I am all right. I will go to Bombay next week. You will find herewith letters for the five boys. I hope when Kusum comes over there she will keep good health. You are doing right in looking after all our children [of the Ashram]. That is just the right thing for us to do.

Valji is in Nasik Road Central Jail. He keeps good health. I have heard that all the prisoners are well. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3135. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Eldest son of Valji G. Desai

CWMG - LV

489. LETTER TO MADALASA BAJAJ

September 9, 1933

CHI. MADALASA,

I got your letter. You should not be afraid that you will be a burden on Vinoba. It is a teacher's duty that he should help a pupil to overcome his or her shortcomings. If you were perfect, why would you require a teacher's help?

Why are you so much afraid of getting your hair cut? Like grass it will grow again. I have seen the hair of many girls, who had it cut, grow even longer than it was before. If, therefore, you are not very much in love with your hair, get it cut. As for your dress, you don't require much change except that you should wear shorts. The dress for a girl like you can easily be made comfortable. But we shall meet shortly now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 315

490. LETTER TO BIPIN BIHARI VARMA

September 9, 1933

BHAI BIPIN,

I have your letter. I am pained to learn of your illness. May God grant you quick recovery. As for the money, talk over with Brijkishorebabu. I have not yet made up my mind. Write to me again if I am still out. I am sending your letter to Brijkishorebabu.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BIPIN BIHARI VARMA, BAR-AT-LAW
SHAKARPUR, P.O. NARKATIA GANJ
CHAMPARAN

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9669

491. *DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND*[1]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

Don't lose heart. Of course I can understand your deep sentiment.

But how much you suffered!

Oh, it was the body that suffered, besides I had invited the suffering myself. When God creates for us a situation involving suffering He also gives us the strength to bear it. It would surely be painful for me if I did not act on His prompting to undertake a fast. This is not a new thing in my life.

But what about [the risk to] your life?

The path of life is not straight and smooth. It has so many turns and twists, so many ups and downs. It is not like a railway track on which, once released, the train simply goes on.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

492. *ADVICE TO GIRLS, PARNAKUTI KANYASHALA*[2]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

GANDHIJI : If in order to keep up and strengthen one's faith in God man is called upon to undergo this much trouble, he should be prepared to do so.

A GIRL: Should prayers be compulsory or voluntary?

G. Is eating compulsory or voluntary?

A GIRL: One cannot do without it.

G. In that case, we should not be able to do without prayer too. Just as our body cannot grow without food, our *atman* cannot grow

[1] This and the following two items are extracted from Chandrashankar Shukla's "Weekly Letter". This appeared under the sub-title, "God's Insurance".

[2] This appeared under the sub-title, "Should Prayers be Compulsory or Voluntary?" C. S. Shukla had reported that in answer to a question put by one of the girls as to why he went on fast, Gandhiji was explaining the significance of his recent three fasts.

without prayer. Just as food is the nourishment for our body, prayer is the nourishment for our *atman*. Without prayer the *atman* becomes lustreless. How can we say that it is killed? For, the *Bhagavad Gita* tells us that the *atman* is deathless. But *atman* may be deluded. There are countless people in the world who do not pray, they are as good as lost. He who is not conscious of the *atman* is only an ignorant fool. Prayer can never be said to be compulsory. It can be only voluntary. If anyone insists on making prayer compulsory, it will result in hypocrisy. But we must make it compulsory of our own accord. It is not one's duty to eat. One can do without eating for a while. One can never eat when one has already eaten too much. But one can never have too much of prayers. We must make prayer so obligatory for ourselves that we can never do without it. If you girls resolve that you would not tell a lie even if you get a kingdom in return, would it be called compulsory or voluntary? What if you have decided on your own and made it a rule to offer your prayers at 4 o'clock in the morning and at 7.30 in the evening —even at the instance of the elders? In such matters we must be hard on ourselves. You can pray only if you have made such a rule. Nothing in the world happens without a law of its own.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

493. ADVICE TO A STUDENT[1]

[Before *September 10, 1933*]

I am asking you to spin for half an hour every day. Do you think it is too much? Suppose you spin only enough to bring you one pice. If you multiply it by 30 crores it would mean 30 crore pice. How much would it amount to in terms of rupees in a year? The national wealth of this poor country would increase to that extent and the problem of poverty would be largely solved. This is not asking too much from you.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

[1] Who had approached Gandhiji after the evening prayers. This appeared under the sub-title, "The Price of an Autograph".

494. WHAT SHOULD A BRAHMIN DO?

A Maharashtrian writes:[1]

I hope not many persons have had the experience that this Brahmin has had. Of course, no one should have it. Anyone who is qualified for a job should get one. There should be no discrimination in this regard, on the basis of caste, varna or religion. It should be easy for any person belonging to this country to find himself a job, or practise a profession here.

This represents the ideal. Ideas of 'high' and 'low' are deep-rooted in our country and hence caste, varna and religion are given greater attention than merit or demerits. Hence it is not surprising that Brahmins are not given employment where there is a ban on their recruitment. Unfortunate incidents will persist, because of our sins and the rot that has entered our religion. We should, therefore, suffer them in a spirit of atonement.

But then, why should one who wishes to observe the dharma ordained for a Brahmin look for employment? Those who profess to be Brahmins, should spread *Brahmavidya*[2] amongst the people and for livelihood depend upon religiously-inclined patrons. A Brahmin who is out to seek employment should find true consolation in the practice of his own dharma, so that he will have no cause for despair.

I hope I will not be criticized on the ground that I who assert that varnadharma has ceased to exist, take refuge in this system when faced with a difficult situation. This is because, to say that varnadharma has disappeared does not imply that no one should observe it. Anyone who believes in it ought to observe it studiously as far as he is personally involved. The fact that this Brahmin claims to be one suggests that he believes in varnadharma. Hence, I would advise him to observe it and give up the lure of employment.

Even in these difficult times, individual Brahmins have rendered no mean service to the country. Compared with others, the

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had pointed out that an educated gentleman had failed to obtain employment because of his being a Brahmin.

[2] Knowledge of Brahman

sacrifice of Brahmins is indeed greater. However, the supreme sacrifice on the part of Brahmins will be to give up all pursuit of wealth such as employment, etc. The Brahmin's dharma could shine only by *paramartha*[1]. If the Brahmins understood the idea behind varnadharma and acted accordingly, it could easily be revived. Hence my advice to this Brahmin and to those in a similar plight is that they should become worthy of practising their Brahmin dharma, act accordingly and give up the lure of wealth.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

495. CONGRATULATIONS

Both caste Hindus and Harijans of Vina deserve to be congratulated on having resolved the differences and the internal disputes which had arisen between them and on having ended the boycott of Harijans. I hope the harmonious relationship will endure. I also compliment the Harijan Sevak Sangh on its successful efforts.

A similar atmosphere of tension and bitterness seems to have been generated in Bhalada. As I write this, I have no information whether or not a settlement has been reached there. I hope the people have been reconciled there too.

Such quarrels are a disgrace to us. In every village the number of our Harijan brothers and sisters is very small compared to the rest of the population. To persecute them is like engaging an army to fight ants. To suspect Harijans or to implicate them in the death or disease of cattle, is nothing but superstition. It might be that some Harijans were involved, but beating or boycotting them will not make them give up the practice, but by having love for them, by spreading knowledge amongst them, by treating them well and by regarding them as our brothers and sisters, it is likely that they will overcome the habit. In other words, the only royal road to make Harijans real children of God (Hari) is by abolishing untouchability wholly.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 10-9-1933

[1] Pursuit of the highest values

496. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

September 10, 1933

CHI. MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA,

I got the letters of you both. Happiness and unhappiness are a part of our lot, as heat and cold are. One day we may be owning a motor-car and the next day we may have to go walking on foot. Why need that make us unhappy? Never lose courage and patience. They are one's real wealth. We hope to arrive in Mani Bhavan on Friday evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS GOKULDAS
SHAMJI SAVAJI'S CHAWL
MANORDAS STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

497. MESSAGE TO WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

[Before *September 11, 1933*][1]

What message can I send through the pen if I am not sending any through the life I am living?

The Hindu, 12-9-1933

[1] This message was reported under the date-line: "Chicago, September 11, 1933".

498. MESSAGE TO SWADESHI EXHIBITION AND BAZAAR[1]

[Before *September 11, 1933*][2]

If women do not uphold the cause of swadeshi, what can men alone do? Your exhibition is organized by women. It must therefore be well ordered and well decorated.

The Hindu, 12-9-1933

499. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

September 11, 1933

BHAI VIYOGI HARI[3],

Your letter. We must, first of all, find out the rules of the tramway. The problem is quite simple if it is only a matter of clothing. Even otherwise we have to teach Harijans the rules of cleanliness. The tramway authorities have no right to ask anyone to disclose his identity, hence neither a Harijan nor anyone else is obliged to answer the question. I shall certainly write for *Harijan Sevak* when I have the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VIYOGI HARI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
BIRLA MILLS, DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1094

[1] Organized by the Gujarat and Broach branches of All-India Women's Conference

[2] The message was published under the date-line: "Ahmedabad, September 11, 1933".

[3] Hindi poet and editor of *Harijan Sevak*

CWMG - LV

500. LETTER TO RAMA DEVI CHOWDHARY[1]

September 11, 1933

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter to hand. Your work seems to be proceeding well. May it progress thus. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMA DEVI
SERVANTS OF UNTOUCHABLES SOCIETY
CUTTACK

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2783

501. TALK WITH A JAPANESE MONK[2]

[*September 12, 1933*][3]

You can help in several ways.[4] Every country must attain its own freedom. But those who are indebted to India can do her service in many ways.

I am not a preacher. Rather, I am a man of action. I can only show you how to work. This spinning-wheel is a wheel of *upasana*[5] and also a wheel of action. When you ply this wheel, you work and pray at one and the same time. Here is work for you. This I recommend to you. Look at the yarn it spins. When you have mastered this, I shall show you some other work. I teach only action. And there is no doubt about this. Learning to spin also means that you should know cleaning and carding cotton. Then you can claim to have joined the charkha movement. This is enough for the time being.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-9-1933

[1] Wife of Gopabandhu Chowdhary

[2] This appeared under the title "Charkha—the Wheel of Action".

[3] From *Gandhi: 1915–1948——A Detailed Chronology*

[4] The Japanese monk was eager to serve India and had asked for instruction.

[5] Prayer

502. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 14, 1933

As a rule, during my long course of public service, the next moment's step has been clear before me, but since my unexpected release from prison on August 23 last, darkness has surrounded me. The path of duty has, therefore, not been clear to me. My present state of health is such that it may yet take several weeks for me to regain my lost strength.

To seek imprisonment as soon as I was physically fit, or to restrain myself for the interrupted year of imprisonment was the question before me.

After hard praying and thinking, I have come to the conclusion that up to the termination of the period of my sentence, that is, up to August 3 next, I must not court imprisonment by offering aggressive civil resistance. This, however, in no way affects the advice given in the statement issued by me after the informal conference[1] at Poona. That I have to suspend action for myself is unfortunate but inevitable.

My release has placed me in a most embarrassing position, but as a satyagrahi, that is, as a humble seeker of Truth, somehow or other it offends my sense of propriety to court imprisonment in the circumstances created by my discharge. Whatever the motive behind it, I may not quarrel with my release. I must examine the act on its merits. It appears to me to be petty to force the Government to re-arrest me by taking aggressive action during the unexpired term of imprisonment, unless extraordinary circumstances, which I cannot foresee, arise compelling me to revise my decision. There is no room for smallness in civil resistance.

This self-imposed restraint is a bitter cup. When I said at my trial[2] after arrest that to remain outside and be a helpless witness of the devastating and demoralizing effect of the Ordinance Rule was an unbearable agony, I stated a simple and unvarnished fact. That agony is no less today than it was on August 4. But I must bear it.

I cannot be a willing party to an undignified cat-and-mouse game if Government have any such thing in contemplation.

[1] *Vide* pp. 262 and 265-6.

[2] On August 4; *vide* pp. 341-3.

Therefore, when and if I am arrested again and denied Harijan service, I would not hesitate, if I had the inner urge, to undertake a fast to the finish which would not be broken even if Government released me, as they did on August 23 last, when the danger point had been reached.

I must state the limitations of my self-restraint in clear terms. Whilst I can refrain from aggressive civil resistance, I cannot, so long as I am free, help guiding those who will seek my advice, and preventing national movement from running into wrong channels. It is an ever-growing belief with me that truth cannot be found by violent means.

The attainment of national independence is to me a search after truth. Terrorist methods, whether adopted by an oppressor or his victim can, I am convinced, never be effectively answered by violent resistance but only by civil resistance.

I would, therefore, be guilty of disloyalty to my creed, if I attempted to put greater restraint on myself than I have adumbrated in this statement. If then Government leave me free, I propose to devote this period to Harijan service and if possible to such constructive activities as my health may permit.

It is needless to repeat here that peace is as much a part of my being as civil resistance. Indeed a civil resister offers resistance only when peace becomes impossible. Therefore, so far as I am concerned and so long as I am free, I shall make all endeavours in my power to explore every possible avenue of an honourable peace.

The Bombay Chronicle, 15-9-1933

503. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
September 14, 1933

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am glad you have written so fully and frankly.[1]

When, on my return from London at the end of 1931, I found you to have been suddenly snatched away from me,[2] I felt the separation keenly. I was, therefore, most anxious to meet you and exchange views.[3]

[1] For the addressee's letter dated September 13, 1933, *vide* Appendix XIV.

[2] The addressee was arrested on December 26, 1931, while on his way to see Gandhiji; *vide* Vol. XLVIII.

[3] Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru met and had long discussions from September 10.

CWMG-IV

With much of what you have said in your letter I am in complete agreement. The experience gained after the Karachi Congress has, if possible, strengthened my faith in the main resolution and the economic programme[1] referred to by you. I have no doubt in my mind that our goal can be no less than 'Complete Independence'. I am also in whole-hearted agreement with you when you say that without a material revision of vested interests the condition of the masses can never be improved. I believe, too, though I may not go as far as you do, that before India can become one homogeneous entity, the princes will have to part with much of their power and become popular representatives of the people over whom they are ruling today. I can corroborate from first-hand experience much of what you say about the Round Table Conference. Nor have I the slightest difficulty in agreeing with you that in these days of rapid intercommunication and a growing consciousness of the oneness of all mankind, we must recognize that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going on in other parts of the world. I can, therefore, go the whole length with you and say that 'we should range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world'. But I know that though there is such an agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us. Thus you have emphasized the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to the repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know that if we can take care of them, attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means. If we can give an ocular demonstration of our uttermost truthfulness and non-violence, I am convinced that our statement of the national goal cannot long offend the interests which your letter would appear to attack. We know that the princes, the zamindars, and those who depend for their existence upon the exploitation of the masses, would cease to fear and distrust us, if we could but ensure the innocence of our methods. We do not seek to coerce any. We seek to convert them. This method may

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 370-2.

appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest.

In the main I agree with your interpretation of Sjt. Aney's instructions and my note[1] upon them. I am quite clear in my mind that had those instructions not been issued, the whole movement of civil resistance would have collapsed through growing internal weakness; for Congressmen were deluding themselves into the belief that there were organizations effectively functioning to which they could look for guidance, when, as a matter of fact, under the organized terrorism which the Ordinance Rule means, organized functioning of Congress Committees had become impossible. A false belief in the functioning of organizations, rendered illegal and largely impotent, was fast producing a demoralization which had to be arrested. There is no such thing as demoralization in civil resistance properly applied. You have said rightly that after all "civil disobedience is essentially an individual affair". I go a step further and say that so long as there is one civil resister offering resistance, the movement cannot die and must succeed in the end. Individual civil resisters do not need the aid of an organization. After all an organization is nothing without the individuals composing it. Sjt. Aney's instructions were, therefore, I hold, an affective answer to the Ordinances and if only men and women belonging to the Congress will appreciate the necessity of those instructions with all their implications, the Ordinances will be rendered nugatory, at least so far as the resisters are concerned. They can form a nucleus around which an army of invincible civil resisters can be built up. Nothing in Sjt. Aney's instructions or in my note would warrant the supposition that they preclude organized action by Congressmen in any shape or form.

I would like to warn you against thinking that there is no fundamental difference between individual civil resistance and mass civil resistance. I think that the fundamental difference is implied in your own admission that "it is essentially an individual affair". The chief distinction between mass civil resistance and individual civil resistance is that in the latter everyone is a complete independent unit and his fall does not affect the others; in mass civil resistance the fall of one generally adversely affects the rest. Again, in mass civil resistance leadership is essential, in individual civil resistance every resister is his own leader. Then again, in mass civil resistance, there is a possibility of failure; in individual civil resistance failure is an impossibility. Finally, a

[1] *Vide* pp. 295-301.

State may cope with mass civil resistance; no State has yet been found able to cope with individual civil resistance.

Nor may much be made of my statement that an organization which feels its own strength can at its own risk adopt mass civil resistance. While, as an opinion, it is unexceptionable, I know that at the present moment there is no organization that can shoulder the burden. I do not want to raise false hopes.

Now about the secret methods. I am as firm as ever that they must be tabooed. I am myself unable to make any exceptions. Secrecy has caused much mischief and if it is not put down with a firm hand, it may ruin the movement. There may be exceptional circumstances that may warrant secret methods. I would forgo that advantage for the sake of the masses whom we want to educate in fearlessness. I will not confuse their minds by leading them to think that under certain circumstances, they may resort to secret methods. Secrecy is inimical to the growth of the spirit of civil resistance. If Congressmen will realize that all property is liable to be confiscated at any moment, they will learn to be utterly independent of it.

I quite agree with you that it is ludicrous for individuals to send notices to the local authorities of their intention to offer a particular form of civil disobedience. We do not want to make a great movement ridiculous. Therefore when civil resistance is offered it should be offered seriously and in an effective manner, in so far as this is possible, in furtherance of the Congress programme.

I notice one gap in your letter. You make no mention of the various constructive activities of the Congress. They became an integral part of the Congress programme that was framed after mature deliberations in 1920.[1] With civil resistance as the background we cannot possibly do without the constructive activities such as communal unity, removal of untouchability and universalization of the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I am as strong as ever about these. We must recognize that whilst the Congressmen can be counted by hundreds of thousands, civil resisters imprisoned have never amounted to more than one lakh at the outside. I feel that there is something radically wrong if paralysis has overtaken the remaining lakhs. There is nothing to be ashamed of in an open confession by those who for any reason whatsoever are unable to join the civil resisters' ranks. They are also serving the cause of the country and bringing it nearer to the goal who are

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, Appendix I.

engaged in any of the constructive activities I have named and several other kindred activities I can add to the list. Ordinance or no Ordinance, if individual Congressmen and Congresswomen will learn the art of contributing their share to the work of building of the house of independence and realize their own importance, dark as the horizon seems to us, there is absolutely no cause for despair or disappointment.

Finally, if I can say so without incurring the risk of your accusing me of egotism, I would like to say that I have no sense of defeat in me and the hope in me that this country of ours is fast marching towards its goal is burning as bright as it did in 1920; for I have an undying faith in the efficacy of civil resistance. But as you are aware, after full and prayerful consideration, I have decided not to take the offensive during the unexpired period of the sentence of imprisonment that was pronounced against me on the 4th of August last by the court that met in Yeravda Jail. I need not go into the reasons as I have already issued a separate statement[1] about it. This personal suspension, although it may be misunderstood for a while, will show how and when it may become a duty. And if it is a duty, it cannot possibly injure the cause.

Yours,
BAPU

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
POONA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(14), pp. 153-61; also *Mahatma*, Vol. III, pp. 308-11

[1] *Vide* pp. 425-6.

CWMG-IV

504. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

'PARNAKUTI', POONA,
September 15, 1933

CHI. MANI,

Since you must be getting letters from Nasik[1] regularly, I did not write any. Now I see that if I had written, you would have got my letters. But let that be. If I am out of prison, I am sure, you will come and see me wherever I may be. I know you will stay in Belgaum for a couple of days and then go to Nasik. I hope you keep good health. I am well. I am leaving for Bombay today. 21st Ahmedabad, 23rd Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN PATEL
CENTRAL PRISON, HINDALAGA
BELGAUM

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 107-8

505. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN FROM POONA TO BOMBAY,
September 15, 1933

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter in the train and I am writing this reply immediately. I am going to Bombay. On Wednesday I will go to Ahmedabad. I have to perform two ceremonies[2] there on Thursday. You must have read about that. I expect to reach Wardha on the 23rd. The programme after that will be decided there.

Don't worry at all about my health. I do take, and will continue to take, the utmost care. I can drink two pounds of

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel was then in Nasik Jail.

[2] Unveiling a statue of Chinubhai Madhavlal and laying the foundation-stone of the Sheth Maneklal Jethalal Library; *vide* Vol. LVI, pp. 12-7.

CWMG IV

milk and eat fruit and vegetables. My weight is 100 pounds. The body is massaged daily. Dr. Dinshaw takes great care of my health. He will come to Bombay also. Premlilabehn literally bathed me in her love. 'Parnakuti' has practically become a second home to me. I am very glad that you have continued honey. Should I ask her to send you some? She will be coming to Bombay tomorrow. She frequently visits the place. Aunt[1] was with me all the time. She is an amazing mixture. There is no doubt about her love, but she always creates difficulties. Jawaharlal's health is excellent. He has still preserved the qualities of character which his name[2] connotes. He will now go to Lucknow. He stayed in 'Parnakuti' with me. He was accompanied by Upadhyaya[3]. Manzar Ali[4] and Professor[5] also were there. Professor had fever, but there is no cause for anxiety. Andrews has remained behind in Poona for two days to have some rest. Devdhar[6] has become very weak. Write a letter inquiring after his health. Shastri[7] is all right now and has returned to Poona. Most probably Chandrashankar will accompany me on my visits. The only difficulty is about his health. Mathuradas[8] also is accompanying. But it is not certain whether he will come to Wardha. Most probably he will accompany up to there. Mirabehn, of course, will be in the party. Prabhavati also is with me up to now. I had a long letter from Mahadev. He is fairly well. He reads and spins. Pannalal[9] was in Poona and will now go to Bombay. Kaka also will come to Bombay in two or three days. Ba is quite well. Do the needful about your tooth. Have you kept up the study of Sanskrit? Don't worry about anything. I have written[10] to Mani and told her that, when she is released, she should go and see you and then see me wherever I am. Kamala Nehru has a cardiac ailment. She is in Lucknow.

Why should we care whether or not we get any company?[11] Why should one who feels the presence of God need other com-

[1] Sarojini Naidu
[2] 'Jawahar', literally means a jewel.
[3] Nehru's Private Secretary
[4] Manzar Ali Sokata, a Muslim leader
[5] J. B. Kripalani
[6] G. K. Devdhar
[7] R. V. Sastri
[8] Mathuradas Trikumji
[9] Pannalal Jhaveri
[10] *Vide* the preceding item.
[11] The addressee was kept alone and the Government had been requested for a companion.

pany? However, you have done right in writing about that, as also about visits.

I have to draw up a tour programme for Harijan work in consultation with Ghanshyamdas (Birla) and Thakkar Bapa.

Anandi is well on the whole. Narahari's children have been ill for some time. They are being properly looked after and treated. Bablo has gone to live with his aunt. He went on crying till he had his way. Nirmala[1] is all right, and so also Sharda[2]. I get letters from Anandi. In Bombay I shall be staying in Mani Bhavan, and in Ahmedabad at Ranchhodbhai's[3] place.

Send for anything you want. Mahadev has taken over charge of making envelopes[4].

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 22-5

[1] Mahadev Desai's sister
[2] Daughter of Chimanlal Shah
[3] Ranchhodlal Amritlal Shodhan, a mill-owner
[4] The addressee used to make envelopes out of waste paper as a hobby.

CWMG - LV

ADDENDA

1. NOTES

Carrion-eating

Sjt. Hiralal Shah has collected writings from different sources condemnatory of carrion-eating and showing how carrion-eating has repelled people.

His first text is from *Bhavprakash*, Part II, verse 88:

स्वयं मृतस्य चाबल्यमतीसारकरं गुरु।

> The flesh of an animal dead from natural causes is debilitating, heavy and liable to cause diarrhoea.

From Kautilya he sends me many elaborate rules from which I take the following:

> The flesh of animals which have been killed outside slaughter-houses . . . and the flesh of animals which have suddenly died shall not be sold.

From the *Ain-i-Akbari* Sjt. Shah sends me several texts recounting ten divisions among Hindus. The last division is classed as that of *Chandalas*, being 'low caste, eating carrion'.

The other quotations are from James Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*. From these, I take the following:

> From the religious order of Brahmins, I descend to the caste of *Chandalas* or Pariahs. These people are considered so abject as to be employed in the vilest offices, and held in such detestation that no other tribe will touch them; and those Hindus who commit enormous crimes are excommunicated into this caste, which is considered to be a punishment worse than death.

Describing the Pulaiyas the author says:

> Constant poverty and accumulated misery have entirely debased the human form, and given a squalid and savage appearance to these unhappy beings. Yet debased and oppressed as the Pulaiyas are, there exists throughout India a caste called Pariahs, still more abject and wretched. If a Pulaiya by any accident touches a Pariah, he must perform a variety of ceremonies and go through many ablutions, before he can be cleansed from the impurity . . . nor do they eat together; although the only difference in their epicurean banquet is that the Pulaiyas eat of all animal food, ex-

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cept beef, and sometimes of that which dies of itself, the Pariahs not only feast upon dead carcasses, but eat beef and carrion of every kind.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

2. *MORE DONATIONS*

Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla writes to me saying that he has received from Lala Kamalapat a donation of Rs. 3,000 and a donation of Rs. 2,000 from Seth Rameshwar Prasad Bagla, both of Cawnpore. These can be utilized for the David Scheme or general education work, the only condition being that the donations will be utilized for the Harijans of that Province.

A sum of Rs. 2,500 has been received from Seth Soniram Poddar of Rangoon to be used at my discretion for education work amongst Harijans. This amount also is available for the David Scheme or for general education work amongst the Harijans, no matter in what part of India.

There is not, therefore, any dearth, at least for the present, of scholarships for suitable Harijans, and Seth Ghanshyamdas is bringing into being a special educational board for the examination and selection of Harijan candidates for scholarship, more especially of those coming under the David Scheme.

From Europe £8 have been received from the same friend whose letter I published in the *Harijan* a month ago. The letter bringing the notes says:

> I am enclosing with my loving Easter wishes £8 that I have saved to send you at Easter for the Harijans. I am not sending them directly to Delhi as it is not worth while, and I would rather you disposed of them where you thought best. I scarcely dare send you such a small sum, but you know I have saved it with my deepest prayers and love for the holy cause that I have made my own. You know this now. All my prayers and penances are to try to help you, and I can so well feel all the difficulties and disappointments you have to live through. Last Monday on receiving *Harijan* of 18th March, I had the feeling so deeply that I was overwhelmed with emotion that I could not explain. I have read the issue through and through and thank you for it. What you say of the Ramji Mandir of your childhood is very beautiful. I know so well that feeling myself. It carries one through life.

Harijan, 29-4-1933

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"[1]

May 2, 1933

I have received messages from dear friends in England, which make me happy. They seem to have been convinced in their hearts about the propriety of the step I am going to take. They have not said this in so many words but that is how I interpret their messages. I was afraid that they might not be able to understand the uniqueness of this fast. But my fear has been proved to be baseless. Mr. Andrews has sent a message on his own behalf and on behalf of friends. Another message is from Mr. and Mrs. Polak. They have never hesitated to criticize me whenever they have not understood any of my actions. I had a vague fear that they might not approve of my present step. I have been receiving messages from friends in India too and I hope that in a few days' time they will understand the propriety of my step. Whatever it be, I am becoming more and more convinced that it was not possible for me to avoid this fast. There was no other way if this movement was to be kept on a purely moral plane and saved from being besmirched by selfish and impure elements that have infiltrated into it. Now I hope that those engaged in it will start working with redoubled zest and fulfil the various tasks connected with the removal of untouchability, including the task of educating public opinion in favour of the Bill for the abolition of untouchability. I am convinced that the progress would have stopped if I had not taken the step. I wish that the sanatanists and reformers should work in co-operation during the coming weeks and remove whatever defects they find in the existing laws and come to a settlement.

You ask me [what I will do] if I am released. This is a question I really cannot at the moment consider.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 279-80

[1] *Vide* p. 84.

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

Private MYLAPORE,
May 7, 1933

DEAREST BROTHER,

After much thought and destruction of several drafts, I have decided that the best reply to your 'begging' and most touching letter of the 2nd instant is the enclosed extract. I trust it will sustain you ever so little in the ordeal which will have begun when it reaches Yeravda. It would have been useless and, as you said in your first statement, embarrassing for me to try to dissuade. What remains for your friends and associates is to wish that you may come out of the ordeal not merely unscathed, but armed afresh with the strength of *tapas* for the struggle that seems without end.

I will not pretend for a moment that I approve of your fast. To one like me, born in Hinduism and bred up in it for long years, the arguments pro and con are thoroughly familiar. From sacred texts one might confute most of the reasoning in your statements. But beyond texts and mere authority is reason and humanity, on which you habitually fall back. Even in that ultimate court I fear we shall not be found on the same side. Our values are different fundamentally. The difference is radical, no sophistry can abolish it.

In spite of what you have said in the last revelation of your heart, I believe that too much self-communion and internal debate have undermined your judgment. The state of ecstasy when values are reversed, when day becomes night and night day, when pleasure becomes pain and pain pleasure, is rare even in the experience of mystics. The attempt to make it habitual and to adopt the language appropriate to that state as the language of everyday speech is, if I may use the expression, to walk on moral stilts. On occasions you appear to me, in strange contrast to your realism, to impose that mode of movement on the common men and women around you. The atmosphere in such circumstances is apt to be thick with disappointment and grievous failure. And if the only correction possible were self-correction, the master must needs find himself doomed to the cell of penitence, which is next door to suicide. You have enough philosophy to understand that to claim divine sanction for a course of conduct is to withdraw it from the field of discussion and deprive it of direct validity to other minds. Whenever I come

[1] *Vide* p. 92.

across the claim in your writing I cannot help quoting to myself the famous line of Kalidasa:

विचारमूढः प्रतिभासि मे त्वम् ।

"You appear to me to be confounded by anxious thought."

Yours always,
V. S. SRINIVASAN

ENCLOSURE

'Revolution and Religion' is a review by John Middleton Murry of a book called *Moral Man and Immoral Society* by Reinhold Neibuhr. The review appears in the *Aryan Path* of this month. Below are transcribed the concluding paragraphs in which reference is made to Gandhi.

'What then are those who are convinced alike of the material and spiritual necessity . . . for the social struggle in the Western world? There is our tragedy. It is a most significant tribute to Gandhi that he should be the figure in whom the rigorous yet imaginative arguments of Neibuhr's book inevitably culminate. Of the book itself, I can only say that it seems to be of an altogether higher order than any other examination of the menacing problem of Western civilization with which I am acquainted. It is a prophetic book; and I do not believe I shall be found the victim of romantic illusionism when I say that I believe it will prove to be the forerunner of a new and enduring political movement in the English-speaking world.'

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 252-4

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

DEHRADUN JAIL,
May 5, 1933

MY DEAR BAPU,

Your letter came today. I was half expecting it for your large heart never permits you to forget anyone. I have sent you a telegram already.

As my telegram will indicate, I feel utterly at a loss and do not know what I can say to you. Religion is not familiar ground for me, and as I have grown older I have definitely drifted away from it. I suppose I have something else in its place, something other than just intellect, reason, which gives me strength and hope. Apart from this undefinable and indefinite urge, which may have just a tinge of religion in it but is wholly different from it, I

[1] *Vide* p. 96.

have grown to rely entirely on the workings of the mind. Perhaps they are weak supports to rely upon, but, search as I will, I can see no better ones. Religion seems to me to lead to emotion and sentimentality and they are still more unreliable guides. Intuition—undoubtedly there is such a thing, though where it comes from I cannot say! Perhaps from the stored up experiences at the back of the mind, the sub-conscious self.

The Harijan question is bad, very bad, but it seems to me incorrect to say that there is nothing so bad in all the world. I think I could point to much that was equally bad and even worse. All over the world there is this same Harijan question in various forms. Is it not the outcome of special causes? Surely it is due to something more than mere ignorance and ill will. To remove those causes or to neutralize their effect appears to be the only way to deal with the roots of the matter. But why should I write of these matters now! I do not want to argue in this letter as the stage for argument seems to be past.

It is hard to be so far from you, and yet it would be harder to be near you. This crowded world is a very lonely place, and you want to make it still lonelier. Life and death matter little, or should matter little. The only thing that matters is the cause that one works for, and if one could be sure that the best service to it is to die for it, then death would seem simpler. I have loved life—the mountains and the sea, the sun and rain and storm and snow, and animals, and books and art, and even human beings—and life has been good to me. But the idea of death has never frightened me, from a distance it seems fitting enough as the crown of one's endeavour. But at close quarters, it is not pleasant to contemplate.

The last fourteen or fifteen years have been a wonderful time for me, ever since I had the good fortune to be associated with you in various activities. Life became fuller and richer and more worthwhile, and that is a dear and precious memory which nothing can take from me. And whenever the future happens to be dark, this vision of the past will relieve the gloom and give strength.

All my love to you.

Yours affectionately,

J

[PS.]

Kamala is staying in Dehradun. I shall communicate your message to her.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1933. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

APPENDIX IV

TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

May 4, 1933

GANDHIJI: Even jurisprudence admits the right of self-destruction. You will ask me whether Ramatirtha, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda did this sort of *tapasya*, whether the suicide of Ramatirtha — deliberate or resulting from a trance — produced any results, whether Jesus mounting the cross left any impact.

C. R. But Hinduism does not sanction suicide.

G. I don't know. But Mahadev was telling me that there is a practice of drowning oneself in the Ganga.

C. R. That is to purify oneself with the water of the Ganga. I do admit that if you are the cause of all these sins you may commit suicide. Logically it would be your victory, but then you do not seek such a victory, do you?

G. I want to atone for the sins. Moral ends require moral means. Cardinal Manning was kept on three biscuits and water. It is easier to undertake twenty-one days' fast than to die the kind of slow death as Cardinal Manning is said to have died. A moral reform can be brought about only through *tapashcharya* and self-purification. We should learn from the experience of scientists who have gone through this. My mother and I were born in families where such fasts were an everyday affair. They were a part of their experience. It is probable that my father did not approve of the severe fasts my mother used to undertake but she showed no ill-effects from the fasting and they made us respect her all the more.

C. R. This is only an instance of association of ideas. Can you defend your case by saying that just because your mother fasted you also must? If someone pierces himself with a needle, how will that convince people that it is sinful to regard a person as an untouchable?

G. Then supposing I fast only for a few days? Supposing I don't die at the end of the fast?

C. R. The two things are not related at all. You seem to believe that there is a secret connection between self-mortification and people's convictions. Buddha was the first to raise his voice against such self-mortification.

G. In a true fast the mind and the soul co-operate with the body. Buddha was against purely physical fasting.

[1] *Vide* p. 111.

C. R. Will you have the strength to think clearly after ten days?

G. On former occasions I did have it. Thoughts become purer during a pure fast even though there may not be any outward sign of that. A co-worker undertook a fast for fifty-five days, still his thoughts have not become pure because his mind was not pure. The very first day he started discussing with me what he would do after the fast. Even now his mind is not steady. He wrote me a letter in which he described the impurity of his mind. But to a man who has his mind fixed on God or on some noble act things that were obscure at first gradually become clearer and clearer.

C. R. This can be true only to a certain extent.

G. In saying this you tread on dangerous ground. You must accept the conclusion of a scientist. One who is pure, who adheres to truth and wants to cling to it is as much a scientist as a physicisist.

C. R. But this is an unnatural situation.

G. It may be unnatural for animals, not for human beings. If you wish to see the unseeable you have to become unseeable.

C. R. Do you wish to see the unseeable?

G. Yes, because I want to serve the Harijans in the best way possible. If untouchability is to be eradicated we must touch the hearts of 160 million people.

C. R. There is a superstition of touching wood to save oneself from ghosts and spirits and God is brought into it. But there must be a limit to such beliefs in the occult.

G. I am not ashamed of the occult element. You seem to say that it is harmful to believe in the occult.

C. R. Yes, if it results in death.

G. You want to have the cake and eat it, too. For the sake of argument I shall grant that fasts which end in death are wrong. Your argument implies that mortification of the flesh can never do good.

C. R. It may sometimes.

G. From the medical point of view?

C. R. No. Even from the spiritual point of view.

G. Then you have lost. If that is the case it should be left to the person who wishes to undertake a fast. I did not undertake this fast of my own free will. I was commanded.

C. R. All right. Can friends advise on this?

G. Certainly.

C. R. If there is an eighty per cent chance of death resulting from this, it is a gamble. You will say that it is a good gamble. I feel that you have been brooding over the same thing in jail and so you have lost your sense of proportion. You have a great fondness for conducting experiments. You are now experimenting with death and you are misguided in it. Can you show me even one person who approves of your step?

G. Duncan, Andrews.

C. R. What could be the value of their opinion? My opinion has greater weight. Andrews does not even know how to lock a room and he is talking about locking up one's life. And how can you claim fully to know God's law? I tell you, you should be more cautious. It is possible to get inspiration from God sometimes but not always.

G. Then you accept the possibility of inspiration from God? If you accept this you have lost your case.

C. R. But the inspiration may be wrong in this instance. It is rashness to close one's mind to reason. Sometimes God appears in the form of rashness, sometimes of the wicked, sometimes of the fish and sometimes of a tortoise. I just want you to realize that sometimes even you can be wrong. In this case I want you to realize that.

G. But how can I accept my mistake unless the result shows it? I have decided to undertake the fast in spite of myself. Mahadev will tell you from my letters how my mind has been working.

C. R. You are deliberately suppressing your thoughts.

G. If I accept your argument I should stop working altogether.

C. R. But there can be no such inspiration which is against reason.

G. It may not be against my reason. . . .[1]

There is only one aim, that of purification. My own purification as well as my co-workers'. Other effects will also flow from it. I see that impurity can exist in my presence. That means there is impurity in me.

I have not attained complete freedom from unwanted thoughts.

Suppose the things I consider impure are proved to be pure, I must still undertake the fast. There are impurities and I feel I am responsible for them. Moreover, it is a mistake to regard this as a political issue. The main thing is that this movement should be conducted in a purely religious spirit.

Religion is concerned with the inner self. It is a matter of the heart, of faith and of eternal verities. The body has no lasting value. God says that everything that has name and form shall perish. Even the sun is not eternal. Science also proves this. But our activities are concerned with material things. My fast is for a wholly spiritual purpose. How can I stand in argument with those who are intellectually much superior to me? But when it comes to what the heart says, I am able to hold my own against them because it does not require any knowledge of Sanskrit. It is a blessing that God dwells in the hearts of the poor and my fast is for heart-searching. There certainly is a tradition of undertaking fasts for rains and other material things. . . . You must respect my convictions. You are telling me to dismiss them summarily. You may strive with me, argue with me. It is possible that I am mistaken but you are telling me to accept the possibility as a certainty. I should be a liar if

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

I undertake the fast with the certainty that it would end in my death. So long as you cannot convince me, by quoting my own statements, that I am mistaken you should not undermine my faith. Nobody can attain to a certitude like God's. But after all, am I not myself the captain of my ship?

[From Gujarati]
Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 284-9

APPENDIX V

M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT SUSPENDING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[1]

POONA,
May 9, 1933

I feel sure that although the news of the fast of Mahatma Gandhi is bound to cast a dark shadow of anxiety and gloom throughout the country, it will be some relief to his countrymen as well as to his friends and followers throughout the world to know that Government has, at any rate, released him unconditionally and allowed him to observe his vow and practise his great penance as a free citizen. In a statement issued to the Press last night, after his release, he has expressed his views on the conduct of the civil disobedience movement which, I have no doubt, will receive the consideration they deserve from every civil resister. It is perfectly true that during the period of fast, the civil resisters will be in a state of suspense and as a consequence he has advised me to declare officially and suspend the civil disobedience campaign for one month or even six weeks.

In his statement he has emphatically stated what I have been saying more than once during the last four months in reply to various critics of the civil disobedience movement that the civil disobedience cannot be withdrawn so long as many civil resisters are imprisoned, and no settlement can be arrived at so long as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and others are in jail.

'Indeed the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement is not within the power of men who are out of prison. It is possible only for the original Working Committee to do so.' I repeat the position so lucidly and emphatically enumerated by Mahatma Gandhi above, which is the only rational and constitutional position for the Congressmen to take on the point of withdrawal of the civil disobedience campaign. But the question of suspending the campaign to serve any definite object of a limited period undoubtedly stands on a different footing. It is no doubt a serious responsibility which I have been called to shoulder. But I am armed with a weapon—it is an advice that comes from one who is not only the author of the present civil

[1] *Vide* p. 160.

disobedience campaign but the originator and sole authority on the science and practice of civil disobedience itself. In response to his suggestion which also strikes me as a proper thing to do at this time in order to eliminate from the atmosphere all the elements of excitement and render it pure for all of us to inhale, to be in a prayerful mood to invoke the blessings of the Almighty on the great cause for which Mahatma Gandhi is undergoing this penance and supply him with an abundance of spiritual food so necessary for him to sustain through this ordeal, I declare officially that civil disobedience shall be suspended for six weeks beginning with Tuesday the 9th of May.

In conclusion I repeat my appeal to every man and woman to utilize this period to the best of his or her ability and energy in the service of such work for the uplift of Harijans as may be most commending itself to him or her.

The Hindustan Times, 10-5-1933

APPENDIX VI

BREAKING OF THE FAST[1]

So *The Day* arrived for which hundreds and thousands had prayed for. The scenes were as solemn as on the 8th May. Men and women of all faiths were represented there by those who were present on the occasion in response to the invitation of the door-keeper, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, who for once in her life had forsaken her extravagant generosity and become niggardly in the interest of the patient, for whom she had kept tireless vigil. On any other occasion of rejoicing, she might have invited the whole city of Poona, but not that day. I had been expecting the Harijan boy who had entered into that contract with Gandhiji on the 8th of May to appear punctually on the noon of the 29th. I had entreated the door-keeper to find him out and allow him in. Unfortunately, I did not know his address; otherwise, I should have fetched him myself. He did not turn up, and the orange juice was supplied not by him but by the kind hostess, Lady Thackersey, who perhaps felt the luckiest woman that day, as Dr. Ansari, the proudest man. The Harijan boy was not there, but the door-keeper had flung the doors open to all Harijans, and the first and only garland offered to Gandhiji before the break of the fast was that of a Harijan girl, who then sat in the midst of her sisters of rank and station. In the centre and with Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar and Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, sat the Harijans among whom there were some who had come from far off Ahmedabad. With the name of Rama on our lips we began the function, which was inaugurated by Dr. Ansari with texts from the Koran on the spiritual meaning of fasting, during which the aspirant after grace had to feast himself on

[1] *Vide* p. 177. This was extracted from "Sparks from the Sacred Fire–IV" by Mahadev Desai.

good and fast from all evil. Brothers from the Christ Seva Sangha sang Gandhiji's favourite: "When I survey the Wondrous Cross." Prof. Wadia sang the Parsi prayer which, as he said, could be the universal prayer; and Kaka-saheb sang the verse in which the devotee offers his prayers to the embodiment of all good, of all freedom from passion and hatred, of all love and compassion, whatever be the name by which men call Him. Then came the Poet's song wherein he invokes the Almighty to come with a torrent of mercy when the springs of life dry up and with nectared music when all the sweetness is missing. The Poet could not be there, as at the break of the September Fast, to sing it and so I sang it in his name. Last came the hymn of 'the true Vaishnava', which is almost as life-breath to Gandhiji and is sung on all occasions when we are called upon to face sorrow and joy with equanimity.

Harijan, 3-6-1933

APPENDIX VII

TALKS WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

June 1, 1933

GANDHIJI: It is difficult for either party to retreat after having taken such a stand. The position of each is absolutely clear. I can very well imagine that Government wants ruthlessly to implement the policy they have adopted. I can understand its attitude. I am also absolutely clear in my mind as to our reply to it. We should not involve the peasantry and the masses in this struggle. We should not put any burden on them. We should depend only on such people from the educated or enlightened class who are willing to join our party. They also should not depend on any financial assistance from the Congress. Those who need it may secure it from friends, neighbours or others. They should uninterruptedly go to jail. There is no need for demonstrations. For instance, Congress meetings should stop. If necessary, a nominal dictator may be appointed. But I see that there will be difficulty in doing so; it will be as well not to appoint any dictator.

There should be no secrecy in the struggle. And no no-tax programme either. I have always felt that a no-tax campaign for swaraj will be a difficult thing. It is of course important but we have never been adequately prepared for it. The no-tax campaigns we have conducted so far have been necessarily limited in their aims. But conducting a no-tax campaign for attaining swaraj is no joke. Let us make it clear to the public through our statements that in restricting the movement we are not giving it up, or deserting those who have suffered but are taking the struggle to a higher plane. People should have faith that one day we are bound to get back all the land

[1] *Vide* p. 180.

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which had been confiscated. Those who do not have this faith may take it that they have lost their land. In wars people lost their lives as well as property.

We should once again let the people know our demands and our ideals. Let us put forward our programmes before the nation unhesitatingly and do whatever has to be done to bring the nation nearer the goal. I have discussed this with Vallabhbhai. I have thought much over this and have arrived at these broad conclusions.

C. R. But what about the people who have already lost their land, etc.? It is only this thought that confiscated properties will be returned that tempts me to secure power. I see from the constitution they are framing that it would not be difficult to get back the properties. I do not know whether I have this feeling because I am weak or because I understand the mind of the British.

G. There is no question of weakness at all. I have also thought of taking power in our hands on account of this and other such things. And Vallabhbhai has also agreed to it. But today we should not think of taking power in our hands at all. At the moment we should think only of keeping up the struggle on the highest level of intensity. It does not worry me if only half a dozen of us are left to do that.

C. R. 1. Can we do anything more on an organized basis in addition to what we can do as individual?

2. In this scheme it is impossible to keep up contacts and maintain organization.

G. Personally I would be satisfied with whatever I can do as an individual.

C. R. Since you forbid secrecy, plans of certain type become absolutely impossible.

G. I want to inspire the finest spirit of self-sacrifice in a few. For that the pure gold of patriotism is necessary. We will be able to build a beautiful edifice over it. If we are not able to do this the whole thing will fall like a house of cards. Let us manifest true satyagraha through this. One pure thing is much better than many which are not completely pure.

Morning, 6 a.m., June 2, 1933

C. R. Is there anything that needs to be done after your statement on the conclusion of the fast?

G. We should renew the plea I had made earlier for a meeting with the Viceroy. I will again ask for the Gandhi-Irwin Pact to be implemented, people to be allowed to collect salt and do peaceful picketing of foreign-cloth shops and liquor shops.

C. R. They have already sent a reply to your statement. Do you think we should write anything more?

G. I feel that we should scrupulously keep to the word I gave that negotiations would be resumed from the point at which they were broken off.

C. R. But they say we should go to them only after first completely withdrawing civil disobedience.

G. They can say this only after the negotiations start and the conditions for settlement are discussed. Where is today the agency that will withdraw civil disobedience? Who will withdraw it? So there can be no condition of withdrawal of civil disobedience till the prisoners are released. I do not at all feel defeated. We just cannot admit having done something wrong or having committed breach of the Pact. No settlement is possible on the basis of such a condition. If we agree to any such condition we would lose the game and will be ruined. Our claim is that there has been no breach of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact from our side. If they think otherwise, they can appoint an enquiry committee. I am ready to abide by the decision of an impartial enquiry committee. But they are not ready to accept any such suggestion. I feel this time also we will get the same reply from the Viceroy as we got on the previous occasion. He would say that, if we wanted to discuss anything without unconditionally and completely giving up civil disobedience, in his view there was no point in my meeting him. Still I feel it is necessary to write a letter not suggesting a way out but asking for an interview.

C. R. Do you not want to write anything to the Secretary of State?

G. I already know his views. Rangaswami had told me that Hoare had written to him a friendly letter saying that there was nothing in the White Paper that could not be changed and so he should go and see him. So Rangaswami went and saw him. Hoare thinks that it is his job to polish off rough edges and show to the world that he is getting co-operation from all the parties, even from the Moderates and the Congress. 'It would be a good thing if Rangaswami could be persuaded to say something in favour of the reform. It would be equally well if he does not'. That seems to be Hoare's attitude. Moreover, he runs the administration at Simla too. He is behind all this and not the Viceroy. He is carrying on Birkenhead's policy in a more gentle way. I am not saying anything new in this because I returned from London with all this information. And all of them in England—Irwin, Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury—are defending his policy.

C. R. Irwin seems to think that there has been so much breach of the Settlement that it cannot be revived and so it is altogether unnecessary to refer to it.

G. We can raise the issue provided the discussion reaches that stage. But even if we meet, ultimately nothing will come out of all that. Birkenhead and [Lord] Reading also said: 'If you do not want war you should accept what the Parliament offers you. Parliament will give reforms gradually. You should be satisfied with that. But at the moment there is no mutual faith or mutual respect at all.'

C. R. This whole chapter has been fully discussed by Sastri. Shall we ask him his opinion today?

G. If you want to see him you may. He will of course not come here. At the annual function of the Servants of India Society he did not say anything special or make his policy known.

C. R. The policy you recommend can be followed only by a few as it is very revolutionary. But it will have no effect on either the Government or the people.

G. I don't care. It is possible what you say is true but I am prepared for it. I am hurt by these pin-pricks. Only those who willingly set out will have to suffer.

C. R. Then the mass struggle comes to an end.

G. That exactly is going to be the key to the whole affair. We have made a mistake in letting the mass struggle go on without any plan. Only when the people have understood a definite plan from the beginning to the end, will a mass struggle come. When responsible persons feel that people are prepared to lose their property and are ready for even greater hardships, they will start the struggle.

C. R. Don't you think that the call for a no-tax campaign in January 1932 was premature?

G. Of course it was. I had told Tandon and others in 1931 that I did not have faith in our strength to carry on a no-tax campaign for attaining swaraj.

C. R. If it was a mistake, should we not rectify it?

G. I will not say that the struggle should be called off even for that purpose.

C. R. Government will not return all the properties even if we withdraw the struggle.

G. Government will not hear of any such thing.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 296-301

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APPENDIX VIII

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

July 14, 1933

I have been asked whether I will again start Harijan work after going to jail. In answer to this I can only say that I will have to see what kind of imprisonment it is. No matter what it is, I will try to see whether it is possible to continue Harijan work. Our struggle was started in 1920. We have expanded its scope through the Lahore and Karachi resolutions. I hope that the struggle will continue till we attain independence. I have one foot in Yeravda and one here. It is for you to see that our struggle continues. This is an informal meeting. Here nobody, not even the Acting President, has the right to call off the movement. Whatever I say here is also by way of advice. If you want to withdraw the struggle you should call the Congress Committee. If you allow me to write to the Viceroy my role will be that of a negotiator. I will have to get the approval of the Congress for whatever conditions I wish to propose. Independence will be a long way from any settlement that may be reached. It is not in the hands of the British to give us freedom. We will have to achieve it with our own strength. At the moment those who know are of the view that reforms will be introduced by the end of 1935. But before we attain independence we will have to fight and risk our lives for it. Every satyagrahi will have to chalk out his own programme for civil disobedience. Even thirty crores can offer individual civil disobedience, each one being his own leader. Or under the leadership of one person, a hundred men can get together and offer individual civil disobedience. In individual civil disobedience a man's strength or enthusiasm can never be curbed. It is irrelevant what my position is. Under the constitution I have the full right to carry on civil disobedience. It is possible that I may be jailed before the All-India Congress Committee meets. Will it befit me or any one of you to obey the order when I come to know that I cannot talk with you more freely or an order is passed imposing some sort of ban on me? That is what I meant when I said in my speech that we are under constant restraint.

QUESTION: What is the position of the dictator of the Congress in individual civil disobedience?

ANSWER: One who offers individual civil disobedience need not ask permission from any dictator. Everyone becomes his own leader. There is no

[1] *Vide* p. 266.

need for any head in individual civil disobedience. There is no need for any orders either.

Q. If any taluka wishes to sacrifice itself, can it do so?

A. Certainly. I wish that every taluka would do so. There is no need for any orders from the Congress for it. But that taluka should do so in the name and under the patronage of the Congress. . . .[1] I am not itching to write to the Viceroy. If you do not permit me I will not do so. . . . The condition of releasing the prisoners of Garhwal and Meerut is not essential for a settlement.

Q. Can a person who is going to offer civil disobedience after a few months give his approval to your suggestion of individual civil disobedience?

A. This is a delicate question. A person can give his assent but he should be faithful to the country and himself. . . . From their childhood I have taught my children to rebel against myself. . . . I don't expect that one who gives his vote today will be in jail the next day. . . . As long as he lives it is not proper for a satyagrahi to say that the organization is without a guide. . . . Anyone who tries to appear brave is usually not truly brave. . . . I don't consider as honourable conditions which do not protect the common public. . . . The Congress will not order any farmer to pay land revenue. It will of course commend those who will go to jail or suffer other hardships.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. III, pp. 315-7

APPENDIX IX

M. S. ANEY'S STATEMENT DISCONTINUING MASS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE[2]

July 22, 1933

Having considered very carefully the recommendations of the informal conference recently held at Poona and the discussions among Congressmen in the Conference and outside, and the advice tendered by Mr. Gandhi, I have come to the conclusion that the country's best interest will be served by the following instructions being carried out:

Firstly, the civil disobedience campaign should not be unconditionally withdrawn in the existing circumstances.

Secondly, mass civil disobedience, including no-tax and no-rent campaign, should be discontinued for the time being, the right of individuals who may be ready for every suffering, and are prepared at their own responsibilities to continue civil disobedience being reserved.

[1] Omissions are as in the source.

[2] *Vide* p. 293.

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Thirdly, all those able and willing to offer individual civil disobedience on their own responsibilities without expectation of any help from the Congress organization are expected to do so.

Fourthly, secret methods followed hitherto should be abandoned.

Fifthly, all Congress organizations, including the All-India Congress Committee office, should cease to exist for the time being, provided however that wherever possible dictators in the provinces and all-India dictators should continue.

Sixthly, all the Congressmen unable for any reason whatsoever to offer civil disobedience are expected to carry on individually or corporately such constructive activities of the Congress for which they are fitted.

I regret it has not been possible to call off the movement, and it has become necessary for me to issue these instructions. I share with many others, Congressmen or others, the disappointment that Mahatma Gandhi's very simple request, unaccompanied by any condition, for an interview with the Viceroy in order to explore peace possibilities, was summarily rejected. His Excellency has very wrongly allowed himself to be influenced by unauthorized reports of confidential proceedings of the informal conference which for the sake of furthering peace efforts were purposely held back from publication. His Excellency should know that at the conference overwhelming opinion favoured seeking such an interview for honourable peace. I hold it impossible for any Congress organization or its representative to accept the terms peremptorily laid down by His Excellency as a condition precedent to peace conversation. I hope the nation will compel revision of this attitude by developing requisite strength, whatever the cost be.

Despite the instructions, suspension of the campaign till the end of this month stands.

The Indian Annual Register, 1933, Vol. II, pp. 332-3

APPENDIX X

CABLE FROM RABINDRANATH TAGORE TO SIR NRIPENDRANATH SIRCAR[1]

I REMEMBER TO HAVE SENT A CABLE TO THE PRIME MINISTER REQUESTING HIM NOT TO DELAY IN ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL ABOUT COMMUNAL AWARDS SUBMITTED TO HIM BY MAHATMAJI. AT THAT MOMENT A SITUATION HAD BEEN CREATED WHICH WAS EXTREMELY PAINFUL NOT AFFORDING US THE LEAST TIME OR PEACE OF MIND TO ENABLE US TO THINK QUIETLY ABOUT THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THE POONA PACT WHICH HAD BEEN EFFECTED BEFORE MY ARRIVAL, WHEN SAPRU AND JAYAKAR HAD ALREADY LEFT, WITH THE HELP OF MEMBERS AMONG WHOM THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE RESPONSIBLE REPRESENTATIVE

[1] *Vide* pp. 311 and 349.

FROM BENGAL. UPON THE IMMEDIATE SETTLEMENT OF THIS QUESTION MAHATMAJI'S LIFE DEPENDED AND THE INTOLERABLE ANXIETY CAUSED BY SUCH A CRISIS DROVE ME PRECIPITATELY TO THE COMMITMENT WHICH I NOW REALIZE AS A WRONG DONE AGAINST OUR COUNTRY'S PERMANENT INTEREST. NEVER HAVING EXPERIENCE IN POLITICAL DEALINGS WHILE ENTERTAINING A GREAT LOVE FOR MAHATMAJI AND A COMPLETE FAITH IN HIS WISDOM IN INDIAN POLITICS I DARE NOT WAIT FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION NOT HEEDING THAT JUSTICE HAD BEEN SACRIFICED IN CASE OF BENGAL. I HAVE NOT THE LEAST DOUBT NOW THAT SUCH AN INJUSTICE WILL CONTINUE TO CAUSE MISCHIEF FOR ALL PARTIES CONCERNED KEEPING ALIVE THE SPIRIT OF COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN OUR PROVINCE IN AN INTENSE FORM MAKING PEACEFUL GOVERNMENT PERPETUALLY DIFFICULT. THAT THE MINISTERS OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD BRUSQUELY REFUSE TO RECONSIDER THIS SUBJECT OF A VITAL IMPORTANCE TO US WHILE ALL OTHER PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE WHITE PAPER ARE BEING FREELY REHANDLED DOES NOT SURPRISE OR HURT ME TOO MUCH. FOR HAVE THEY NOT OFTEN EXULTINGLY PROPHESIED OF THE EVIL DAYS WHEN WE MIGHT BE LEFT TO FIGHT THE FRATRICIDAL TURBULENCE WITHOUT THEIR AID AND FAIL? AND NATURALLY THEY MAY LACK TODAY ENTHUSIASM TO HELP US IN MAKING OUR PATH TOO SMOOTH TOWARDS COMMUNAL RECONCILIATION. BUT THAT THE INDIAN MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE BELONGING TO PROVINCES OTHER THAN OURS SHOULD NOT ONLY REMAIN APATHETIC BUT ACTIVELY TAKE PART IN AGGRAVATING BENGAL'S MISFORTUNE IS TERRIBLY OMINOUS PRESAGING NO GOOD FOR OUR FUTURE HISTORY.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Home Department, Political File No. 3/17/33, pp. 16-7. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX XI

ORDER RESTRAINING GANDHIJI'S MOVEMENTS[1]

ORDER NO. S. D. 3806

TO

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

Whereas the Governor-in-Council is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that you, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, have acted and are about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety and peace and in furtherance of a movement prejudicial to the public safety and peace and whereas the Governor-in-Council has taken into his consideration the record in writing made by the District Magistrate, Poona, of the statement made by you; now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-section (1) of

[1] *Vide* pp. 339 and 340.

Section 4 of the Bombay Special (Emergency) Powers Act, 1932, the Governor-in-Council is hereby pleased by order in writing to direct:

1. that you shall remove yourself from the village of Yeravda before 9.30 a.m. of this day; that you shall not enter Poona Cantonment area; that you shall reside and remain in Poona City municipal limits from 10.30 a.m. of this day; and that you shall not depart from the said municipal limits;

2. that you shall abstain from every act in furtherance of the civil disobedience movement or of any movement prejudicial to the public safety or peace;

3. that you shall abstain from encouraging or inciting any person to interfere with the administration of the law or with the maintenance of law and order or to commit any offence or to refuse or to defer payment of any land revenue, tax, rate, cess or other due or amount payable to Government;

4. that except with the previous permission of the District Magistrate of Poona you shall abstain from being present at or addressing or participating in any meeting of twelve or more persons or any public demonstration or procession.

The Governor-in-Council is pleased under Sub-section(2) of Section 4 to direct that this order shall remain in force for more than one month from the making thereof and until further orders.

By order of the Governor-in-Council, dated at Poona, this 4th day of August, 1933.

R. M. MAXWELL
SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BOMBAY, HOME DEPARTMENT

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(4), Pt. V, p. 67

APPENDIX XII

EXCERPTS FROM VICEROY'S CABLE TO SECRETARY OF STATE[1]

August 18, 1933

5. IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO MR. GANDHI THAT THE ORDERS PERMITTED HIM TO INTERVIEW THE EDITOR OF THE "HARIJAN" AS ONE OF HIS DAILY VISITORS AND TO HAND HIM HIS MANUSCRIPT, AND THAT LETTERS SO FAR AS THEY DEALT WITH HARIJAN MATTERS WOULD BE DELIVERED TO MR. GANDHI.

6. GOVERNMENT ARE NOT AWARE WHAT MR. GANDHI MEANS BY SAYING THAT THEY HAVE ADMITTED PERMISSION TO DO HARIJAN WORK IN PRISON IS IMPLIED IN THE YERAVDA PACT, THOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT IN THE EXCEPTIONAL

[1] *Vide* p. 361.

CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THAT PACT THE GOVERNMENT DID PERMIT MR. GANDHI AS A STATE PRISONER TO INAUGURATE THE MOVEMENT TO WHICH HE APPEARED TO BE DEVOTING HIS WHOLE ATTENTION. PROTESTS WERE MADE AT THE TIME ON BEHALF OF THE ORTHODOX HINDU COMMUNITY, WHO DID NOT AGREE WITH MR. GANDHI'S POLICY IN THIS MATTER, AGAINST HIS BEING ALLOWED FACILITIES TO CONDUCT PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FROM JAIL, AND IT MIGHT WELL BE ARGUED THAT MR. GANDHI, HAVING NOW AFTER A PERIOD OF FREEDOM COURTED IMPRISONMENT AGAIN ON A PURELY POLITICAL ISSUE, SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT THAT IS NOT GIVEN TO OTHER A-CLASS PRISONERS. NEVERTHELESS THE GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO TAKE ACTION WHICH COULD BE REGARDED AS UNREASONABLE INTERFERENCE WITH A WORK OF SOCIAL REFORM OR TO TAKE THEIR STAND TOO RIGIDLY ON THE FACT THAT MR. GANDHI IS BY HIS OWN DELIBERATE ACT A PRISONER CONVICTED FOR A BREACH OF THE LAW. IN SPITE OF THE INCONVENIENCE TO JAIL DISCIPLINE AND THE ANOMALY OF THE POSITION, THEY HAVE ALLOWED MR. GANDHI FACILITIES FOR PURSUING HIS WORK ON ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY WHICH WILL ENABLE HIM TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT AND EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS IT. IT WAS NOTICEABLE THAT WHEN MR. GANDHI WAS AT LIBERTY HE DID NOT APPEAR TO DEVOTE THE MAJOR PART OF HIS TIME OR ATTENTION TO THIS MOVEMENT. HIS MAIN ENERGIES WERE EMPLOYED ON POLITICS AND ON THE CONTINUANCE IN WHATEVER FORM MIGHT BE POSSIBLE OF THE MOVEMENT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. HIS PRESENT CLAIM THAT HE SHOULD BE ALLOWED FROM PRISON TO CARRY ON HIS HARIJAN WORK "WITHOUT LET OR HINDRANCE", AMOUNTS TO A REFUSAL TO ACCEPT FOR HIMSELF THE NORMAL CONCOMITANTS OF IMPRISONMENT, EXCEPT RESTRICTION ON HIS ACTUAL PHYSICAL LIBERTY, AND IN EFFECT IS A CLAIM TO DICTATE THE TERMS OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

THE GOVERNMENT ARE SATISFIED THAT THE FACILITIES THEY HAVE ALLOWED ARE AMPLE TO ENABLE MR. GANDHI TO CONDUCT SUCH WORK IN FAVOUR OF THE REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY AS IS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES REASONABLE. IF MR. GANDHI NOW FEELS HOWEVER THAT LIFE CEASES TO INTEREST HIM IF HE MAY NOT DO HARIJAN SERVICE WITHOUT LET OR HINDRANCE, THE GOVERNMENT ARE PREPARED, PROVIDED MR. GANDHI IS WILLING TO ABANDON ALL CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ACTIVITIES AND INCITEMENTS, TO SET HIM AT LIBERTY AT ONCE SO THAT HE CAN DEVOTE HIMSELF WHOLLY AND WITHOUT RESTRICTION TO THE CAUSE OF SOCIAL REFORM. MR. GANDHI HAS BEEN INFORMED ACCORDINGLY.

Home Department, Political File No. 3/17/33, 1933, pp. 38-9. Courtesy: National Archives of India

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APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI[1]

COIMBATORE,
August 27, 1933

DEAREST BROTHER,

Government might well have given you the old facilities. A curse has disabled them from generous or timely action.

But they haven't conferred a right on you or made you a promise. What they conceded to you at one time and in one set of conditions they are not bound to concede to you at another time and in another set of conditions. The order made after the Poona Pact, from which you quote, does not amount to an irrevocable or unconditional promise. You indulge in special pleading of a bad type when you charge them with a breach of promise. The addition of the words 'made to a prisoner in their custody' loses the point it might have had otherwise.

It might be said by an observer who wasn't prejudiced against Government that, while Harijan uplift was dear to you, putting blame on Government was dearer. It has been said in my hearing by well-disposed persons that you would love nothing so much as to die in gaol and leave Government burdened with the responsibility.

Behind and beyond your present tussle with Government lies the future of the country. How can Congress best secure that future? Your answer is clear. But another answer is taking shape in people's minds. It is that civil disobedience, both mass and individual, must be given up. A new policy, aiming at constructive national good in legislation, finance and administration all round has long been overdue and must be tried, over and above what is now called the constructive programme of Congress. I believe this feeling is common outside Congress, and is gaining ground inside Congress. How can this orientation be brought about?

It is so different from your present policy, in look so opposed to it, that one doubts whether you can undertake it. Perhaps your whole preparation and equipment lie in a different direction. It is no disparagement to anyone that he is not fitted to lead the nation in all contingencies and in all directions. Unfortunately no man, however big, can be always trusted to know his limitations and make room when the cause to which he is devoted requires it. His very greatness stands in the way of change. And as I have told you more

[1] *Vide* p. 381.

than once, you have out-topped all other leaders so long and so decisively that there is no man in sight to take your place at once. What a blessing it would be if you could be transformed and re-made, as it were, for the fresh era! But you are too good, too true to yourself to pretend you are the same teacher when the creed is no longer yours and the ritual is something you have never conducted.

In this sore strait, the country looks to you to play a greater part than you have ever played. (Pardon me: what I mean is the greater part of the country as I figure out the parties.) Save your individual conscience, pursue civil disobedience, seek the gaol and embarrass Government as you like; but leave Congress free to evolve a new programme. It simply cannot do so, while it has to give authority and countenance to individual disobedience. You remember I begged you to adopt this course when I was last with you at Parnakuti. You told me you put it to the Working Committee, but they would have none of it. Naturally and in a way properly too. The Committee couldn't face the odium of abandoning you. I don't wonder the thought was abhorrent to them. The moment is come—in my opinion it came long ago—for you to say, 'I set Congress free to try other methods. I have plenty of God's work to do, for the nation's welfare, with Harijans.'

There, then, I have told you the truth as it seems to me. May one hope that you will see the problem from a new angle? I know one thing. There is no self-effacement to which you are not equal. The only thing is, it must seem to you to be called for.

All that a friend and brother can do is to give an indication.

Yours affectionately,
V. S. SRINIVASAN

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, pp. 258-60

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APPENDIX XIV

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

'PARNAKUTI',
September 13, 1933

MY DEAR BAPU,

In our recent conversation you will remember that I laid stress on the reiteration and clearer definition of our national objective. The objective of political independence has been finally laid down by the Congress and there is nothing to add to it or take away from it. We stand for complete independence. Sometimes a little confusion arises because of vague phraseology and misleading propaganda and it is therefore as well to remove this confusion by a reiteration of our political demand. Even the word 'independence' is used with a variety of meanings. Obviously it must include, as the Congress has clearly and definitely laid down, full control of the army and of foreign relations, as well as financial and economic control.

In regard to economic matters, the Karachi Congress by passing the important resolution on 'Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy' gave a lead and pointed out the direction in which we should move. I attach great importance to that resolution but I would personally like to go much further and to clarify the position still more.

It seems to me that if we are to improve the condition of the masses, to raise them economically and give them freedom, it is inevitable that vested interests in India will have to give up their special position and many of their privileges. It is inconceivable to me how else the masses can rise. Therefore the problem of achieving freedom becomes one of revising vested interests in favour of the masses. To the extent this is done, to that extent only will freedom come. The biggest vested interest in India is that of the British Government; next come the Indian Princes; and others follow. We do not wish to injure any class or group and the divesting should be done as gently as possible and with every effort to avoid injury. But it is obvious that the divesting is bound to cause loss to the classes or groups which enjoy special privileges at the expense of the masses. It is also obvious that the process of divesting must be as speedy as possible to bring relief to the masses whose condition, as you know, is as bad as it can well be. Indeed economic forces themselves are acting with amazing rapidity today and breaking up the old order. The big zamindari and taluqdari system in the United Provinces has

[1] *Vide* p. 426.

largely collapsed, though it may be kept up for some time longer by outside agencies. Even the condition of the zamindars is very bad and the peasantry of course are in a far worse position.

We are all agreed that the Round Table Conference and its various productions are utterly useless to solve even one of India's many problems. As I conceive it, the Round Table Conference was an effort to consolidate the vested interests of India behind the British Government so as to face the rising and powerful national and economic movements in the country which threaten these interests. Essentially, in international parlance, it was a fascist grouping of vested and possessing interests, and fascist methods were adopted in India to suppress the national movement. And because the mere preservation of all these vested interests in India cannot possibly solve our economic ills, whether those of the masses or even of the middle classes, the effort is foredoomed to inevitable failure. Even from the point of view of a democratic nationalism, as you yourself stated at the Round Table Conference, democracy and autocracy can ill go together.

Another aspect has to be borne in mind. The problem of Indian freedom cannot be separated from the vital international problems of the world. The present crisis in the world's affairs is having its repercussions in India. At any moment it may result in a complete breakdown or in a violent international conflagration. Everywhere there is a conflict and a contest between the forces of progress and betterment of the masses and the forces of reaction and vested interests. We cannot remain silent witnesses to this titanic struggle for it affects us intimately. Both on the narrower ground of our own interests and the wider ground of international welfare and human progress, we must, I feel, range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world. This ranging ourselves at present can of course be ideological only.

These are some of the larger issues that fill my mind and I am convinced, not only that we ignore them at our peril, but that a true appreciation of them will vitalize and give new meaning to our struggle for freedom which we must continue till the full objective is achieved.

These wider issues are of great importance but at present, as you know, the minds of large numbers of our countrymen are greatly exercised over immediate national problems and especially the question of carrying on the struggle. The statements that you and Sjt. M. S. Aney issued some time ago to guide the country have, I am afraid, produced some confusion and there has even been some resentment in regard to particular directions contained in them. There is a vague talk, in quarters which ought to know better, that the Congress has been dissolved. It is obvious that nothing of the kind has been done or could be done under the constitution. Your directions and those of Mr. Aney were, I take it, in the nature of advice or suggestions to meet a certain position that had arisen. The Congress continues as before but it is clear that it cannot function normally when Government declare its committees to be illegal.

There can be no regular offices or open activity. To recognize this fact and to adapt ourselves to it is not to wind up any Congress Committee, much less the Congress organization as a whole.

A necessary consequence from this was to avoid the possibility of a few newcomers who formed committees, when the old members and other reliable workers went to prison, or even individuals, committing the Congress to an undesirable course of action. As is known, we have had to face this risk in The past and unreliable persons have come to the helm of affairs in some local areas with the intention of obstructing and even stopping the very activities they were supposed to further. It thus becomes desirable to prevent such unreliable persons from exploiting the name of the Congress Committee. This of course does not prevent Congress workers in any area from co-operating together in an organized way for the furtherance of our programme.

Confusion has also arisen in the country about the implications of individual and mass civil disobedience. I appreciate to some extent the difference but this difference does not appear to me to be a fundamental one, as, in any event, civil disobedience is essentially an individual affair. Individual civil disobedience can develop into mass civil disobedience. Besides, you told me that if an organization felt strong enough to undertake the responsibility and the risk, it could, of its own initiative, take up mass civil disobedience. Indeed you were of opinion that a local organization could, in this manner go ahead in any direction which was not contrary to Congress methods or policy.

Stress was laid in your previous statement on the undesirability of secrecy, although you pointed out that there was nothing inherently illegitimate in secret methods. I think that most of us agree, and certainly I am of that opinion, that our movement is essentially an open one and secret methods do not fit in with it. Such methods, if indulged in to any large extent, are likely to change the whole character of the movement, as it has been conceived, and produce a certain amount of demoralization. Agreeing with this, some of us feel that, to some extent as for instance in communicating with each other or sending directions or keeping contacts, a measure of secrecy may be necessary. Perhaps secrecy is hardly the word for those activities and privacy would suit them better. Privacy of course is always open to all groups and individuals. Secrecy or the avoidance of it, as you said, cannot be made into a fetish.

But secrecy is certainly involved in the production of printed or duplicated news-sheets and bulletins. These bulletins have often served a useful purpose in the past in keeping contact between headquarters and districts and in sending information or directions. You pointed out to me the difficulties and undesirable consequences of running these secret presses and duplicating machines. Many good workers are tied up and have to avoid aggressive action; money has to be invested in such machines and frequently they are taken away by the police. Even from the practical point of view this continuous drain and tying up of workers is not desirable, and undoubtedly it

sometimes results in demoralization. You suggested that the best way was to have handwritten copies of bulletins, etc., containing the name of the publisher. Generally, I agree with all this and appreciate the force of your argument. But I do feel that under certain circumstances it may be desirable for a local or Provincial committee or group to issue bulletins of directions, etc., secretly. This must not be encouraged; indeed it should be discouraged, but a certain latitude in exceptional circumstances might be permitted.

There is one other small matter which seems to me rather ridiculous. It was right and proper, if I may say so, for you to court imprisonment by giving previous intimation of your intention to do so to the authorities. But it seems to me to be perfectly absurd for others, and even Congress volunteers, to send such notices or communications to the authorities. Any person desiring to offer civil resistance should openly carry on activities which further our cause and thus court arrest. He must not forget or ignore these activities and merely ask to be arrested.

This letter has become long enough. I do not mention here the many other matters which I had the privilege of discussing with you.

Yours affectionately,
JAWAHAR

MAHATMA GANDHI
POONA

Bombay Secret Abstracts, Home Department, Special Branch, File No. 800(40)(11)-C; also *Mahatma*, Vol. III, pp. 305-8

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CHRONOLOGY

(*April 23—September 15, 1933*)

April 23: Gandhiji was in Yeravda Central Prison, Poona.
Interview to Associated Press of India on talks with B. R. Ambedkar.

April 27: In *Harijan* article, "Yeravda Pact", Gandhiji stated that Ambedkar's suggestion for alteration of panel system was "in no way to the advantage of Harijans".
In letter to P. N. Rajbhoj said that "the *yajna* started in September . . . is still continuing, it can end only when untouchability is eradicated".

April 29-30: At midnight resolved "to go on an unconditional and irrevocable fast for twenty-one days "from May 8" for the purification of self and associates".

April 30: Issued statement on fast.
In telegram to Home Department intimated decision to fast.

May 1: In letter to Raojibhai Patel, said that proposed fast was "intended as punishment for those who believe that they are too weak to fulfil the vow they had taken".
Broke silence at noon.
Interview to the Press on decision to fast.
Gandhiji met co-workers.

May 2: Received cable from Gen. Smuts appealing to desist from decision to fast.

May 3: Interview to Associated Press of India. Sarojini Naidu came and took charge of Gandhiji.

May 4: In telegram to Dr. M. A. Ansari, Gandhiji said: "God would be my invisible medical attendant."

May 5: In letter to C. Rajagopalachari, agreed to undergo medical examination which he had rejected the previous day.

On or before *May 6 :* Sent message to Arya Samaj Conference.

May 6: In the evening gave message to numerous friends and admirers who had called on him.

Before *May 8:* Interview to the Press on his proposed fast.

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May 8: Gandhiji commenced 21-day fast at 12 noon; issued statement explaining fast.
Was released from jail at 6 p.m.; reached Lady Thackersey's bungalow at 9 p.m.
Interview to Associated Press of India.
Gandhiji advised suspension of civil disobedience movement for one month or six weeks; appealed to Government to withdraw ordinances and release all civil resisters.

May 9: M. S. Aney issued statement suspending civil disobedience movement for six weeks.
Government of India issued communique on Gandhiji's release.

May 10: In telegram, Gandhiji asked Kasturba to "be brave".

May 11: In *Harijan*, gave message "To the Reader".
Doctors Phatak and Gharpure, by turns, attended on Gandhiji from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

May 13: Kasturba was released from Sabarmati Jail.
Gandhiji began to take 'Vichy' water in order to control acidity.

May 14: Kasturba and Harilal visited Gandhiji.

May 18: Was examined by Dr. M. A. Ansari who considered condition to be better.

May 20: As desired by Gandhiji, Mahadev Desai returned to Sabarmati Ashram.
In telegram, Gandhiji advised Senapati Bapat to give up fast.
Began taking Sinhagad spring water mixed with soda bicarbonate; it was sweeter than 'Vichy' water and was associated with Shivaji and Tilak.
Medical bulletin from 'Parnakuti' read: "Mahatma Gandhi spent yet another good night. There is no change in his condition which continues to be quite satisfactory. A few of the most important letters were read [out] to him this morning."

May 21: Another 'Parnakuti' bulletin: "Gandhiji passed another good night and enjoyed undisturbed sleep till the morning prayer time. The feeling of nausea has almost entirely disappeared. Since yesterday afternoon he has been drinking water from Sinhagad springs. His general condition continues to be very satisfactory and his spirits are calm and cheerful".
Senapati Bapat rejected Gandhiji's appeal to give up fast.

May 23: "Heads I win, tails also" was Gandhiji's reply to Dr. B. C. Roy who asked how he was feeling.
Medical bulletin on Gandhiji announced: "Gandhiji had good sleep and rest and is well."

May 25: Dr. B. C. Roy and Dr. M. A. Ansari were at Gandhiji's bed-side.

May 26: Discussion with Mahadev about Ashram management.

May 27: Gandhiji had discussion with Devdas.

May 29: Gave message which was read out by Mahadev Desai; broke fast.

June 6: Notice of Devdas-Lakshmi wedding was given to Registrar of Marriages, Poona.

June 10: Devdas Gandhi and Lakshmi gave declarations under Section 10 of Special Marriages Act.

June 16: At 'Parnakuti', Poona, Devdas-Lakshmi wedding was performed according to Hindu rites. Gandhiji addressed bride and bridegroom.

June 17: In message to South Indians, wanted spread of Hindi in every village.

Before *June 18:* In a message, wanted Ashram inmates to lead "purer lives than heretofore".

June 21: Registrar of Marriages, Poona, registered Devdas-Lakshmi marriage under Act III of 1872.

June 25: In reply to Asaf Ali's open letter, Gandhiji said: ". . . non-violence for me is not a mere experiment. It is a part of my life. . . . I am more convinced that in the complex situation that faces India, there is no other way of gaining freedom."

July 2: Invited Congressmen for Leaders' Conference to be held on July 12.
Had discussion with Harijan workers in morning.

July 8: In *Harijan*, wrote "All about the Fast".

July 11: In Poona, had discussion with M. S. Aney, M. M. Malaviya, C. Rajagopalachari, Bhulabhai Desai, Dr. Alam and Abul Kalam Azad.

July 12: Spoke at Leaders' Conference.
Conference recommended withdrawal of civil disobedience movement.

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Gandhiji addressed people from balcony of Tilak Memorial Hall, venue of Leaders' Conference.

July 14: Spoke at concluding session of Leaders' Conference which authorized him to seek interview with Viceroy.
In telegram sought interview with Viceroy. Spoke at Tilak Smarak Mandir.

July 17: Viceroy refused to grant interview; Gandhiji renewed the request which was again turned down.

July 18: Interview to the Press.
Gandhiji reached Bombay *en route* to Ahmedabad.
In Bombay, gave interview to *The Hindu* and *The Bombay Chronicle.*

July 19: Reached Ahmedabad; stayed at Sheth Ranchhodlal's Amrit Bhuvan; had discussion with Harijans and anti-untouchability workers.
Interview to Associated Press of India on Sir Samuel Hoare's speech in House of Commons.
Gandhiji visited Sabarmati Ashram in afternoon.
Was examined by Ahmedabad doctors; condition considered "good".

July 20: In interview to representative of *The Times of India*, explained individual civil disobedience.

July 21: Accompanied by Kasturba, Gandhiji met Mirabehn in Sabarmati Jail.

July 22: In *Harijan*, published reply to "An American Criticism".
In letters to Jamnalal Bajaj and Devdas Gandhi, announced decision to disband Sabarmati Ashram.
M. S. Aney issued statement discontinuing mass civil disobedience movement.

July 23: At Ashram prayer meeting, Mahadev Desai read out Gandhiji's appeal for funds for removal of untouchability; contributions collected on the spot.

July 24: In letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta, Gandhiji suggested stopping publication of Bengali *Harijan*, if it was not self-supporting. Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* on M. S. Aney's statement.

July 25: Interview to Associated Press of India on decision to disband Sabarmati Ashram.

July 26: Gandhiji issued statement on M. S. Aney's statement.
In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, con-

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veyed decision to disband Sabarmati Ashram.
Interview to Associated Press of India.
Interview to *The Hindu* on disbanding of the Ashram.

July 27: In letter to Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhiji said that "there was no injustice done to Bengal" by Yeravda Pact.
Interview to *The Daily Herald* on disbanding of Ashram.
Interview to *The Times of India.*

July 28: Interview to Associated Press of India on disbanding of Ashram.

July 29: Interview to Associated Press of India on suspension of Congress Committees. Gandhiji visited Sharda Mandir on its foundation day.

July 30: Issued statement approving the appeal for observance of Sen Gupta Day on August 6.
In statement to Associated Press of India, urged Congressmen not to fritter away their energy in debating over decision on civil disobedience; reminded Englishmen that for "real friendship with India, Ordinance Rule is not the way, . . . Congress is the only way".
In telegram to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, conveyed decision to march to Ras.
In an appeal to people of Gujarat, announced proposal to leave Ashram on march to Ras with 33 companions on August 1.

August 1: Along with Kasturba and Mahadev Desai, was arrested after prayers.
Bade farewell to Harijans who had gathered on the road, on way to Sabarmati Jail.
Gave statement before District Magistrate, Ahmedabad.
In letter to Advani, Superintendent, Ahmedabad Central Prison, asked for permission to do Harijan work.
Ahmedabad observed hartal.

August 2: Gandhiji was transferred to Yeravda Prison.

August 3: In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, declined to conform to proposed restriction on his movements.
In statement before District Magistrate, Poona, referred to his letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, sent earlier in the day.

August 4: Was released from Yeravda Prison and served with order to quit Yeravda village and confine his movements to Poona city municipal limits.

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Rearrested and sent for trial in Yeravda Prison for disobeying restraint order.
During trial gave brief statement explaining his "wilful and deliberate breach of order of the Government of Bombay". Was sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment and was allotted 'A' class.
Mahadev Desai also was sentenced to an equal term of simple imprisonment and was allotted 'B' class.
In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, Gandhiji renewed his request for permission to "resume anti-untouchability work" and sought decision before Monday, August 7.

August 5: In *Harijan* article, "Ethics of Fasting", wrote: "Just as a fast for regaining lost health is neither unnatural nor criminal self-torture, so is not a fast for purification of self or others."
In letter to R. V. Martin, refused "to pay for any extra food" and asked Government to extend the same facilities given to him before.

August 6: In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, requested expeditious decision on his request for grant of facilities.

August 8: Thanked Government of Bombay for "limited permission" on some points and asked Government to be equally "considerate in regard to [his] supra-physical needs".

August 10: In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, appealed for a decision on or before Monday, August 14.

August 14: In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, conveyed decision to deny himself all nourishment if demands were not granted before Wednesday, August 16.
At Akola, M. S. Aney with 13 companions was arrested while starting on a march.

August 15: In letter to R. V. Martin, Gandhiji urged granting of three requests, pending final orders, in order to avert proposed fast.

August 16: Commenced fast in the afternoon despite sanction of certain facilities, which he described as having been "grudgingly given".

August 17: In letter to R. V. Martin, enumerated points for settlement.

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August 19 : In letter to Home Secretary, Government of Bombay, stated that civil disobedience, "a perfectly lawful activity", was his creed though considered by Government as unlawful.

August 20: In *Harijanbandhu*, paid tributes to Hariprasad Desai of Bhavnagar—"A silent worker in the Harijan Cause".

August 21 : Gandhiji was removed to Sassoon Hospital, Poona, because of serious condition. Andrews and Kasturba visited him. Fearing that he was nearing death, Gandhiji distributed his personal articles of use among Hospital staff attending on him.[1]

August 23: Was released unconditionally.
Broke fast at 3.45 p.m. by taking a glass of orange-juice; taken to 'Parnakuti' in an ambulance-car; Dr. Dinshaw Mehta took charge of him.

August 24: Sarojini Naidu visited Gandhiji; Legislative Assembly decided to hold over "Temple-entry Bill" for one year.

August 25: Gandhiji gave interview to the Press. Prabhashankar Pattani visited Gandhiji.

August 28: In Legislative Assembly, Viceroy announced that on question of reforms he had been consistent in his policy "so as to help India towards responsible Government, Home Rule or Dominion Status". Jamshed Mehta visited Gandhiji.

August 30: In letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Gandhiji said that he would "gladly retire from Congress and devote myself to the development of civil disobedience".

September 2: Interview to Associated Press of India.
Hallett, Home Secretary, met C. F. Andrews who gave him his impressions of Gandhiji's mind as gathered from daily interviews since his release.

September 3: In *Harijanbandhu* article, "No Exaggeration", Gandhiji wrote: "Harijan service is the breath of my life and that, therefore, I cannot live for a moment without it."
In statement to the Press, deplored the assassination of B.E.G. Burge, Magistrate of Midnapore.

September 7: Issued statement on 'Harijan Day' fixed for September 24, 1933.

[1] On p. 393 of the text, Gandhiji mentions the last to have happened on the afternoon of the 24th. But that seems to be a slip of memory. The date given in *Mahatma*, Vol. III, p. 264, is August 21.

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September 9: In *Harijan* article, "Was it Coercive?", said : "As a great weapon in the armoury of satyagraha, it [fasting] cannot be given up because of its possible abuse."

In letter to V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, said: " . . . I do not want power. I look upon it as a privileged service. The moment I feel that I can get out of it to the benefit of the Congress, I will not fail."

September 10: In *Harijan*, congratulated Harijans and Hindus of Vina on having resolved their differences.

September 10-14: Had discussion with Jawaharlal Nehru.

Before *September 11:* Sent messages to World Fellowship of Faiths; also to Swadeshi Exhibition organized by Gujarat and Broach All-India Women's Conference.

September 12: A Japanese sadhu visited Gandhiji.

September 13: In a letter to Gandhiji, Jawaharlal Nehru pointed out that "Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy" Resolution adopted at Karachi Congress "gave the direction in which we should move".

September 14: In letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhiji said: "I can go the whole length with you and say that 'we should range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world'. But ". . . though there is such an agreement between you and me in the enunciation of ideals, there are temperamental differences between us."

September 15: Left Poona for Bombay.

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ADDENDA-II[1]

3. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 17, 1933

CHI. NARANDAS,

A negative reply[2] has come from the Viceroy. So consider me out [of jail only] for a short while. I am getting ready [for jail again]. It is my keen desire that the whole Ashram is surrendered in this final sacrifice. I wish that Ambalalbhai or some such friend looks after the movable property of the Ashram as a trustee. I am thinking of handing over the immovable property to the Government.[3] Those who wish to leave may do so after that. Those who remain may accommodate themselves where they wish to. I don't want to force you if you do not approve of this. The responsibility of protecting the Ashram and its ideals rests with those who stay behind. Let them do as much as they can. I can only guide them. If this happens we have to think where we can put N. and Amala. If Amala wishes to do some Harijan service, she may do so. If Jamnalalji agrees to take responsibility for N., she may go to Wardha. I cannot think of the other problems that may be there just now. I don't say anything about Duncan because he is after all a man. Moreover he belongs to this place. He can easily be accommodated for Harijan service.[4]

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 371-2

[1] For Addenda–I, *vide* pp. 434-5.
[2] *Vide* p. 264.
[3] *Vide* pp. 301-4 and 327.
[4] *Vide* also pp. 327-9.

4. LETTER TO COLLECTOR OF AHMEDABAD[1]

July 31, 1933

You had already given me permission to take away such books as I wanted. Would it be in order for me to take away all the books from the Vidyapith building including the book-shelves in which they are kept? As you know, it has been decided to hand over the books in the Sabarmati Ashram for public use. It is the intention of the trustees of the Vidyapith to hand over the Vidyapith library also in a like manner. Hence my question.[2]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 161

[1] In the source, Narahari Parikh explains that this letter was drafted for D. B. Kalelkar who had sent it "after arriving in Ahmedabad on July 31".

[2] According to Narahari Parikh, the Collector had said in his reply "that there was no objection to the books and such shelves as are not fixtures in the building being removed".

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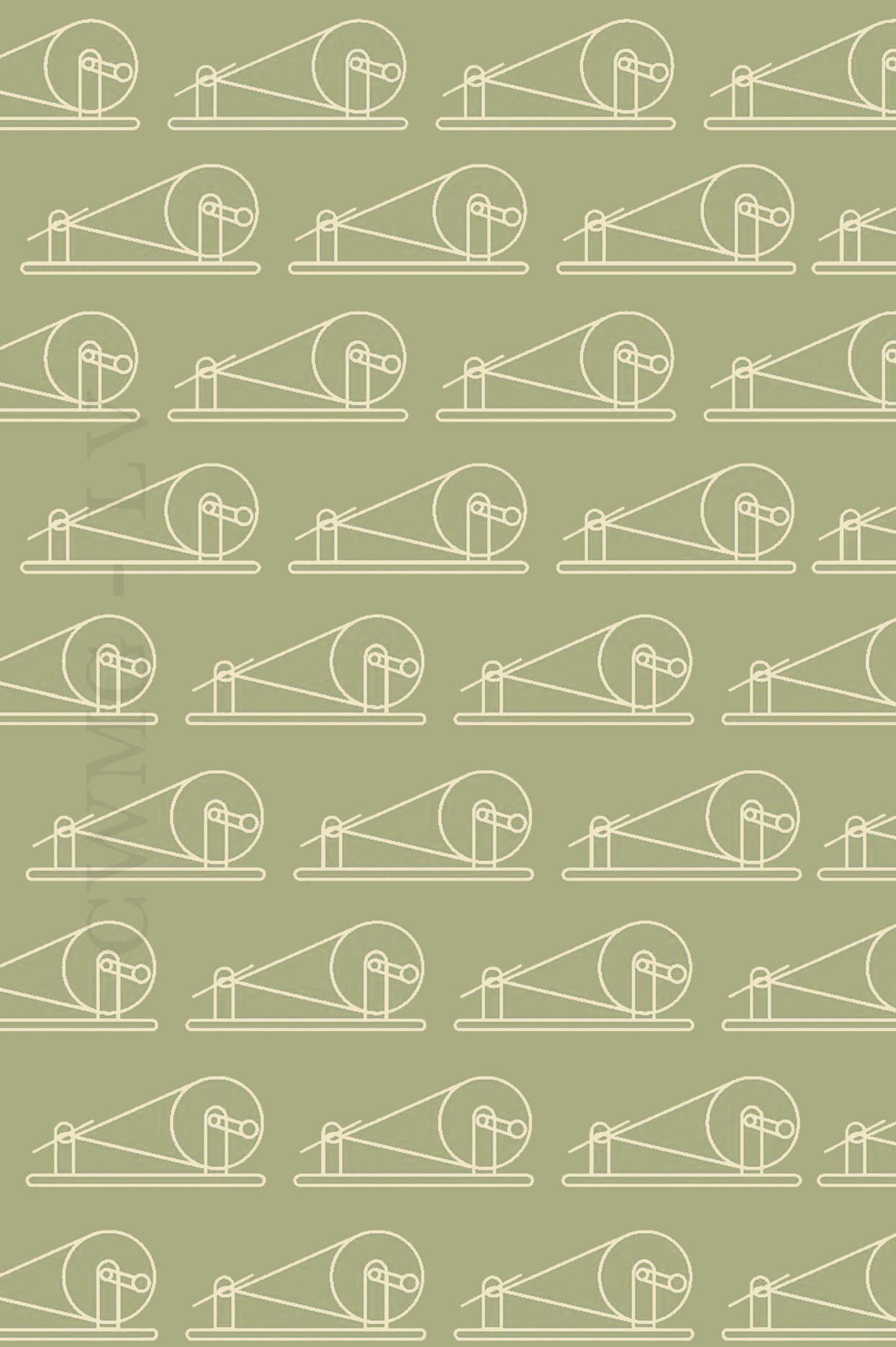
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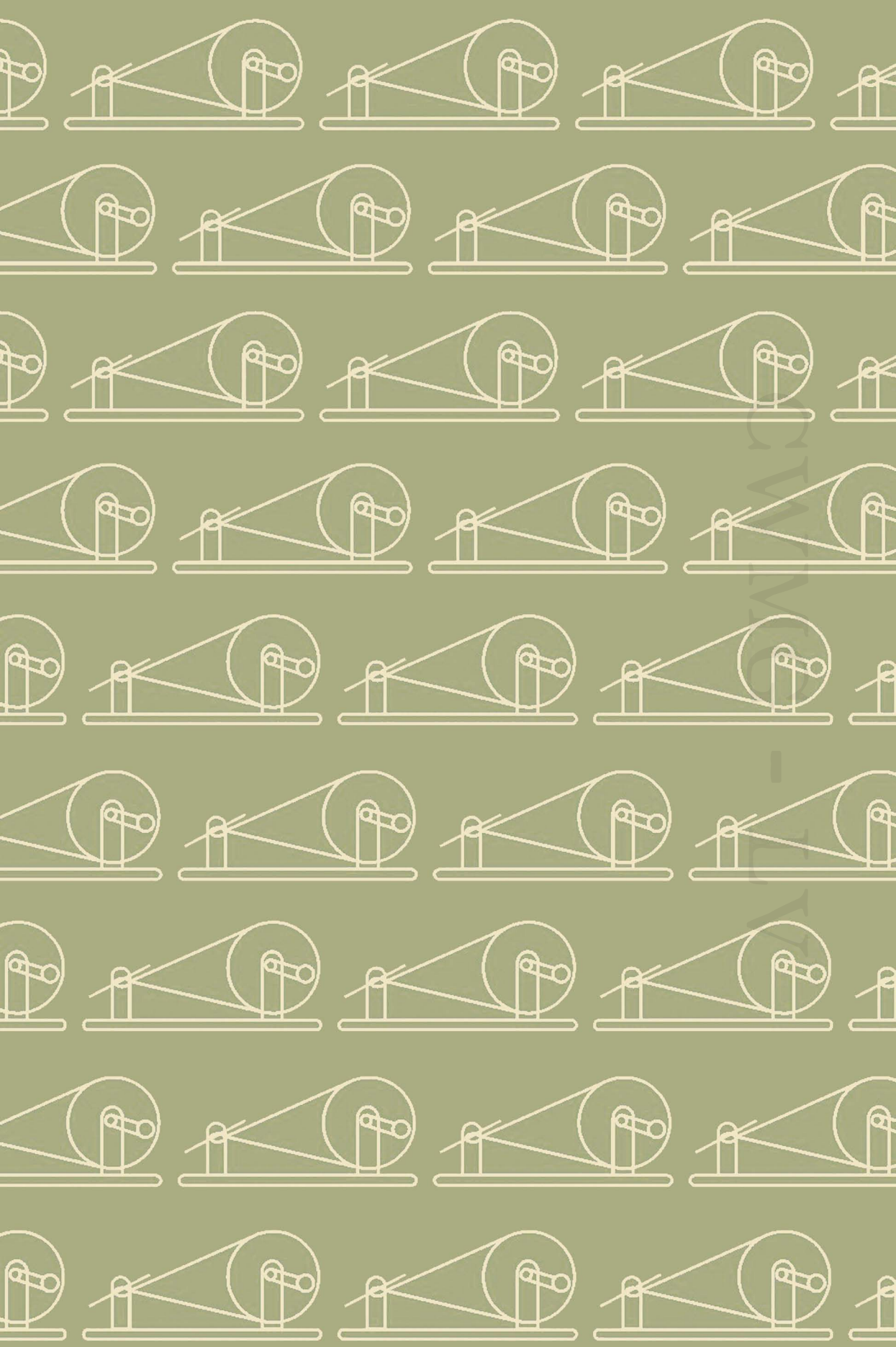
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26	* Item 28, para 2, line 2	*Stotra*	*Sutra*
94	* Item 90, title	Nanibehn B. Jhaveri	Nanibehn P. Jhaveri
106	* Footnote 1, last line	attendance	attendants
117	* Line 6 from bottom	crieterion	criterion
150	* Item 169, line 5	I w	I want
174	* Footnote	" 'Dhruva Katha Bhagavata': fourth *skandha*—eighth, ninth *adhyayas*; also 'Gajendra Stuti Bhagavata': eighth *skandha* — second, third, fourth *adhyayas*"	" 'Dhruva Katha' (*Bhagavata*: fourth *skandha*—eighth, ninth *adhyayas*); also 'Gajendra Stuti' (*Bhagavata*: eighth *skandha* — second, third, fourth *adhyayas*)"
215	* Line 4	statisfied	satisfied
255	* Line 7 from bottom	a far	afar
306	Item 354, line 5	Mahadevi's	Mahadev's
323	Line 5 from bottom	has done	has shown
337	* Item 392, line 4	woll	well
370	* Para 2, line 5	Nayyar	Nair
370	* Footnote 3	Pyarelal Nayyar	Gandhiji's typist

* Due correction made.

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