THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXII

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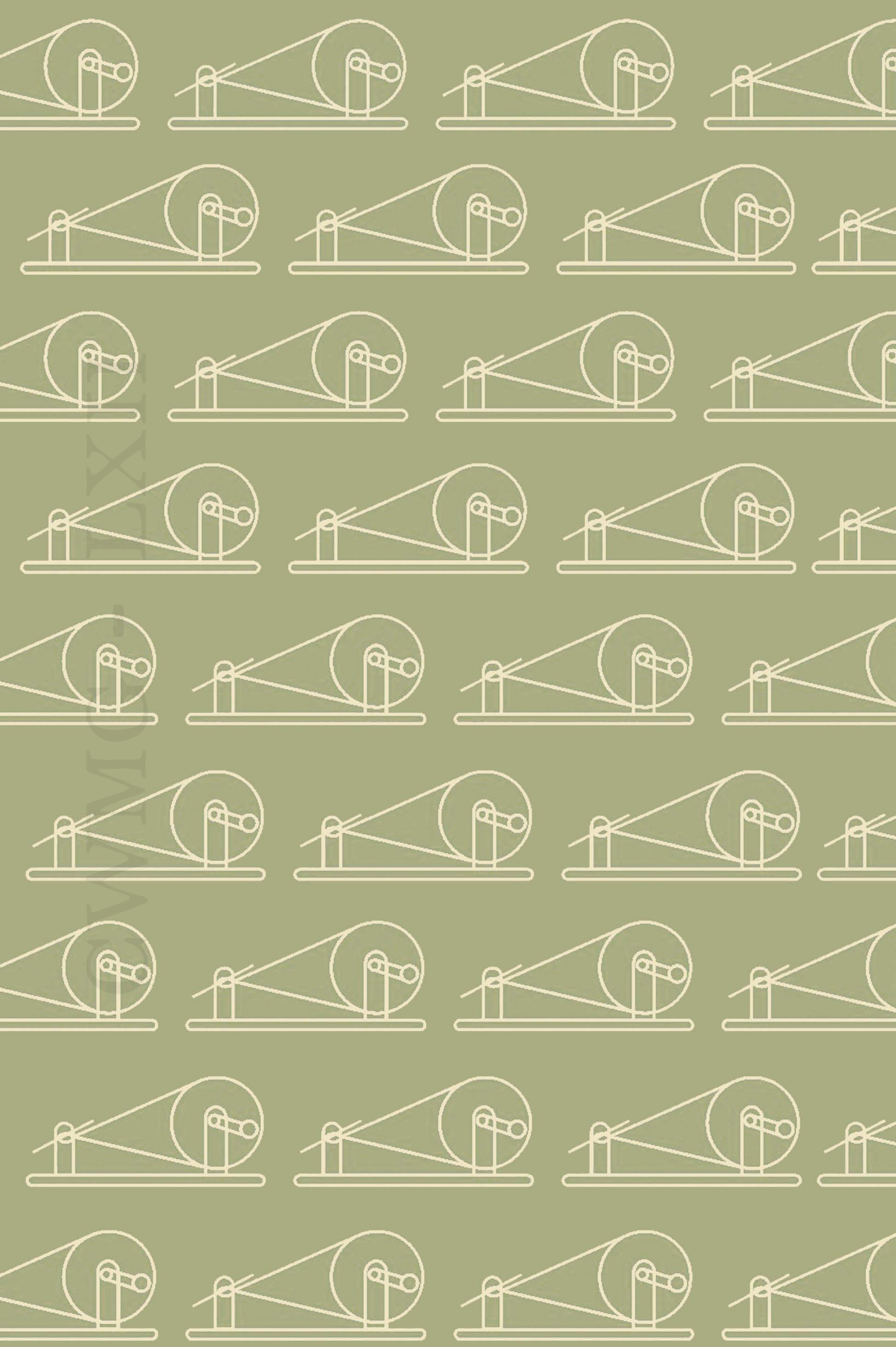
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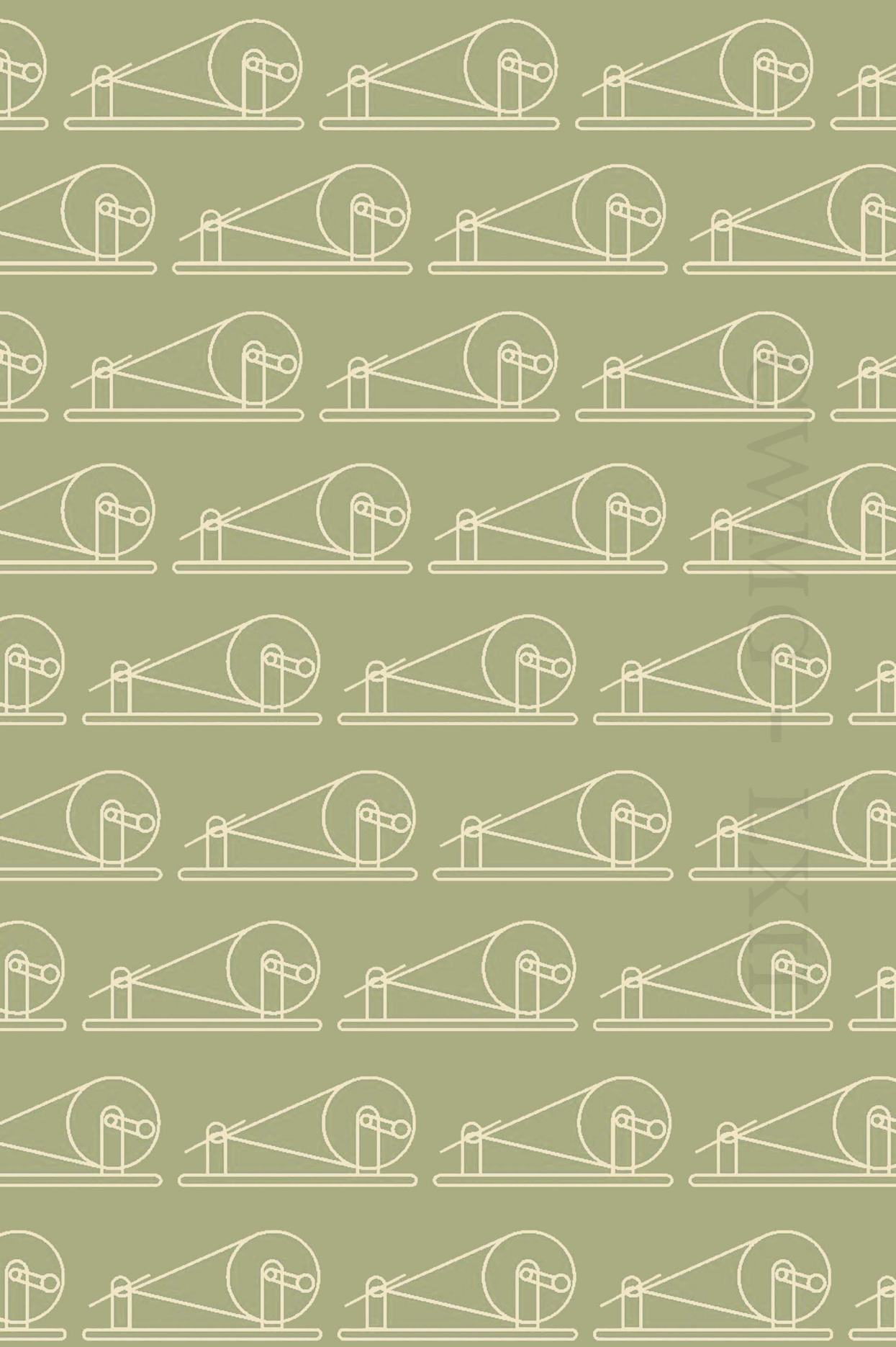
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(October 1, 1935 – May 31, 1936)

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GANDHIJI COMING OUT OF HIS HUT AT SEGAON

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PREFACE

With the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935 in July, the country was confronted with a new political reality and during the eight months (October 1935 to May 1936) covered by this volume the Congress and the League were debating whether or not to accept the provincial autonomy granted under the Act. Both finally decided to reject it. Gandhiji took no part in this debate, for his heart was in the villages (p. 345), and he continued to devote his time and energy to the village reconstruction programme which he had taken up after his retirement from the Congress in October 1934. It was quite taxing work, and Gandhiji felt obliged to cut down his correspondence in order to avoid a breakdown (p. 24). A breakdown, however, did occur, on December 7, and Gandhiji was prevailed upon to have "perfect rest in bed, attending to no correspondence, writing nothing, dictating nothing" (p. 169). In May of the next year, Gandhiji went for a fortnight's rest to the Nandi Hills in Mysore where, on the very day of his arrival, May 11, he received news of the sudden death of Dr. M. A. Ansari. It was "a stunning blow" (p. 389) to Gandhiji, for whom the association with the late doctor had been "infinitely more than a political friendship" (p. 392). "Few deaths," he wrote to Dr. Zakir Husain, "leave me disconsolate as this has done" (p. 390).

Though Gandhiji kept himself aloof from day-to-day politics and indeed declared that one must forget the political goal in order to realize it (p. 93), he continued to advise and guide the Congress leaders whenever necessary. With Jawaharlal Nehru, particularly, he had developed a relationship of mutual love despite differences which was to play an important part in shaping the course of events in the coming years. Nehru represented the radical temper in the Congress and was impatient with Gandhiji's approach to both political and economic issues (p. 392), but, as Gandhiji told Agatha Harrison, though "the gulf between us as to the outlook upon life has undoubtedly widened, we have never been so near each other in hearts as we perhaps are today" (p. 354). This bond between them was strengthened by Gandhiji's recognition, in the true Vaishnava spirit, of the significance of all sincere roles in the Divine play that is human history. "After all," Gandhiji wrote to Nehru, commenting on the difference of outlook between them after reading Nehru's autobiography in

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manuscript, "we are helpless actors in the mighty flow of events, we have to act according to our lights allowing or expecting the events to correct us where we err" (p. 172). Gandhiji knew, moreover, that though Jawaharlal was "extreme in his presentation of his methods," he was "sober in action" (p. 353). He therefore judged that, in the changed political circumstances of the country, Nehru would be best able to provide the necessary leadership and urged him to accept the Presidentship of the Congress. "I am sure," Gandhiji wrote to him on receiving his consent, "that it would solve many difficulties and it is the rightest thing that could have happened for the country" (p. 6).

Developments in the international field, too, may have played a part in changing Gandhiji's relationship to Nehru. The Abyssinian war had broken out, and Nehru alone among the Congress leaders was equipped to grasp the bearing of the international forces on the Indian struggle. Gandhiji was quick to realize this, and he confessed to Jawaharlal: "You have undoubtedly a much greater grasp of the situation than any one of us has, certainly than I can ever hope to have. Therefore you may be able to evolve a dignified formula for national self-expression in speech as well as in action" (pp. 39-40). Whether or not under Nehru's influence, Gandhiji also came to see more clearly the significance of India's non-violent experiment in the context of world events. Nehru saw India's struggle in relation to contemporary world events in terms of modern political values; Gandhiji saw it in terms of his more fundamental creed of non-violence. "Non-violence to be a creed," he wrote in an article inspired by the Abyssinian war, "has to be all-pervasive." He could not, therefore, "be indifferent about the war that Italy is now waging against Abyssinia" and, though conscious of "the very grave and glaring limitation" of his own hold over India, he described non-violence as "The Greatest Force" and explained how it could be effectively employed by Abyssinia against Italy and what Great Britain or India could do to demonstrate its power. About India particularly, though he knew that "at no time in her ancient history . . . has it had complete non-violence in action pervading the whole land" and that, in the present, too, her non-violence was "that of the weak", it was his "unshakable belief that her destiny is to deliver the message of non-violence to mankind", for she had "an unbroken tradition of non-violence from times immemorial" (pp. 28-30).

Gandhiji's faith in non-violence rested on his faith in human nature. "Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace,"

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he said in a message to an American journal, "is to disbelieve the godliness of human nature." He could say, from his own experience, that "the primary virtues of mankind are possible of cultivation by the meanest of the human species" (pp. 175-6). But non-violence, Gandhiji explained to a Negro deputation from America, was not a passive attitude of mind but the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, seeking which "everything else shall be added unto you" (p. 201). It was "the greatest and the activest force in the world", a "self-acting" force; it was love in the full Pauline sense of *I Corinthians*, 13. He himself, Gandhiji admitted in all humility, "was a poor specimen" of the practice of such all-embracing ahimsa, but his faith in the principle was boundless (pp. 199-201).

Gandhiji had taken up the village reconstruction programme as "a concrete expression of truth and non-violence" (p. 225), and his numerous discussions with the workers on the manner and spirit of its implementation reported in this volume make clear his central vision of man as a moral and spiritual being which inspired the programme. By "introducing the right kind of diet and making the sanitation of your village tolerably good," Gandhiji told a group of village workers, "you will have rendered human bodies worthy of becoming temples of God and efficient tools for doing a good day's work." (p. 59). Having realized the intimate relation between body labour and the moral quality of living, Gandhiji would, if he could, "make physical labour compulsory for everybody", ensuring also "that a doctor or a lawyer should take the same wages as a labourer" (p. 219). Gandhiji knew the *Gita's* definition of yoga as "skill in work" and could deeply appreciate the beauty and joy of such work. Describing his impressions of the Village Industries Exhibition at Lucknow during the Congress session there in April, he spoke of the Exhibition as "a feast for your eyes and ears, a spiritual feast capable of purifying the senses," and explained why: "Well, from that hunger-stricken, impoverished land of skeletons," Orissa, "have come men who have wrought miracles in bone and horn and silver." "Go and see," Gandhiji urged the audience, "how the soul of man even in an impoverished body can breathe life into lifeless horns and metal" (p. 323).

Gandhiji's attitude to the labour-capital problem was also conditioned by this conviction of the moral worth of labour. The problem, according to him, was "not to set class against class, but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. . . . The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i.e.,

it will be held in trust for labour'' (p. 47). In economic matters, too, moral considerations were equally important. ''The law of demand and supply,'' he declared, ''is not a human law, it is a devilish law . . . True economics must follow ethics'' (p. 241). No matter what the public reaction was, Gandhiji asked the All-India Spinners' Association Council, ''once for all'' to ''dismiss the thought of competing with futile soul-killing economics'' and not to think of reducing the prices in order to meet the competition of Japanese goods (p. 31). In a discussion with G. D. Birla, Gandhiji warned the industrialist ''that if India becomes industrialized, we shall need a Nadirshah to find out other worlds to exploit'', since the search for markets would involve India in a competition with other industrial powers. ''My head,'' Gandhiji said, ''reels to think of these rivalries.'' ''No,'' he declared with some passion, ''I am clear that whilst this machine age aims at converting men into machines, I am aiming at reinstating man-turned-machine to his original estate.'' He knew, with the certainty of a prophet, ''that all the other things that seem to challenge my faith are doomed'' (p. 145).

It was because of this moral aim, behind the village reconstruction programme, of ''reinstating'' man ''to his original estate'' that Gandhiji gave priority to that programme over the political struggle for freedom. ''Our present policy,'' he told a group of college professors and students, ''is to leave all politics or politico-economics alone'' (p. 130). Quoting Thoreau's famous maxim that 'that government is the best which governs the least', Gandhiji argued that ''a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much State interference is truly democratic'' and that where ''such a condition is absent the form of Government is democratic in name.'' This required intelligent regulation of their own lives by the people, and therefore the more important reform was the reform of thought. Such was ''the potency of thought'' that ''as a man thinks so does he become.'' ''In this realm of thought,'' Gandhiji pointed out, ''political power does not come into play at all.'' Man ''can be independent as soon as he wills it.'' Why should not the people, waiting for leaders to bring about great changes, not ''clear their own doors and environments of dirt and filth?'', Gandhiji asked. This was true swaraj—self-rule—and he who was ''not ready for small reforms'' brought about in this manner ''will never be ready for great reforms.'' That is why, Gandhiji explained, it ''has become a matter of absorbing interest to me to find out how best to clean our latrines, how best to save our people from the heinous sin of fouling

Mother Earth every morning'' (pp. 92-3).

An educative programme of this nature required workers with the highest spirit of dedication. If they were drawn from cities, they had to ''develop village mentality and learn the art of living after the manner of villagers'' (p. 319). The worker would be ''a pattern of virtue and work before the villagers'', doing eight hours' productive work and giving two hours to voluntary service of the villagers (p. 132). He should get accustomed to food which would be ''nourishing and yet within the means of an average villager'' (p. 57). Gandhiji wanted the workers to apply this ideal to members of their families, too, saying: ''any ideal which is right for us is also right for our children''—a principle which he had followed in his own life—though he did make allowance for human weakness (p. 217).

Gandhiji was confronted, during the period of this volume, by the problem of religious conversion in three different forms, and in each case he reacted from the same basic position, viz., that religion is a matter of inner growth for the individual and not merely an outward form. At a meeting of the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference on October 14, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar threw a ''bomb-shell in the midst of Hindu society'' (p. 280) by advising the Harijans to choose ''any religion which gives you equality of status and treatment.'' Religion, Gandhiji commented, ''is not like a house or a cloak which can be changed at will. It is more an integral part of one's self than one's body.'' Gandhiji, therefore, urged Dr. Ambedkar, if he had any faith in God, ''to assuage his wrath and reconsider the position and examine his ancestral religion on its own merits and not through the weakness of its faithless followers'' (p. 37). And while he accepted the reality of the Harijans' grievances and warned the *savarna* Hindus that Hinduism would perish if they failed to do ''elementary justice'' to the Harijans, Gandhiji pleaded with ''enlightened Harijans for their own sakes not to seek material betterment under threat of conversion'' (p. 281). However, this is exactly what Gandhiji's eldest son Harilal did. On or about May 14, he embraced Islam at Bombay, taking the name Abdulla. He had met Gandhiji at Nagpur on April 26 and told him ''that he would do anything whatever to satisfy his greed.'' It was this rather than his acceptance of Islam which pained Gandhiji. He had, Gandhiji wrote to Ramdas, ''ceased to belong to any faith and now he has taken on the label of Islam. That does not make him a follower of the faith, though,'' Gandhiji added, ''we should indeed feel satisfied

if he truly practises in his life what is best in Islam'' (pp. 461-2). Gandhiji himself was often urged by Christian friends to embrace Christianity as the only true religion. Commenting on a letter from one such friend Gandhiji replied that he accepted Jesus as ''a great world-teacher among others'', but not as ''the only begotten son of God.'' ''He affects my life,'' Gandhiji asserted, ''no less because I regard him as one among the many begotten sons of God.'' For Gandhiji the *Gita* had become ''the key to the scriptures of the world'' and, unravelling with its help their ''deepest mysteries'', he had found that all the great teachers of the world had said, though in different words, ''verily, verily, I say unto you, not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven shall enter the Kingdom'' (pp. 333-4).

On December 3 and 4 Gandhiji had long discussions with Mrs. Margaret Sanger, a well-known advocate of artificial birth-control. In these, as reported by Mahadev Desai, he ''poured his whole being'' and ''revealed himself inside out, giving Mrs. Sanger an intimate glimpse of his own private life.'' Gandhiji made his position clear—with his philosophy of life that sought ''self-realization through self-control,'' he could not recommend the remedy of birth-control (p. 156). Gandhiji shared Mrs. Sanger's aim that women should be emancipated, having himself tried all his life ''to show them they were not slaves either to their husbands or parents, not only in the political field but in the domestic as well'' (p. 157), but he did not ''endorse'' the ''contention'' that ''sex expression without desire for children is a need of the soul'' (p. 159). He agreed with a correspondent that ''man is undoubtedly an artist and a creator'', that he ''must have beauty, and therefore colour'' but held that man's ''artistic and creative nature at its best taught him to see art in self-restraint and ugliness in uncreative union.'' Art, for Gandhiji, was not a matter of imagination only but of living. Not only did his ''eye for art'' teach ''man to seek enjoyment in usefulness,'' but, Gandhiji held, at ''a later stage he learnt further that there was neither beauty nor joy in living for its own sake but that he must live to serve his fellow-creatures and through them his Maker'' (pp. 310-1). This idea, that a life of service and sacrifice is a life full of the joy of self-fulfilment, is a recurring theme in Gandhiji's thought.

The two months' breakdown in Gandhiji's health beginning from December 7 was psychologically a very painful experience for him, for it not only revealed, as he confessed in an article in

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Harijan, "Nothing without Grace", "vital defects in my following out of the interpretation of the *Gita* as I have understood it", but also occasioned an involuntary violation of *brahmacharya*. The central teaching of the *Gita*, according to Gandhiji, was non-attachment, but he discovered that the innumerable problems which he was called upon to solve had not "left my body or mind untouched." "I verily believe," Gandhiji declared, "that one who literally follows the prescription of the eternal Mother need never grow old in mind. Such a one's body will wither in due course like leaves of a healthy tree, leaving the mind as young and as fresh as ever." The truth of this, Gandhiji believed, was exemplified by "Bhishma delivering his marvellous discourse to Yudhishthira though he was on his death-bed" (p. 211). The other "mental disturbance" which he experienced during the illness made Gandhiji "disgusted" with himself (p. 212). He had been striving for years, as he explained to Premabehn Kantak, "to attain to Shukadeva's condition", to "become a eunuch" (p. 429) in the manner of those who have, in the famous words of Jesus, "made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven's sake", and he knew that a "mind that is once hooked to the Star of stars becomes incorruptible", but the experience during the illness revealed to him how far he was from such a condition and the discovery humbled him. After that experience Gandhiji "broke loose . . . from the rigid rest that was imposed" upon him and resumed active work (p. 212).

At the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings in February-March it was proposed that a committee for Gandhian thought be formed. When the matter was brought to his knowledge, Gandhiji made it clear that the committee's work, if it was formed at all, "should only be one of collecting my thoughts and beliefs", for he had conceived no such thing as Gandhism in the sense of a systematic body of doctrines which could be codified. His way was that of living growth and not of abstract thinking. "Without any elaborate scheme," Gandhiji explained, "I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal principles of truth and non-violence to our daily life and problems. Like a child I did whatever occurred to me on the spur of the moment during the course of events", and it was later that he "realized that what" he "was doing were experiments in truth" (pp. 223-4).

Gandhiji had been dreaming of going and settling in a village. "Well, I am at last in Segaon," he wrote to Amrit Kaur on May 1. "We came yesterday. The night was glorious" (p. 358).

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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the Students; and the following newspapers and journals: *The Bombay Chronicle*, *Gujarati*, *Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu*, *Harijan Sevak*, *The Hindu*, *The Hindustan Times*, *The Hitavada* and *The Leader*.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

GANDHIJI COMING OUT OF HIS HUT AT SEGAON	*frontispiece*
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1. LETTER TO VISHWANATH

WARDHA,
October 1, 1935

MY DEAR VISHWANATH,

I have your note. I shall await your arrival on the 5th instant. If you do not see anybody to receive you at the station, you will ask your way to Maganwadi which is about under ten minutes' walk from the station. Someone will be there, however, to receive you.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am not writing to Satis Babu.

SJT. VISHWANATH
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
15 COLLEGE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 2731

2. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 1, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I got your letter. I understand about Ramji. His nature is exactly as you describe it. What can we expect from one whom even a man like Lakshmidas found difficult to deal with? It is our penance to suffer him. The rest when we meet.

Tell me about the machine, too, when you come. If the engine-pump proves to be an enemy of the bullock, then we had better be careful about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9090

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3. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

October 1, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got your letter. It will help me a lot. Send me the hakim's name.

Bachubhai[1] seems to be causing you much worry. Death, disease and decay are the inevitable lot of every creature that is born, no matter how many vaidyas like Charaka[2] and hakims like Lukman come into the world and go out of it. It is our good fortune that God always keeps from us the time of death or of recovery from disease. It is because of that that we can make some limited efforts to fight against the two. Keep me informed about Bachubhai's condition. Give him my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN VAIDYA
RAMDAS BHIMJI'S BUNGALOW
BORIVLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 85. Also C.W. 8819. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

4. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

October 1, 1935

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was very happy to have your letter; I had thought you had completely forgotten me.

All that I have to say to the friends of Harijans is that they should strengthen their faith in the purity of their task.

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

[1] Bachubhai Bhimji Ramdas, addressee's brother's son

[2] Principal exponent of the Ayurvedic system of medicine and author of *Charakasamhita*

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5. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
October 2, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM[1],

I have your letter with Rs. 55. As I answer I call to mind a young man who lives on charity and wants me to supplement it for continuing his studies. I am reserving the Rs. 55 for that special purpose. As a result of my enquiry if I understand that he does not need any further assistance, I shall transfer the amount to the general Harijan cause.

I have your parcel of fruit also. I understand the depth of feeling behind your writing many returns of my birthday. But as you know well, not a minute will be added by the Creator to the allotted span of my life, no matter what human effort is put forth. Nevertheless while it lasts we shall always continue to pray and otherwise strive for one another's good health and longevity.

I am glad you seem to have recovered completely from your last attack of fever.

Blessings from[2]
BAPU

SHRIMATI AMBUJAMMAL
AMJAD BAGH, LUZ
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

6. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS BUJNA

October 2, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

I have your letter. I am wholly opposed to Pandit Ramchandra's fast because I find ignorance and violence in it. Therefore my approving of it is a total impossibility. I only appeal to

[1] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyengar. The superscription in this and the other letters to the addressee is in Hindi.

[2] This is in Hindi.

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the friends who write to me to persuade him to abandon the fast by giving him the assurance that an agitation would be taken up to stop animal sacrifice.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI PURUSHOTTAMDAS BUJNA
5 ROYAL EXCHANGE PLACE
CALCUTTA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9839. Courtesy: Bharat Kala Bhavan

7. *THANKS*[1]

[After *October 2, 1935*]

I am grateful to the senders of wires, cables and letters received from friends in India and abroad containing their good wishes and blessings on my sixty-seventh birthday. I can only hope that the future such as may be in store for me will find me worthy of their precious gift. They will forgive me for my utter inability to send them personal acknowledgements.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

8. *THANKS*[2]

[After *October 2, 1935*]

Many brothers and sisters from all provinces have sent me letters and telegrams of good wishes and blessings on my sixty-seventh birthday. Speech is not adequate to express my gratitude. I pray to God to make me worthy of the pure love showered and to remove my imperfections in order to make me a true servant of the public. I am aware that the letters and telegrams received are not merely formal but an expression of heart-felt sentiments.

As the greetings cannot possibly be individually acknowledged, I hope all the friends will be content with this.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1102

[1] This appeared under "Notes". *Vide* also the following item.

[2] This appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 12-10-1935, and a Gujarati version in *Harijanbandhu*, 13-10-1935.

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9. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

[After *October 2, 1935*][1]

BHAI VIYOGI HARI[2],

Do correct errors of style or grammar, if any.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1102

10. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
October 3, 1935

CHI. AMALA[3],

I was delighted to receive your postcard. It was wrong of you not to have got down when Kanti met you at the station. However, if you get something there it would be very good. Don't be nervous and don't be impatient. Take the money that may be offerred to you by Hiralal. He will see you again. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from[4]
BAPU

SMT. AMALA

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is written in the form of a note to the preceding item.

[2] Editor, *Harijan Sevak*

[3]&[4] The superscription and the subscription in this and the other letters to the addressee are in Hindi.

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11. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 3, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL[1],

Your letters come in with clock-like regularity and they are such a blessing.

I see that Kamala is putting forth a very brave effort. It will be rewarded. You know my partiality for nature-cure methods. There are in Germany itself many nature-cure establishments. Kamala's case may be past that stage. But one never knows. I know of cases which were reported to be for surgical treatment but which yielded to nature-cure treatment. I send you this experience of mine for what it is worth.

Your letter about the wearing of the next year's crown was delightful. I was glad to have your consent. I am sure that it would solve many difficulties and it is the rightest thing that could have happened for the country. Your presidentship at Lahore[2] was totally different from what it would be at Lucknow.[3] In my opinion it was comparatively plain sailing at Lahore in every respect. It won't be so in any respect at Lucknow. But those circumstances I cannot imagine anybody better able to cope with than you. May God give you all the strength to shoulder the burden.

I am going through your chapters[4] as speedily as I can. They are to me of absorbing interest. More than that I must not say just now.

This letter carries the love of us to you all.

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The addressee was in Germany with his wife Kamala who was undergoing treatment in a sanatorium.

[2] In 1929

[3] The Congress session was scheduled to be held in April 1936.

[4] Of autobiography

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12. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

October 3, 1935

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I got your letter. It was a clear one. I received a letter from Thakkar Bapa[1] just before I got yours. He has placed the whole burden on me. I have accordingly written a long letter to Chhaganlal. I do not wish to put more pressure on Jivanlalbhai. Let him do as much as he can. It is not possible to change Chhaganlal's methods very much now. He can spend his energy in doing service, and Thakkar Bapa is in love with him. It is natural, therefore, that he should have full confidence in himself. Let him find out a president and carry on the work. Thakkar Bapa's suggestion is that either Nanalal or Narandas should become the president. But Narandas and Chhaganlal will not team up well. The two follow their own methods of work and, therefore, the one cannot be president over the other. Even if that is possible, however, I wish to get Narandas over here if some other arrangement can be made for his parents. Chhaganlal simply cannot leave Kathiawar at present. I am sending your letter to him. Try and discuss the matter with him to the extent you can. Our duty is to serve the Harijans and we have to solve this problem only with a view to finding how best we can do it. Your own dissatisfaction certainly does not mean that you wish to give up Harijan work. On the contrary you also have the same problem, namely, what contribution you can make to the solution of the difficulty which has arisen.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Amritlal V. Thakkar

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13. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
October 4, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

You must have seen what I have written to Mathew[1]. Let Lilavati come. We may give her as much work as she is willing to do. I had a letter from Harilal. He has asked for permission to come here and for railway fare. Give him the enclosed letter[2]. During the charkha week, about 50,000 rounds of yarn was spun here. Some persons, besides taking part in non stop spinning, also spun sometimes for eight hours at a stretch. They showed great keenness. Manu was one of them.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Jamnalalji has arrived here. I talked to him. He is eager to know your decision. He wishes to merge the Mahila Ashram and the Kanya Ashram into one and hand over full charge to you. This suggestion was mine. If you have already discussed the matter with Jamnadas and if you can get the whole-hearted consent of your parents, send me a wire. It will be enough if you are able to take a decision for coming. It will not matter if you take some time to come. Once I know your decision, I can make definite arrangements.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M. M. U./II. Also C.W. 8478. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] P. G. Mathew
[2] Not available

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14. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 4, 1935

CHI. SHARDA[1],

I had given up hope of having a letter from you. I think of you quite often. If you wish, you can derive some consolation from the thought that you are not the only one who avoids writing to me. You wrote me a letter if only after nine months. Narayandas of course kept me informed about your health. I was also informed about your activities.

Now, if you are not able to study there I wish you joined the Vidyapith where at present all facilities are available and many of your friends are studying. But I make one condition which you must fulfil, and it is that you should not be separated from your parents. Try to gain as much as you can by remaining wherever they are. Your health is my main consideration in laying down this condition. In spite of your staying there, you will be able to improve your English by your own effort, although Mathew might leave. Since you are not keen about passing examinations, you can conveniently take up the subjects of your liking taught in Sushilabehn's school. Moreover, you will be able to have an easy influence on the girls attending that school. I have no fear of your being tempted by the happy-go-lucky tendency of the girls attending the school. Nor do I think you have.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9969. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Daughter of Chimanlal Shah

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15. *THREE QUESTIONS*

Shri Gopabandhu Choudhury writing from Bari, Cuttack, sends the following three questions:

> 1. In self-sufficing khadi what should be the price of surplus khadi?
>
> 2. If a villager has cotton but no spinners to give him the requirements of his family and he wants to have his cotton spun for his own family requirements by his co-villagers or neighbouring villagers, what should be the wage? Will the proposed living wage for commercial khadi be applicable here? Or, will it be left to mutual adjustment?
>
> 3. What should be the wage when the spinner has no cotton of her own and she spins not for wages in cash for living but for cotton and that also till she earns a quantity sufficient for her cloth need?

The price of surplus khadi passing through the A. I. S. A. can only be the same as that of any other in the same province. Now that for the most part khadi sales, except for the requirements of cities, will be confined to the province where it is manufactured, the prices in different provinces will perhaps vary more than they do now. But there cannot be any distinction between surplus khadi and any other. Indeed all khadi can only be surplus khadi, for khadi will not be accepted by the Association or its branches from anyone who is not himself or herself a full wearer of khadi. Of course the rule may have to be relaxed during the transition stage.

On the analogy of the first answer, there is no doubt that so far as the Association is concerned it must pay all spinners alike. But the Association will not regulate the dealings between spinners themselves. They must be allowed to adjust their own mutual relations. Any other policy must fail.

In the third case also the same principle applies as in the first two. The thing to remember is that the Association will be responsible for the payment of the minimum subsistence wage where it is itself concerned. If its policy becomes popular and therefore general, no doubt it will be difficult if not impossible for anyone to get things done for less wages. And the co-operation between A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. may become so powerful that

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wages in every other department will at once be levelled up to their standard. The success of the effort will depend upon the hearty response from the buying public. If they will realize that they may no longer exploit the poor villagers on whom depends their existence, the problem of unemployment and semi-starvation will be automatically solved.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

16. VACATE KAVITHA

Sjt. A. V. Thakkar says in a letter[1] received last week:

There is no help like self-help. God helps those who help themselves. If the Harijans concerned will carry out their reported resolve to wipe the dust of Kavitha off their feet, they will not only be happy themselves but they will pave the way for others who may be similarly treated. If people migrate in search of employment, how much more should they do so in search of self-respect? I hope that well-wishers of Harijans will help these poor families to vacate inhospitable Kavitha.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

17. A KNOTTY QUESTION

Since the talk of the rise in the wages of spinners khadi-lovers are filled with all kinds of vague fears. For instance, they fear a fall in the public demand for khadi in view of a rise in its price. I am hoping that the public will appreciate the little rise that must take place in the price of khadi. They have hitherto benefited by the continuous reduction in prices which hitherto it has been the aim of the Association to achieve by extraordinary effort in the direction. The price of khadi has been never so low as it is today. And yet the sales have gone down owing to want of propaganda. If some systematic propaganda is carried on without increasing administrative expenses, I have little doubt that the sales of khadi can be increased in spite of the rise that will take place in the prices.

[1] Not reproduced here. Amritlal V. Thakkar had written that Harijans in Kavitha, a village in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat, had been subjected to great hardships by caste Hindus and therefore they had decided to vacate the village. *Vide* also Vol. XLI, pp. 380-1.

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But it is well to be prepared for the worst. The Association must not be deterred from doing the just thing by the spinners for fear of the public demand falling. It must, however, if need be, remove from its list of spinners those who do not need the support of spinning for their food. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of spinners who spin for gaining a few pice not for buying food, but for buying tobacco, bangles or the like. If there is pressure, these may be told to abstain from competition with those who need coppers for their food. The vast majority of spinners are such. The question, therefore, for workers is to find who are the needy ones in terms of the Association scheme. From the definition will be excluded those petty cultivators who employ labour and who are not ordinarily in want of food and clothing and who are not obliged to sell their holdings or other property to buy food with. But it will strain every nerve to give spinning work or other work accessory to spinning, assuring for every one of the occupations not less than a minimum subsistence wage at the rate of eight hours a day, to all those landless and propertyless workers who would starve partially or wholly but for the work found for them by the A. I. S. A. or the A. I. V. I. A. Conversely, these Associations will not concern themselves—not for want of will but for want of sheer ability—with those who eke out a living in some other way. If these bodies succeed to the full in their mission, they will have not only fulfilled their mission but they will have indirectly helped all the other needy ones and turned their lives of blank despair into those of bright hope.

Harijan, 5-10-1935

18. NOTES

Tree Cotton and Spinning

Of Shrimati Kiranprava Chaudhuri of Noakhali, who was good enough to send me a beautiful specimen of khadi woven from yarn of her own spinning, a friend of hers writes:[1]

I congratulate this sister on her devotion to khadi. Her emphasis on growing tree cotton is supported by several khadi experts throughout India. The experiment is worth making on a fairly large scale all over India. Evidently it does not re-

[1] The letter is not reproduced here.

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quire any expense worth the name. And if it is true that tree cotton does not need carding, it must mean a great advantage over the ordinary plant cotton. I would like those who spin tree cotton to send me their experiences and if possible samples of their cotton and yarn, as also the seeds.

How to Preserve Gur

A correspondent sends the following useful recipe for preserving *gur*:[1]

Harijan, 5-10-1935

19. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

Maganwadi, Wardha,
October 5, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. I have sent it to Devchandbhai. I am not at all fit for such matters now. I don't get even a single minute free. I understand what you say regarding your daughters.

Vandemataram from
Mohandas

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5828. Also C.W. 3051. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

20. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 5, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. I understand what you say. As far as I can help it, I would not give you the trouble of coming to me. But if I am obliged to do so, you may be sure that it will be for your own good, for the sake of . . .[2] whom up to now you have respected as your guru and father and for the sake of Shankar[3] who is going to be your companion for this life and

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had written that jaggery could be preserved during rainy season in gunny bags with cloth lining, stored under wheat straw.

[2] This name has been omitted in this and subsequent letters to the addressee.

[3] Shankar *alias* Satish, elder son of D. B. Kalelkar

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for all your lives to come. You are like a daughter to me, Shankar is like a son and . . . is an old co-worker. He is a trustee of a big national institution. For the present I will content myself with a few questions.

If you stick to every word of your letter to Kishorelalbhai, then what about your letter to Manubhai ? How do you reconcile the two? Kishorelalbhai wrote that letter at my instance. I wanted to save my time. Besides, in your letter to Kishorelalbhai written by you on your own, you had offered to answer any questions that he might ask. That is why he wrote those letters to you and asked some questions. It was formal courtesy on Kishorelalbhai's part to say that you were not bound to answer them, and it was obviously your duty to answer them, if not for anybody else's sake certainly for Shankar's sake. But don't mind that you didn't answer them. Now please reply to this letter and answer the other questions, too, that Kishorelalbhai has asked. Do so without fear and with the God of Truth as your witness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 936. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

21. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

October 5, 1935

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I got your letter. Please take whatever step you do after the most careful deliberation and with the utmost courtesy. I do not understand how you can now break off the engagement to which you had given your consent. It is a grievous sin to act against the wishes of one's parents unless a great moral issue is involved. When such an issue may be considered to be involved is for you to judge. I can do nothing from here. All those who, after a superficial study of my life, take any hasty step in imitation of me feel frustrated afterwards and many of them even repent their actions. See that such a thing never happens in your case.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2595

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22. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 7, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have hardly time to give you a line. But I must. Day by day I must deny myself more and more the pleasure of writing love-letters, if I am to preserve my health and cope with the ever-increasing calls on my time. I have to lay the axe somewhere. It has to fall on the correspondence, I much fear.

Yes, you will share apples with me or the like when these come your way without having to buy. I know there [is] little logic about it. But it is some restraint on my greed and if you like yours also—mine to take and yours to give. We won't quarrel about which is worse. It would be well for us both to give it [up] simultaneously and thus avoid at least one cause of war between us.

Yes, Ba is happy that she finds herself among her grandchildren and their mother.

The enclosed to P[yarelal] and D[evdas].

Love to you all.

BAPU

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE, SIMLA W.

From the original: C.W. 3554. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6363

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23. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHAGANJ,
October 9, 1935

CHI. GANGABEHN,

It is a difficult time for you. Tell Bachubhai that he should not lose his peace of mind in spite of his painful condition. Our faith is tested only in adversity. Do drop me a few lines from time to time. Nath's[1] presence there must be a great support for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 85. Also C.W. 8820. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

24. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
[*October 10, 1935*][2]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wanted to write to you on Sunday but I was so busy that I simply could not do it. That was to be in answer to your letter enclosing copy of your letter to Agatha[3]. Yours to Agatha gave me an insight into the working of your mind which I would not miss for anything. She fully deserved that frankness. I can endorse most of your sentiments. You do not know that I have written to her more than once in much the same strain though in my own way and my own language. Nevertheless if Kamala shows distinct signs of improvement and if you are free to go [to] London and the way is open, I would like you to see the big ones, open yourself out to them even as you have to Agatha.

But your letter received yesterday shows that you may not leave Kamala's bedside just yet. After all you have been freed

[1] Kedarnath Kulkarni, Kishorelal Mashruwala's guru

[2] A part of this letter is available in Mahadev Desai's Diary under this date. The original, which is damaged here, however bears the date 18-10-1935.

[3] Agatha Harrison

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for that purpose and if Providence keeps you chained to Kamala's bed, we must not grumble. You have gone there to see her through the terrible ordeal. How I wish I was there to share your burden and cheer Kamala! As I saw her for two days in Bombay before her departure, I observed that she never had so much peace of mind as she seemed to enjoy then. Her faith in the benevolence of God, she said, was never so bright as then. Her mental disturbance had vanished and she did not mind what happened to her. She went to Europe because you all wished it; it seemed to be her obvious duty to do so. If she lives, she will live for greater service than she has yet rendered. If she dies, she will do so to come down to earth with a body more fitted for her task than the one she has today.

It is well too that Indu's[1] literary studies remain suspended for a while. For me, she is having a training that is of far greater value than any she would have in a college. She is having her training in the University of Nature. She may give the finishing touch by completing her literary studies.

I am going through your chapters with the deepest interest. I should like to finish them at a single sitting as Mahadev did and as Khurshed[2] almost did. I have no such good luck. I must reserve my opinion till I have reached the last chapter.[3] I am thankful that you have sent them to me.

I am not going to talk to you about the politics. It is enough for my purpose that you will shoulder the burden, if it falls to your lot. That it will, seems to me to be a foregone conclusion.

You will read the accompanying to Kamala, if you think fit. Indu used to write to me a few lines when you were not there. Now I suppose she thinks she is absolved from the task!

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You must excuse my obstinacy in writing with village ink, village reed on village paper.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Indira, addressee's daughter
[2] Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter
[3] *Vide* pp. 171-2.

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25. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

October 10, 1935

CHI. KAMALA,

What can I write to you except to say that we remember you every day? May God give you peace whatever be the circumstances. Have no worry for anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

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

26. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 10, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I got the letter you wrote prior to reaching Boston; it was extremely good. You must have got over the disappointment of not receiving while in Boston any letter of mine. I could not help it, nor was there anything fresh to write about. You have the opportunity to write about fresh matters and you have been using it freely so far. I am fully hopeful that such letters will continue to come.

You must be writing to Draupadi[1] too. I am passing on your letters for her perusal. She is unable to write frankly. I do not mind her not writing [to me] as long as she and the children are happy, though I shall persist in my effort of drawing her to me.

I send you the letter[2] for London that you had asked for. Be in no haste to leave America, but you may if there is nothing worth learning or if the expenses are too high. Do what you think best.

There was a birthday greetings cable from New York. The name 'Sharma' was also in it, I suppose it was you. Do give me word-pictures of the people you meet.

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Letter of introduction addressed to Agatha Harrison, which is not available

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I send only one letter for London, it will do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 198 and 199

27. TELEGRAM TO H. N. KUNZRU

October 11, 1935

KUNZRU
CARE "HITAVADA"
NAGPUR

YOUR AKOLA LETTER CLEAR INDICATION EXCLUDE BEANS GREENS. CONFINE ONLY HONEY FRUIT JUICES WITH WITHOUT SODA INTERMITTENT HIPBATHS. AWAITING DAY'S REPORT TOMORROW.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

28. MESSAGE TO INDIAN IMMIGRANTS OF SURINAME

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 11, 1935

Pandit Bhavani Bhikh Mishra from the Dutch Guiana came to see me along with Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi, and asked for a message for the Indian immigrant brethren of Suriname. Al I have to say to you is to live in unity, taking care to lead a pure life by observing chastity of body, mind and speech. You should resort to Hindi-Hindustani to communicate with one another and open Hindi schools and libraries.

M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Surinameke Pravasi Bharatiyonke Nam*

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29. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 11, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter. Encouraged by you, I am pressing Jivanlalbhai. I am sending your letter to him. I will write to you after I receive his reply.

If Pranjivan Joshi has already been relieved I will not waste time in inquiring into the matter now.

Let me know the result of your experiments in making manure out of bones and carcasses.

You shouldn't have had the difficulty which you had regarding the use of hand-made paper. The argument has often been advanced against the use of khadi and we have solved the difficulty in but one way. Though khadi is relatively costly, those who have understood its importance have found a way of making it cheap for themselves. Many of us, for instance, reduced the consumption of cloth after they started using costly khadi and on the whole effected some saving. Those who could not reduce consumption saved on other items but did not accept defeat. Similarly, when we resolved to use hand-made paper, we reduced writing or included more matter in a given amount of space than previously. We stopped using envelopes costing four or five pice and started using postcards costing three pice only. I resumed here the practice of writing on small slips of paper, which I used to follow in jail. On the balance, therefore, our expenditure on postage has not increased.

I do not know how things are in Delhi. But I hope Malkani has started practising economy. What we give to the Government is in fact given to ourselves. It is, therefore, not right to think that we should spend less on postage because the money goes to the Government. Even when the Government will be in our hands, it will certainly not be proper for public workers to spend extravagantly on postage. In jail, we tried to keep the consumption of everything to a minimum because we thought that all things in the country belonged to us. For, no matter who ran the Government, everything it owned belonged to us, the people. The

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money that we give to the Government is spent for Government purposes.

Because the Government money is spent extravagantly when the Government is in foreign hands, it does not mean that such money ceases to be ours. It is our duty of course to check its extravagance. But so long as it continues, it is we, the people, who provide the money in one way or another. Hence the argument of increase in postage should not be advanced against the use of hand-made paper. In propagating the use of such paper, the expenditure on postage may perhaps go up in the beginning. Even then, if the use of hand-made paper is likely to increase through our example we ought not to grudge the additional expense on postage.

Those teachers who see the moral necessity of manual work will themselves find out some crafts which they can take up. Nobody else can advise them in this matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5536

30. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA

October 11, 1935

CHI. BALI[1],

I got your letter. You did well in going to Bombay. I know about Tulsidas's illness. I had written to him. Now you should write to him.

What can we do about Harilal? It seems he is heading for complete ruin. He rarely writes to me. He is the fruit of some sins I must have committed. How can we blame him? Can one ever change one's nature ?

Manu[2] has returned. She got quite ill in Delhi. She is well now. As you know she is lazy about writing letters. Kishorelalbhai has asked for her hand for Surendra, his nephew, son of Balubhai. Ba and I would very much welcome this alliance. If you two sisters[3] and Kunvarji[4] approve of it, I will arrange the betrothal. I hope you remember Surendra who

[1] Sister of Harilal Gandhi's wife
[2] Harilal Gandhi's daughter
[3] The addressee and Kumibehn Maniar
[4] Kunvarji Parekh, husband of Rami, Harilal Gandhi's elder daughter

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was in the Ashram. He is in Bombay at present. Manu has left the decision to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1552. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

31. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM G. PANSE

October 11, 1935

CHI. BHAU,

I do reply to your letters. Only one has remained unanswered. Your letters are very frank and satisfactory. The expenses should be accounted for but not worried over. The money spent now is only for the sake of service and I shall take as much work from you. Regard it your duty to make yourself strong.

I am trying to send Balkoba[1] there and have written to Gaurishankerbhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6754. Also C.W. 4497. Courtesy: Purushottam G. Panse

32. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[2]

[Before *October 12, 1935*]

You will borrow cotton this season, but next year you must grow your own cotton. Anyone will permit you to grow a few cotton trees in his field. The seed should be the tree cotton or *devakapas*. It lasts for ten to fifteen years and the cotton, I am told, does not need to be carded. I have not used the cotton myself but propose to do so.

You are right that I did not like your leaving your place even for a couple of days. I did not like it because it is a pastime with you, and the best discipline for you is to settle down

[1] Balkrishna Bhave, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee, "one of the best workers working in a Gujarat village", had restricted his needs to Rs. 5 a month.

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quietly and work away uninterruptedly for a year. A villager absorbed in his work has no time to go on friendly visits. We must try to emulate him. You must therefore make it a rule not to move out beyond a radius of ten miles. It is impossible to get under the skin of the villagers until one lives in their midst all the twenty-four hours for an unbroken period. The moment you relax the rule, you will find excuses for going.

To be free from filth and the dog nuisance is certainly necessary, but one may not run away from them. Everyone cannot go out of his house and find conveniences for himself. One has also to cultivate that sense of cleanliness in others. One must not therefore shun people. One cannot serve them from a safe distance. I know this is easier said than done, and if you cannot sleep in the midst of these nuisances you will continue to repair to the fields. I do not want you to do anything at the risk of your health.

Yes, you may have in course of time a grass hut, but it should not be far from the village. The people must be free to call upon us at all hours of the day and night. We must always be within easy call. The fact that you leave the village at 7 p.m. every day means that you deprive the villagers of the chance of talking to you and seeking your advice after supper, and that you will not hold even an hour's night-school. You see the difficulty of Ashram inmates serving in the villages. The Ashram life and rules might easily become a luxury. We must realize that the villagers do not enjoy most of the amenities we enjoy with all our much-talked-of simplicity and renunciation. Man is naturally apt to turn every renunciation into a joy. Sannyasa which connotes the highest renunciation has become today the biggest source of laziness and indulgence for many!

The scavengers will slowly understand your work of love. You must make them understand that you do not want to oust them, but to improve their efficiency. You must also find out for them more sources of income.

Because my recent renunciation was a source of pang, it need not have grieved you. The pang was a source of joy, and such pangs are inevitable.[1]

Harijan, 12-10-1935

[1] The addressee had referred to Gandhiji's renunciation; *vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 437-8.

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33. NOTES

To Private Correspondents

As time advances, my private correspondence too keeps on advancing at an accelerated speed and leaves its adversary far behind. My capacity to overtake this ever-increasing correspondence decreases in the same ratio as the increase in the volume of my correspondence. The mischief is aggravated by the new tasks that have come to me unsolicited. The most absorbing and fascinating is the work of village regeneration or, to adopt a current word, rejuvenation. The fascination increases with a growing perception of the difficulty of the work. My mind is living in the villages. They are calling me to bury myself in them. I do not know how this internal struggle will end. Difficulties are already cropping up to prevent such a burial. Much against my will I have been obliged to make a promise to shoulder a burden in Gujarat early next year. I know what it will bring in its trail. God's will be done.

But if a breakdown is not to take place, I must cut off as much private correspondence as possible and deal with the most necessary part of it through deputy. Then only can I at all hope to cope with the increasing call of *Harijan*. The extent of its scope has meant much additional burden on both Mahadev Desai and me. If the readers are to receive justice, we must free ourselves for it more than we have done hitherto.

This is, therefore, written to invite the co-operation of my many correspondents. Let them be assured that I am not tired of the correspondence. I have prized their confidence beyond measure. It has given me an insight into human nature and its ultimate nobility I should not have had otherwise. Such correspondence I have carried on for over a generation. My writings and publication of some of my correspondence provide sufficient help to those who will know my opinion on a given problem. I know that nothing can be a substitute for personal contact. But in the nature of things it is a perishable article, very fragile. I would urge correspondents to deny themselves the temptation of referring to me on all kinds of problems. Let them take the trouble of solving them themselves with such help as writings on ethics and eternal verities can give. They will find that they will

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do better in the end than if they would make of me a dictionary of reference on every occasion.

Any way let my private correspondents not be surprised if they find that they no longer hear from me directly or that their letters remain unanswered or are answered on my behalf.

Duty of Speaking Gently

A Gujarati correspondent writes:

> Speaking unnecessarily loud affects the health of hearers. In this country and among us, women and children, more than men, are in the habit of speaking much louder than we need and a false sense of delicacy makes most of us, even though we may be aware of the noise and its ill effects, tolerate such speaking which really grates on our ears. We would not protest. This may be a sign of our ahimsa but I would not classify it under 'courtesy'. Model Montessory schools can be abodes of peace, not so our so-called homes, much less our institutions or our public roads. You advise people not to tolerate insanitation. Can you not do likewise about noises that are almost equally injurious to health? I am quite clear that gentle speech should have the same place in our system of education as sanitation. May I warn you that you are yourself often guilty of tolerating the vice of loud speaking about you and thus injuring your health and missing the opportunity of educating public opinion.

I must plead guilty to the charge. What the correspondent says is largely true. I have often tolerated maddening noises which could have been easily avoided. I am well aware that they are injurious to health. The object of giving place to this correspondent, however, is to draw the attention of teachers to this national defect and invite them to make a beginning by restraining their pupils from making noises and speaking loud in class-rooms and outside. In railway trains these noises are simply maddening. They are made in total disregard of the feelings of fellow-passengers. Many indulge in loud talks which they can easily carry on in gentle tones. In this connection I am reminded of the meetings of Sikhs in which whenever necessity arises someone on the platform puts up a board which is fastened onto a long bamboo containing the words "Please avoid loud talking" or "Peace Peace". Some such device can be adopted by passengers who notice such noises.

Waste into Wealth

Those who have been following what is being written in these columns on balanced diet will not have failed to understand the

vast importance of bran which we simply throw away and give to our cattle. I do not grudge the cattle what they get. But it seems to me that we are thoughtless about cattle-feeding as about many other things. Cattle do not need bran so much as green fodder and seed cakes which they can easily divide with us if we will revert to the village oil-presses. But we need every ounce of the bran of wheat and rice if we are to become efficient instruments of production not to be beaten on this earth by any race, and yet without the necessity of entering into killing competition or literally killing one another. But I must not prolong what is becoming a heavy preface to a simple recipe which a friend has passed on to me for treating wheat bran. He is obliged to his sister for it. Here it is:

> Grind sufficient wheat coarse to give you one pound of bran which you get by passing the meal through a medium sieve. Add 1¼ lb. of cold water, eight *tolas* of pulverized clean *gur* and half a tea-spoonful of clean salt to the bran and stir well. Pour the mixture in a flat vessel, cover and let it stand for full half hour. Then put a well-fitting *tava* or dish on the pot containing the mixture and stand it on hot coal and heap hot coals on top. Keep the pot between the two fires for full five minutes. Then transfer the mixture onto an iron *kadai* and roast on a slow fire till the water is fairly dried out. Then take the pot off the *chula* and let the contents cool. Then strain them through a sieve with clean hands and the contents will drop on a clean cloth or board in the form of threads. Expose these to the sun till thoroughly dry. These can be taken as they are or with hot or cold milk or hot water or whey. Two ounces will make a good breakfast and is claimed to be a valuable aid to remove constipation—the bane of civilized life and precursor of many diseases.

For Four Rupees a Month

Dr. Aykroyd, Director of Nutrition Research at Coonoor, recently delivered an instructive lecture at Bangalore. From the lecture as published in the daily Press it appears that a well balanced diet need not cost more than Rs. 4 per month. Thus the lecturer said that:

> The dietary requirements of an adult man per day were 16 ounces of *ragi*[1], two ounces of soya bean[2], an ounce of jaggery, four ounces each of

[1&2] The source has "16 ounces of soya bean", which is a slip; *vide* "A Correction", p. 48.

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spinach and amaranth, an ounce each of potatoes and colacasia, 1.5 ounces of coconut oil and six ounces of buttermilk—all costing about two annas.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

34. CONSOLATION FOR THE AGED AND THE INFIRM

Dr. Sir P. C. Ray is 75 years old. He has been a weakling in body from youth upward. Yet he is foremost among the chemists of the world and retains to the present day the vigour and energy of youth. His greed for service is insatiable. He never refuses to help people in distress, especially the student world. He is so generous that swindlers have been known successfully to have exploited his name. He has not minded this. He takes pride in his prodigality and turns away from those who plead with him to discriminate. He works away till late at night, keeps an open door, and has a smile for everybody. In spite of all this output of service why does he remain so fresh when many of his contemporaries have either joined the majority or are too infirm to do any work? He gives the answer in a remarkable chapter he has written for the second volume of his autobiography. He had occasion to write to me on the event of my birthday. Without even mentioning (to him) the insignificant event (for am I not a youngster compared to him?), he quietly sends me the 'foul' proof of that chapter.[1] It is so full of bright hope that I have no hesitation in sharing it with the readers especially old and infirm, though I have no doubt that young people can read it with profit. To the reasons Dr. Ray has given for his energy in[2] old age I would add his irrepressible humour and his boyishness. I have seen him shamelessly mount on the shoulders of his bulky friends like Sjt. Jamnalalji or Maulana Shaukat Ali and cracking all kinds of joke, forgetting for the moment that the world knows him as a serious scientist and Principal of a great college of science of which he is virtually also the creator.

Harijan, 12-10-1935

[1] The extracts from the chapter are not reproduced here.

[2] The source has "and".

35. THE GREATEST FORCE

Non-violence is at the root of every one of my activities and therefore also of the three public activities on which I am just now visibly concentrating all my energy. These are untouchability, khadi, and village regeneration in general. Hindu-Muslim unity is my fourth love. But so far as any visible manifestation is concerned, I have owned defeat on that score. Let the public, however, not assume therefrom that I am inactive. If not during my lifetime, I know that after my death both Hindus and Mussalmans will bear witness that I had never ceased to yearn after communal peace.

Non-violence to be a creed has to be all-pervasive. I cannot be non-violent about one activity of mine and violent about others. That would be a policy, not a life-force. That being so, I cannot be indifferent about the war that Italy is now waging against Abyssinia. But I have resisted[1] most pressing invitation to express my opinion and give a lead to the country. Self-suppression is often necessary in the interest of Truth and non-violence. If India had as a nation imbibed the creed of non-violence, corporate or national, I should have had no hesitation in giving a lead. But in spite of a certain hold I have on the millions of this country, I know the very grave and glaring limitation of that hold. India had an unbroken tradition of non-violence from times immemorial. But at no time in her ancient history, as far as I know it, has it had complete non-violence in action pervading the whole land. Nevertheless, it is my unshakable belief that her destiny is to deliver the message of non-violence to mankind. It may take ages to come to fruition. But so far as I can judge, no other country will precede her in the fulfilment of that mission.

Be that as it may, it is seasonable to contemplate the implications of that matchless force. Three concrete questions were, the other day, incidentally asked by friends:

> 1. What could ill-armed Abyssinia do against well-armed Italy, if she were non-violent?
>
> 2. What could England, the greatest and the most powerful member of the League, do against determined Italy, if she (England) were non-violent in your sense of the term?

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 301-2.

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3. What could India do, if she suddenly became non-violent in your sense of the term?

Before I answer the questions let me lay down five simple axioms of non-violence as I know it:

1. Non-violence implies as complete self-purification as is humanly possible.

2. Man for man the strength of non-violence is in exact proportion to the ability, not the will, of the non-violent person to inflict violence.

3. Non-violence is without exception superior to violence, i.e., the power at the disposal of a non-violent person is always greater than he would have if he was violent.

4. There is no such thing as defeat in non-violence. The end of violence is surest defeat.

5. The ultimate end of non-violence is surest victory—if such a term may be used of non-violence. In reality where there is no sense of defeat, there is no sense of victory.

The foregoing questions may be answered in the light of these axioms.

1. If Abyssinia were non-violent, she would have no arms, would want none. She would make no appeal to the League or any other power for armed intervention. She would never give any cause for complaint. And Italy would find nothing to conquer if Abyssinians would not offer armed resistance, nor would they give co-operation willing or forced. Italian occupation in that case would mean that of the land without its people. That, however, is not Italy's exact object. She seeks submission of the people of the beautiful land.

2. If Englishmen were as a nation to become non-violent at heart, they would shed imperialism, they would give up the use of arms. The moral force generated by such an act of renunciation would stagger Italy into willing surrender of her designs. England would then be a living embodiment of the axioms I have laid down. The effect of such conversion would mean the greatest miracle of all ages. And yet if non-violence is not an idle dream, some such thing has some day to come to pass somewhere. I live in that faith.

3. The last question may be answered thus. As I have said, India as a nation is not non-violent in the full sense of the term. Neither has she any capacity for offering violence—not because she has no arms. Physical possession of arms is the least necessity of the brave. Her non-violence is that of the weak. She be-

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trays her weakness in many of her daily acts. She appears before the world today as a decaying nation. I mean here not in the mere political sense but essentially in the non-violent, moral sense. She lacks the ability to offer physical resistance. She has no consciousness of strength. She is conscious only of her weakness. If she were otherwise, there would be no communal problems, nor political. If she were non-violent in the consciousness of her strength, Englishmen would lose their role of distrustful conquerors. We may talk politically as we like and often legitimately blame the English rulers. But if we, as Indians, could but for a moment visualize ourselves as a strong people disdaining to strike, we should cease to fear Englishmen whether as soldiers, traders or administrators, and they to distrust us. Therefore if we became truly non-violent we should carry Englishmen with us in all we might do. In other words, we being millions would be the greatest moral force in the world, and Italy would listen to our friendly word.

The reader has, I hope, by now perceived that my argument is but a feeble and clumsy attempt to prove my axioms which to be such must be self-proved.

Till my eyes of geometrical understanding had been opened, my brain was swimming, as I read and re-read the twelve axioms of Euclid. After the opening of my eyes geometry seemed to be the easiest science to learn. Much more so is the case with non-violence. It is a matter of faith and experience, not of argument beyond a point. So long as the world refuses to believe, she must await a miracle, i.e., an ocular demonstration of non-violence on a mass scale. They say this is against human nature—non-violence is only for the individual. If so, where is the difference in kind between man and beast?

Harijan, 12-10-1935

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36. SPEECH AT A.I.S.A. COUNCIL MEETING[1]

WARDHA,
[On or before *October 13, 1935*][2]

We must once for all dismiss the thought of competing with futile soul-killing economics. Do you know the insidious way in which Japanese fents are glutting the market? Whereas less than five years ago they were a few thousand yards, they amount to millions of yards today. How can you compete with these? No, we must no longer aim at reducing the prices in order to meet this competition. We have all these years thought of the consumer and done precious little for the spinner, forgetting that the Association was a spinners' association, not an association of consumers. We have to be the true representatives of the spinners which we have ceased to be. The result is that we have simply jogged on and relied on the political upheavals and indulged in a kind of gamble. 'What is the use of all the fancy advertisements that you have been giving?' I asked Jerajani[3]. 'We shall soon end in justifying the charge that we are maintaining the institution in order to provide work for the middle-class unemployed.' It is therefore that I suggest that we should no more incur losses in order to exploit the neediest of our fellowmen. 'In order to give a hundred women a satisfactory wage, you will run the risk of depriving thousands of them of employment?' is the question that was put to me. I say it is a crisis that it is necessary to produce in order to get rid of a remittent fever. Our goal is to see a spinning-wheel in the hands of every adult villager and a loom in every village. We may have produced millions of rupees worth of khadi but we have gone nowhere nearer the goal. I ask you to forget the cities and the consumer in the cities. Concentrate on making the thirty crores of our villagers produce and use their own khadi, and the one crore of the city-dwellers will automatically begin wearing khadi. Do not mind a temporary lull or a breakdown. If there is no demand, do not produce the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Earlier, members had expressed their doubts and difficulties regarding "Gandhiji's proposal for a new departure in the khadi policy".

[2] The A. I. S. A. Council met from October 11 to 13.

[3] Vithaldas Jerajani

supply. Where your bhandars are run at a loss close them down, and tell all those who care to have your khadi that you are prepared to get it made for them but only at the revised rates.

But I do not want to thrust my proposal on you. You may reject it, if it fails to carry conviction. Do not assume on your shoulders heavier responsibility than they can bear. Cut your coat according to your cloth. Let me tell you that in the production centre at Savli there are already spinners who are satisfying the conditions of the new wage and have begun to earn from three to four annas daily. Concentrate on self-sufficing khadi wherever it is possible, and a healthy khadi atmosphere will grow out of it. In Kathiawar, for instance, for a time they made desperate attempts to run several centres and to stimulate the sale of khadi thus produced. They have given it up now, and among the replies that Sjt. Shankerlal Banker has received is one from the Secretary of the Kathiawar Branch to the effect that he has no criticism to offer and no opinion to express on the new policy, inasmuch as all the production in that centre consists of self-sufficient khadi.[1]

Harijan, 19-10-1935

37. SIXTY-THREE YEARS AGO AND TODAY

From a circular issued on February 24, 1872, we find that cotton used to be consumed in the following quantities in Vadod in Kathiawar:

Twine	300	seers
Ropes and muzzles	250	,,
Webbing	46	,,
Indian-made cloth	2,000	,,
Mattresses	75	,,
Sewing thread	50	,,
Wicks for lamps	75	,,
Sacred thread	4	,,
	2,800	,,

10,000 seers [of cotton] was sent elsewhere. The same circular states that the spinning-wheel alone was used for spinning and

[1] For the resolutions adopted at the meeting; *vide* Appendix I.

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women belonging to the Kanbi, Koli, Rajput, Vania, Brahmin, Khoja, Memon, Darji, Luhar, Suthar, Mochi, Ghanchi, Dhed, Bhangi and all other communities used to engage in spinning. The Dheds alone did the work of weaving with looms. Altogether, 53 spinning-wheels and 10 looms were in operation. The following is a communitywise break-up of the women who did the work of spinning:

11 Kanbi [peasant]	1 Brahmin
10 Koli [farm labourer]	4 Rajput
5 Soni [goldsmith]	1 Bhangi
1 Pinjara [Muslim carder]	1 Darji [tailor]
1 Bharwad [shepherd]	1 Luhar [blacksmith]
1 Khoja [Ismaili Muslim]	2 Mochi [cobbler]
8 Vania [bania]	3 Memon [Kathiawar Muslim]
1 Valand [barber]	1 Bawa [sadhu]
2 Suthar [carpenter]	1 Khavas [a mixed caste]

The gentleman who has sent this circular writes to say that not even two seers of cotton is spun now at a place where sixty-three years ago they used to spin 2,000 seers, not a single spinning-wheel plies, the few weavers who are there weave mill-yarn. The production of cotton in Vadod and Kathiawar has increased, not decreased. And the situation that obtains in the large industries is also to be found in the smallest industries. We can easily imagine how impoverished the people would become when they do not utilize the raw material grown in their vicinity but instead sell it to others. And this is what we actually see today. The small-scale industries which once flourished in the villages are no longer there. Hence men and women are unemployed for most of the time. And what else could the idle minds be if not the Devil's workshops?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-10-1935

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38. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

WARDHA,
October 13, 1935

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your touching letter was received only on 11th instant when I was in the midst of meetings. In the hope of delivering it to me personally Anil needlessly detained it. I hope he is now quite restored to health.

Yes, I have the financial position before me now. You may depend upon my straining every nerve to find the required money. I am groping. I am trying to find the way out. It will take some time before I can report the result of my search to you.

It is unthinkable that you should have to undertake another begging mission at your age. The necessary funds must come to you without your having to stir out of Santiniketan.[1]

I hope you are keeping well. Padmaja[2] who was with you a few days ago is here for the day and has been telling me how you have aged.

With reverential love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2287

[1] Rabindranath Tagore was touring with a ballet troupe to collect funds for the Visva-Bharati.

[2] Sarojini Naidu's daughter

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39. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 13, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your note on the position of women was received yesterday afternoon. I have gone through it. It does not admit of corrections. Your writing is always proper and easy to follow. The argument runs smooth. But it is not what I had expected. It is not a striking statement of the position. I now appreciate when you said, you had never had to perform such a mission before. That your presentation is not impressive is no fault of yours. I do not want you to make another effort, just now, on any account whatsoever. When you come here, we shall discuss the thing and I shall tell you what I would have liked. Then if you feel like it you will write something independently, perhaps for your Association[1].

I do not worry about Devdas. I know he would have done no better, if he was with me. And most certainly he would not have received from me the same care which you and Shummy[2] are able to give. My fear is that you are worrying unnecessarily.

I have been having many meetings just now—A. I. S. A., Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, etc. No attention can be paid to correspondence or any other thing in these circumstances.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3555. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6364

[1] All-India Women's Conference

[2] Kunwar Shamshere Singh, a retired surgeon, addressee's brother

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40. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 13, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the letters of you both. You may arrange for Sita's[1] education as you like best.

We are considering a proposal for Manu's betrothal with Surendra. It was Kishorelal's wish.

Devdas is still in Simla. Pyarelal is with him. He seems to be improving. But he still needs very careful nursing. There is no cause for worry.

Ramdas is battling with fate in Bombay. He enjoys the game. I am therefore content.

I have already written to you that Ba has returned here.

Mirabehn has recovered completely. In a few days' time she will go to a village to live there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4845

41. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
October 14, 1935

Less said the better about the load of work I have to carry.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 161

[1] Addressees' daughter

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42. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

WARDHA,
October 15, 1935

With reference to Dr. Ambedkar's speech[2] at Yeoli, Mahatma Gandhi said:

The speech attributed to Dr. Ambedkar seems to be unbelievable. If, however, he has made such a speech and the conference adopted the resolution of complete severance and acceptance of any faith that would guarantee equality, I regard both as unfortunate events, especially when one notices that in spite of isolated events to the contrary, untouchability is on its last legs. I can understand the anger of a high-souled and highly educated person like Dr. Ambedkar over the atrocities as were committed in Kavitha and other villages.[3] But religion is not like a house or a cloak which can be changed at will. It is more an integral part of one's self than of one's body. Religion is the tie that binds one to one's Creator and whilst the body perishes, as it has to, religion persists even after death. If Dr. Ambedkar has faith in God, I would urge him to assuage his wrath and reconsider the position and examine his ancestral religion on its own merits and not through the weakness of its faithless followers. Lastly, I am convinced that change of faith by him and those who passed the resolution will not serve the cause which they have at heart; for millions of unsophisticated, illiterate Harijans will not listen to him and them when they have disowned their ancestral faith, especially when it is remembered that their lives, for good or for evil, are intertwined with those of caste Hindus.[4]

The Hitavada, 16-10-1935

[1] This appeared in *Harijan*, 19-10-1935, under the title "Unfortunate".

[2] On October 14 at the Bombay Presidency Depressed Classes Conference, Nasik, B. R. Ambedkar had said: "Because we have the misfortune to call ourselves Hindus, we are treated thus. If we were members of another faith none dare treat us so. . . . Choose any religion which gives you equality of status and treatment." On Ambedkar's advice, the Conference unanimously passed a resolution urging complete severance of the Depressed Classes from the Hindu fold and their embracing any other religion which guaranteed them equal status and treatment with the other members of it.

[3] *Vide* p. 11.

[4] On being asked by an Associated Press of India representative for his comments on this, Ambedkar said: "I have made up my mind to change

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43. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 15, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your well-written Hindi letter. You must get rid of your fever altogether. How I wish you were here! Just now the weather is very good. But I suppose that must not be.

The month of January I shall have to give to Gujarat. February will probably be devoted to Delhi. It is not so cold there at that time.

Vasumati is due here this week. Amtul Salaam and Prabhavati are here and so is Ba. Devdas has now returned to Delhi. He still remains depressed.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Did I ask to send me your recipe for *rasam*[1] ? If not, I do so now. You may send me medical opinion on the quality of *rasam*.

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

44. LETTER TO BALVANTSINHA

October 15, 1935

CHI. BALVANTSINHA,

You are right. I shall make some effort[2] though who but Rama can undo the damage done! Let us see how He guides us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1882

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my religion. I do not care if the masses do not come. It is for them to decide. . . . Kavitha does not represent an isolated incident but it is the very basis of the system founded on the ancestral religion of the Hindus."

[1] A thin soup of tamarind and pulses

[2] The addressee had requested Gandhiji to take better care of his already indifferent health.

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45. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

October 17, 1935

BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
CARE CONGRESS
MADRAS

JAWAHARLAL MAY [HAVE] RECEIVED MOHANLAL NEHRU'S[1] LETTER SWARAJ BHAWAN. WANTS DEFINITION DECISIVE ATTITUDE CONGRESS COMMITTEE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
October 17, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your very important letter to hand. I have wired[2] to Rajendra Babu about Swaraj Bhawan. I do not know what is happening. I am entirely of your opinion that the policy of the Committee should be strictly defined.

As to our attitude on the present world situation, I do not think there is want of appreciation of it. But it is our helplessness which imposes silence on us. There is no weakness either. It is merely a matter, if you will, of tactics in the best sense of the term. Anyway I have no sense in me of weakness. But I know that I cannot speak with effect at this juncture. I cannot give the lead without knowing what the people can do. I know what they should do. And what is true of me is perhaps equally true of the majority of our workers. But I have great faith in you in these matters. You have undoubtedly a much greater grasp of the situation than any one of us has, certainly than I can ever hope to have. Therefore you may be able to evolve a dignified for-

[1] Secretary, Board of Management, Swaraj Bhawan Trust; *vide* also the following item.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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mula for national self-expression in speech as well as in action—assuming of course that at the present moment direct action is ruled out.

Your paragraph about Kamala is somewhat disturbing. But we are prepared for these ups and downs. I must await your further contribution on the Constitution[1] before I say anything. I am glad I spent the money[2] for putting you in possession of the Constitution as early as it was possible.

Love to you all.

Blessings from
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

47. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
October 18, 1935

DEAR AMALA,

Your letters are beginning to be sane and that shows that you are settling down. Now, don't you be greedy. Be content with what you are getting. Rs. 50 plus Rs. 25 should be enough for you. It is good you have got into touch with Miss Chattopadhyaya. Whilst you are thus making fresh contacts and settling down, you must not think of coming here though of course you are free to come whenever you like. The conditions you know well by now.

Blessings from
BAPU[3]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Congress constitution

[2] The constitution was sent by air mail and the addressee had protested against this expenditure.

[3] The subscription is in Gujarati.

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48. LETTER TO A UNIVERSITY STUDENT[1]

[Before *October 19, 1935*]

You can serve the country:

1. By spinning daily even and strong yarn for the sake of *Daridranarayana*; by keeping a diary of the time for which you have spun, of the quantity spun, with its weight and count; and reporting the work to me every month. Yarn should be carefully collected and held at my disposal.

2. By daily selling some khadi on behalf of the local certified bhandar and by keeping a record of your daily sales.

3. By saving at least one pice per day.

4. By holding the collection at my disposal. The implication of the adjective 'least' should be understood, namely, that if you are able to save more, you should pour more into *Daridranarayana's* chest.

5. By visiting Harijan quarters in company with other students; and with your companions cleaning the quarters, befriending the children and giving them useful lessons in sanitation, hygiene, etc.

Then if you can save some more time, you should learn some village industries for future service of villagers after finishing your studies. When you have been able to do these things and have still time and ambition for doing more, consistently with your studies, you can ask me and I shall send you more suggestions.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The student had "expressed his keenness to serve during his spare time without prejudice to his studies".

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49. SOYA BEANS

It has been found that soya beans can be cooked whole and eaten like any other beans. Shri Narhar Bhave of Baroda, who has given his three gifted and gentle sons, Vinoba, Balkrishna and Shivaji, to national service, is himself a careful observer, 61 years old. He is living almost wholly on milk and six ounces of soya beans and is keeping perfect health and strength. He is of opinion that soya beans help him to avoid constipation which milk alone or milk taken in combination with cereals and vegetables could not do. Soya beans have in his opinion helped him also to avoid flatulence which other pulses or milk produced. He has come to this conclusion after an unbroken experience of over ten months. I may add that Shri Bhave used to suffer from gout and corpulence and had a trace of diabetes. He got rid of this triple disability by mere careful dieting. In imitation of Shri Bhave the inmates of Maganwadi including me have been trying soya beans for the last few days. It is too early yet to pronounce any opinion for ourselves. Each inmate gets a heaped dessert-spoonful per day. This is how the beans are cooked: Clean the beans of foreign particles or dirt, wash in cold water and soak at least for twelve hours, and not more than eighteen, and drain off superfluous water. Put these beans in boiling water and cook for fifteen minutes on a quick fire. No salt or soda to be added while cooking. Salt may be added later.[1] At Maganwadi we steam them for two hours.

Let those who are interested in food-reform from the poor man's point of view try the experiment. It should be remembered that soya beans are a most nutritious diet. It stands at the top of all the known articles of diet because of its low percentage of carbohydrates and high percentage of salts, protein and fat. Its energy value is 2,100 calories per lb. against 1,750 of wheat and 1,530 of gram. It contains 40 per cent of protein and 20.3 per cent of fat against 19 and 4.3 respectively of gram and 14.8 and 10.5 of eggs. Therefore no one should take soya beans in addition to the usual protein and fatty foods. The quantity, therefore, of wheat and ghee should be reduced and dal omitted altogether, soya beans being themselves a highly nutritious dal. We are just now trying the Manchurian variety. The Baroda beans we

[1] The source has "after".

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have not tried. Maganwadi has its own crop of soya beans. I hope to report the quality of Indian varieties from a layman's point of view as they come under my observation. Those who have Indian varieties are requested to send me samples with prices.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

50. SIMPLE CURE FOR SCORPION STINGS

Shri M. S. Narayanan who is a retired engineer writes the following letter[1]:

The caution Shri Narayanan gives is worthy of him.[2] He is devoting his savings and his time and skill to village reconstruction principally through khadi. Though Maganwadi has a fair share of scorpions, the cases are nothing so frequent as Shri Narayanan has. I have no reason to doubt his testimony. I must not therefore keep this costless remedy from the public for fear of its proving a failure. Those who will try the cure will please report the results of their observations. If I have reports only of failures, the public shall know them. Let those who will try the cure prepare the solution in the manner prescribed.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

51. NOT PATCHWORK

A correspondent whose earnestness is unmistakable wrote some time ago a long, very long letter declaiming against the anti-untouchability campaign and the methods adopted by the Harijan Sevak Sangh to combat the evil. He called it all patchwork. The letter lay in my file for several weeks, always making room for something which I then considered more important and pressing. With great difficulty I have reduced the letter to readable compass. Here it is:

> I hold that your programme re: 'untouchability' is misconceived for the following reasons: You presume that 'untouchability' is nine-

[1] Not reproduced here. The correspondent, a social worker, had suggested a simple remedy for scorpion stings: "Make a saturated solution of common salt, allow it to settle for a day and decant the clean solution. A drop of this solution put into each eye removes the pain of the sting instantaneously."

[2] The correspondent had written that "after local tests you may give the information to the rest of the world".

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tenths of the ills of Harijans and its removal the only cure. You feel it a social and religious curse. I respectfully disagree with you. I hold the whole trouble is directly economic. Social and religious aspects that have gained ascendancy in the public view only serve the purpose of sugar-coating. We have been long trained by our ancestors (who knew the proper clue to it) to close our eyes to the bitter pill inside, but it mocks at us grimly in all its naked truth. I believe that 'untouchability' is bound to disappear along with the disappearance of the inferiority complex of the Harijan. Remove the causes of his poverty, improve his economic conditions, fight for a more equitable distribution of national wealth, make the Harijan feel that he has to revolt against the existing capitalistic exploitation; then a panoramic view of his future will be opened to him and he will then need no outside agency to count the steps of his progress and caution halt at measured intervals.

You believe 'untouchability' is peculiar to Hindu society and confined to our own land. But my view is totally different. It is a universal problem facing every land and the Harijan that inhabits it. So the solution to root out this evil must be one which is common to all lands, and which goes to the root of the matter, and one ought not to be satisfied only with lopping off the topmost branches. After all, what is 'untouchability'? It is treating a whole race of men as lepers and denying the elementary rights to them. Mere touching or not touching is just a symbol and a symptom of the corroding disease, viz., subjection, and matters little or nothing to the victim so long as the main cancer is not sought to be removed. In this view, 'untouchability' is a universal menace and all oppressed peoples have got to rebel against it. It has taken various guises in various countries with difference in degree. Everywhere, its basis is economic which is miscalled 'political'. Indian 'untouchability' arose, I believe, out of the conquest of Aryans over the so-called 'Aborigines' to whom the present-day Harijan has to trace his ancestry. American 'untouchability' towards the Negroes is rooted in the land-greed of the white man who first travelled to America in the *Mayflower*. The Hitlerian hatred of the Jew, the Bolshevik's hatred of the *bourgeoisie*, the Chinaman's fear of the 'Mikado' are all traceable to the same source, viz., economic exploitation, euphemistically called 'Politics'. The Indian '*asprishyata*', the American 'lynching', the Belgian 'Congo', the Nazian persecution of the Jews are outstanding examples of this injustice, and world wars are their natural culmination.

Again 'untouchability' or, to speak more correctly, the inferiority complex of the conquered original owners of this land, was a *bourgeoisie* political necessity of the Aryans for keeping the comparatively inferior races of the Harijans under eternal subjection solely for economic ends, that is, for permanently maintaining the superiority in status of

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the conqueror over the conquered. The much-advertised I.C.S. steel-frame superiority, the recent uncouth reminder to the African Negro chief Tesh-Kendy by his European masters, the preferential treatment claimed [by] and conceded to those of European extraction are but living reminders of this hiatus which have been carefully conceived to enable smaller but more powerful nations to exploit bigger but weaker peoples.

This explains and greatly probabilizes the imposition, for economic ends, of cruel disabilities by the conquering Aryan hordes over the vanquished forces of the sons of the soil. Then followed as night did the day the engine of ruthless suppression, and every effort was made to introduce and establish this racial superiority in matters of residence, association, eating and drinking and in every walk of life. Poets sang praises of this system and Puranas sealed it with divine approval. The Harijan, like the Natal Indian, was feared in commercial competition, too, and there came the law ousting him from main business centres and important thriving trades. The impoverished Harijan reduced to mere manual labour became half-naked, huddled in huts, developed insanitation and illiteracy and, to use Arnold's language, "bowed low and let the storm to pass". He had of course to pay the penalty for being a conquered nation, as others do.

You do not believe in the existence of class struggle and are not prepared to unseat those owners of the so-called vested interests for the mere reason that their 'status quo' ought not to be disturbed. You refuse to recognize that the interests of the capitalists and the labourers are bound to clash with each other so long as the inequality in their present position is approved and sought to be maintained.

The Harijan asks for bread but a stone is your answer. For aught I know about the Harijan, he is least concerned about his 'touch me not' trouble. I am sure you realize that the Harijan's untouchability is too deep to be removed by an occasional inter-dining, demonstrative sweeping in the slums, ceremonious entries into the village temples and merciful distribution of clothing and sweetmeats, which seem to be the type-design programme that is chalked out for the much tired Congressman. To all appearance, the programme seems to go on merrily. Details of boys holding scholarships in the till-recently banned schools, instances of temples and wells thrown open, are tabulated in *Harijan*, but what strikes me most pointedly is: Is the Harijan going to be satisfied with all this? Can we say that he is on the shortest road to his salvation? I would only wonder what the response would be if the public are asked to give better wages for shorter hours of work and do their duty by the impoverished Harijan.

To be true to you, I feel compelled to state that the too much stress you have laid on this comparatively minor problem, in preference to

their more vital needs, leads the Harijans to self-deception, binds them to the chariot-wheel of capitalistic exploitation, and puts off indefinitely the day of their economic freedom, which their brethren in other countries are striving hard to secure.

Such argument was heard when I was touring in the South in the Harijan interest. It is well, however, to have it summed up in a letter. The mistake the correspondent makes is in thinking that the struggle against untouchability ends with the removal of touch pollution. The campaign had to begin with the removal of the impassable religious bar. Those who come under the religious ban are a class apart. To them the taint attaches by birth. Who does not know that these men though they may be economically well off are still treated as social lepers? Thousands of Ezhawas in Travancore and Namosudras in Bengal are very well off and yet to their great sorrow and to the equally great disgrace of the so-called *savarna* Hindus, the former's possession of the good things of the earth makes no difference in their social status.

There is no difficulty in admitting that much will remain to be done after the bar sinister is removed. Indeed it is the recognition of this obvious fact that has impelled the Harijan Sevak Sangh to handle educational and economic work among Harijans which the correspondent seems to belittle. That work serves the Harijans tangibly and tests the sincerity of the reformers and brings them in close touch with those whom they are out to serve.

When untouchability is altogether gone, Harijans will share the benefit with the others of the economic uplift that is silently but surely going on. Harijans contribute, say, 16 per cent of the total population of India. But those who suffer from economic exploitation form at least 90 per cent of the population. It is for that reason that I have said in these columns that the missions of the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A. and Harijan Sevak Sangh are interrelated, and that is why the scope of *Harijan* has been extended.

The correspondent is wrong in suggesting that I do not believe in the existence of class struggle. What I do not believe in is the necessity of fomenting and keeping it up. I entertain a growing belief that it is perfectly possible to avoid it. There is no virtue in fomenting it, as there is in preventing it. The conflict between moneyed classes and labourers is merely seeming. When labour is intelligent enough to organize itself and learns to act as one man, it will have the same weight as money if not much greater. The conflict is really between intelligence and unintelligence. Surely it will be folly to keep up such a conflict. Unintelligence must be removed.

Money has its use as much as labour. After all money is a token of exchange. A person having 25 rupees has, say, 50 labourers per day at his disposal, regarding eight annas as the wage for a day of eight hours. A labourer who has 49 fellow-labourers working in unison with him is even with the person who has Rs. 25. The advantage, if any, will be with the one who has monopoly of labour. If both are even there will be harmony. The problem therefore is not to set class against class, but to educate labour to a sense of its dignity. Moneyed men after all form a microscopic minority in the world. They will act on the square, immediately labour realizes its power and yet acts on the square. To inflame labour against moneyed men is to perpetuate class hatred and all the evil consequences flowing from it. The strife is a vicious circle to be avoided at any cost. It is an admission of weakness, a sign of inferiority complex. The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i.e., it will be held in trust for labour. For labour is more than money.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

52. *DUTY OF REFORMERS*

I gladly publish the following letter[1] from the Principal, Sanatan Dharma College, Lahore:

There can be no doubt that there must be a relentless war waged against this vice. I have gone through the gruesome reports enclosed with this letter. These are of a different type from those dealt with by me in the articles[2] to which the Principal refers. They had reference to cases exclusively of seduction by teachers. The reports now sent mostly deal with cases of unnatural assaults committed by goondas on boys of tender age and then murdered. Though the cases of unnatural assaults followed by murder appear more hidious, I believe that they are more capable of being dealt with than the cases in which boys become willing victims of their teachers. Both require incessant vigilance by the reformer and the rousing of public conscience against the commission of this disgusting crime. It is the duty of leaders in the Punjab, in which this crime seems to flourish most, to get together, irrespective of race or creed, and devise methods of

[1] This is not reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXXI, pp. 373-4 and Vol. XLI, pp. 84-5.

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protecting the youth of the land of five rivers from criminals whether as seducers or ravishers and murderers. It is no use passing resolutions condemning the criminals. All crimes are different kinds of diseases and they should be treated as such by the reformers. That does not mean that the police will suspend their function of regarding such cases as public crimes, but their measures are never intended to deal with causes of these social disturbances. To do so is the special prerogative of the reformer. And unless the moral tone of society is raised, in spite of whatever may be written in the newspapers such crimes will flourish, if only for the simple reason that the moral sense of these perverts has become blunt and they rarely read newspapers, especially those portions which contain fervent exhortation against such vices. The only effective way I can conceive of, therefore, is for some enthusiastic reformers like the Principal of the Sanatan Dharma College, if he is one, to gather together other reformers and take concerted measures to deal with the evil.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

53. A CORRECTION

In the last issue of *Harijan* a serious mistake has crept in. In the last note[1] on the last page Dr. Aykroyd is made to say that among other things the dietary requirements of an adult man per day were 16 ounces of soya bean. Please read there 16 ounces of *ragi* and two ounces of soya bean.

Harijan, 19-10-1935

[1] *Vide* pp. 26-7.

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54. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

MAGANWADI, (WARDHA),
October 19, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

There is no such good news for you or for me. I don't stir out of Wardha till the end of the year. January has been mortgaged to Gujarat, and February will probably be given to Delhi.

The Sangh[1] Council will meet here in November, I expect. But do not expect me to go either to Calcutta or to Bangalore next year. I do not want to devote the whole year to travelling. There is much work to be done here. It is with the utmost reluctance that I have undertaken to go to Gujarat. One month to Delhi I will have to give.

You may expect no congratulations; but you will certainly deserve them for having built at such a reasonable cost, and from the details you have sent, I see that everything was worked out most thoughtfully. You won't have Amtul Salaam before next year and you might not have Viyogi Hari either.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 923

55. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 19, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter of the 9th. I like it very much. It is a frank one. Kishorelalbhai had written everything with the purest of motives. He used to speak in Shankar's favour when I was prejudiced against him. He was shaken in his confidence by the . . .[2] episode, but your letter to him made him wonder again whether Shankar might not be right in his belief. Hence with the aim of discovering the truth and because you had permitted

[1] Harijan Sevak Sangh
[2] The name has been omitted.

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him, he put you more questions. There was thus no reason for you to feel offended with him. But now your letter to me closes that chapter.

I am still meeting Nanabhai[1]. . . . will return. I will of course still need your help. I will not put you to the trouble of coming here while you are taking rest. You may certainly stay with your brother and his wife for some time and recoup yourself. When your stay is over, I may suggest your coming over here before going to Vartej. I think it will be necessary to do so. And if you wish, I shall send a reliable person to escort you. If anything occurs to you meanwhile, write to me. Is there any other girl, besides you two sisters, who can throw light on this chapter? If there is, give me her name and address. If there is anyone else also who is in a position to help, let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 936. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

56. ABOUT SNAKE-BITES

I give below a summary in my words of the questions put by a Harijan reader and my answers:

Q. Is there any risk involved in making vertical and horizontal cuts over a [snake-]bite? And, if there is any, is it proper to invite one risk in order to avoid another?

A. There is no risk at all in making a cut over the bite. It would have been easier to follow if the translator had used the word 'incision' instead of 'cut'. The only purpose of making an incision is to drain some blood out. Such superficial incision does not hurt much; and anyone who has been bitten does not feel the pain at all and because he gradually tends to lose consciousness the cells in his brain become so insensitive that he has little awareness of what his body is being subjected to.

Q. Please explain clearly how the tender skin covering the bones escapes injury.

A. The previous passage explains this. The razor's edge does not reach the bone while making an incision. Instead of the skin we should think of layers. We should imagine that there are layers beneath the skin which we can see and touch. The

[1] Nrisinhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt, founder of the Lokbharati

incision which has to be made is just to open up the skin. In that case the edge of the knife cannot even reach the layer of the skin immediately next to the bone.

Q. What is meant by "using the blade of the safety razor after passing it over a flame"?

A. The blade should be passed back and forth over a lighted match until the latter burns out. This would take only a few seconds.

Q. Is there no danger of death to the person who sucks [the poison] ?

A. If he has no ulcers in his mouth, there is no danger of death or of any other harm. If he has ulcers, there is no question of his sucking.

Q. You write of mud-pack remedies, but you cannot give any assurances.

A. I can give no guarantee whatsoever. Moreover, who will permit me to make sufficient number of experiments to give any assurance ?

Q. The sixth question is that I should have written[1] exhaustively about identifying the different kinds of snakes.

A. Nothing is gained by putting before the reader something which I find it difficult to understand because even if I understood, it cannot help me in identifying the kinds. Those who [want to] understand this matter more than I do ought to obtain the literature for themselves and go through it; this literature can generally be found in libraries.

Finally, I may add that I am collecting further knowledge about snake-bites and if I find anything more valuable, I shall certainly inform the readers. An experienced doctor, who is an old friend, writes to say that there is no likelihood of anything new and worth communicating coming to light. I may say that Ramanama is the remedy for a bite by a venomous cobra. Luckily, such cobras are few. There is little danger of death if the other bites are treated immediately in the manner suggested.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1935

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 338-9.

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57. *TWO QUESTIONS*

Many questions keep coming up about the new policy of the Spinners' Association, which is being framed. Here are some of them:

Q. 1. How can workers prepare themselves to put into effect the new policy?

The best way is for those who have grown accustomed to the new policy to train workers from among villagers and persons who do not know English. We shall need innumerable workers if the policy of self-sufficing [khadi] is to be made widespread. This poor country cannot afford them salaries if these happen to be large. If workers are trained only from amongst the English-educated persons they would demand large salaries as their needs have increased. They no longer possess a hardy constitution. And, in a sphere where a knowledge of the English language is not essential they cannot be said to be particularly useful. Very often, their usefulness has indeed declined. For instance, they do not like living in villages and they try to import city-life into the villages. Their bodies are less supple and only in rare cases can they become skilled craftsmen. Even when they learn a craft, they can seldom compete with ordinary craftsmen. I only want to suggest here that we should give up the craze of looking for workers who know English. This does not mean that we should boycott or despise those who know English. We should welcome any such person who is available. They are all right where they belong. The only purpose of saying this is to rid ourselves of the false notion that only those who know English are fit to be workers. If a village worker's services are available, he will bring in greater returns than the amount paid to him. An allowance of not more than Rs. 10 to 15 should be required for such a worker. And he can easily bring in by way of return that amount every month. Organizers should train such workers wherever there are khadi centres and to that extent enlarge their field of work. Workers should acquaint themselves with all the processes starting from growing cotton right up to making khadi. And if those who are in charge of these centres are themselves efficient, they can readily produce such workers at no cost.

At present, I do not visualize any separate institution for training workers.

Q. 2. Will the number of private traders increase or decrease with the implementation of the new policy?

There cannot be any increase in the number of private traders. Making [khadi] self-sufficing will be the principal policy. Private traders have no place in it. They will continue for the purpose of selling khadi in the cities. There is very little likelihood of there being an increase in their numbers because, with the growing desire of craftsmen to add to their earnings, private traders will progressively decrease in number. This is because the latter are impelled by the profit motive. Hence they will not be satisfied. In the new scheme, the ceiling to the seller's earnings will be fixed and whatever profit is there, will go to the craftsmen.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-10-1935

58. A LETTER [1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 20, 1935

It is true that I have the strength to strike her non-violently to bring her round, but it is not right to use such strength on every occasion irrespective of the circumstances.

Differences of opinion have been known to exist even among those whose spiritual eye has opened or is believed to have opened.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8770

[1] Only the last sheet of the letter is available.

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59. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 20, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

Mathew has reached here. He has no work. He says that he will go to Poona at any rate. I won't send him to you. The desire for degrees is becoming universal at present. How, then, can we blame Sharda[1] and Vijaya[2]? Let them satisfy their desire. Only they should not expect any money from us.

I got Nanubhai's letter. Is it necessary to reply to it? I can't recall his face.

I was pained and surprised to read about Jamnadas. He had given me a firm assurance here.

Really speaking the money collected during the Charkha Week[3] should be utilized in promoting khadi activities. However, do what you think best.

Lilavati[4] has been entrusted just now with the management of the kitchen. I have of course been encouraging her to go to you. At the moment, however, she does not think of leaving this place till December. After I leave in January, she is bound to feel unhappy. Let us see what happens. Mirabehn recovered long ago. (A palatial hut has been put up for her.) She has gone to live in Sindi.

Devdas has returned to Delhi. He is steadily improving. But he will take some time to recover completely. Ghanshyamdas has kept him at his place. I am sending herewith a letter from Jethalal Joshi. Have you relieved Pranjivan Joshi? If so, on what ground? What is the truth in what Jethalal writes? What is the Seva Sangh? What has been Sushila's part in it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8479. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Sharda C. Shah
[2] Vijaya N. Patel
[3] The period, of about a week, from the date of Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram Calendar and October 2; *vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 444-5.
[4] Lilavati Asar

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60. INTERVIEW TO PATITPAWANDAS AND OTHERS[1]

October 20, 1935

Mahatma Gandhi said that it was no fault of the religion that Dr. Ambedkar was going to make himself a convert.[2] Caste Hindus and Harijans had a common religion. The enmity between those two parties was no sufficient reason for him to go against the religion. Dr. Ambedkar and Harijans might go against the caste Hindus and fight for their equality. It was a fact that the Harijans were molested by the caste Hindus at Kavitha. It should not be the case that from some such stray instances of harassment, men like Dr. Ambedkar should go against the religion. The Harijans of Kavitha might leave the place and go to other places where they would get the necessary environment to pull on. If Dr. Ambedkar was converted, many men from the depressed classes would not follow him. Anyhow the Muslim fold was thought to be a suitable place to go into. The Muslims would not be able to take many depressed classes in their fold; for they would not be able to manage them. Moreover, he said that the water-tight compartment of untouchability had been already loosened through the efforts of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and others. In such circumstances Dr. Ambedkar's threat to change his religion only showed that he was impatient and no one was able to help him in such a situation.

The Hitavada, 3-11-1935

[1] At the instance of the Depressed Classes Federation Conference of the C. P. and Berar held on October 20, Patitpawandas, head of the Berar Maharashtra Temple-entry Satyagraha Movement, D. K. Bhagat, Chairman, C. P. and Berar Matang Society, T. A. Purohit of Arvi and D. S. Shende of Nagpur met Gandhiji at 9 p.m.

[2] *Vide* p. 37.

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61. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 21, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

The longer you stay in Simla, the gladder I feel. Now that the giddy season there is over, you get a change of having a little bit of rest. I fancy that now is the real season for Simla—quiet and bracing. There need be no hurry to descend to Jullundur. The work won't run away from you, if you go there a little later.

Pray do not worry over my estimate[1] of your brochure on the position of women in India. The matter is all right; it is the manner which appeared to me to be defective. I could smell your fatigue and midnight oil—must one say now midnight electric burners—in it. I did not miss the political part. It was not expected there. But of all this when we meet, if only that will bring you here earlier.

Nor need you worry about Devdas not having been completely cured there. Dr. Ansari is more than satisfied. The weather in Delhi is quite good now and Devdas is accommodated in a nice house. Pyarelal is no longer with him all the 24 hours. Devdas says nowhere could he have had greater kindness than under your roof. 'Be careful for nothing.'

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3556. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6365

[1] *Vide* p. *35*.

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62. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 21, 1935

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. Don't expect long or regular letters from me. I certainly wish to write, but being in the Committee I get no time at all. I am glad that you keep good health. I don't know how long I shall have to stay here. I see that I shall have to do some travelling, unless indeed I have to go there immediately for some reason.

I am quite well. I intentionally avoid writing with my right hand. I am trying to drink 2½ [pounds] of milk daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne, pp. 73-4

63. SPEECH TO VILLAGE WORKERS [1]

October 22, 1935

As today's menu was selected by me with some careful thought, and especially with a view to the needs of village workers, I must speak to you about it at some length. The idea was to provide you with food, nourishing and yet within the means of an average villager and within the possibility of an eight hours' minimum wage as we have fixed it, i.e., three annas.

We were 98 diners today and the total cost of our food was Rs. 9-14-3, which means that each meal cost slightly more than six pice. Here are the details:

	Rs.	As.	Ps.
36 lb. Wheat flour	1	8	0
12 „ Tomatoes	0	11	3
4 „ Jaggery	0	6	3
24 „ Red gourd	0	7	6

[1] As summarized by Mahadev Desai. The workers had undergone a fortnight's study course from October 8 to 22.

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6	„ Linseed oil	1	2	0
50	„ Milk	3	13	0
4	„ Soya bean	0	6	0
4	Cocoanuts	0	4	0
16	*Koth* fruit	0	2	0
	Tamarind and salt	0	2	3
	Fuel	1	0	0
	Total	9	14	3

Vinoba had passed on the suggestion to me that I need not worry about giving all of you *roti*[1] but might simply give you wheaten porridge (that we have here every morning) and thus save a lot of trouble. No, said I to myself, you young men whom God has given strong teeth must have good hard well-baked *bhakhari*[2], which anyone can make, which one can easily carry on one's person from place to place and which can keep for a couple of days. Before the dough was kneaded it was treated with linseed oil. This rendered it both soft and crisp. Then, as we must have some greens and raw vegetables, we had tomatoes and two chutneys—one made of *koth* fruit available in plenty in these parts and another made of leaves available in our garden. *Koth* fruit is known for both its aperient and astringent properties, and jaggery goes well with it and makes a delicious chutney. The other chutney contained some cocoanut, tamarind and salt to spice the leaves. Green leaves must be eaten by us in some form or other, in order that we may get proper vitamins in our diet. The vegetable chosen was the cheapest available and grows everywhere in our villages. You will see that I allowed the use of tamarind in the preparation of chutney. In spite of the popular prejudice against tamarind, it has been found that it is a good aperient and blood-purifier. I gave copious doses of tamarind water to one of the inmates suffering from malaria with very good effect and have tried it in several cases of constipation.

Milk is an essential article of diet. Your menu contained half a pound of milk, but you must have seen that I gave you no ghee. I hope, however, that you did not miss it. For I gave you soya beans and oil. Soya beans are rich in oil (20 per cent) and proteins (40 per cent). Ground-nuts also are rich in oil, but they have the disadvantage of containing too much starch from which

[1] Bread

[2] Crisp chapati

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soya beans are comparatively free. Milk with soya beans gives us almost all that we need in the shape of fats and there is no need for ghee at all. Why then go to all the wasteful trouble of making ghee ? And where procuring good ghee is a doubtful proposition, why have spurious ghee? But milk or buttermilk we ought to have, no matter how little. Medical men say that it helps in the assimilation of the vegetable fats and proteids. Therefore ghee you can omit with impunity. I had recently two little children under my care whose diet I carefully regulated. I cut out ghee from it and found that they were none the worse for the cutting out of ghee. Of course I gave them as much milk as they wanted.

Our menu has cost us a little more than six pice. It was a full meal and the other meals need not be so heavy as this. They, therefore, need not cost more than an anna or so. Milk may be omitted for the other meals. Wheat *bhakhari*, soya bean and chutney should be quite enough.

So this is one of the two main things you have to do—to ensure to villagers a balanced diet, and to content yourselves with the same. There may be some who burden their diet with useless articles and many whose diet is badly deficient in vitamins. You have to introduce the right kind of diet to them. You will learn cow-keeping yourselves and encourage cow-keeping among villagers. It ought to be considered a shame that milk is not available in many of our villages. The second main duty is sanitation—a most difficult thing indeed. But if you have succeeded in introducing the right kind of diet and making the sanitation of your village tolerably good, you will have rendered human bodies worthy of becoming temples of God and efficient tools for doing a good day's work.

Khadi will certainly occupy the centre of the village industries. But remember that we have to concentrate on making the villages self-sufficing in khadi. Out of self-sufficing khadi will follow commercial khadi as a matter of course. The argument you will find elaborated in the columns of *Harijan*. But on you will depend the success or failure of khadi. People have been frightened by baseless scares. You have to restore their faith in khadi and explain to them the new policy.[1]

You will of course take up any other industry available in villages and for which you can find a market, care being taken that no shop has to be run at a loss and no article produced for which there is no market. Give eight hours of your day to

[1] *Vide* pp. 31-2.

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any home-craft you like and show to the villagers that as you earn your wage, even so can they earn it by eight hours' work. Make Vinoba your ideal here. It is impossible for you to emulate his learning or to have his wonderful memory, but you can certainly emulate his industry and devotion to work. Go not to the villages to write commentaries on the Upanishads, which you may well do in towns and cities. Your work will provide the best commentary as does Vinoba's concentrated work. We have to infect the villagers with our passion for work. We say they have become hewers of wood and drawers of water[1]. In order that they may stand erect and say they shall no longer be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for us, you have to explain to them the reason for every one of their actions and make them voluntary workers for a living wage. What Vinoba has done should be easier for these simple folks to achieve. I am told a village lad called Gulab has already broken Vinoba's record in spinning.

You will also not take a companion to work with you. Our policy is to send a single worker to a village or group of villages. That will enable him to bring his resourcefulness into full play. He may pick out any number of companions from the village itself. They will work under his direction, but he will be mainly responsible for the village under his charge.

Let us not be tempted by the allurements of the machine age, let us concentrate on rendering our own body-machines perfect and efficient instruments of work and let us get the best out of them. This is your task. Go ahead with it, without flinching. There need be no despair in a field which Vinoba has made his own and where he has given the best of his 15 years. I at least have no cause for despair and that is why you find me settled down here.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

[1] The source has "work".

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64. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 23, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I got your letter. The fever should go now. Om[1] has stayed over there. Keep in touch with her. Come over only when your parents give you their consent. I have read the recipe for *rasam*. I had enquired about it because Bharatan told me that it is recommended to patients suffering from fever, etc. Write to me what the doctors and vaidyas there say about the efficacy of *rasam*.

Are soya beans available in Madras? If so, at what price? Are they indigenous or imported? Send me a sample.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

65. FOREWORD TO "SHRIMADRAJACHANDRA"

WARDHA,
October 24, 1935

There is no doubt that these gleanings selected from the writings of the late Shri Raichandbhai will prove useful as an introduction to the original work. As they are arranged subject-wise, they will be very helpful to the *jijnasu*[2].

[From Gujarati]

Shrimadrajachandra

[1] Umadevi, daughter of Jamnalal Bajaj
[2] Seeker of knowledge

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66. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
October 25, 1935

BHAI NANABHAI[1],

The bonds between our two families are increasing on their own. There must be some divine purpose behind it. You sent a girl into our family. You have now taken a girl into your family. As Sushila and Manilal make each other happy, even so may Surendra and Manu do. Manu is a submissive and simple-hearted girl, delicate in health. I do not think she would have felt as secure in any other family as she will be in yours and with Surendra. Let us hope that they live long and learn to do selfless service. Jamnalalji came here just a little while ago at 9.30 and, with the willing consent of Ba, the betrothal was solemnized. A coconut was broken and the betrothal ceremony was performed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7524. Also C.W. 5000. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

67. LETTER TO JAIJI PETIT

October 25, 1935

DEAR SISTER,

How could I, of course, expect you to write to me? But even so I often thought of you. And then I got Charlie's[2] letter. He has given a vivid description of the state of your health. I can imagine from it what agony you have been passing through and with what courage you are enduring all the suffering. You have endured so much mental suffering that in comparison with it this physical suffering should be nothing. I hope to see in you increasing awareness of God even as your suffering increases. I feel easy in mind because of the knowledge that Hilda is with you. Please ask her to write to me sometimes.

[1] Sushila Gandhi's father
[2] C. F. Andrews

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Charlie tells me in this letter that you often wish you were at Panchgani. I have indeed often wished that you were in India. If you were here today and in good health, I could have got so much work out of you in connection with village industries. But God's will be done. Now please get all right soon. I am still hoping that you will return one day and serve the women of India.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3157

68. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

October 25, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

How is it that there has been no letter from you? I forwarded to you a long letter from Sharma and asked that it may be returned.[1] Neither that letter nor yours has been received. Amtul Salaam is keeping indifferent health and she too awaits your letter. I hope you are all doing well. You should not be lazy about letter writing. Ramdas must have sent you yet another letter from Sharma.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 191

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXI, p. 364.

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69. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 25, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Long beautiful letters kept pouring in while you were on board the ship but they have stopped, now that you have reached America. I had the one written prior to your reaching Boston but none since then which is extremely surprising. I could not reach you at the ports of call but I am now trying to write almost every week but your letters have stopped coming. Every week I look forward to a letter from you and am invariably disappointed. I feel that you have written but they are still in transit from New York. Your letter ought to arrive by tomorrow's mail. It is now three weeks since you wrote from Boston. As desired by you I have already sent the letter for England and you must have got it by now.

I receive no letters from Draupadi, but on my part I keep on writing and ultimately she also may write regularly.

You are doing well, I suppose.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 206

70. ON ITS LAST LEGS

Some critics have not hesitated to observe that it was preposterous for me to claim, in answer to Dr. Ambedkar's threat to accept some other faith rather than die a Hindu, that untouchability was on its last legs in spite of Kavitha. Indeed, Kavitha itself supports my claim. Kavitha had gone on ever since its birth living peacefully till an over-zealous worker, not knowing his own limitations, had put up Kavitha Harijans to dare to send their children to the local school, though he knew that there was opposition from some Kavitha *savarnas*. He had hoped, as had happened elsewhere, that Harijans had successfully asserted their right to send their children to public schools. But Kavitha *savarnas* showed that they had not recognized the time spirit.

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Only a few years ago the Kavitha incident would have attracted no notice. There were very few reformers then. The few were to be found mostly in towns and cities. Now, thank God, their number is increasing and presently every village will have its quota. But a few years ago Harijans could not be induced to resist untouchability on any account whatsoever. It was part of their faith as it was of *savarnas*' faith. These columns contain sufficient evidence of the weekly progress made by the campaign against untouchability. Phenomenal though the progress has been, Kavitha and the like show that it has not yet affected the majority of *savarnas* in many places. The fact is a warning to the reformers and the Harijans that much has yet to be done before the hard hearts of *savarnas* are melted.

Let it be further observed that it was *savarna* reformers who advertised the Kavitha tragedy and gave it an all-India importance. It has agitated *savarna* conscience more than it has angered the Harijans. I have to note with shame and sorrow that even Kavitha Harijans no longer want to agitate for their rights. They have meekly submitted to the *savarna* impudence. In spite of all the help offered to them, they would not leave Kavitha. It is easy enough for the few that are there to earn their bread by honourable toil elsewhere. The attempt of the reformers to induce them to leave Kavitha under their protection has failed.

Even if change of faith, not on account of its inherent inadequacy but because of the unreasoning prejudice of many of its followers, were justified, in the present instance it can but defeat the cause intended to be served. Secession of stalwarts like Dr. Ambedkar can but weaken the defences of Harijans. We know, as a matter of fact, that non-Hindu Harijans, no matter how eminent they may be, are not able to help Hindu Harijans. Indeed, they are a class apart still in their adopted faiths. Such is the hold untouchability of the Indian type has on the people in India.

Let not Dr. Ambedkar's just wrath deject the reformer, let it spur him to greater effort. For whilst it is true that the number of workers against untouchability has greatly increased, there can be no doubt that the number is yet too small to overtake the prejudice of ages. Nevertheless [with] a movement which has attained the proportions that the anti-untouchability campaign has attained and in which the slightest untoward incident can attract world-wide attention, [untouchability] cannot but be on its last legs. Humanity will not suffer it any longer.

Harijan, 26-10-1935

71. "*DEV COTTON*"

Some of the readers of *Harijan* may recall the periodical publications of khadi bulletins giving all kinds of useful information to khadi workers. It was part of the pioneer work done by the late Maganlal Gandhi who built up the science of khadi. Shri T. Sreenivas of Secunderabad sends me a copy of one of these bulletins called *Dev Cotton* published in 1923. It is almost prophetic or rather shows how attempts were being made even in the early stages of the movement to work out a scheme of self-sufficing khadi. Now that it is to have the first place in the activities of the A. I. S. A. the reader will appreciate the reproduction of the bulletin[1]:

Harijan, 26-10-1935

72. *NEW KHADI SCHEME*

The resolution[2] adopted by the A. I. S. A. regarding spinners' wages and khadi policy generally deserves the careful study of every khadi worker. It can produce great changes, if the new policy is properly worked. In order to work it properly, all the instructions issued from time to time from the Centre should be meticulously carried out.

Self-sufficing khadi has to receive the first place in all khadi organizations. In a way, self-sufficing khadi and production for sale will go together. Production for sale will be a by-product of self-sufficing khadi, and the latter will ensure the success of the former. As the condition of production is that the workers must be khadi-clad, they will have to make or take khadi for themselves. This they can easily do out of the (for them) very big rise in their wages which they will be receiving without having expected or demanded it. But receipt of wages will depend upon the surplus production which to be of use must command a ready sale. Thus self-sufficing methods will be easy where there are producing centres. For the spinners and other artisans will be

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] *Vide* Appendix I.

more open to conviction than the others with whom workers have never come in touch.

But some ask, who will buy khadi at higher prices? In my opinion this betrays ignorance and want of faith and resourcefulness.

Hitherto we have confined our attention to stimulating demand in the cities: we have been urban-minded. We have never cared to study the localities immediately surrounding centres of production, we have neglected the very producers themselves. Now, before we even tested the latter, we seem to have confidence that they will respond. Why should we not have the same confidence about the people in the surrounding localities? Surely they need cloth for their daily use. Is it too much to expect them to take in some khadi manufactured by their next-door neighbours? I know that those who have made an earnest effort in that direction have never failed. Failure has been with us, not with the prospective buyers. They are always with us, it does not matter what they buy and use today. If we[1] would study the wants of the surrounding localities, we would produce khadi that would suit their taste and arrest their attention. Khadi workers have done that before now with success for the sake of the city-dwellers. Will they now turn their attention towards rural areas? It is not so much the dearness of khadi that turns people away from it. It is our want of faith and resourcefulness. If we have faith, we shall find that the same millions are open to us as they are to the vendors of fents that come to us from the Far East. They rely upon the cheapness of their pieces to produce a demand for their wares. We may rely upon local patriotism and the tastefulness of our wares to tempt the would-be buyers of cloth.

It is not without full justification that the Council of the A. I. S. A. has insisted upon every khadi organization being self-supporting and hence autonomous. They may no longer rely on the Centre to spoon-feed them. The central fund should be freed for tapping areas we have hitherto neglected.

Harijan, 26-10-1935

[1] The source has "one".

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73. LETTER TO BEHCHARDAS DOSHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 26, 1935

BHAI BEHCHARDAS,

I got your letter. May you prosper in the new year[1]. I hope you are quite at peace there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1342

74. LETTER TO KUNVARJI K. PAREKH

October 26, 1935

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Manu was betrothed to Surendra Mashruwala yesterday at 9.30.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9724

75. LETTER TO ABHIMANYU

October 26, 1935

CHI. ABHIMANYU,

I am glad you wrote to me the moment you reached there. When you write next, please improve your handwriting. Why didn't you like this place? Which item of food did you not like? A hungry person would relish any food. Such likes and dislikes in food are for the sick and the aged. Children should be satisfied with whatever things the elders give them to eat. May you all prosper in the new year.

[1] According to Vikram calendar the new year begins on the day following Diwali, i.e., *Kartak Sud* 1.

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I am not writing a separate letter to Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI ABHIMANYU
C/O SHRI HEMENDRA B. DIWANJI
KHAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5744

76. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 26, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I wished to write this in the letter addressed to Pranjivan Joshi which I sent to you, but could not do so.

Jivrambhai's cheque has been traced. You must have heard its amusing story.

I have already written to Jethalal Joshi. It is a strange affair.

Mathew has arrived here. I have made everything plain to him. I have fixed the whole day's programme of work for him. It consists entirely of physical labour. I have told him that if he learns sufficient Hindi to satisfy me and takes whole-hearted interest in physical labour, I am ready to provide for the maintenance of his parents. He will stay here. I will see what work he can do.

I have sent for publication in *Harijan* the account[1] of the khadi woven from yarn spun by you. How many hours of work does the yarn represent? What is your speed? What is the count of the yarn? If you give me these details, they will help me still more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8480. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* "An Experience" 30-11-1935.

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77. *PROBLEMS CONFRONTING A SANITARY WORKER*

A volunteer who has taken up the task of sanitation in villages has written a long letter from which I give the following extract[1].

This letter may be divided into two parts—one relating to the incompetence of the ordinary worker and the other about the difficulties involved in the work of sanitation. It can certainly be said that very little progress, if at all, can be made in a task which is not done in an enlightened manner.

A volunteer who does his work with sincerity will indeed come at last to do it intelligently. It may so happen that a person may do the work entrusted to him through a sense of loyalty to his superior but there may be an absence both of sincerity and knowledge. Such volunteers continue to give the expected results and we can hardly hope for any enlightenment or of any new discoveries resulting from their work. Every volunteer should become engrossed in the work entrusted to him and keep doing research in it. From experiences published in *Harijan* we find that this has happened in certain places. Some are seeking ways and means to do away with the indifference of the people, while others are trying to find out how night-soil can be disposed of with the least expenditure and in the simplest manner. This is happening in relation to Sindi. The people's indifference persists. There is no response from them. Hence, Mirabehn has as a last resort gone to live there. Underlying this is the conviction that the people's indifference cannot be done away with so long as we do not find out someone to live amongst the people of every village. Methods are being evolved also for the rapid disposal of night-soil.

There is no end to the difficulties of volunteers; the work of sanitation is more difficult than all other forms of service, as it is regarded as the meanest of tasks. There is a feeling of great disgust attached to it. Very few persons are prepared to do this work. I am of the opinion that there should be only one volunteer for every village. It is possible that this will yield result most quickly. He will realize that he alone is responsible for the sanitation of the entire village. By himself, he will never be able to cope with the

[1] Not translated here

entire work of sanitation if people from the village itself do not come forward to help him. When faced with problems, human beings find out new ways; hence the English saying: necessity is the mother of invention. As in the work of sanitation so too in the task of disposal of night-soil it is difficult to find assistance from the villagers. Let us take the example of Sindi again. People there defecate publicly in their own courtyards. The neighbouring fields are surrounded by fences, so these cannot be used. No one would be prepared to go very far. The village population consists of labourers. How can the latter find the time to go to a distance? How far can the womenfolk go ? If so, nothing need be said of children. Hence, as a last resort, nothing but courtyards remain for the people to make use of. Villagers are not accustomed to have a latrine in every household. Hence so long as there are no public latrines in fair numbers or people are not prepared to make their own, public roads will continue to be used as latrines. In fact, so long as every individual does not acquire a knowledge of sanitation and he does not put it into practice, the practice of using roads as latrines, despite its being unseemly, is perhaps the least harmful from the hygienic point of view and may be tolerated.

How can a single volunteer living in a village facing such a situation carry out the work of sanitation? He should set aside a certain time each day for this task. So long as he is staying there, he should spend that time in educating the people and keeping the place clean to the extent that it is possible to do it single-handed. As soon as someone is ready to take up the work of sanitation in the locality, he himself should seek out yet another locality in the same village. If he is capable enough he should seek the assistance of the district board and such other authorities for sanitary work. He should find out the best possible use for the night-soil which accumulates every day. He may either sell it to the owners of the fields nearby and use whatever he so earns for further sanitation work in that very area, or, if no one is prepared to purchase it, he should give it away to any farmer who is prepared to use the manure made out of it in his field and demonstrate how useful it is. This is but a trend of thought presented to the reader. I have not been able to put this idea totally into practice myself, nor to make others do so. After all this field of work is but new. Hence, for the present, there can only be an exchange of ideas. Volunteers who are doing this work will adopt from this whatever is worth adopting. They will inform me of any drawback in these ideas, and report to me the experience

which they have gained wherever these have been put into practice.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 27-10-1935

78. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
October 27, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Your two letters were duly received. I know you have been doing what you can for the Harijans. Please continue to watch the situation in Kavitha. If the Harijans there wish to leave the place we should encourage them to do so. I hope you remember that I am awaiting your letter in regard to the appeal for funds. Tell Narahari that he forgot to tell me what he intended to do regarding Bhai Velchand, and that I forgot to ask him. Ask him to write now. I hope Shashikant, who had a fall, is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3957. Also C.W. 129. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

79. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 27, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. Before you go to Vartej, please do pay a visit here. You will be returning there before December. I will be here all the while. Meanwhile, I am collecting as much information as I can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 937. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

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80. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
October 28, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

What do you say to this postcard? Choudhury has made vast strides. You will see the works when you come.

I do hope you are having full rest in Simla. I dread your habit of making work and then fretting that the day's work is not done.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3718. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6874

81. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

October 28, 1935

CHI. SHARDA,

Today is a day of silence. I am scribbling a few lines since I have just finished writing for *Harijan*. Whether or not I write, you should definitely write to me from time to time to give a full account of yourself. Lilavati is looking after the management of the kitchen for the time being. She is working very hard. Let this year bring happiness to all of you. I have received a letter from Chimanlal. It is just as well that you would be going back to Rajkot. Even there you can learn whatever you wish to learn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9970. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

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82. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

October 28, 1935

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

Please be satisfied that Devchandbhai has written to me. It is plain that he does not wish to write to you. In these circumstances, I don't in the least feel inclined to press him to do so. Surely you don't believe that you will have had justice if he wrote directly to you what he has written to me.

May the new year bring you happiness. I remember the matter of indigenous herbs.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SHRI BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND, VAKILSAHEB
RAJKOT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5829. Also C.W. 3052. Courtesy: Bhagwanji A. Mehta

83. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 28, 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I understand about Jethalal. All this is a mystery. Why should Sushila take part in this? I shall be eager to know what Pranjivan Joshi has to say in the matter.

I understand about Jamnadas. Manu has been betrothed to Surendra Mashruwala.

Kanu[1] has settled down very well just now. He uses his time so carefully that he can account for every minute. He keeps good health and remains cheerful. At the moment he does not in the least feel like going there. Please, therefore, give up your desire of getting him away from here. I won't hold him back if he shows the slightest inclination to go there.

I would certainly like to take him with me on my tour. I shall be able to decide it when the tour starts. My inclination is

[1] Addressee's son

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to let him accompany me. You may take it for certain that I shall be here till January 10. Perhaps I may have to start a day earlier. In any case, I am not going out anywhere before December 31. I have to reach Ahmedabad on the 12th for the Parishad[1]. After that, I have to tour a little in Gujarat. The programme will be fixed by Vallabhbhai.

I wish you all a happy new year.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 9481. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

84. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 29, 1935

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. When you feel tired, you may wind up your work there. Do not wait till you are besieged on all sides. One must understand one's limitations. If the quarrels go on increasing and you feel helpless against them, you should frankly admit defeat and wind up the whole thing. Rent out the orchard to somebody. If you get a buyer, sell it off. If the public want the journal[2], they should meet the expenditure. If they do not want it, it is against our principle to force it on them. About the Trust, I shall think and let you know.

I tried hard to persuade Ramdas to accompany Pragji, but he did not yield. Manu has been betrothed to Surendra, which means one more tie with the Mashruwala family.

May the new year see you prosper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4846

[1] Gujarati Sahitya Parishad, over which Gandhiji was to preside; the session, however, was postponed owing to Gandhiji's illness and was held from October 31 to November 2, 1936. For Gandhiji's Presidential and concluding addresses at the session, *vide* Vol. LXIII.

[2] *Indian Opinion*

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85. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

October 29, 1935

CHI. SURENDRA,

It was not I who was responsible for your betrothal. It was Kishorelal and next to him Jamnalalji. Even in your short letter you have committed quite a number of spelling mistakes. Will you be able to take it well when Manu points out your mistakes? Wait and see.

I am sure both of you will be happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SURENDRA MASHRUWALA
TOPIWALA CHAWL
SANDHURST ROAD, BOMBAY[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2666. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

86. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

October 29, 1935

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

If the women spinners there refuse to accept khadi or they keep back a part of their yarn for their own clothing before giving it for weaving, you should give them no spinning work. Do not mind if as a result no spinner is left in Vijapur. If middle-class people wish to spin for their own requirements, you may give them the necessary facilities. If nobody listens to your appeal to wear khadi or to spin for his or her own clothing or by way of service, you may leave off khadi work. If the people agree to learn some other village or home industry, you may create the necessary facilities to enable them to do so, but see that we do not have to bear the expense for that. It should be possible to meet it from the sale-proceeds of the articles produced. And see that the industries which you select are also such that their products

[1] Address from a copy

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have a ready market; for instance, ghee, oil, jaggery, paper and some medicinal foods. This is only an illustrative list. If you cannot undertake any of these activities, you may try to run a hostel for Harijan boys and girls. If you cannot do even that, you may find out any other activity in the way of service.

I note that Gangabehn[1] refuses to sign for registration a document transferring the land and the building to the names of the trustees of the Ashram. But in spite of her refusal to sign there is no risk to the land. We have with us a document signed by her and, therefore, she can create no difficulty. And no third party can do so either. Am I right? If, however, there is any risk even in this, discuss the matter with Mavalankar[2].

Manu was betrothed the day before yesterday to Surendra Mashruwala. She is here for the present. She went to Akola yesterday for two days' stay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9682. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

87. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[About *October 29, 1935*][3]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. We have to be prepared for ups and downs in Kamala's health. I marvel at the resisting power Kamala is showing and so long as she has got this tremendous reserve of strength and will, we can hope for the best; at least I do. When I said good-bye to her in Bombay, I did not feel that we were parting for all time, and I naturally said: 'We are going to meet again in a year's time, if I am out till then.' I claim to have that hope still and I interpret your reports in that light.

I understand the depth of feeling behind your intense disinclination to see the "big folk",[4] but I know that in spite of your disinclination, if there is a real approach to you, you are not

[1] Gangabehn Majmudar
[2] G. V. Mavalankar
[3] The addressee reached England on October 29, 1935. Evidently the letter was written some time about this period. Again, in his letter dated November 7, 1935, to the addressee, Mahadev Desai wrote that Khurshed had already left.
[4] *Vide* p. 16.

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going to be unapproachable. I know that at a given moment your decisions are always correct. Your firm decision, therefore, does not frighten me. I share your view, however, that during the election fever nobody would want to see you, nobody would be in the mood to discuss things that are irrelevant to their electioneering campaign, and India has ever been irrelevant on such occasions. From your standpoint you will be going to England at a safe time.

Khurshedbehn will be most probably leaving for Bombay on Wednesday. She has a bit of a literary programme before her which should keep her busy for some months.

I wonder if you have ever time to look into *Harijan*, which is sent to you regularly?

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

88. LETTER TO ABHIMANYU

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
October 30, 1935

CHI. ABHIMANYU,

Your handwriting cannot be described as very good but it is fairly good. The letters in a word are also pictures, and a good picture is one that is an exact copy. If you drew such well-formed letters as looked like pictures, I would say your handwriting was good. According to me, learning to form letters is a step in the process of learning to draw. If you are eager to learn how to draw such letters, you may succeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5746

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89. LETTER TO G. K. DEODHAR

October 31, 1935

MY DEAR DEODHAR[1],

Kishorelal gives me a graphic and pathetic description of his visit to you. You are not a broken reed. You [have] a record of faithful service in the past and, God willing, you will rise from your sick-bed to render still further service. But if God has willed otherwise, what then? Your past—stainless past—is an absolute assurance of your equally stainless future, no matter where God takes you. You are a man of faith. It is always well with those that have faith. May God keep you in our midst for many a long year.

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

90. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
October 31, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Enclosed is a letter from Parikshitlal. You seem to have read it. I think I was wrong in giving my consent. Before I correct myself, however, I must have a clear idea of the situation[2]. I think that, if Harijans are physically ill-treated in a place and if they cannot get redress in any other way, they should leave that village and we should encourage them to do so. I have accepted and followed this policy for many years, both for individuals and groups. I started advocating it in 1906 and gave expression to my views in writing in 1908, and since then I have given the same advice on all occasions. When the Harijans of Talaja and of the villages near Meerut were terrorized, I gave this very advice. In Talaja, Pattanisaheb[3] intervened on behalf of the Harijans. In the village near Meerut, there was a court case which dragged

[1] Founder-member of the Servants of India Society, social reformer and friend of Harijans. He passed away on November 16, 1935; *vide* "Telegram to R. R. Bakhale", 16-11-1935.

[2] At Kavitha; *vide* p. 11.

[3] Prabhashankar Pattani, Dewan of Bhavnagar

on for a long time and the Harijans lost it. The lawyers and other advisers were lukewarm and the matter was not pursued. Possibly there are special reasons in the case of Kavitha which make mass migration inadvisable. But what is the harm if the Harijans, all or some of them, leave the place after serving notice on the caste Hindus? If you differ with me about this, please explain your point of view to me. I don't know if there are any special circumstances in Kavitha. You have been there and so will be able to throw plenty of light on the situation. We should not treat the Kavitha chapter as closed. We do not hear that the kind of things which happen in Gujarat ever happen in the other provinces. In Tamil Nad the relations between Nairs [*sic*] and Harijans are equally bad, but I have not heard of such things happening anywhere else. We must find some remedy.

Valchand[1] is thinking of coming here and bringing Ambedkar with him.

They have asked me about the programme to be drawn up during my visit there. It should include a tour of the Bhil areas and a tour for public collections for the Harijan Fund.

If the operations are necessary, you should get them done as soon as possible, unless of course the doctors think otherwise.

Deodhar is on his death-bed in Bhajekar's hospital. Write to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
DR. KANUGA'S BUNGALOW
ELLIS BRIDGE, AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 190-1

[1] Valchand Hirachand, an industrialist

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91. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

October 31, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I couldn't understand your letter. I remember your having written and told me that Sardar had gone to the place and brought about an understanding between the parties. But I did not know that though the Harijans were ready to migrate, Sardar disapproved of their intention. If he did, I must rectify the error now. I am asking Sardar how it can be done. You also may throw light on the matter. It was you, Dahyabhai[1] and Puratan[2] who gave me the information about Kavitha.

I had asked you to send me a scheme in connection with the appeal for funds, suggested by Thakkar Bapa, for the estimated expenses for the year. Either you did not get the letter or I did not receive your reply. I am waiting for your reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4005. Also C.W. 130. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

92. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

October 31, 1935

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. If you go to a village and engage yourself in silent service, you will experience peace of mind from the very first day. The people will not be able to rival you in making speeches, but they will be able to follow your example in hard work. If anybody from among the Harijans in Kavitha still wishes to leave the place, he can do so. Parikshitlal is keeping a watch on the situation.

What you say may be practicable where one latrine is used by one person. But in a place like Santa Cruz, as many as 25

[1] Dahyabhai M. Patel
[2] Puratan Buch

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people may be living in one bungalow. The latrine is at a height of 25 to 30 feet so that the stools fall to the ground from that height. Again, this can barely be removed through a dark passage. Now if there are no Bhangis in such a place, how and by whom would the latrine be cleaned? And such cleanliness maintained as you describe?

What you say about food and drink is correct. But since I myself have not been able to reach such an ideal state despite my strenuous efforts, what light can I throw on the subject? Maybe, in order to reach it many other things are necessary besides right food. Let all of us strive our best to reach it.

May you prosper in the new year.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI M. PATEL
DHOLKA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2707. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

93. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

October 31, 1935

CHI. MANI,

Why do you fall ill so often? I hope you don't think that devotion to one's father means that whenever the latter is ill one should fall ill, too? Shravana's parents were infirm, but he made his body as strong as steel and took them round on a pilgrimage, carrying them in a *kavad* carried across his shoulders. King Lear's daughter maintained good health while serving her father. Why have you, then, become prematurely old? If not indigestion, you have fever, and if not that you have cold, but you are always suffering from one thing or another. Why don't you find out the reason and make your body as strong as steel?

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 118

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94. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 1935

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. How could you trust Harilal? How can we believe in anything he says when drunk? But I am quite guarded. I am not going to spend a single pie out of public funds for his coming here or for keeping him here. I hope you also have not promised to pay him the [railway] fare from such funds. You know that formerly he had asked me for the fare and I had plainly refused.

Why do you insist on calling away Kanu against his will? He has settled down here now, his studies are progressing and his health also is improving. He does not at all feel happy in Rajkot. What is then the point in sending for him? He has been here only for fourteen months. He has been entrusted with responsible work. For that reason, too, it will be difficult for him to leave.

If he is to accompany me on my tour, he wouldn't like to miss even one day from it. Such absence would stand in the way of his acquiring practical experience, and perhaps I may not be in a position to spare him at that time. When he is needed here, I am sure you will not call him away. Hence, the most convenient and the best time for him to go there would be when I am here. Let Santok[1], therefore, come [here] any day between now and December 31 or she may do so after I return and get settled here, that is, at the earliest after the end of March. If you take into account Kanu's inclination and my convenience, he should be called away only after March, or for a few days just now. Personally he does not wish to leave this place for the present. That also should be borne in mind. But finally your wish is to prevail. I have simply given you the facts which I know, to enable you to come to a decision. You will know from his letter what activities he is engaged in here. Do let me know your final decision. I will carry it out.

If Jamnadas remains so ill, how will he be able to take up responsible tasks in his present condition? What arrangement has been made for his expenses? What is the expenditure on

[1] Maganlal Gandhi's widow

account of Chimanlal? Is all that met from the Ashram fund? What are his activities there? Send me the figure of the expenditure incurred every month from the Ashram reserves.

The reasoning behind three yards and two yards of khadi is this: Satis Babu and Jethalal think that any spinner who wishes to consume three yards of khadi for personal use will, if he produces two yards of khadi for sale, realize the cost of the three yards. These figures have no importance. We have made the calculations here on a different basis. I have not gone through them. I will publish the figures when I get time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8482. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

95. LETTER TO A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

[Before *November 2, 1935*]

Your meal is very meagre, it is starvation diet. In my opinion, you are not making full use of the instrument that God has put at your disposal. You know the story of the talents[2] that were taken away from him who did not know how to use them, or having known would not use them?

Mortification of the flesh is a necessity when the flesh rebels against one; it is a sin when the flesh has come under subjection and can be used as an instrument of service. In other words, there is no inherent merit in mortification of the flesh.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The addressee had "imposed on himself a strict regimen involving only one meal a day, consisting generally of 15 *tolas* of raw rice boiled, *amti* (made of vegetables and dal) and buttermilk—all costing only one anna per day".

[2] *St. Matthew*, xxv. 28-9

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96. A TALK[1]

[Before *November 2, 1935*]

A visitor asked Gandhiji if he was not putting too much emphasis on the gospel of work, if not making a kind of fetish of work. Gandhiji replied:

Not at all. I have always meant what I said. There can never be too much emphasis placed on work. I am simply repeating the gospel taught by the *Gita* where the Lord says: "If I did not remain ever at work sleeplessly, I should set a wrong example to mankind."[2] Did I not appeal to the professional men to turn the wheel to set an example to the rest of our countrymen?

[VISITOR:] Would you do the same thing with, say, one like Lord Buddha?

Yes; without the slightest hesitation.

Then what would you say about great saints like Tukaram and Jnanadev?

Who am I to judge them?

But you would judge Buddha?

I never said so. I simply said, if I had the good fortune to be face to face with one like him, I should not hesitate to ask him why he did not teach the gospel of work, in preference to one of contemplation. I should do the same thing if I were to meet these saints.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

97. NEED FOR HUMANE CUSTOM

Dr. P. C. Ray, who at his ripe age of 75 is exhibiting in the interest of suffering humanity the energy of youth, writes:[3]

The custom for fine khadi has fallen off even before the expected or rather threatened rise in prices. When it falls further, if it does, it will do so not because of the rise in prices but undoubtedly

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 23

[3] The letter is not reproduced here. P. C. Ray had written that they in Bengal had to seek the Bombay market as there was very little sale of fine khadi in Bengal.

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because of want of love or humanity in the buyer. Humanity does not search for low prices in a spirit of bargain. The humane in man, even in his purchases, seeks opportunities of service, and therefore wants to know first not the price of the article of purchase but the condition of its producers, and makes purchases in a manner that serves most the most needy and deserving. If a sufficiently large number of men and women were actuated by this spirit of love of fellow beings, there would be an ever-increasing demand for khadi, and now more than ever, because of the knowledge that extraordinary care is being taken to assure to the humblest spinner at least a subsistence wage—a wage which would enable her not merely to eke out a living somehow but which would enable her to get sustaining food.

Side by side with the attempt to give khadi artisans a subsistence wage there must be an attempt to find a better, i.e., more natural market for khadi. We have hitherto been satisfied with the easy way of obtaining custom only in the big cities—such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, etc. This was surely wrong. I have suggested to Dr. Ray that he should, if his health permits, deliver his message of love to the places surrounding the producing centres. The whole of Bengal wears fine cloth. Why should it not wear fine khadi? Under the new scheme it is possible to cheapen khadi if Bengal will produce cotton not for speculation but strictly for home use. But that day may be far off. For the time being Bengal as the rest of India should buy khadi for humanity's sake, not in a commercial spirit, counting the cost. We do not count the cost and find out what our children or our aged parents cost us. We support them at any cost. Should we do less for our millions of brothers and sisters who are starving by reason of our criminal neglect of them for centuries? We may leave no part of India neglected. The science of khadi requires decentralization of production and consumption. Consumption should take place as nearly as possible where khadi is produced. All effort should be directed towards that end. We may produce for the demands of the cities, but should never depend upon them as we would on the local market. We must first study the local market and supply its wants. And since all khadi artisans and wherever possible all artisans working under the aegis of the A. I. S. A. or A. I. V. I. A. will be expected to use khadi, a minimum demand will thus always be assured. Satis Babu and Shri Jethalal of Anantpur have made independent calculations and have concluded that self-sufficing khadi will mean two yards of sale outside against three yards of wear by the artisans. If the calculation is correct, self-sufficing

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khadi to be popular will need considerable support from local markets. Since other industries will go hand in hand with khadi, it may be that self-sufficing khadi will receive help through village industries other than khadi. The test of self-sufficing khadi lies in the fact that it will cost the wearer practically nothing but his labour. Self-sufficing khadi will never spread unless local markets are created all over the country and demand stabilized. In order to ensure stabilization it is necessary to define areas for every producing centre so as to avoid overlapping and unhealthy competition among workers attached to the same organization.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

98. GHEE

Those who can afford it are fond of eating ghee. It enters into the preparation of almost all the sweetmeats. And yet, or perhaps by reason of it, it is one of the most adulterated articles of food. The vast bulk of it that one gets in the bazar is undoubtedly adulterated. Some, if not most, of it is mixed with injurious fats which non-meat-eaters must not eat. Vegetable oils are often mixed with ghee. This mixture diminishes the vitamin value of ghee when it does not contain rancid oils. When the oils mixed are rancid, the ghee is unfit for consumption.

At Maganwadi we have been insisting on procuring cow's ghee. It has meant much difficulty and great expense. We have paid as much as Rs. 29 per 40 lb. plus railage.

This can only be for a rich man's pockets. We are trying as much as we can to approximate the poor man's standard consistent with balanced diet scale. I observed that Dr. Aykroyd had omitted ghee from his balanced diet scale.[1] Medical testimony, while it insists on milk or buttermilk, does not insist on butter or ghee as an indispensable part of the daily menu. We have tentatively dropped ghee from our menu, except for those who consider it to be necessary for their health. We are issuing an equivalent in weight of pure fresh vegetable oils. Millions in India never know the taste of ghee. After all it should be borne in mind that those who take milk get some ghee in the purest and most assimilable form. Apart from the question of relish it may safely be said that village workers can with impunity omit ghee from their diet so long as they can procure some milk or curds or buttermilk.

[1] *Vide* pp. 26-7.

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At the same time it is the duty of wealthy people and public bodies like municipalities to place at the disposal of the poor people cheap wholesome unadulterated milk and its products. Adulteration of milk or other foods should be as difficult as counterfeit coin or note or postage stamp, and their value should be standardized as is that of postage stamps.

If half the skill that is today devoted to the management of commercial concerns meant for private gain were devoted to the conduct of dairies for the public benefit and shops for food-stuffs, they could be run as self-supporting institutions. There is nothing to prevent them from becoming so, except the public disinclination to give the requisite skill and capital to such philanthropic concerns. The benevolence of the wealthy is exhausted in the effort to run *sadavrats*[1], to misfeed the ever-increasing army of beggars who are a burden on society. For they eat without labouring. It is benevolence misplaced, if it may not be described as mischievous. The difficulty amounting to impossibility of getting wholesome articles of diet at reasonable rates in every town and village is a great stumbling-block in the way of the village worker. Time is not wasted when village workers attempt to find out by experiments what in spite of this handicap are the indigenous sources of procuring an adequate diet.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

99. NOTES

Apologies to Visitors

Maganwadi is taxed to its utmost limit. It has guest quarters with maximum accommodation for 12. They are principally meant for A. I. V.I. A. Board members and those who are invited for consultation or otherwise by the Chairman or the Secretary. But wherever I stay people gravitate from all parts. I have made it a rule to ask them so far as possible to share with me what has been put at my disposal. The result is that my abode has become a dharmashala without any private quarters. In dry weather this is no hardship. People sleep on the ample flat roof of the rooms occupied by me and the Board office. In the daytime they spread out anyhow. Living thus it is not possible for me to find comfortable rooms for an unlimited number of visitors. Yet they come without notice and without appointment. Add to this the fact that

[1] Charitable eating-houses

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we are working without servants. Cooking, washing and cleaning are all done by us. The resources of Maganwadi are therefore truly taxed when visitors come as they do without notice. I am obliged to refuse them accommodation or food. The latter is always cooked according to the number known to be resident the previous night. This is all contrary to convention. In an Indian household, a chance comer becomes an honoured guest, and he shares what is prepared for the household. But Maganwadi is not a household. It is a trust created solely for the service of the semi-starved unemployed or semi-employed millions. We are trying in the best manner we know to husband all our resources to save every pice we can. We have therefore no warrant for providing a lavish table at which all who come may sit.

Hence even at the risk of being considered rude or miserly, I am obliged to be very strict and turn away those who come without previous appointment. Those who have therefore been, much against my wish, refused hospitality will please extend their sympathy to me and excuse me. Future comers will take note of the peculiar position we are in at Maganwadi. I may mention for the convenience of those who must come without notice that within a stone's throw of Maganwadi there is a well-appointed dharmashala capable of taking in a fair number of guests. It has private quarters too for a limited number. I would like to add that in asking for appointments would-be comers should have mercy on me. It taxes all my strength to cope with the day-to-day work. No appointment should therefore be sought except for the benefit of the tasks which at the moment engage my attention to the exclusion of all else.

Lajpat Rai Week

The All-India Achhutoddhar Committee, which was started by the late Lala Lajpat Rai, has decided to celebrate a Harijan Week in the revered memory of the Lion of the Punjab as from 11th November to 17th November. Besides what local committees may arrange, the A. I. A. C. has circularized the workers in the Harijan cause all over India to observe certain common features. They are as follows:

> November 11 : *Prabhat pheris* singing songs impressing upon the minds of all the necessity of treating the Harijans as brothers and sisters, and reciting the services of Lalaji in the Harijan cause.
>
> November 12: *Kathas* of religious literature, such as *Ramayana*, *Gita*, *Bhagawat*, etc., to be read in Harijan quarters by *purohits* and pundits. Other Hindus should be invited to these *kathas*.

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November 13: *Panchayats* to be held in Harijan quarters or temples to which all groups of the Harijans should be invited. Speeches emphasizing removal of untouchability among Harijans themselves and other evil habits.

November 14: Caste ladies to be persuaded to visit Harijan sisters in their quarters and establish social contacts with them.

November 15: Baby show. Harijan mothers with their babies should be invited to a temple or dharmashala where caste ladies would meet them and award the babies presents and prizes for cleanliness and good health.

November 16: Games. Caste students should fraternize with Harijan students and play with them indigenous games and end with light refreshments.

Shri Algurai Shastri who has sent circulars to friends informs me that the programme above sketched is subject to change. Readers should therefore be ready for alterations that may be sent from headquarters. The chief point to remember is that the celebrations must be fitting to the great cause and the memory of the illustrious patriot and reformer. Workers and committees should zealously devote themselves to the success of the celebrations.

Harijan, 2-11-1935

100. TWO QUESTIONS

A worker of the Harijan movement has sent me two written questions, of which the first one is:[1]

There is no dilemma here. When we take a Harijan into our family circle, we should tell him all the rules of our household at the very beginning. He should be told plainly that guests who observe untouchability also visit us and in order not to violate their principles they would be served drinks and other things by us or by the other servants. The Bhangi servant who knows this custom of ours will have no cause to feel hurt. But the above question implies that because of such behaviour a new problem faces the Bhangi. Hence, in such circumstances we should clarify our position to the Bhangi as well as the guest. Then neither is deceived and there is no dilemma.

The second question is this:[2]

[1] Not reproduced here. The worker had asked whether he should let his Harijan servant serve his guests.

[2] Not reproduced here. It asked whether guests at dinner parties for Harijans should be forewarned about the caste of the cooks, etc.

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If this question relates to an event in the past, then it is quite pointless. I can only speak for the future. When we invite all communities of Harijans for a feast, they must be informed beforehand that the meals would be cooked and served by Bhangi Harijans only. If we do not make this clear, then we are certainly guilty of practising deception. We should never forget the fact that the poison of untouchability has permeated Harijans as well.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 2-11-1935

101. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
November 2, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Will it be convenient to arrange the collection for the Harijan Fund during my visit there for the [Gujarati] Sahitya [Parishad] ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4004. Also C.W. 131. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

102. LETTER TO MANEKLAL AND RADHA GANDHI

November 2, 1935

CHI. MANEKLAL AND RADHA,

I have the New Year day letters from both of you and was glad to read them. May the new year bring you happiness and prosperity.

Ba is here. Devdas recovered recently from his illness. He will come over here for rest. Ramdas is in Bombay, doing nothing there. One cannot quite say that he has settled down. Manu and Kanti are here. Manu is betrothed to Surendra, Kishorelalbhai's nephew.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

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

[1] This is followed by a note to someone, saying: "I was glad to read this." November 2 being Monday was a silence day.

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103. A FATAL FALLACY[1]

Among the questions that a correspondent asked me for discussion in *Harijan* there was one which I have kept on my file for some time:

> Don't you think that it is impossible to achieve any great reform without winning political power? The present economic structure has also got to be tackled. No reconstruction is possible without a political reconstruction and I am afraid all this talk of polished and unpolished rice, balanced diet and so on and so forth is mere moonshine.

I have often heard this argument advanced as an excuse for failure to do many things. I admit that there are certain things which cannot be done without political power, but there are numerous other things which do not at all depend upon political power. That is why a thinker like Thoreau said that "that government is the best which governs the least." This means that when people come into possession of political power, the interference with the freedom of people is reduced to a minimum. In other words, a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without much State interference is truly democratic. Where such a condition is absent, the form of government is democratic in name.

There is certainly no limit or restraint on the freedom of thought. It may be remembered that many reformers are nowadays laying the greatest emphasis on a new ideology. How few of us are going in for any reform in our opinions? Modern scientists recognize the potency of thought and that is why it is said that as a man thinks so does he become. One who always thinks of murder will turn a murderer, and one who thinks of incest will be incestuous. On the contrary he who always thinks of truth and non-violence will be truthful and non-violent, and he whose thoughts are fixed on God will be godly. In this realm of thought political power does not come into play at all. Even so it must be obvious that political power or want of it is of no consequence in many of our activities. I would make a humble suggestion to the correspondent. Let him make a detailed note of all his daily activities and he is sure to find that many of them are performed

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 3-11-1935.

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independently of any political power. Man has to thank himself for his dependence. He can be independent as soon as he wills it.

The correspondent has raised the bugbear of 'great' reform and then fought shy of it. He who is not ready for small reforms will never be ready for great reforms. He who makes the best of his faculties will go on augmenting them, and he will find that what once seemed to him a great reform was really a small one. He who orders his life in this way will lead a truly natural life. One must forget the political goal in order to realize it. To think in terms of the political goal in every matter and at every step is to raise unnecessary dust. Why worry one's head over a thing that is inevitable? Why die before one's death?

That is why I can take the keenest interest in discussing vitamins and leafy vegetables and unpolished rice. That is why it has become a matter of absorbing interest to me to find out how best to clean our latrines, how best to save our people from the heinous sin of fouling Mother Earth every morning. I do not quite see how thinking of these necessary problems and finding a solution for them has no political significance and how an examination of the financial policy of Government has necessarily a political bearing. What I am clear about is that the work I am doing and asking the masses to do is such as can be done by millions of people, whereas the work of examining the policy of our rulers will be beyond them. That it is a few people's business I will not dispute. Let those who are qualified to do so do it as best as they can. But until these leaders can bring great changes into being, why should not millions like me use the gifts that God has given them to the best advantage? Why should they not make their bodies fitter instruments of service? Why should not they clear their own doors and environments, of dirt and filth ? Why should they be always in the grip of disease and incapable of helping themselves or anyone else ?

No, I am afraid the correspondent's question betrays his laziness and despair and the depression that has overtaken many of us. I can confidently claim that I yield to none in my passion for freedom. No fatigue or depression has seized me. Many years' experience has convinced me that the activities that absorb my energies and attention are calculated to achieve the nation's freedom, that therein lies the secret of non-violent freedom. That is why I invite everyone, men and women, young and old, to contribute his or her share to the great sacrifice.

Harijan, 11-1-1936

104. SOME WAYS OF SERVING THE COW

Shri Purushottam Narhar Joshi who calls himself a worker in the cause of the cow writes as follows:[1]

This letter deserves consideration. Only an institution can put into practice the suggestions made in it. Some of them can be implemented by Government authority alone. However, every reader of *Harijanbandhu* can implement one point. He should use nothing but cow's milk and ghee made from cow's milk. Cow's milk is better and more nourishing than buffalo's milk. Nothing but cow's milk should be given to children. Ghee made from this is easier to digest. The testimony of doctors and vaids regarding these two points has already been published in *Harijanbandhu.* Despite this, many people use buffalo's milk and ghee made from it for the sake of their taste. Some others, while prepared to drink cow's milk, are not ready to use ghee made from it. They claim that the ghee made from buffalo's milk alone is good. It is whiter in appearance and is thicker in consistency. Many people who have become accustomed to its appearance and taste are not ready to give it up for the sake of the cow or the country. In fact the whiteness and the consistency of ghee made from buffalo's milk are themselves points against it. It seems impossible to keep both the cow and the buffalo alive. If the buffalo is to survive, the cow must perish. The buffalo is dying even now. It is because we deliberately permit the slaughter of he-buffaloes that the she-buffalo survives. If, therefore, we remain negligent, we shall be instrumental in destroying both the cow and the buffalo and shall become dependent upon milk and butter imported from countries where thousands of cows are slaughtered daily and not a single cow is even allowed to grow old. Any reader who does nothing beyond insisting upon what I have suggested will make his contribution to cow-protection and averting this terrible calamity.

Shri Joshi refers to the Goseva Sangh. That organization is not defunct; there are some members who still belong to it. One may say that its activities as an organization are very few, nevertheless it does continue to exist. A few individual *go-sevaks* are being trained. A dairy is being run under its auspices.

[1] The letter is not translated here.

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Another receives inspiration from it. At the moment, I am not in a position to point out any tangible result of its activities. Attempts are being made to demonstrate such results. God alone knows what will happen in the future.

There is no doubt that much can be accomplished if the Indian States start implementing Shri Joshi's suggestions. Even if the work is taken up on a large scale and in a co-ordinated manner in the States of Kathiawar alone, it cannot but succeed. And once its success is demonstrated, it cannot but spread to other parts. Shri Joshi fails to mention that a tannery is an important instrument in saving the cow. As this has been often repeated in *Harijanbandhu*, I do not mention it here again. But every *go-sevak* has to bear this fact in mind.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-11-1935

105. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

November 4, 1935

DEAR MATHEW,

Your letter to hand. I never threw you overboard. I have dealt with you no otherwise than I have with my blood-son and blood-sister. I repeat my advice to you not to come if you can be suited elsewhere. I must refuse to undertake the support of your parents until I am satisfied that you can cheerfully labour with your hands and feet the whole day long and assiduously make up your Hindi and that you have consecrated yourself to constructive work through me and that there remains no cause to suspect your purity.

Love.

BAPU

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

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106. LETTER TO S. DUTTA

November 4, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I know Sjt. Krishnadas very well. If you will give your daughter to a man of character, staunch and true, even though he may be above 40, possessing no means nor a strong physical frame, Krishnadas will make a wholly worthy husband.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

S. DUTTA
C/O PROF. BOSE
BALLYGUNJ, CALCUTTA

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

107. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

WARDHA,
November 4, 1935

CHI. TARA,

I like your letter very much. I shall wait for you on the 7th. I fully agree with your view. I do not want to tempt you in any way. At present I only want to help you as much as I can in improving your health. I am not writing separately to Nanabhai[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN
C/O NANABHAI MASHRUWALA
AKOLA, BERAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6697. Also C.W. 4342. Courtesy: Nanabhai I. Mashruwala

[1] Addressee's father

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108. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

WARDHA,
November 6, 1935

DEAR NIRMAL BABU,

Ghani[1] tells me that ten rupees out of his account are missing and that you propose to reimburse the loss from your pocket. That is not to be thought of for a single minute. Such things will always happen especially where Ghani is involved. He has been brought up in the lap of luxury. He is a spoilt child of his family. You must not, therefore, worry over the loss. Surely it is enough that you have given him your precious time and bestowed on him such extraordinary care.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE
6/IA BRITISH INDIAN STREET, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 10521-a

109. LETTER TO S. P. KAMAT

November 6, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I know that some khadi bhandars have been having their khadi dyed and bleached through mills, if not with the permission, certainly with the connivance of the A. I. S. A. I do not propose to interfere with them all of a sudden, but your objection is sound. I shall see what is practicable in view of the fact that the custom of having khadi dyed and bleached through mills has been going on for some years.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. P. KAMAT
ANKOLA (NORTH KANARA DIST.)

From a photostat: G.N. 5680

[1] Abdul Ghani, son of Abdul Ghaffar Khan

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110. LETTER TO S. V. KOWJALGI

November 6, 1935

DEAR SRINIVASARAO,

I have a vivid recollection of our meeting at Bijapur but none of your letter. All my 'secretaries' were not secretaries but youngsters who were doing their very best to share my burden. Mahadev himself was in the Belgaum jail. But to show how much I value your letters and your co-operation, whenever you can give it to me, I hasten to reply per return.[1]

1. The story of Rama and Ravana is to my mind an allegory. In my preface[2] to *Anasaktiyoga* I have explained what I understand by 'incarnation'. What Rama used were spiritual weapons, i.e., satyagraha against the material weapons of the ten-headed Ravana. There is intrinsic support in Tulsidas's *Ramayana* for this interpretation.

[1] The addressee, in his letter dated November 1, had asked: (1) When Ravana carried away Sita, why did not Shri Rama practise satyagraha instead of going to Lanka and destroying Ravana? (2) Shri Krishna, the author of the *Bhagavad Gita* which you have annotated, says:

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते
हत्वाऽपि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते । [XVIII. 17]

Not only did he say this but helped, though himself unarmed, the Pandavas to conquer the Kauravas after a bloody battle in which millions of warriors were killed, frequently with the power of his brain which proved superior to material weapons, in order to gain their birth-right. Does this not show that Shri Krishna did believe in the destruction of evil rather than in its reform by peaceful methods? (3) When Vishwamitra proceeded to snatch away Kamadhenu by force and when she complained to her master Vasishtha, the latter told her that he was precluded by his vow from getting angry or retaliating, but at the same time permitted her to protect herself against the outrage. Thereon soldiers fully armed cropped up from every hair of hers and routed the army of Vishwamitra with great slaughter. Why did not Vasishtha permit her to be taken by Vishwamitra? Why did he not practise satyagraha to retain her by peaceful means? (4) It is said that Buddha died of poisoned animal food offered to him by a devotee. We find all his followers to be flesh-eaters. How is this consistent with ahimsa? (5) Is there any instance in history where evil—unreformable evil—was conquered by good only by peaceful means?

[2] *Vide* Vol. XLI.

2. The verse you quote from the *Bhagavad Gita*, in my opinion, emphasizes the interpretation that I have put upon the whole teaching of the *Gita*, namely, that when a man has lost his egotism and his intellect remains untarnished, what though he should kill all life. In other words, such a person would be incapable of killing.

3. My interpretation of the version of Kamadhenu is that the rage of Vishwamitra was impotent to touch even a single hair of the Kamadhenu. It is an illustration of the famous saying that God is the help of the helpless.

4. Eating of animal food as a matter of habit is not inconsistent with the observance of ahimsa, even as eating milk and vegetable which have also life is not inconsistent with the practice of ahimsa. I have elsewhere argued that practice of absolute ahimsa by embodied life is an utter impossibility.

5. Perhaps your question is not properly put. There can be no question of conquering evil. Evil will always retain its quality but what we endeavour always is to induce our companions, even as we try ourselves, to rid them and us of evil. Is not history replete with instances of men and women, the most evil-minded, being reformed by an appeal to their higher natures? I have not entered into an elaborate argument because I assume that you will take the trouble of procuring a copy of my introduction to *Anasaktiyoga*. It is translated into Marathi—I believe also in Kanarese. An English translation was published in the pages of *Young India*, but so far as I am aware it has never been published in book form as yet.

I hope you are keeping well.

Sjt. S. V. KOWJALGI
ADVOCATE, BIJAPUR

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 6569

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111. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 7, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter after a long wait. The surprising thing is that in America you did not receive even one letter of mine. You should have received at least three. I have the dates of posting. These shall be given at the end of this letter as they have to be traced in the diary. But our agreement stipulated your writing every week irrespective of my writing or not writing. It is possible that I may have nothing much to say while you must always have something new to write about. Anyway, let bygones be bygones. Now I shall expect a letter from you every week. I have also made it a practice to send on your letters to Draupadi and Ramdas; to the latter because of his specific request and to the former just by the way. It has brought forth one result, namely, that Draupadi is obliged to write in reply. Otherwise would she have at all written to me?

I did not expect you to pay your way so soon in America but I did hold that it would not be difficult to live on modest means. Anyway, now that you are there you may stay on till you are satisfied. You should leave only when you feel that you have nothing further to learn regarding nature cure. The experiences of America will be almost repeated in England. There, too, you will not find much by way of nature cure but it was imperative that you visit the West. Quite a few misconceptions persist until experience drives them out. From this angle I do not regard your trip unproductive.

Do see Shelton's place if you have not visited it so far; Govind waxed eloquent over it. His Health School is situated in San Antonio, Texas.

You must have got the letter for England which I sent at your request.

You ask me what I meant by saying that you would open out in America. I meant that the slight eccentricity or say a kind of kink that you possessed would be straightened out there and that you would develop the habit of living well-adjusted to others. Your account has been received. You should keep up

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correspondence with Bhai Brijmohanji but you need not send him an account of your expenses. You must have got the *Harijan* issues. They have been sent so far to Dr. Holmes's address as also my letters but this letter I am sending to Dr. Kellogg's address. I have already forwarded to you the letter I received from Dr. Kellogg. What advice can I give you from here regarding your health except that you should be well protected against the cold and should walk daily at least ten miles? You should partake liberally of milk and fruit and eat salads prepared from greens. This much should ensure good health; and keep up the breathing exercises.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Dates of letters sent to America:
1. Friday, September 20
2. Thursday, October 3
3. Friday[1], October 10

Three letters.

HERBERT SHELTON'S HEALTH SCHOOL
SAN ANTONIO (TEXAS)

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 208 and 209

112. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 8, 1935

CHI. OM,

I got your letter at long last after waiting for many days. How dare I reproach you? I accept what you give me. I must content myself with it. Ambujam also gives me news about you from time to time. You are having good experience there[2]. Take the best advantage of it. I am sure you will perfect your English. The music in that place is also reputed to be excellent. Learn it well. I do hope that you will learn Tamil at any rate, and will also propagate Hindi there. Reduce your weight too. In short,

[1] Evidently a slip for 'Thursday'

[2] The addressee, had joined the Vidyodaya School at Madanapalle where S. Ambujammal was the head mistress.

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since you have gone to such a distant place prove yourself worthy of the great, although mono-syllabic, name[1] which you sport. There must be some meaning in your owning a name which, the Shastras say, leads to spiritual welfare. I want you to justify this belief. You do possess some of the virtues symbolized in this syllable. If you acquire a few more, you will need nothing else. I will also tell you another thing, in case you do not know it. Sanskrit words are spoken with perfect pronunciation in Tamilnad as in Maharashtra. Maharashtra is good in respect of pronunciation but the quality of music is not so high. In Tamilnad, the Sanskrit *mantras*, etc., are recited melodiously and in a sweet voice. You can learn all this with Ambujam's help. All this can be learnt with little trouble. It will not be necessary to spend much time over it. May this year prove good for you. Now that you have started writing, please keep up the practice and write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 341-2

113. NOTE ON CALCUTTA BUSTIS OR SLUMS[2]

Many a time have I rehearsed to myself what I should do if I were a member of a corporation, and when years ago I used to walk through the streets of Calcutta and compare the palaces with their beautiful and sanitary surroundings with the ugliness and want of sanitation of its slums, I used to say to myself that the work and worth of the Corporation of Calcutta should be measured not by the number or beauty of its palaces, but by the condition of its slums, and I felt that then the Corporation had neglected its duties.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

[1] The mystic syllable ॐ standing for the Brahman or the Supreme

[2] A. V. Thakkar's article which appeared along with this note is not reproduced here.

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114. MEDICAL RELIEF

Medical relief as part of village work or social service plays an important part in many reports I receive from numerous organizations. This relief consists of medicines supplied to patients who from far and near flock to any person who advertises himself as distributor of such relief. It means no trouble on the part of the medicine man. He need not have much or any knowledge of diseases and the symptoms. Medicines he often receives free from obliging chemists. Donations are always to be had from indiscriminate donors whose conscience is satisfied if they can distribute their charity in aid of suffering humanity.

This social service has appeared to me to be the laziest form of service and often even mischievous. It works mischief when the patient is expected to do nothing save to swallow the drug given to him. He is none the wiser for having received the medicine. If anything, he is worse off than before. The knowledge that he can get for nothing, or for a trifle, a pill or a potion that will correct certain irregularities will tempt him to repeat them. The fact that he gets such aid free of charge will undermine his self-respect which should disdain to receive anything for nothing.

There is another type of medical relief which is a boon. It is given by those who know the nature of diseases, who will tell the patients why they have their particular complaints and will also tell them how to avoid them. Such servants will rush to assist at all odd hours of the day or night. Such discriminating relief is an education in hygiene, teaching the people how to observe cleanliness and to gain health. But such service is rare. In the majority of cases mention of medical relief in reports is a piece of advertisement leading to donations for other activities requiring perhaps as little exertion or knowledge as medical relief. I would therefore urge all workers in the social field, whether urban or rural, to treat their medical activity as the least important item of service. It would be better to avoid all mention of such relief. Workers would do well to adopt measures that would prevent disease in their localities. Their stock of medicines should be as small as possible. They should study the bazaar medicines available in their villages, know their reputed properties, and use them as far as possible. They will find as we are finding in Sindi that hot

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water, sunshine, clean salt and soda with an occasional use of castor oil or quinine answer most purposes. We make it a point to send all serious cases to the Civil Hospital. Patients flock to Mirabehn and receive lessons in hygiene and prevention of diseases. They do not resent this method of approach instead of simply being given a powder or a mixture.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

115. SOYA BEANS

Inquiries are being made as to where soya beans are to be had and how they are to be sown and in what ways they are to be cooked.

The leaflet published by the Bombay Health Association was condensed in these columns only recently. I now give below a free translation of the main parts of a Gujarati leaflet published by the Baroda State Food Survey Office. Its cost is one pice:

> Soya beans grow on a plant from one foot to fifteen inches in height. Every pod has on an average three beans. The plant has many varieties. The bean may be white, yellow, blackish, variegated, etc. The yellow variety has the largest percentage of protein and fat. This variety is more nutritious than meat or eggs. The Chinese eat beans with rice. Soya bean flour may be mixed with ordinary flour in the proportion of one to five parts of wheat and turned into chapatis.
>
> Soya bean crop improves the soil. Instead of deriving nitrogen like other plants from the soil, soya bean derives it from the air and thus enriches the soil.
>
> Soya bean grows in practically all soils. It thrives most in soils favourable to cotton or grain crops. Salt soil improves if soya bean is sown in it. In such soil more manure should be used. Fermented cowdung, grass, leaves and dungheap manure are quite serviceable for this crop.
>
> Temperate climate suits the bean. It thrives where the rainfall is not more than 40 inches. It should not be sown in water-logged soil. The bean is generally sown after the first rains, but it can be sown during any season. In the dry season it requires to be watered once a week, or twice if the soil is inclined to dry quickly.
>
> The soil is best prepared in summer. It should be ploughed up and exposed to the sun's rays. Then the clods should be broken up and pulverized.
>
> The seed should be sown in rows twenty-four to thirty-six inches apart. The plants should be three to four inches apart in their rows. There should be frequent weeding.

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One acre would take from 20 to 30 lb. of seeds. They should not be sown deeper than two inches. One acre will require about 10 cart-loads of manure.

After the sprouting of the seeds there should be proper weeding with a light plough. All crust should be broken up.

The pods are ready for picking in 120 days after sowing. They should be picked as soon as the leaves begin to turn yellow and drop off. They should not be allowed to be on the plants till they open, or else the seeds will drop out and be lost in the soil.

So much for the crop.

Now a word as to the results of the experiment being made in Maganwadi.

It is too early to draw deductions as yet. It may be said that the weight of the inmates has kept constant. In a few cases there has been a decided increase—in one case as much as 4½ lb. in a fortnight. Ghee has been stopped since the close of the first week. The absence of it has yet made no impression on the weight. One ounce of oil is being issued instead. The ration of beans has been increased for the current week from two ounces to three per head. The bean is served both morning and evening. They are soaked for some hours and then cooked well. Water in which it is steamed is strained out and tamarind and salt added to it. It makes a very popular soup. To the bean after straining are added linseed or *til* oil and salt making a tasty dish. In the morning the bean is served with chapati or *bhakhari* and in the evening with rice. The bean requires to be chewed well. No ill effect has yet been reported.

The bean is obtainable in Bombay and Baroda. Negotiations are being carried on for a reduction in the price. Meanwhile small quantities can be had from Maganwadi at three annas per pound, railage extra. This price is prohibitive. By some mistake our beans were received from Baroda by passenger train instead of goods. My advice to senders is not yet to order the beans from Maganwadi. Godrej and Co. (Parel, Bombay) supply the beans in Bombay and the Baroda Food Survey Office in Baroda.

Harijan, 9-11-1935

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116. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

WARDHA,
November 9, 1935

MY DEAR ANAND,

The pamphlets are well got up. I am glad that *From Yeravda*[1] was sold out so quickly.

You must not allow your constipation to persist. You must take serious steps to get rid of it not by drugging yourself but by proper dietetics. Wheat bread, prunes, pure and raw milk and plenty of leafy vegetables—raw and cooked—ought to see you through.

I have a letter from Vidya[2], which still awaits answering. I do hope she is getting on well.

Love.

BAPU

SJT. ANAND T. HINGORANI
D/3 COSMOPOLITAN COLONY
KARACHI (SIND)

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

117. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 9, 1935

CHI. NARAHARI,

I saw your letter only last night, because Kaka had forgotten [to hand it over to me]. It will be good if you can anyhow persuade Bhai Velchand to start paying Rs. 500 a month. In fact, he should have started doing so as soon as he had decided to do so.

It is good news that Vanu[3] has recovered completely. Her leaving the Vidyapith is a great act of renunciation. But it will

[1] *From Yeravda Mandir*, English translation of *Mangal Prabhat*; *vide* Vol. XLIV, p-40 and Vol. XLIX, pp. 41 and 181.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Vanamala, addressee's daughter

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endure only if her attachment for the Vidyapith is dead. I hope you haven't in any way coerced her into taking the step. Otherwise she will always repent it afterwards and will continue to nurse the desire in her heart. If, however, the arrangement that you have made endures, the work being done there will shine out very well.

It won't be in my hands to arrange where I will stay. I believe it will be done by the Sahitya [Parishad]. See the person in charge and do what may be necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9091

118. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

November 9, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your postcard. If you come to meet me in January it will be too late. . . . is coming here on the 12th at my call. He will stay here as long as I wish. I sent for him earlier on the strength of your letter. I will arrange to send your brother's son to Bhavnagar and then you, too, after your work here is finished. You will feel completely at home here, and so will have good rest and will at the same time see some new things. Perhaps you know that Mahila Ashram, Kanya Vidyalaya, Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh and such other activities are being run here. Women from different provinces have gathered here. Hence even from the point of view of experience, your time will not have been wasted. Besides, you will be able to fulfil your resolve mentioned in your letter. You may come and see me again in January in Ahmedabad. Please, therefore, don't fail to come to Wardha now, if you can manage to do so somehow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 938. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

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119. LETTER TO A. S. SATYARTHI[1]

[Before *November 10, 1935*][2]

Malaviyaji occupies an unrivalled position in the country and in the Congress. He at least should be above aspersions. If your translation is correct, the writer of the paragraph in his zeal to vilify Malaviyaji has not had strict regard for truth. Malaviyaji never applied for the Communal Award.

The Hindustan Times, 11-11-1935

120. LETTER TO UMASHANKAR J. JOSHI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 10, 1935

BHAI UMASHANKAR[3],

Never mind if you are an utterly unsophisticated man; why can't you write to me and tell me in a postcard, without arguing, what I as President of the Conference should do? Do write to me. And if you are harbouring any suspicion that I told you I could not understand your previous letter even though I had understood it, banish that suspicion from your mind. I sought Mahadev's help also to understand it, but when even he could not help I sent the reply I did.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10705. Courtesy: Umashankar J. Joshi

[1] Some statements against Madan Mohan Malaviya had appeared in a language newspaper of Lahore. The addressee was General Secretary of the Punjab Congress Nationalist Party.

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Lahore, November 10, 1935".

[3] Gujarati poet and man of letters

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121. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

November 10, 1935

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I read the letters. I see no need for Kamalnayan[1] to write to Dr. Jawaharlal. It will do if you yourself write to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2976

122. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[Before *November 12, 1935*][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I learnt only today from Narandas's letter that you were running fever. Your letter came later.

It seems you have not properly understood the point of what I have written to Jethalal[3]. I did disapprove of Bharatan[4] getting Rs. 50. However, he had given up a post of Rs. 300 a month and even now he can get a job which would bring him the same income or even more. From the Rs. 50 which he takes, he gives as much as half to a poor student whom he supports. Bhai Jethalal is looking for some other job or occupation and will leave the work of the Seva Sangh as soon as he gets any. I had clearly seen this. I hope you will be able to see the difference between the two cases. Those of you who take more than Jethalal does have dedicated yourselves to public work and your market value is greater than what you are getting at present. That is the difference. Even so, I do expect increasing self-sacrifice, within

[1] Addressee's son

[2] According to the addressee the letter was received on November 12, 1935.

[3] Jethalal Joshi, who had resigned from the National School and accepted the post of secretary, Seva Sangh, Rajkot on a remuneration of Rs. 40 per month.

[4] Bharatan Kumarappa, an office-bearer of A. I. V. I. A.

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your capacity, from you all, though I wouldn't feel disappointed, either, if that expectation did not materialize.

Get well soon. We shall meet when it is so willed by God.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5537

123. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

WARDHA,
November 12, 1935

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

I have your letter. It satisfied me. Malkani too wrote about you. I want to retain you as the Editor even though you continue to live where you are. You will send from there whatever you can. If an agency of *Harijan Sevak* can be carried on in Delhi, that too should be done. If you have someone in mind who can cope with all the work here, do send me his name as also what he would expect by way of salary. Your maintenance, as Malkani has said, will be provided by the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the editorship will be only honorary. I shall inform you when the date for the publication from here of *Harijan Sevak* is fixed. It will be enough if the list and other things are kept ready. If the list can be prepared in duplicate, a copy may be sent in advance.

If the names and the addresses of the subscribers are printed, they should also be sent. There is of course no hurry about anything; for the press, etc., will not be arriving till towards the end of the month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1078

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124. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

November 12, 1935

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. There are many reasons for issuing *Harijan Sevak* from here. Ghanshyamdas had approved of all the suggestions as also Viyogi Hari's coming here. But I understand your difficulties. You shall certainly keep him. I shall manage somehow. He also likes the idea of staying there. More when we meet.

Herewith a letter[1] for Viyogi Hari.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. N. R. MALKANI
DELHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1168

125. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 12, 1935

The sight of your handwriting has become rare these days. But I am content that you let me have it every time there is some crisis.

I am cherishing the hope that for the present I will at least get a postcard from you from time to time. The Sardar suffers more because he delayed [his operation][2]. But there is no fear, since he knows how to bear pain and can laugh even while in pain.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 159-60

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel had undergone an operation for piles on November 9, 1935.

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126. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. JAYANTI,

I got your letter.

Swaraj is definitely connected with politics. But many an activity can have its roots in swaraj, and not in politics. For example, I would definitely regard it your contribution, however small, to the winning of swaraj if you all three brothers[1] engage yourselves in business—at present not for your own benefit but to help your father[2] and to pay off his debts. Please remember that our means of winning swaraj are non-violent and doing one's dharma is the most important of non-violent means.

May this year see your noble aspirations bear good fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6271

127. LETTER TO KANTI N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter.

Never mind if you have changed from a farmer to a businessman. Are all our dreams realized, even if they were noble ?

Most of the band of eighty[3] have taken up some work or other for themselves. How, then, can we find fault with Jayanti or Indu[4]? Besides, a special dharma has arisen for Jayanti and Indu, as it has for you. I do not regard it as a breach of your former pledge[5] if you three brothers do your dharma. If, when

[1] The addressee, Kanti and Indu
[2] Nathubhai, a businessman of Calicut
[3] Who participated in the Dandi March
[4] Who, however, was not one of the eighty
[5] *Vide* Vol. XLIII, p. 358.

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he is in difficulty, you don't help your father who has sacrificed everything for you, you cannot claim to be devoted to him. No higher dharma is facing you just now. Of course, I do wish that even for your father's sake you should not violate moral principles for earning money.

I have no other reason than this in my mind when I advise Indu to give up his education at an early age.

May this year see your noble aspirations fulfilled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6273

128. LETTER TO INDU N. PAREKH

November 12, 1935

CHI. INDU,

I at any rate didn't know that you had gone to Calicut. I have dictated letters for your two brothers and so there is nothing new to tell you.

Harbhai and Moolshankar[1] have come to see me today. They will stay here for some time. If you write to this address, they will get your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6272

129. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

November 12, 1935

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Show the remarks on the reverse to Father. I hear that everybody was extremely pleased with the way Jawaharlal conducted himself.[2]

[1] Moolshankar Mohanlal Bhatt

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru had, at Gandhiji's instance, seen several British statesmen in England.

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Father must be in excellent spirit and making the doctors laugh with his jokes. Don't neglect your own health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 118

130. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

WARDHA,
November 13, 1935

CHI. MARY,[1]

I have just received your letter. I have written to Margarete and sent her a general note of introduction.

I believe that Shanta has been suffering from over-tiredness; but it was strong enough to induce fever which she seems to have got rid of. She is taking sufficient nourishment—five to six pounds of milk and fruit daily. Sumitra[2] had a very bad night. She developed high fever, about 105°; so she had to be sent back to the hospital today. Naturally Tara is in charge. Here she readily abstained as much as she could. But with Tara here, I could not think of sending anyone else with Sumitra. Of course she would be relieved twice daily. The doctor thinks that septic poisoning was not eliminated entirely when she was discharged last time from the hospital.

I hope you are keeping fit. Tara has not been bombarding me with questions as before. It is only during the mealtime that she asks some questions. She has been most considerate and keeping quite well. Hitherto soya beans do not seem to have disagreed with her.

Love.

BAPU

MARY BARR
KHEDI SAOLIGARH (BETUL)

From a photostat: G.N. 6059. Also C.W. 3389. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] The superscription is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Ramdas Gandhi's daughter

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131. LETTER TO JITENDRA NATH KUSARI

WARDHA,
November 14, 1935

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not a shadow of a doubt that the Congress will attain complete political independence in spite of present dissensions.

Delicious and stimulating tea can be made by boiling *tulsi* plant leaves with a little ginger and *gur*. It has none of the injurious properties of tea and it is any day better.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRA NATH KUSARI
C/O HOME HALL
NEW MARKET, PATNA

From a photostat: G.N. 7192

132. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

November 14, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I shall be reaching there[1] on the 12th. It is, therefore, necessary to think and decide right now in what way I can be useful for collecting money for the Harijan Fund. Thakkar Bapa will be arriving here on the 23rd instant. If you wish you may come then.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4003. Also C.W. 132. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

[1] Ahmedabad

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133. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 14, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You must be strong enough now to talk and shout [in your usual manner]. I went through your letter to Ambedkar. It is apt but it is not likely to have any effect on him at present. He cannot help abusing me how can he spare you, then? Here, as in London, there are several influences acting on him from behind. The pity of it is that the problem has been given exaggerated importance because of his threats. Even that wouldn't matter, were it not that instead of exploiting the situation for constructive work people are going about the wrong way to solve it. Instead of making a determined effort for the eradication of untouchability, they are trying to win over Ambedkar with appeals and entreaties. But let it be; this is the atmosphere in which we have to work. Look where you will, you find nothing but an exhibition of fear and weakness.

Can't you take some steps regarding Patadi? Is it right for your secretary to preside over any sort of meeting without your permission?[1]

I hope you understand now the position about my programme in Gujarat in the month of January. As the 12th is fixed for my arrival in Ahmedabad, so the 28th is fixed for my return to Wardha, for on that day Radhakrishna[2] and Anasuya[3] are getting married. I must, therefore, return here at the latest on that day. I can thus give to Gujarat 14 days at the most. You may arrange whatever is possible within that period.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 192-3

[1] A conference of the people of 17 villages of British India was held at Patadi, a principality, on November 8, 1935, with Morarji Desai as Chairman, to oppose the proposal to hand over criminal and civil powers to the Patadi durbar.

[2] Son of Jamnalal Bajaj

[3] Daughter of Shrikrishnadas Jaju

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134. LETTER TO AVADHESH DUTT AVASTHI

[*November 14, 1935*][1]

CHI. AVADHESH,

I have your letter after a long time. Why have you not yet taken up some definite work? In order to be fearless we should love all and adhere to the path of truth. The assertion that goodness is easier to come by is based on the fact that all wish to be known as good people and no one wants to be known as a sinner. Therefore it can be said that to be a sinner is difficult!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3214

135. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

WARDHA,
November 15, 1935

CHI. AMALA,

I have your letter. As soon as the German card was placed in Mahadev's hand he redirected it and you got it. There seems to have been no avoidable delay in redirecting it to you. It was first addressed to you at Bombay. From there it was redirected to the Ashram, not Maganwadi. At the Ashram, there is anarchy at present because the whole thing is being reconstructed. No one can tell when ultimately the card was brought here. You must carefully study the five postal stamps on it. Examine the dates, and perhaps you will solve the mystery of the delay. Such misfortunes are inevitable and you are able to stand greater ones.

I am glad your income is increasing by leaps and bounds. No wonder you like Bombay. You must not count the cost of your food but take whatever is necessary to keep you in perfect health.

[1] From the postmark on the original postcard preserved in the National Archives of India

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With Khurshedbehn at your back you will be quite all right. I am glad Krishna and her party came to see you.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. MARGARETE SPIEGEL
C/O MRS. BHANDARKAR
MADHAV NIVAS, 8 LABURNUM ROAD
BOMBAY 7

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

136. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

November 15, 1935

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

Your letter remained unattended to till today. You are observing your vow well enough. With a firm mind you will go farther. The food seems to be quite all right, except that it is deficient in green leaves and vegetables. You must include some fresh raw leaves. You should grow them yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Vasumati to write to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9516. Also C.W. 432. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

137. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

November 15, 1935

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I had your letter. Follow Jamnalalji's advice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 210

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138. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

November 15, 1935

CHI. VIDYA,

I had your letter. I get no time. Restore your health by any means. It is good to act as Dr. Ansari says. In the last analysis, God is our only doctor.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

139. NEEM LEAVES AND TAMARIND

In answer to certain questions Dr. Aykroyd, Director of Nutrition Research, sends the following interesting replies:

> You ask about food values. Data on this point are being rapidly gathered here and elsewhere in India, and I hope that at no very distant period an authoritative book or pamphlet giving the chemical composition, vitamin potency, etc., of all common foods will become available for those interested in dietetics. I have little doubt that you are right in stating that in practice different vegetable fats and oils produce different physiological effects. This is probably due to their chemical make-up, but unfortunately we are not yet in a position to correlate chemical composition and dietary effect in this case. In all probability some research worker somewhere in the world will soon enlighten us.
>
> We have analysed *neem* leaves in the laboratory. As compared with a number of other green vegetables previously investigated, they have a high nutritive value. Both mature and tender leaves are rich in protein, calcium, iron and vitamin A activity and are superior in these respects to amaranth leaves, coriander leaves, drumstick leaves, lettuce, murraya leaves, and spinach. This perhaps explains the tradition of their high nutritive value. I believe that modern laboratory investigations in China have not infrequently demonstrated that herbs and other types of food recommended in ancient Chinese books are rich in vitamins, etc.
>
> With regard to vitamin content, tamarind and lemon are roughly similar, except that the latter is richer in the antiscorbutic vitamin C.

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Tamarind pulp, unlike lemon, contains a good deal of tartaric acid—about 14%; the chief acid in lemon is citric acid. Otherwise the two fruits resemble each other in food value. Tamarind is stated to contain a laxative principle. I can offer nothing in support of the popular belief that it induces fever and rheumatism.

The reader should know that I have been making extensive experiments in *neem* leaves and tamarind. *Neem* leaves have been taken with impunity by several. My difficulty has been to make them palatable. Taken in the form of chutney containing sufficient tamarind pulp and salt or lemon and salt, it is least objectionable. Some take two to three *tolas* of whole leaves with relish. I am unable to say definitely what effect the taking of leaves produces on the system. I have been tempting volunteers to try them because of the high merit attributed in Ayurveda to them and because of their decidedly good effect on Shri Bhansali[1]. Their common use would enable the poor people without extra cost to take the green leaves upon which modern diet experts lay much stress. That the use of the leaf produces no ill effect can be stated with perfect confidence.

Of the good effect of tamarind I can write with equal confidence. One ounce of pulp taken with meals has in several cases induced free movement of bowels. It can be mixed with vegetables or rice or dal. It can be eaten as jam when mixed with sufficient quantity of *gur*. I have used it with beneficial effect for reducing fevers by giving it in the form of tamarind water. In no case have I found it to have induced cold or rheumatism or boils as many people believe it does. There is hardly a man or woman in the South who does not eat tamarind in some shape or form. It is the base for its famous *rasam*.

Village workers will have to find out cheap, effective and harmless substitutes for the expensive yet useful articles one uses in cities and which one cannot get in the villages for love or money. Tamarind and *neem* leaf are such substitutes.[2]

Harijan, 16-11-1935

[1] Jayakrishna P. Bhansali
[2] *Vide* also pp. 150-1.

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140. CASTE HAS TO GO

I gladly publish Sir Govindrao Madgaonkar's open letter[1] in this issue. My own position has been often stated in these columns. It may be summed up as follows:

1. I believe in varnashrama of the Vedas which in my opinion is based on absolute equality of status, notwithstanding passages to the contrary in the *smritis* and elsewhere.

2. Every word of the printed works passing muster as 'Shastras' is not, in my opinion, a revelation.

3. The interpretation of accepted texts has undergone evolution, and is capable of indefinite evolution, even as the human intellect and heart are.

4. Nothing in the Shastras which is manifestly contrary to universal truths and morals can stand.

5. Nothing in the Shastras which is capable of being reasoned can stand if it is in conflict with reason.

6. Varnashrama of the Shastras is today non-existent in practice.

7. The present caste system is the very antithesis of varnashrama. The sooner public opinion abolishes it the better.

8. In varnashrama there was and should be no prohibition of intermarriage or inter-dining. Prohibition there is of change of one's hereditary occupation for purposes of gain. The existing practice is, therefore, doubly wrong in that it has set up cruel restrictions about inter-dining and intermarriage and tolerates anarchy about choice of occupation.

9. Though there is in varnashrama no prohibition against intermarriage and inter-dining, there can be no compulsion. It must be left to the unfettered choice of the individual as to where he or she will marry or dine. If the law of varnashrama was observed there would naturally be a tendency, so far as marriage is concerned, for people to restrict the marital relations to their own varna.

10. As I have repeatedly said there is no such thing as untouchability by birth in the Shastras. I hold the present practice

[1] The letter appeared under the title "An Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi and Hindu Leaders". The writer, a former judge of the Bombay High Court, had appealed to Gandhiji, Madan Mohan Malaviya and N. C. Kelkar and others "to give a clear and a courageous lead" in reforming the caste system.

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to be a sin and the greatest blot on Hinduism. I feel more than ever that if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies.

11. The most effective, quickest, and the most unobtrusive way to destroy caste is for reformers to begin the practice with themselves and where necessary take the consequences of social boycott. The reform will not come by reviling the orthodox. The change will be gradual and imperceptible. The so-called higher classes will have to descend from their pedestal before they can make any impression upon the so-called lower classes. Day-to-day experience of village work shows how difficult the task is of bridging the gulf that exists between the city-dwellers and the villagers, the higher classes and the lower classes. The two are not synonymous terms. For the class distinction exists both in the cities and the villages.

Harijan, 16-11-1935

141. AWFULNESS OF CHILD-MARRIAGE

The Anti-Child-Marriage Committee has published a useful and instructive bulletin on child-marriage. I copy the main paragraphs below:[1]

> The Census Report for India of 1931 gave the following figures of the number of girls who are married under the age of 15 by age groups;
>
> | Age group | Percentage married |
> |---|---|
> | 0 to 1 | 0.8 |
> | 1 „ 2 | 1.2 |
> | 2 „ 3 | 2.0 |
> | 3 „ 4 | 4.2 |
> | 4 „ 5 | 6.6 |
> | 5 „ 10 | 19.3 |
> | 10 „ 15 | 38.1 |
>
> Thus nearly one girl in 100 girls of less than one year of age is married and the same horrible fact is repeated in all the other age groups under 15.
>
> One consequence of this is the almost unbelievable number of child widows in the country.
>
> The figures are:
>
> | Age group | Actual number of widows |
> |---|---|
> | 0 to 1 | 1,515 |
> | 1 „ 2 | 1,785 |

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

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2 „ 3	3,485
3 „ 4	9,076
4 „ 5	15,019
5 „ 10	1,05,482
10 „ 15	1,85,339

Another consequence of child-marriage is the number of young mothers who die in childbirth. 2,00,000 deaths in childbirth is the yearly average for India. This works up to 20 deaths per hour, and a vast number of these deaths occur to girls in their teens. . . .

Lastly, child-marriage affects not merely the mother but the child and therefore the race. In India out of every 1,000 children born, 181 die. This is the average; there are places in India where the average goes up to 400 per 1,000. . . .

The figures should cause us all to hang our heads in shame. But that won't remedy the evil. The evil of child-marriage is at least as extensive in the villages as in the cities. It is pre-eminently women's work. Men have no doubt to do their share. But when a man turns into a beast, he is not likely to listen to reason. It is the mothers who have to be educated to understand their privilege and duty of refusal. Who can teach them this but women? I venture to suggest therefore that the All-India Women's Conference to be true to its name has to descend to the villages. The bulletins are valuable. They only reach a few of the English-knowing city-dwellers. What is needed is personal touch with the village women. Even when, if ever, it is established, the task won't be easy. But some day or other the beginning has to be made in that direction before any result can be hoped for. Will the All-India Women's Conference make common cause with the All-India Village Industries Association? No village worker, no matter how able he or she is, need expect to approach villagers purely for the sake of social reform. They will have to touch all spheres of village life. Village work, I must repeat, means real education, not in the three R's but in opening the minds of the villagers to the needs of true life befitting thinking beings which humans are supposed to be.

Harijan, 16-11-1935

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142. TELEGRAM TO R. R. BAKHALE

[*November 16, 1935*][1]

BAKHALE
SERVINDIA
BOMBAY

SOCIETY[2] HAS LOST ONE OF ITS FOUNDERS COUNTRY A TRUE TIRELESS SERVANT AND HARIJANS AN INTREPID FRIEND. DEODHAR WAS SOCIAL REFORMER OF FIRST RANK. ALL IS WELL WITH THIS PURE SOUL. MY CONDOLENCES TO ALL CONCERNED.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

143. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

WARDHA,
November 16, 1935

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have your letter of the 30th October but not the one of October 8. Even the letter from Colombo has not been returned though the letter enclosed with Ramdas's has been received. I would not like to bother you this time to send me a copy of the letter from Ceylon. Make enquiries there if possible. To whom did you give it? Sharma complains of the absence of letters from you. There should be no laziness about letter-writing. If you confess you are guilty of laziness, you must follow it up by ridding yourself of it. You are all well, I hope. Do write.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 192

[1] The telegram was sent to condole the death of G. K. Deodhar on November 16.

[2] Servants of India Society

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144. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

WARDHA,
November 17, 1935

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

Send the accompanying letter to Kavitha if you approve of it. If you receive any names of persons intending to migrate from the place, see Gulzarilal[1] and fix them up in some mill for the present. Write to me if you encounter any difficulty.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4034. Also C.W. 133. Courtesy: Parikshitlal L. Majmudar

145. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

November 17, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter after waiting long for it. . . . is still here. He is as firm as you are. I personally am concerned with the good name of you both. My interest and peace of mind lie in your welfare. Maybe today Shankar's heart is estranged from Kakasaheb's and mine; but how can I forget that you are going to be Kakasaheb's daughter-in-law? I, therefore, feel all the more concerned for your good. My bond with . . . is an old one. I won't be able to find out the truth unless you come. If you don't come this time you will be failing in your dharma. So please come even if doing so means some hardship to you. Take the advice and help of Bal[2].

More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 939. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

[1] Gulzarilal Nanda, then secretary of the labour union of Ahmedabad
[2] Elder son of D. B. Kalelkar

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146. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

WARDHA,
November 18, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Your description of the village visit is consoling and stirring. In Sindi we have nothing but apparent disappointments to register. Your report is therefore a good set-off. I hope the progress will be sustained.

So you did not or could not go to Saharanpur? You should, if you can.

You must not expect a long letter from me. Only I love to talk to you on Mondays, the day I use the right hand for writing.

Even before you come here, you hold the pistol to my head and say when you must leave here. You will be somewhat just, if you also told when at the latest you will reach here.

Devdas is at Jamnalalji's. He is getting on quite well. He is still tired if he attempts to do any writing himself. He does a lot of dictating.

Pyarelal and his sister are also here just now.

You will see the child-marriage note reproduced in the current number of *Harijan*.[1] The other will partly go in, in due course. You want the other returned?

Love to you all.

BAPU

[PS.]

How I wish you could be here when Mrs. Sanger[2] comes about 26th!

From the original: C.W. 3557. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6366

[1] *Vide* pp. 122-3.
[2] Margaret Sanger; *vide* pp. 156-60.

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147. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA J. SOMAN

November 18, 1935

BHAI SOMAN,

Instead of milk, take curds made from cow's milk once a day. Be satisfied with 20 *tolas* of milk just now. Mix ten grains of soda bicarb in the curds and eat them slowly with a spoon after having stirred them thoroughly. The curds must not be sour. Measure out 20 *tolas* of milk before boiling it. The quantity will be reduced slightly on boiling. Don't boil the milk long. This will be all your breakfast. You should have a brisk walk at least half an hour before eating the curds. Eat them only if you feel hungry. You will have eaten them, say, at seven. Take 20 minutes in eating, keeping a watch in front of you. At eleven you may eat a *bhakhari*, made from whole-wheat flour and well-baked, with cooked fenugreek leaves. If you wish, you may add to the latter mustard, turmeric and a little oil. You may also eat ripe uncooked tomatoes, but nothing else.

In the afternoon at three you may take, if you wish, lime juice in boiled water with a little soda bicarb. At six in the evening you may eat a *bhakhari* of the kind described above with milk or take *pattarveli*[1] cooked with garlic and uncooked fenugreek leaves; tomatoes also if you wish. It is not necessary to eat fruit for the present. Changes may be made in this regimen after you have tried it for a week.

You should go out for an hour's walk daily in the evening. Every morning and evening you should carefully do breathing exercises on an empty stomach. Drink boiled water, warm or cold, according to need. Jaggery and sugar must be avoided for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4050. Also C.W. 95. Courtesy: Ramachandra J. Soman

[1] Arum indicum

148. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
November 19, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter. You have done well in sending me a small quantity of *ragi*. I simply wanted to have a specimen. I shall now try it. Is it used only for making chapatis or is it used like rice also? What is the price of it? I inquire in order to compare prices, not to send you the money. I understand your difficulty about the A. I. V. I. A. I quite see that you should not become an ordinary member. I shall look up the rules and find out whether you can come in cheaply under any classification. Probably Bharatan or Kumarappa will write to you.

When I have tried the *ragi* you have sent me, I shall tell you whether you have to send more.

Next time when you come you should come to stay at least for a few days.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AMBUJAM
MADRAS

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

149. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

November 19, 1935

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I got your letter. You want me to write on the evils that were rampant during the fair. I would certainly like to do it; but would it have any effect on anybody? And one likes to write something only if it is going to have some effect. Everybody in the country is talking about the fine of Rs. 1,000. If we go on brooding over such misfortunes, we can do no work at all. One should not grieve over what can't be helped; only then can we

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do something about what we can help, what is within our strength to set right. So if you really want to become a villager, you should, like a true villager, forget all other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORBHAI PATEL
CONGRESS OFFICE
DHOLKA

From Gujarati: C.W. 2708. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

150. LETTER TO KIKABHAI L. WAGHELA[1]

[Before *November 21, 1935*][2]

Pandit Malaviya has not arrived at Wardha. There is little possibility of his coming here. It will not be necessary for me to visit Dr. Ambedkar, but if it is necessary I will not hesitate to do so. I will try to visit the Harijan locality when I visit Ahmedabad, but my programme after arrival at Ahmedabad will be fixed by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Hindu, 22-11-1935

151. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
November 21, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your letter. *The Hindustan Times* will continue to be available to you as before as Devdas who is here has agreed to it. I have a letter from Draupadi saying that she is happy and would now write regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, pp. 210-1

[1] A Harijan leader of Ahmedabad

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Ahmedabad, November 21, 1935".

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152. TALK WITH PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS[1]

[Before *November 23, 1935*]

Finding that they were thinking of opening night-schools for adults and children[2], Gandhiji wondered whether they were agreeable to working under All-India Village Industries Association or would chalk out their own path. If they did the latter he had naturally no suggestions to make. If they would work under the All-India Village Industries Association he would give them his own idea of the educational needs of the villagers. He said:

What they need is not a knowledge of the three Rs. but a knowledge of their economic life and how they can better it. They are today working as mere automatons, without any responsibility whatsoever to their surroundings and without feeling the joy of work. We are entirely responsible for this state of things, as we have had no intimate contact with them. We have indeed studied their politico-economic condition, as did the late Romesh Chandra Dutt. But whilst we have been told of the state to which they have been reduced, they do not know how they themselves can partly or wholly remove their poverty. Now I think it is possible to show them how to double their income. You will say they are heavily taxed. That they are, but I am not concerned with that problem at the present moment. Our present policy is to leave all politics or politico-economics alone. You will therefore begin with a study of their social, hygienic and moral condition. You may use magic lantern slides for the purpose. You have to show them that untouchability is no part of religion, and that the idea of superiority of status is foreign to any true religion. Just as a healthy man does not regard an unhealthy man as inferior to him in status, even so a teacher or a merchant may not regard a scavenger as inferior to him. You have to teach them these fundamentals of religion and ethics. Then you will teach them geography and history—you will begin with the history of their own village. Now I would teach them the three Rs as a means for imparting a knowledge of these things, but you do not need to make them matriculates or graduates for this purpose. A

[1] Of a college newly started in Wardha. This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

[2] In Sindi

knowledge of English may be a source of income in these days, but it is not necessary to add to the health of one's mind or body. All our energy has been sapped in mastering a foreign language and in reading tons of books which in no way help us to keep ourselves physically and morally fit or to serve the villagers. You will thus see where I bring in a knowledge of the three Rs. It comes in at the end, and at the long end at that, and not in the beginning, and then, as a help to things permanent. You cannot more usefully pass an hour every night with them than by teaching them the laws of health, social morals, and the way of a strenuous life of easy labour.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

153. FEAR COMPLEX

Many workers are so frightened of village life that they fear that if they are not paid by some agency they will not be able to earn their living by labouring in villages, especially if they are married and have a family to support. In my opinion this is a demoralizing belief. No doubt, if a person goes to a village with the city mentality and wants to live in villages the city life, he will never earn enough unless he, like the city people, exploits the villagers. But if a person settles in a village and tries to live like the villagers, he should have no difficulty in making a 'living by the sweat of his brow'. He should have confidence that if the villagers who are prepared to toil all the year round in the traditional unintelligent manner can earn their living, he must also earn at least as much as the average villager. This he will do without displacing a single villager, for he will go to a village as a producer, not as a parasite.

If the worker has the ordinary size family, his wife and one other member should be full-time workers. Such a worker won't immediately have the muscle of the villager, but he will more than make up for the deficiency by his intelligence, if only he will shed his diffidence and fear complex. He would be doing productive work, and not be a mere consumer, unless he gets an adequate response from the villagers so as to occupy the whole of his time in serving them. In that case he will be worth the commission on the additional production of the villagers induced by his effort. But the experience of the few months that the village work has gone on under the aegis of the A. I. V. I. A. shows that

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the response from the villagers will be very slow and that the worker will have to become a pattern of virtue and work before the villagers. That will be the best object-lesson for them which is bound to impress them sooner or later provided that he lives as one of them and not a patron seated amongst them to be adored from a respectful distance.

The question, therefore, is: what remunerative work can he do in the village of his choice? He and the members of the family will give some time to cleaning the village, whether the villagers help him or not, and he will give them such simple medical assistance as is within his power to give. Every person can prescribe a simple opening drug or quinine, wash a boil or wound, wash dirty eyes and ears, and apply a clean ointment to a wound. I am trying to find out a book that will give the simplest directions in the ordinary cases occurring daily in the villages. Anyway these two things must be an integral part of village work. This ought not to occupy more than two hours of his time per day. The village worker has no such thing as an eight hours' day. For him the labour for the villager is a labour of love. For his living, therefore, he will give eight hours at least in addition to the two hours. It should be borne in mind that under the new scheme propounded by the A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. all labour has an equal minimum value. Thus a carder who works at his bow for one hour and turns out the average quantity of cards will get exactly the same wage that the weaver, the spinner or the paper-maker would, for the given quantity of their respective works per hour. Therefore the worker is free to choose and learn whatever work he can easily do, care being always taken to choose such labour whose product is easily salable in his village or the surrounding area or is in demand by the Associations.

One great need in every village is an honest shop where unadulterated food-stuffs and other things can be had for the cost price and a moderate commission. It is true that a shop, be it ever so small, requires some capital. But a worker who is at all known in the area of his work should command sufficient confidence in his honesty to enable him to make small wholesale purchases on credit.

I may not take these concrete suggestions much further. An observant worker will always make important discoveries and soon know what labour he can do to earn a living and be at the same time an object-lesson to the villagers whom he is to serve. He will therefore have to choose labour that will not exploit the villagers, that will not injure their health or morals but will teach the villagers to take up industries to occupy their leisure

hours and add to their tiny incomes. His observations will lead him to direct his attention to the village wastes including weeds and the superficial natural resources of the village. He will soon find that he can turn many of them to good account. If he picks up edible weeds, it is as good as earning part of his food. Mirabehn has presented me with a museum of beautiful marble-like stones which serve several useful purposes as they are, and I would soon convert them into bazaar articles if I had leisure and would invest into simple tools to give them different shapes. Kakasaheb had given to me split bamboo waste that was destined to be burnt, and with a rude knife he turned some of it into paper knives and wooden spoons both salable in limited quantities. Some workers in Maganwadi occupy their leisure in making envelopes out of waste paper blank on one side.

The fact is the villagers have lost all hope. They suspect that every stranger's hand is at their throats and that he goes to them only to exploit them. Divorce between intellect and labour has paralysed their thinking faculty. Their working hours they do not use to the best advantage. The worker should enter such villages full of love and hope, feeling sure that where men and women labour unintelligently and remain unemployed half the year round, he working all the year round and combining labour with intelligence cannot fail to win the confidence of the villagers and earn his living honestly and well by labouring in their midst.

'But what about my children and their education?'—says the candidate worker. If the children are to receive their education after the modern style, I can give no useful guidance. If it be deemed enough to make them healthy, sinewy, honest, intelligent villagers, any day able to earn their livelihood in the home of their parents' adoption, they will have their all-round education under the parental roof and withal they will be partly earning members of the family from the moment they reach the years of understanding and are able to use their hands and feet in a methodical manner. There is no school equal to a decent home and no teachers equal to honest virtuous parents. Modern high school education is a dead weight on the villagers. Their children will never be able to get it, and thank God they will never miss it if they have the training of the decent home. If the village worker is not a decent man or woman, capable of conducting a decent home, he or she had better not aspire after the high privilege and honour of becoming a village worker.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

154. A GREAT SOCIAL WORKER

In the death of Shri G. K. Deodhar the country has lost one of its great social workers and an uncompromising and faithful friend of Harijans. He was one of the foundation members of the Society founded by Gokhale. He was President of the Maharashtra Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh. There was not a famine or a flood in the country which did not claim the attention of this servant of humanity. Though he could easily become a rich man, he chose poverty as a life principle for a public worker. His tireless energy was contagious. He never spared himself when social service was demanded of him. His was a life of spotless purity. He was the soul of the Poona Seva Sadan which he loved and for which he laboured so well that from a little thing it has today grown into an institution of the kind second to none in all India. I tender my respectful condolences to the family of the deceased.

Harijan, 23-11-1935

155. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

WARDHA,
November 23, 1935

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your two letters and *ragi*, also samples of soya beans, and now cow-gram. We have already cooked *ragi*, but not exactly in the fashion mentioned by you. Cow-gram does not contain the quantity of fats that soya beans do. I am now trying to find the chemical constituents of *ragi*. If you can find them through any doctor please send them.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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156. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 23, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have been indeed late in replying to your letter but I was helpless. Your budget seems a bit too exacting. You do not have enough workers to cope with so many activities. The scheme is certainly good provided financial assistance and workers too are available. Every enterprise must necessarily become self-supporting. Only those articles should be produced about the demand for which you are quite confident.

You must be keeping well. Malkaniji told me that you were to shift today to the new residence.

Wherefrom and at what price did you obtain the soya beans ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2432

157. DEATH OF A TRUE HARIJAN SEVAK

There are only a handful of persons in Kathiawar who have no trace of the feeling of untouchability in their veins and are engrossed in the service of Harijans despite being orthodox. Among them the celebrated Harilal Govindji Parekh of Amreli was a leading personality. The late Harilal was the soul of Amreli. There could seldom be a public welfare activity in Kathiawar in which Shri Harilal Parekh did not have a hand. One and all needed his services and his advice, and everyone found it acceptable. In many ways, his was an exemplary life; we should perpetuate his memory by learning all that we can from it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 24-11-1935

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158. AN APPEAL[1]

WARDHA,
November 24, 1935

A sum of about Rs. 29,000 is needed for this year's work of the Harijan Sevak Sangh of Gujarat. Fifty-seven schools and three ashrams are being run with the Sangh's help. The Sangh is under the supervision of no less a public worker than Thakkar Bapa. Shri Parikshitlal Majmudar is giving his devoted services to it. According to me the expenditure of Rs. 29,000 a year is nothing. If we regard the service of Harijans as our dharma and if everybody who earns Rs. 500 a year decides to spare even Re. 1 this charitable activity, we can get several lakhs of rupees annually. But we don't yet have such religious awareness. Moreover, not all caste Hindus regard untouchability as contrary to dharma and, therefore, accept service of the Harijans as their dharma. Hence it doubly becomes a duty of those who regard the service of Harijans as their dharma to sustain the work of such service.

Eradication of untouchability is not one man's job. Neither can it be done only with the help of money. Money can be regarded as a form of energy for the work of service. If every caste Hindu who looks upon eradication of untouchability as his dharma regularly contributes to the fund according to his capacity, then the work being done at present can be kept up and those in charge of it will be saved from financial worries.

I shall be going to Ahmedabad in the second week of January for the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. I am hoping to collect at that time from Gujaratis the sum mentioned above. It was suggested to me that I should appeal for help from friends outside Gujarat [also] but I rejected the suggestion. If I did that, it would be a disgrace to Gujarat and so to me. No one can say that Gujarat is among the poor provinces in the country. It has, on the contrary, helped other provinces in their time of need. It has never begged for anything from other provinces, and rightly too. Why shouldn't it, then, contribute for such a noble activity? It is true that it has to contribute to many funds. It is also true that the

[1] This appeared in the form of an open letter "To All Gujaratis" in *Harijanbandhu*, 8-12-1935.

farmers of Gujarat have suffered many calamities and borne great losses. But I firmly believe that such arguments cannot be advanced as excuses for not doing one's dharma. I, therefore, hope that all friends, men and women, will work hard and collect the small amount mentioned above and thus relieve Thakkar Bapa, other workers and me of the worry. The burden of most of the activities in Gujarat is generally borne by Sardar. I know that he has had to collect money for many of them. I have, therefore, deliberately not put this burden on him. But he cannot, for that reason, remain unconcerned till the money is collected. Nobody should think that eradication of untouchability is Thakkar Bapa's and my concern only and not his. I hope that Gujarat will not send me back empty-handed.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7184; also C.W. 4781

159. LETTER TO M. R. MASANI

WARDHA, MAGANWADI,
November 25, 1935

MY DEAR MASANI,

Come whenever you can during the next fortnight excepting of course Mondays—my silence days.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4127

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160. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 25, 1935

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I have now two letters in front of me. Better a postcard than no letter. I sent you a wire in reply to your first. I expect you here any day in reply to this.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDER CITY
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3719. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6875

161. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

November 25, 1935

BHAI MAVALANKAR,

You must of course be a member of the Reception Committee. Take me for the opening ceremony as you wish, after consulting the Committee. Convey my condolences to the family of the deceased.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1246

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162. NOTE TO MANU GANDHI

[On or after *November 25, 1935*][1]

Do you wish to tell me anything? Return soon. Write to me regularly. Give me all the news. Live in the utmost simplicity. Don't fear Harilal at all. I will write to Narandas about slivers. Kanti will go to see you off. Ask for a direct ticket for Rajkot.

I hope you have been writing to Surendra. Continue to write from there too. Does he write?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1553. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

163. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
November 26, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

It was settled yesterday with Thakkar Bapa himself that Malkani would do his work independently while remaining the Joint Secretary. But he came to me early this morning expressing his inability to hold the office. I am enclosing a copy of the letter[2] I have written to Thakkar Bapa regarding this development. Hence it would be superfluous to go into further details here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8014. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] This silence day note is written on the back of a letter dated November 20, 1935. The Monday following November 20 fell on November 25, 1935.

[2] This is not available.

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164. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

WARDHA,
November 27, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

I got your letter. When I say that one per cent doubt remains, what I mean is that I am ready to listen to and think over what Father or you may say. If I didn't have even this one per cent doubt, there would be no need at all for me to hear anybody. Please don't forget this, that before I discussed the matter with you I used to doubt the truth of what . . . and his friends said. After my long and patient talk with you, my attitude towards . . . became more favourable. Your story is something like this: you were bitten by a snake, but you did not feel the effect of poison although you already knew from experience the nature of the poison. Just as this wouldn't be a plausible story, so is your story of [the effect of] . . .'s touch not plausible. The poison of a lustful man's touch is far more than that of a snake. And if a snake, while lifting its young one with its teeth, accidentally bites it with its fangs, the young one also would feel the effect of poison. Since a child is easily influenced by its parents, if they pour poison into it the child cannot but feel its effect. Please, therefore, know that it is your own testimony that proves the innocence of . . . to the extent of 99 per cent. And that is why I have told you, and I repeat here, that you should continue to write to me and keep me informed about everything. If you continue to help me, the remaining one per cent doubt also can be cleared. After your testimony, I cannot bring myself to find . . . guilty. Nor can I bring myself to believe that you are telling a brazen lie. Till, therefore, I get further evidence, the one per cent will remain in your favour. If you are one hundred per cent truthful and if you continue your effort [to convince me], you will be able to raise the one per cent to 100 per cent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 940. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

165. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

November 27, 1935

CHI. OM,

I got your letter. I find it intolerable that teachers in your school cannot speak with their pupils in any language other than English. You should report this matter to the management politely. Why do they behave in this manner? Your letter is fairly good. You do not take much time to get used to such things. Learn whatever good you find there, but try to keep away from whatever is undesirable.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 342

166. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

November 27, 1935

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRAJI,

I have certainly asserted that birth-control by artificial means is harmful and I still maintain it. It would be wrong even to think about the possible exceptions. The same holds true in the case of insurance, the only difference being that the number of exceptional cases can be greater in the latter case. The spiritual harm resulting from birth-control by artificial means is much greater than what results from insurance.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6094

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167. CASTE AND VARNA

WARDHA,
November 28, 1935

A gentleman writes that I advocate the abolition of castes and maintain that the varnas are and ought to be enduring. He wants me to explain this with illustrations.

Castes are numerous. They are man-made. They undergo constant change. The older ones die and new ones spring up. Castes based on occupations are to be found all over the world. It is only in India that there are restrictions, as regards inter-marriage and inter-dining, which defy reason. This is very harmful. It stands in the way of the community's progress. It has nothing to do with religion.

Varnas are just four and not numerous. They have been sanctioned by the Shastras. Whether or not people are conscious of them, they do exist all over the world as we see. There are everywhere these four classes: one to impart knowledge of god for the welfare of the world, another to protect the people against manifold dangers, a third one to carry on the work of farming, etc., to sustain the community and one class to work for these three classes. There is no feeling of high and low in this division. But since this is not understood as a great law of nature, there has been confusion in it, that is, these four functions are no more confined to the respective varnas. Instead men have been taking up any occupation they choose with a view to achieving their selfish ends. At one time in India people used to consciously follow this law and thus lived in peace. One accepted the calling of one's own varna and was satisfied in its pursuit for general welfare. There was no unhealthy competition among people to jump from one varna to another for the sake of money or fame. At present this significance of the varna system seems to have disappeared even in India. Destructive competition is on the increase, everyone takes liberty of following any profession and the meaning of varna has been restricted to unnatural and meaningless restrictions on inter-marriage and inter-dining. And that is why the country has stopped progressing. Hinduism will once again shine forth if such senseless restrictions are abolished, the pristine varna system is

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resurrected and the distinctions of high and low are banished. This would be to the good of India as well as the whole world.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-1-1936

168. LETTER TO S. V. KAMAT

November 28, 1935

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.[1] I am sending it to Sjt. Gangadharrao for his reply. On receipt of it I shall write to you further.

I cannot recall all the conversations that take place with friends.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

169. LETTER TO SWARUPRANI NEHRU

November 28, 1935

DEAR SISTER[2],

I have a letter from you after months and that too in response to one of mine. Still, something is better than nothing.

I too got a letter about the rise in Kamala's temperature. Let us hope that it has come down by now.

You must be getting letters from Krishna[3]; there is hardly any chance of her writing to me. Jawaharlal will never have any respite from work. Did he have rest even in jail ? He wrote a book there and now that he is out he writes letters which read like books.

Ramdas is keeping indifferent health and passing his days in Bombay. He is expected here this week. Ba is all right and so is Mahadev. I hope you are keeping well and cheerful.

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Gandhiji-Indira Gandhi Correspondence. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In his letter dated November 27 the addressee had sought an account of Rs. 2,675 out of Rs. 20,000 entrusted by Gandhiji to Gangadharrao Deshpande for Kanara Relief.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's mother

[3] Krishna Hutheesingh addressee's daughter

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170. LETTER TO MIRABEHN[1]

MAGANWADI,
November 29, 1935

CHI. MIRA[2],

The bearer of your note is in a hurry to go. Your note was read as soon as it came. The reply is being dictated immediately after the reading. The things wanted will be sent tomorrow with the bearer who will bring tomorrow's note. The idea of cow-keeping is good. If there is none there, I could perhaps send one from here. She will be a good companion for you and provide with good occupation. Meanwhile you should take such milk as you get there. Are there any goats there? If there are, you should possess a few goats on loan. You should take as much ghee as you need and fall back on Maganwadi for supply. I am glad the first experience has been so happy. All well here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6307. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9773

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* Mirabehn explains: "Between the last letter [LXI, pp. 114-5] and this there comes another eventful gap. For some time I was serving Bapu in Maganwadi. Bapu's health had become very bad and high blood-pressure had developed. At the same time Maganwadi had become overcrowded with inmates of all descriptions. The problem of Sindi village was continuing unsolved and Bapu suddenly announced that he intended to go and live in Sindi all alone, taking what help he required from the villagers. Everyone was aghast at the idea, specially in view of Bapu's state of health. I asked Bapu that if I went instead to Sindi, would he accept the compromise. Bapu reluctantly agreed. A small one-room cottage was built and I went there to live. I felt that Sindi was no village and that our experiences of, and experiments with regard to, village life could not really be carried on there. I, therefore, suggested that as soon as someone else would be found ready to stay in Sindi, I would go on to a real village in the countryside. The following letter was addressed to me in Segaon which was the village I had gone on to from Sindi."

[2] The superscription in this and the other letters to the addressee is in the Devanagari script.

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171. DISCUSSION WITH G. D. BIRLA[1]

[Before *November 30, 1935*]

G. D. BIRLA: That friend in charge of the tannery[2], you say, is working for a mere pittance. It is highly commendable.

GANDHIJI: He is a Brahmin and a graduate. He does not accept more than eight annas a day. His wife also works elsewhere the whole day for a bare living wage.

Yes. All that surprises me, but I do not know how long this can go on in this machine age.

I have no such fear, because I have the conviction within me that when all these achievements of the machine age will have disappeared these our handicrafts will remain; when all exploitation will have ceased, service and honest labour will remain. It is because this faith sustains me that I am going on with my work. After all where is there any cause for despair? What are a few years in the vast stretch of eternity? A study of human origins would carry us back to millions of years. Indomitable faith in their work sustained men like Stephenson and Columbus. Faith in my work sustains me, but there is also added to it the conviction that all the other things that seem to challenge my faith are doomed. Don't you see that if India becomes industrialized, we shall need a Nadirshah to find out other worlds to exploit, that we shall have to pit ourselves against the naval and military power of Britain and Japan and America, of Russia and Italy? My head reels to think of these rivalries. No, I am clear that whilst this machine age aims at converting men into machines, I am aiming at reinstating man-turned-machine to his original estate.

I quite see your invincible faith. But you seem to forget in your enthusiasm that you will not be with us until eternity. You are getting old. Why not make large collections and spread your work over a large area?

No. I do not believe in collecting more than I need.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". G. D. Birla was at Wardha for the executive meeting of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

[2] At Nalawadi

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But supposing you constructed twenty, even ten, model villages?

If it is such an easy thing, you might do so with your money. But I know it is not easy. You cannot bring a model village into being by the magic wand of money. And I believe in making a full return for whatever money I receive from the public. And then I am against raising any more central funds now. There are so many Harijan schools and ashrams in Gujarat requiring an annual budget of Rs. 29,000.[1] Why should I ask you for work in Gujarat? Is it not the duty of the Gujaratis to find money for the Harijan work in Gujarat? If they cannot find it, they had better close down their institutions rather than ask for outside help.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

172. AN INTERESTING POINT

The Council of the Harijan Sevak Sangh met last week at Wardha. In view of my article "Caste Has to Go"[2] some members raised the question whether in the pages of *Harijan* which was issued under the aegis of the Harijan Sevak Sangh I was justified in airing my views on the Sangh, or whether I could express views which went beyond the official policy of the Sangh, or lastly whether the Sangh could extend the scope of its objective.

I gave it as my opinion that I was free as an individual to advocate in the pages of *Harijan* views which I may know to be contrary to the views of some members or maybe in advance of the official policy of the Sangh. In my opinion, any member of the Sangh is entitled to the same freedom so long as his views do not in any way tone down the Sangh's objective. Its policy represents the highest common factor between the views of the moderate reformer and those of the radical. We have in the Harijan Sevak Sangh both the sections well represented. There are sanatanists who would restrict removal of untouchability to the mere touch. There are others who would extend it to inter-dining and intermarriage. The membership pledge lays down the minimum which every member has to subscribe to and practise in his or her own life. It does not prevent any member from going further so long as he or she does

[1] *Vide* pp. 136-7.

[2] *Vide* pp. 121-2.

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not advocate the advanced view as the policy of the Sangh. At its very origin all sections of Hindus had met and, in order to carry the largest number of Hindus with them, that representative gathering passed a comprehensive resolution[1] that would secure the hearty assent of the largest number present. The wisdom of the course was justified in that there was, thanks to Pandit Malaviyaji, practical unanimity. It is obvious that if the resolution had contemplated the suppression of advanced views and practice by members acting in their individual capacity many members would not have subscribed to such restriction. But on the other hand not even a majority of the members of the Board could change the constitution so far as its objective is concerned. That can only be done by a general representative meeting of Hindus convened specially for the purpose. Therefore whilst the most cautious reformer may rest secure about the fundamental policy of the Sangh, the extreme radical is in no way hampered in his advocacy, as an individual, of the views which in his opinion may promote the purity and health of Hinduism.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the views expressed by me in the article "Caste Has to Go" have been often expressed in these columns though under different headings. Moreover the article does not deal with the relations between caste Hindus and Harijan Hindus. It deals with reform only among caste men or *savarnas*. When untouchability goes, untouchables will occupy precisely the same position as caste men. And whatever rule or custom then governs caste men will govern Harijans who are no longer Harijans. If, therefore, caste remains as it is now, there will be no intermarriage and no inter-dining between Harijans and caste men. But if caste goes in its present form, as it will some day, there will most undoubtedly be intermarriage and inter-dining between Harijans and caste men as there will be between caste men and caste men. And if varna remains, as I hope it will, occupations will be restricted as they were in the past; intermarriage and inter-dining will not be restricted even as they were not in the past. Whatever happens it will happen not because of the activity of the Sangh as a body but because of other forces which the Sangh can neither regulate nor control. Its members as individuals will no doubt take their due share in moulding those forces according to their predilections.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

[1] *Vide* Vol. LI, p. 139.

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173. THE IDEAL AND THE PRACTICAL

Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhry writes:[1]

> In the article "Need for Humane Custom"[2] you refer to a calculation that "self-sufficing khadi will mean two yards of sale outside against three yards of wear by artisans, etc." . . . But the reading of the article leaves an impression that the success of self-sufficing khadi entirely depends upon the sale of khadi. But is this a correct ideal? Is not the ideal of self-sufficing khadi this that in a majority of cases the spinners will spin their own cotton or purchase their cotton and pay the weaver from their earnings from other village industries or agricultural labour?
>
> Otherwise, when our aim is to make every home in the village self-sufficient, where will the extra two yards for outside sale produced by the spinners sell? Will the demand of the cities be possibly so large?
>
> . . . Self-sufficing khadi ought to thrive independently on its own merits, as there is enough unutilized land to grow the cotton required and unemployed leisure to spin the yarn.

The ideal no doubt is for every family to grow, spin, weave and wear its own cotton, just as it is for every family to own land and grow its own corn, cook and eat it. But we know that every family won't and can't realize the ideal; we know, too, that success will not attend the worker immediately he begins to preach the unadulterated message of self-sufficing khadi. What Gopabandhu Babu has himself suggested is itself an intermediary stage, that of a householder buying enough cotton, spinning it himself, having the yarn woven and paying the charges from his savings. But there are millions who have no savings and there are millions who purchase their cloth without performing any of the processes. To spin for oneself and pay for cotton and weaving out of the proceeds of some other industry is an intermediate stage. To spin extra and from the proceeds of that labour to pay for weaving is yet another intermediate stage and perhaps the easiest both from the workers' and the weavers' points of view. In working out this stage we have ready-made khadi centres. There the workers have to induce spinners and other artisans to wear khadi if they are to continue to get work

[1] Only extracts from the letter are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* pp. 85-7.

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through the All-India Spinners' Association agency. There are many among them who depend for their maintenance entirely on their labour spent on spinning, weaving, carding or dyeing. These can only wear khadi if they work at producing surplus khadi and command the sale of such products. This ought not to be difficult, if in spite of the rise in the spinners' wage the existing demand for khadi continues.

In practice all the stages will be worked simultaneously. What the new scheme does is to put the emphasis on the right spot and state what the goal is in unmistakable terms. Khadi workers will no longer concentrate on increasing sales and reducing the price of khadi. They are henceforth to concentrate on people becoming self-sufficing about their cloth requirements at least to the extent of spinning. They will have to establish personal touch with the artisans, befriend them, know their wants and help them, progressively to improve their economic condition by making the best possible use of their leisure hours consistently with equal opportunity for all. This ought to be a good enough programme for the most ambitious worker. The most difficult task will be on the one hand to open the eyes of understanding of the millions and persuade them to use their leisure hours for their own betterment and on the other to persuade the buying class—the city people and the middle men—to realize that in the long run it pays them if they buy village manufactures even though their cost may be apparently somewhat higher than they have hitherto paid and even though the appearance be not quite what they have been used to. It pays them because it raises the material condition of the people and therefore their purchasing power. The new scheme is therefore calculated to draw the best out of the whole of the nation irrespective of 'caste, colour or creed'. The question ultimately resolves itself into this: Have we for this task workers enough of the requisite purity, self-sacrifice, industry and intelligence?

Harijan, 30-11-1935

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174. AN EXPERIENCE

A correspondent who has for years been wearing khadi made out of his own yarn writes:

> This year I had 80 yards of khadi of 50 inches width. It cost me twenty rupees in round figures. People want my khadi at 10 as. per yard, i.e., Rs. 50 for the whole piece. Thus if I want to use three yards for myself I need to sell only $1\frac{1}{4}$ yards. If I keep for myself 20 yards and sell the rest, besides paying for my own khadi, I would make a profit of Rs. 17/8.

I know this correspondent. He stands in an exceptionally favourable position because his yarn is fine, even and strong. Weavers weave it at reasonable rates, and the khadi being therefore strong and fine-looking is greatly in demand. Everyone having faith and patience may verify the truth of the statement by making the experiment himself. Strong, even and fine yarn is the secret of successful khadi.

Harijan, 30-11-1935

175. NEED FOR CARE

Apropos of my reproduction of Dr. Aykroyd's letter[1] on *neem* leaves and tamarind, the reader will appreciate the following further letter[2] from the Director of Nutrition Research.

> 1. I think there is a certain danger in publishing small items of dietetic knowledge apart, as it were, from their scientific context. Ignorant readers are apt to make faulty interpretations. For example, on re-reading the paragraph in my letter of November 6 relating to *neem* leaves, which you wish to publish in your paper, I think it might possibly give the impression that everyone should consume great quantities of this vegetable as a cure for all human ills. Actually, the small series of analyses we have carried out to date show *neem* leaves to be somewhat richer in certain food factors than a number of other leafy vegetables, but it is only a question of degree. In a word, it would be better, for purposes of popular education, to stress the value of all

[1] *Vide* pp. 119-20.

[2] From which only extracts are reproduced here.

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green leafy vegetables rather than to single out one particular vegetable for special commendation. I should therefore prefer the paragraph, which refers to the bitter variety of *neem* leaves (*Azadirachta Indica*) to read as follows:

QUESTION : What is the nutritive value of *neem* leaves ?

ANSWER : *Neem* leaves resemble other green leafy vegetables in composition. Both mature and tender leaves are richer in protein, calcium, iron and carotene than amaranth leaves, coriander leaves, drumstick leaves, lettuce, murraya leaves and spinach. Their composition makes them valuable as a supplement to a diet largely composed of cereals, and in this respect they resemble the leafy vegetables in general.

2. The paragraph relating to tamarind and lemon might be modified as follows:

With regard to vitamin content, tamarind and lemon are roughly similar, except that the latter is richer in the antiscorbutic vitamin C. Tamarind pulp, unlike lemon, contains a good deal of tartaric acid—about 14%; the chief acid in lemon is citric acid. Fresh tamarind, which is more solid than fresh lemon, contains a somewhat higher percentage of protein, carbohydrate and minerals than lemon; in the dried state tamarind yields about 3% protein and 73% carbohydrate (by difference). Tamarind is stated to contain a laxative principle. I can offer nothing in support of the popular belief that it induces fever and rheumatism. . . .

Harijan, 30-11-1935

176. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

November 30, 1935

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

How much do you spend daily on vegetables? How much on fruit? What is the expenditure on food per head per month at the present rate of quantity served? Do you keep an account of the quantity consumed daily? Do you note down the names of those who come for meals from day to day? How are you keeping? In what other activities besides this are you engaged?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 383. Courtesy: Bhagwanji P. Pandya

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177. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

WARDHA,
November 30, 1935

BHAI MUNSHI,

I got your letter. I am not at all surprised by the result. Your duty ended when you responded promptly to an urgent call at the last hour. Tatachari was happy beyond words. He had written a fine letter to me. Who will be hearing the appeal? Whoever it may be, there is no doubt that an appeal should be made.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7586. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

178. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

November 30, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

You should immediately approach the four persons whose names you have given me and show them your budget. For this you need not await my arrival. Let me know the outcome. Mother must have recovered by now.

Soya beans are available in Bombay at two rates. The variety from Sind costs 12 annas a lb. and the one from Manchuria 8 annas a lb. Both the varieties can be obtained through Gosibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Gosibehn's address: Shrimati Gosibehn Captain, Nair Building, Gandhi Seva Sena, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2431

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179. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA[1]

WARDHAGANJ,
December 2, 1935

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

WITHOUT DIMINISHING INFLUENCE OR DAMAGING STATUS OF RECOGNIZED UNION OFFER LISTEN COMPLAINTS BY WHOMSOEVER MADE AND REDRESS LEGITIMATE PROVED GRIEVANCE. PERSONS THEMSELVES NOT EMPLOYEES SHOULD PROVE THEIR AUTHORITY SPEAK FOR AGGRIEVED WORKERS. IF THIS ADVICE DOES NOT FIND ECHO IN YOUR HEART IT IS CLEAR I HAVE NOT GRASPED TRUE SITUATION. IN THAT EVENT SHOULD ACT ACCORDING YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7785. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

180. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 2, 1935

I got your letter. I am getting confirmed in the views which I have publicly expressed. Your argument[2] applies to all similar things, but just as it would not be right to carry on public propaganda for such things so also it would not be right to do so in this case. One may propagate a thing that is spiritually elevating. How can one propagate something that has a lowering tendency? "A lowering tendency" need not be taken in a deprecatory sense here. Everybody would welcome sex-gratification without having to have children. Therefore the means

[1] The workers of the Birla Cotton Mill had gone on strike in protest against reduction in their wages, and under the leadership of Satyavati had formed an *ad hoc* committee to fight their cause. But the addressee had refused to recognize her authority and insisted on negotiating with the Birla Cotton Mill Union functioning since 1928.

[2] About artificial birth-control

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of ensuring this are spreading like intoxicants. If there is any cause for regret, it is only that what is morally bad is being regarded as morally desirable. I have recently been given Mrs. Erskine's book. It is worth pondering over. It also advocates control but in a different way. I have no time to write more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 160

181. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 2, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have seen both your letters and you must have got the wire I sent you this morning.

In my opinion no harm can come out of seeing Satyavati. After all, your aim is justice. But she should hold an authority from the workers. The best thing would be to take all the complaints to an agreed arbitrator with the initial condition that there should be no future strike. I have not suggested my own name, for how can I even take up this function? You have to appoint someone else as the arbitrator. I hope you will be patient in everything.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8015. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The letter carries the following note by Mahadev Desai: "A *Hindustan Times* issue reports Satyavati as the 'wife of a dismissed employee'. It hurt Bapu. He wrote to Satyavati who had complained to him that it was a stupid blunder by a reporter and that even Ghanshyamdas would not like it."

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182. LETTER TO SURENDRA

WARDHA,
December 3, 1935

CHI. SURENDRA,

I had your previous letter. It did not particularly call for a reply, hence I saved my time for some other work. Now I shall not treat your letter of the 29th ultimo in the same manner.

Do continue to post me with your bitter-sweet experiences. It would be a mistake to regard the experiences at Sindi as fully comprehensive. I fail to see a reflection of my own experiences in the picture that I form in my mind by putting together Mahadev's description of the experiences at Sindi. There is a restraint in Mahadev's description, hence the bitter experiences included in it are like sugar refined in a factory. I can summarize my experience of Sindi in one sentence. Justice has not yet been done to Sindi. But willy-nilly I happen to be its director. And what sort of a director? I used to pay only short visits. Now I visit the place daily and stay there for a few minutes. I have not mixed with the people. Mirabehn tried hard to do it. But she had gone there only to stop me from settling down in the place.[1] She had not set her mind on it. She was staying under my pressure. Now Gajanan[2] is there but it is also only an experiment. Hence it is likely you are mistaken in placing Sindi in line with the others. I can say that for me [the work at] Sindi is vast enough.

We have done nothing about Vadaj. A separate ashram has come into being at Nalawadi. It cannot be said that it has any appreciable impact on the people of Nalawadi. It is a different kind of activity. We have not yet mastered the art of living in a village. We still have to learn the way of mingling with them. Hence Nalawadi, Vadaj and Sindi, and all the three are different things. Your experiment is the fourth and it is in line with the experiments that are now being carried on. Let us see what finally comes out of it. I am therefore closely watching your work. I am intentionally forgoing the temptation of

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 144.
[2] Gajanan Nayak

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taking more work from you. I had to exercise great firmness in sending my reply to Navli. . . .[1]

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

183. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

December 3, 1935

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I have forgotten the letters connected with the swadeshi industry. You can do what seems fit to you. It would not be proper to send suggestions from here.

I had given an appointment to the sadhu but refused to keep it as he desired me to go to his place. We could certainly meet on my coming to Delhi if he wants it.

You are keeping well, I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2430

184. INTERVIEW TO MARGARET SANGER[2]

[*December 3/4, 1935*][3]

Gandhiji poured his whole being into his conversation. He revealed himself inside out, giving Mrs. Sanger an intimate glimpse of his own private life. He also declared to her his own limitations, especially the stupendous limitation of his own philosophy of life—a philosophy that seeks self-realization through self-control, and said that from him there could be one solution and one alone:

[G.] I could not recommend the remedy of birth-control to a woman who wanted my approval. I should simply say to her: My remedy is of no use to you. You must go to others for advice.

Mrs. Sanger cited some hard cases. Gandhiji said:

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Mrs. Sanger and Birth-control"

[3] According to *Gandhi—1915–1948: A Detailed Chronology*, Margaret Sanger met Gandhiji on December 3 and 4.

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I agree, there are hard cases. Else birth-control enthusiasts would have no case. But I would say, do devise remedies by all means, but the remedies should be other than the ones you advise. If you and I as moral reformers put our foot down on this remedy and said, 'You must fall back on other remedies', those would surely be found.

Both seemed to be agreed that woman should be emancipated, that woman should be the arbiter of her destiny. But Mrs. Sanger would have Gandhiji work for woman's emancipation through her pet device, just as believers in violence want Gandhiji to win India's freedom through violence, since they seem to be sure that non-violence can never succeed.

She forgets this fundamental difference in her impatience to prove that Gandhiji does not know the women of India. And she claims to prove this on the ground that he makes an impossible appeal to the women of India —the appeal to resist their husbands. Well, this is what he said:

My wife I made the orbit of all women. In her I studied all women. I came in contact with many European women in South Africa, and I knew practically every Indian woman there. I worked with them. I tried to show them they were not slaves either to their husbands or parents, not only in the political field but in the domestic as well. But the trouble was that some could not resist their husbands. The remedy is in the hands of women themselves. The struggle is difficult for them, and I do not blame them. I blame the men. Men have legislated against them. Man has regarded woman as his tool. She has learned to be his tool and in the end found it easy and pleasurable to be such, because when one drags another in his fall the descent is easy. . . .[1] I have felt that during the years still left to me if I can drive home to women's minds the truth that they are free, we will have no birth-control problem in India. If they will only learn to say 'no' to their husbands when they approach them carnally! I do not suppose all husbands are brutes and if women only know how to resist them, all will be well. I have been able to teach women who have come in contact with me how to resist their husbands. The real problem is that many do not want to resist them. . . . No resistance bordering upon bitterness will be necessary in 99 out of 100 cases. If a wife says to her husband, 'No, I do not want it', he will make no trouble. But she hasn't been taught. Her parents in most cases won't teach it to her. There are some

[1] Omissions as in the source

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cases, I know, in which parents have appealed to their daughters' husbands not to force motherhood on their daughters. And I have come across amenable husbands too. I want woman to learn the primary right of resistance. She thinks now that she has not got it. . . .

Mrs. Sanger raises the phantasmagoria of "irritations, disputes, and thwarted longings that Gandhiji's advice would bring into the home." . . . She cited cases of great nervous and mental breakdowns as a result of the practice of self-control. Gandhiji spoke from a knowledge of the numerous letters he receives every mail, when he said to her:

The evidence is all based on examination of imbeciles. The conclusions are not drawn from the practice of healthy-minded people. The people they take for examples have not lived a life of even tolerable continence. These neurologists assume that people are expected to exercise self-restraint while they continue to lead the same ill-regulated life. The consequence is that they do not exercise self-restraint but become lunatics. I carry on correspondence with many of these people and they describe their own ailments to me. I simply say that if I were to present them with this method of birth-control they would lead far worse lives.

He told her that when she went to Calcutta she would be told by those who knew what havoc contraceptives had worked among unmarried young men and women. But evidently for the purpose of the conversation, at any rate, Mrs. Sanger confined herself to propagation of knowledge of birth-control among married couples only. . . . The distinction that Gandhiji drew between love and lust will be evident from the following excerpts from the conversation:

When both want to satisfy animal passion without having to suffer the consequences of their act it is not love, it is lust. But if love is pure, it will transcend animal passion and will regulate itself. We have not had enough education of the passions. When a husband says, 'Let us not have children, but let us have relations', what is that but animal passion? If they do not want to have more children they should simply refuse to unite. Love becomes lust the moment you make it a means for the satisfaction of animal needs. It is just the same with food. If food is taken only for pleasure it is lust. You do not take chocolates for the sake of satisfying your hunger. You take them for pleasure and then ask the doctor for an antidote. Perhaps you tell the doctor that whisky befogs your brain and he gives

you an antidote. Would it not be better not to take chocolates or whisky?

MRS. S. No. I do not accept the analogy.

G. Of course you will not accept the analogy because you think this sex expression without desire for children is a need of the soul, a contention I do not endorse.

MRS. S. Yes, sex expression is a spiritual need and I claim that the quality of this expression is more important than the result, for the quality of the relationship is there regardless of results. We all know that the great majority of children are born as an accident, without the parents having any desire for conception. Seldom are two people drawn together in the sex act by their desire to have children. . . . Do you think it possible for two people who are in love, who are happy together, to regulate their sex act only once in two years, so that relationship would only take place when they wanted a child? Do you think it possible?

G. I had the honour of doing that very thing and I am not the only one.

Mrs. Sanger thought it was illogical to contend that sex union for the purpose of having children would be love and union for the satisfaction of the sexual appetite was lust, for the same act was involved in both. Gandhiji immediately capitulated and said he was ready to describe all sexual union as partaking of the nature of lust.

I know, from my own experience that as long as I looked upon my wife carnally, we had no real understanding. Our love did not reach a high plane. There was affection between us always, but we came closer and closer the more we or rather I became restrained. There never was want of restraint on the part of my wife. Very often she would show restraint, but she rarely resisted me although she showed disinclination very often. All the time I wanted carnal pleasure I could not serve her. The moment I bade good-bye to a life of carnal pleasure our whole relationship became spiritual. Lust died and love reigned instead. . . .

Mrs. Sanger is so impatient to prove that Gandhiji is a visionary that she forgets the practical ways and means that Gandhiji suggested to her. She asked:

Must the sexual union take place only three or four times in an entire lifetime?

G. Why should people not be taught that it is immoral to have more than three or four children and that after they have had that number they should sleep separately? If they are taught this it would harden into custom. And if social reformers cannot impress this idea upon the people, why not a law? If husband and wife have four children, they would have had sufficient animal enjoyment. Their love may then be lifted to a higher plane. Their bodies have met. After they have had the children they wanted, their love transforms itself into a spiritual relationship. If these children die and they want more, then they may meet again. Why must people be slaves of this passion when they are not of others? When you give them education in birth-control, you tell them it is a duty. You say to them that if they do not do this thing they will interrupt their spiritual evolution. You do not even talk of regulation. After giving them education in birth-control, you do not say to them, 'thus far and no further'. You ask people to drink temperately, as though it was possible to remain temperate. I know these temperate people. . . .

And yet as Mrs. Sanger was so dreadfully in earnest Gandhiji did mention a remedy which could conceivably appeal to him. That method was the avoidance of sexual union during unsafe periods confining it to the "safe" period of about ten days during the month. That had at least an element of self-control which had to be exercised during the unsafe period. Whether this appealed to Mrs. Sanger or not I do not know. But therein spoke Gandhiji the truth-seeker. Mrs. Sanger has not referred to it anywhere in her interviews or her *Illustrated Weekly* article. Perhaps if birth-controllers were to be satisfied with this simple method, the birth-control clinics and propagandists would find their trade gone. . . .[1]

Harijan, 25-1-1936

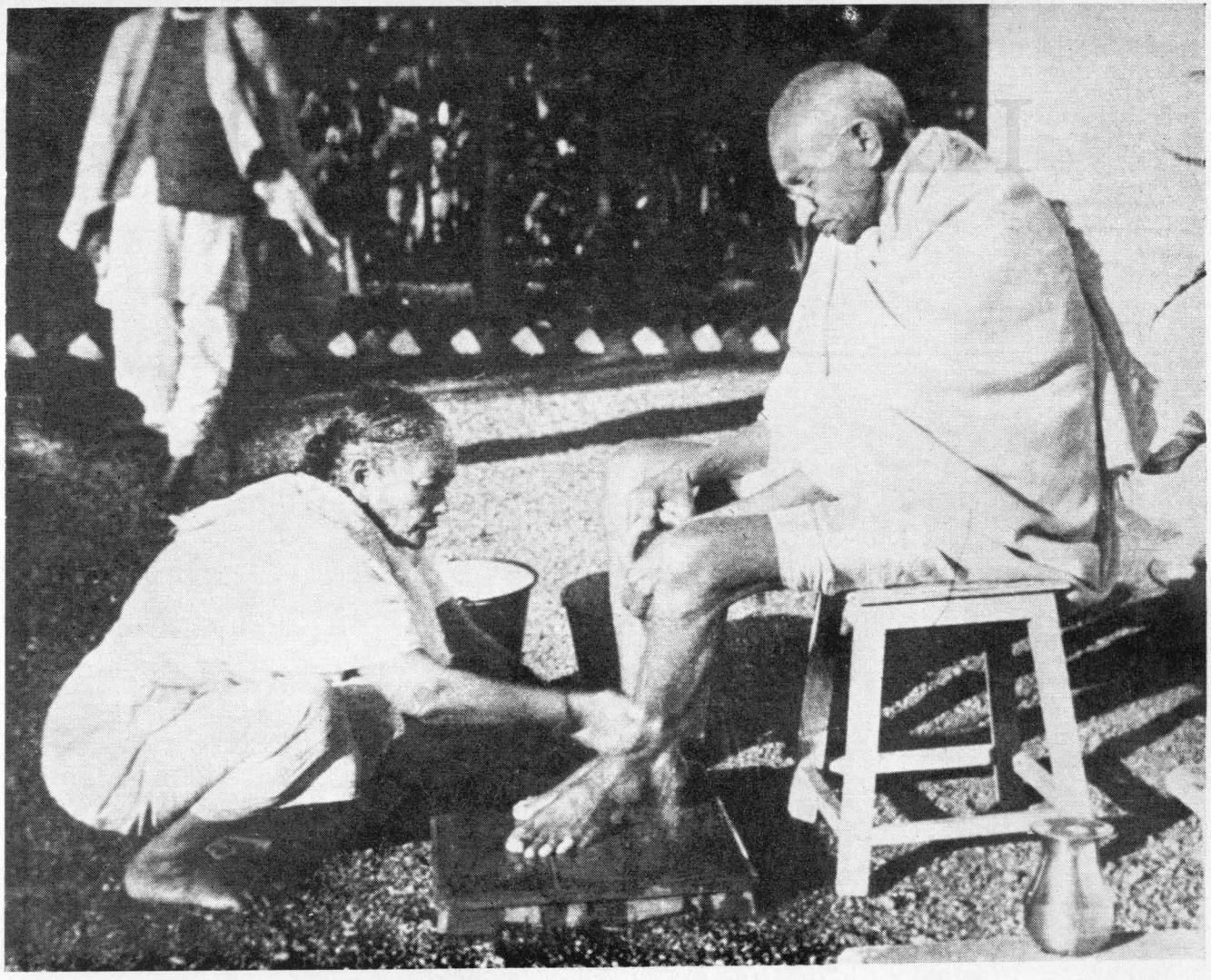
[1] Margaret Sanger's rejoinder appeared in *Harijan*, 22-2-1936.

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WITH MARGARET SANGER IN WARDHA



KASTURBA BATHING GANDHIJI'S FEET

185. A MESSAGE[1]

[*December 4, 1935*][2]

At the age of sixty, a person does not become old but rather attains the fullest maturity; unfortunately, however, in this country we wear out too soon and therefore rejoice when we complete fifty years. Lady Vidyagauri does not suffer from old age. May she ward off old age for many years to come!

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 5-1-1936

186. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 4, 1935

CHI. MANUDI,

I sent you yesterday the letters from Natal. But though I spent money on postage, I didn't reply to you and so am writing again. I am glad you wrote to me. Do write to me from time to time. You did very well in going there. Serve your mother's sisters devotedly and, if they permit you, return soon. Keep yourself well occupied all the time. Describe your daily programme to me. We had quite a crowd of guests here. The number has come down today, but will go up again.

Take proper care of your health. If you are careful about your food, you are bound to keep well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANUBEHN GANDHI
C/O BALIBEHN VORA
OPP. HIGH SCHOOL
RAJKOT SADAR (KATHIAWAR)[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2667. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

[1] This was sent for the 60th birthday celebration of Vidyagauri, wife of Ramanbhai Mahipatram Nilkanth.

[2] From *Gandhi—1915–1948: A Detailed Chronology*.

[3] The address is from a copy.

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187. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

WARDHA,
December 5, 1935

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have your letter dictated with calm and deliberation.

The Harijan Sevak Sangh is as much yours as mine if not more.

You should cling to your own dharma. If you succeed in that place Navli will get everything [it needs]. . . .[1] ought to be. Hemubhai is a good man. He works hard. I myself could not give him much time. Kishorelal should be reaching in a day or two. Anyway I have to go to Gujarat in the month of January. And now I must stop.

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

188. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

December 5, 1935

CHI. CHANDU,

It was very good indeed that you wrote your letter calmly. Do continue to write in detail so that Father needn't write.

It is extremely difficult to explain fully why I didn't believe your story.[2] The analogy you have adduced is not correct. You yourself admit that the incident which took place could not happen without impure desire. And when it took place you had already had experience of such desire. And still you say that even in impure actions you did not recognize any impure desire in . . ., nor was such desire aroused in you by those actions. This part of the story is not plausible and so I disregard the rest of it also. If I accept your account, I would have to draw a terrible inference against you, namely, that impure desire was aroused in you but that you now shrink from admitting the fact. How can I bring myself to draw such an

[1] Illegible
[2] *Vide* p. 140.

inference? I, therefore, believe that there is conscious or unconscious exaggeration in your account. And since I believe that, the conundrums you have put to me have little meaning. You did well in sending me an extract from Kamu's diary. Send its date also. I will then write again.

Do come and see me when I arrive in Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 941. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

189. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 5, 1935

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Your letter. The letter you wrote to Hanumant Sahai is perfectly correct. Neither he nor Satyavati can be recognized to represent labour unless either of them is elected by the workers. But they should get their due. This was all I meant to say[1] and I understand that you have already taken action in this regard.

I expect the whole matter to have been concluded by now. Your offer[2] seems adequate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 8016. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,
December 6, 1935

I wasn't arguing merely academically. You had asked for my views and I expounded them.[3]

How can I support the move for the Corporation[4] to open a clinic and to issue posters advising the people to take advantage of it?

[1] *Vide* p. 154.

[2] To examine the mill's records to judge if the workers' grievances were legitimate

[3] *Vide* pp. 153-4.

[4] The Municipal Corporation of Bombay, of which the addressee was a Councillor

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I had long discussions with Mrs. Sanger.[1] The more I listened to her arguments the more I became confirmed in my view. If a gourmand falls ill, what else would a vaid advise him to do but to fast? But people will continue to take digestive pills and yet continue to suffer. Understand that it is the same with regard to birth-control. My advice to you is that, in your own case, you may do what you like but should take no interest in the propaganda move. If, however, you have come to definite views on the subject and are convinced of the universal necessity of birth-control, I would have nothing to say.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 161

191. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM J. JOSHI

December 6, 1935

BHAI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. I was surprised. It needed no reply.

PURUSHOTTAM JIVRAJ JOSHI
AMRELI

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

192. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

December 6, 1935

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter regarding the circular about the restriction on taking loans. The circular is all right. But the law of mortgage is against it. Hence we shall have to consider its implementation. I myself cannot decide immediately what should be done in cases in which money is withdrawn with the Head's consent. Now that the 12th is drawing near we shall have a further discussion then. For the present let your circular remain. Personally I approve of it. I never like the employees in a big department taking loans from its funds. I can, however, imagine the necessity of permitting them to borrow with the Head's permission. It would be less undesirable if employees got loans openly from a public organization instead of incurring private debts.

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 156-60.

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193. LETTER TO SUSHILA NAYYAR

December 6, 1935

CHI. SUSHILA,

Let us see whether you get this letter or not. I have never thought or written that your wish is to make money. If it were so, how could you even think of sending me the money you save? Now I know what you want. Let us see what God ordains.

Pyarelal must have been operated upon yesterday. I hope to get more news today.

LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE
NEW DELHI

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

194. DISCUSSION WITH A VILLAGE WORKER[1]

[Before *December 7, 1935*]

[VILLAGE WORKER:] Why are we laying such an emphasis on khadi and wholesome food-stuffs, when you know that even before the advent of the British, khadi was there and our good food-stuffs were there, and yet we were in no better case?

[GANDHIJI:] This question was discussed threadbare in the columns of *Young India* and *Navajivan* if you read them. But I shall sum up the reply for you. We had khadi, but we did not know its significance; we were self-contained, but without realizing its necessity. There was little intelligence behind khadi and our handicrafts, and we little realized that they sustained us. Therefore, when they were lost to us we did not miss them, and today when an attempt is being made to restore them, some of us are wondering what use there could be in their restoration.

Then that means that political education and propaganda is needed, and you have tabooed this.

No political propaganda is needed to teach people the lesson of self-help, of reform in their diet, and of throwing off their inertia and making the best of their idle hours.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

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My difficulty is this, that though people in our villages are working like asses from morning until night without an hour's respite they do not get enough to eat. And you are asking them to labour still more?

What you say is news to me. The villages I know are those in which quantities of time are being wasted. But if as you say there are people who are being overworked, I am asking such people to accept nothing less than a living wage for nothing more than eight hours' work.

But why not accept the machine with all its good points, eliminating the bad ones?

I cannot afford to keep our human machines idle. We have such an amount of human power lying idle that we have no room for other power-driven machines.

Introduce the power-driven machines and get them to work for only as long as is needed for our purposes.

How do you mean? Supposing X produced all the cloth we needed, in mills specially constructed for the purpose, and gave work to say three million men, also distributing all the profit between them, what then? Then these three million men will be having all the money that used to be distributed between 300 million a hundred years ago.

No, Sir, I propose that our men should not work more than is necessary for our purposes. Some work is indeed necessary for all of us, but why should we work, say, more than a couple of hours a day and not devote the rest of our time to pleasant occupations?

So you would be satisfied if our men were to work only for one hour a day?

That should be worked out. But I should certainly be satisfied.

Well there's the rub. I should never be satisfied until all men had plenty of productive work, say, eight hours a day.

But why, I wonder, should you insist on this eight hours' minimum?

Because I know that millions will not employ themselves in work for the sake of it. If they did not need to work for their bread, they would lack the incentive. Supposing a few millionaires from America came and offered to send us all our food-stuffs and implored us not to work but to permit them to give vent to their philanthropy, I should refuse point-blank to accept their kind offer.

That would be because the offer would hurt your self-respect?

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No, not only because of that; but especially because it strikes at the root of the fundamental law of our being, viz., that we must work for our bread, that we eat our bread by the sweat of our brow.

But that is your personal view. Would you leave the organization of society to society itself, or would you leave it to a few good guides?

I should leave it to a few good guides.

Which means that you are for a dictatorship.

No, for the simple reason that my fundamental principle is non-violence and I should not coerce any individual or community. Guidance is not dictatorship.

Harijan, 7-12-1935

195. EVIL OF CREDIT SALES

Whilst the whole policy of the A. I. S. A. about khadi is being overhauled, it is well to remind those who are in charge of the numerous khadi depots that the custom of selling khadi on credit has on the whole resulted in loss rather than gain to khadi. The temptation to give credit to friends, acquaintances and monied men is no doubt very great. Often it offends them if credit is refused when, they contend, no risk is to be run. These good people do not realize that it is wrong to expect a salesman to make invidious distinctions. Numerous complaints are received from managers of khadi depots about friends and well-to-do men not discharging the debts incurred by them. To issue processes of law for the recovery of debts is a thankless and expensive task and often means more worry than it is worth. Hence even at the risk of offending and even losing some customers the safe course is never to depart from the golden rule of 'no credit sales'.

Let the khadi workers realize that the mission of khadi is not to be confined to the cities, it has to spread among the millions of villagers who are waiting to hear the call. We do not know how to reach them. We have hitherto tried the roundabout way. We shall not find the direct and the true way in the vain attempt to show ever-increasing sales in the books of city depots. Let them know that it is the surplus khadi that is to find its way to cities. The vast quantity has to be made and used by the villagers themselves. The true way to reach the villagers is to concentrate on them in their own cottages. City sales, therefore, can

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be no index of the progress of the mission of khadi. Khadi statistics of the future have to show the progress made from year to year in the villages. If a large number of workers are to be freed for the spread of khadi in the villages, we must reduce our labours in the cities. One way of doing it is religiously to do away with credit sales and confine our attention to those who really want khadi and appreciate the virtue of cash payment. Credit sales invariably mean increase in prices for they involve more work, i.e., more expenses. Considered from all points of view credit sales have nothing to recommend them except the doubtful convenience of a few customers. But khadi exists not for the convenience of the few. It is intended for the benefit of all. In restricting khadi sales, therefore, to cash transactions the A. I. S. A. seeks the welfare not only of the hungry millions but also of the city buyers of khadi.

Harijan, 7-12-1935

196. HAND-MADE PAPER

Shri Yadavrao S. Chaudhary is a paper expert trained in Germany. He has prepared the following notes[1] showing how hand-made paper is prepared in Maganwadi.

Harijan, 7-12-1935

197. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

WARDHA,
December 7, 1935

BHAI UDIT MISHRA,

I have your letter about Sharma. I am not satisfied. In your earlier letter you had praised Sharma. It now becomes your duty to give me a correct picture of what Sharma said. Please let me have it. I have not received Brijmohanji's letter.

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

[1] Not reproduced here

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198. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

December 7, 1935

BHAI FULCHAND,

Jaisukhlal read in a newspaper that you had been suffering from a dreadful disease of the lungs. We cannot believe the newspapers. I hope that is the case in regard to this report, too. Please write to me, or ask somebody to write, and tell me what the fact is. Persons like you cannot afford to fall ill. You have a good many tasks yet to accomplish.

How old are you?[1]

SHRI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND SHAH
RASHTRIYA SHALA
WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9197. Also C.W. 2850. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

[1] The letter carries a note by Mahadev Desai saying that after he had dictated the letter Gandhiji suddenly took ill and was forbidden by doctors to do any work. The letter, therefore, could not be signed by Gandhiji. In his letter dated December 13 to Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahadev Desai wrote: "He [Gandhiji] has been having high blood-pressure for several months, I think, and we should not have noticed it but for a timely warning ten days ago when he had some unaccountable pain in the back regions of the head—no headache, no neuralgic or rheumatic pain, but a certain pain accompanied by numbness which disappeared with careful massage but recurred every two or three hours. It was only when the doctors were called—I wired to Jivaraj—that it was found that he had a blood-pressure over 200 (syst.) and 120 (diast.). He has since been having perfect rest in bed, attending to no correspondence, writing nothing, dictating nothing."

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199. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
December 11, 1935

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am writing to you after many days. I don't know if I am disobeying doctors' instructions in doing so. Jamnalalji has got alarmed, but I don't want you to be so. Come only when you would ordinarily have done. I am all right. The strings of your life, mine and everybody else's, are held by Mira's Lord. Let Him pull them as He wills. Does He ever let anybody have his way? Pyarelal is fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 193

200. IN PRAISE OF GROUND-NUT CAKE

A friend sends the following opinion[1] of Prof. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe, in praise of ground-nut cake. It certainly deserves a trial.

Harijan, 14-12-1935

201. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHA,
December 14, 1935

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letters have started coming, which is good. I had a short letter from Draupadi. I keep passing on your letters to her and Ramdas. I have not written again to Kellogg but I shall certainly do so if necessary, on your reaching there. You do well to observe everything there—good or bad. Tell me if you notice

[1] Not reproduced here. Professor Sahasrabuddhe had stated that ground-nut was as good as soya beans in proteids, amino-acids and mineral matter, and that ground-nut cake (free from oil) was "a highly nutritious food material for human consumption".

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anything there that can be useful.[1] Everywhere there are two kinds of shops—those in the poorer quarters and those in the rich section of the town. Sometimes some extremely useful but inexpensive articles are available in the poor business section. This has been my experience in London and Paris. You should not leave the poorer section of New York unexplored. You will of course visit Shelton's Health Home.

Amtussalaam is here and reads your letters. I was not aware that she never writes to you. Ramdas is still in Bombay, and has not yet settled down.

Your diet seems simple and good. You will of course build up your body.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi in Mahadev Desai's hand: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 213

202. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 19, 1935

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I wrote to you last week about the sudden breakdown in Bapu's health.[2] He is progressing well, but it will be some time before his blood-pressure becomes normal again. He seems to have worked at high pressure all these months and Dr. Jivraj and Dr. Gilder who examined him two days ago are definitely of opinion that he must have a couple of months' rest. This he has agreed to do. For ten days now he has been in bed resting and sleeping, never reading or writing or dictating. But you will be surprised to know that he continued to do his reading on the commode even during these days! And he finished the 9th Part of your *magnum opus*—which it really is—this evening.

And as soon as he finished it he called me to his bedside and asked me to send you his impressions. If he had been well he should have written himself or dictated something but he did not want to strain himself in the teeth of the doctors' advice and so told me in Gujarati in a minute or

[1] The addressee had noticed several appliances in the American nature-cure clinics but had found them much too expensive and complicated for India.

[2] *Vide* footnote on p. 169.

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two what he felt. What I say will, therefore, be in my language and not his. He said:

It is needless to say that it is a brilliantly written book, and a great literary production. There are parts where I have my fundamental differences with you and which I would like to criticize, but I will not do so as it is scarcely necessary or useful. For when all is said and done it is a highly introspective narrative containing an expression of your innermost thoughts and convictions. Even if you could be persuaded to moderate or soften that expression, I should not attempt it, as it would result in taking away from its naturalness, if not also its truthfulness. After all we are helpless actors in the mighty flow of events, we have to act according to our lights allowing or expecting the events to correct us where we err. There is just one thing where perhaps I might make a helpful suggestion. The attack on the Liberals seems to have been overdone. It seems to obtrude on the reader's attention over and over again and sometimes mars the grace and beauty of the narrative. Not that there is any venom in anything that you have said; far from it; but you should not be even unconsciously guilty of doing an injustice to them. What you have said about Sastri leaves that impression on me. These friends served the country in their time according to their lights, and whilst we may have our serious differences with them we do not exactly serve the cause of the country by publicly pillorying them. If you have not, therefore, already sent the book on to the publishers, you might alter these portions. . . .

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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203. CABLE TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

December 22, 1935

OUR HEARTS ARE WITH YOU AND KAMALA.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1935. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

204. LETTER TO PADMAVATHI

WARDHA,
December 26, 1935

DEAR PADMAVATHI,

I wrote one letter to Devdas yesterday after my so-called illness. This is the second letter. Your letter of 20th November last has been lying on my head all these days. But I did not want to disregard doctor's warning.

Your love for Kanti[2] is very great. May he prove worthy of it. Personally I have no objection to the betrothal being announced. But it may not be in Saraswathi's[3] interest. She must have the right of refusal when she grows to her full age. As you yourself tell me she knows very little of the understanding between you and Kanti or, say, between us. Her mind should be left free and unfettered.

Do ask Saraswathi to write to me some lines on the strength of the old connection.

I am getting better.

Love.

From a copy: C.W. 9770

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's letter to the addressee dated December 23, 1935, which read: "Two cables from you in painfully quick succession have been repeated by Sarupbehn. Bapu immediately sent a cable to you yesterday. And 'our' here means the whole family, including Rajendra Babu, and Jamnalalji and Vallabhbhai (who are all here) not to mention those near Bapu."

[2] Son of Harilal Gandhi

[3] Addressee's daughter

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205. FOREWORD TO "SATYAGRAHA IN GANDHIJI'S OWN WORDS" [1]

[Before *December 27, 1935*][2]

A dear friend on seeing Rajendra Babu's letter asking for a pamphlet, among others, on the philosophy represented by the name 'satyagraha' asked me if I would write such a pamphlet. Rajendra Babu who knew my preoccupations did not make any such demand upon my time. I, therefore, pleaded my inability when the suggestion came to me. Another suggestion was then put forward that some friend who knew my writings should make relevant extracts from them and prepare the booklet required. I readily endorsed it. The result was the following pages prepared after much labour of love. The workers desire to remain unknown. I glanced through the manuscript and I felt that the work was ably done. I believe that it will enable the reader to appreciate the very important implications of satyagraha. The fascination of the doctrine as an epitome of non-violence is daily growing on me, and I doubt not that if an individual or a nation adopts it as a plan of life, it will promote their happiness and peace and it would be their highest contribution to the attainment of the world peace after which we are all hankering.

Satyagraha in Gandhiji's Own Words, p. 36

206. FOREWORD TO "TO THE STUDENTS"

[Before *December 28, 1935*][3]

I like Anand Hingorani's idea of collecting my writings under suitable heads. The reader will not fail to appreciate the labour he has given to securing attractive printing and binding.

M. K. GANDHI

To the Students

[1] & [2] The last sentence of this Foreword appeared in *The Hindu*, 27-12-1935, under the date-line "Allahabad, December 27" as Gandhiji's "Foreword to the Jubilee Brochure on the subject of satyagraha issued by the A.I.C.C. office".

[3] The first edition was published on December 28, 1935.

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207. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS JUBILEE SAMMELAN

[Before *December 28, 1935*][1]

Happy at the thought that so many ex-Presidents are meeting. The President's is the spirit of brotherly love. Hope it may augur well for the country.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-12-1935

208. ANSWER TO "THE COSMOPOLITAN"[2]

[*1935*][3]

Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve the godliness of human nature. Methods hitherto adopted have failed because rock-bottom sincerity on the part of those who have striven has been lacking. Not that they have realized this lack. Peace is unattainable by part performance of conditions, even as a chemical combination is impossible without complete fulfilment of the conditions of attainment thereof. If the recognized leaders of mankind who have control over engines of destruction were wholly to renounce their use, with full knowledge of its implications, permanent peace can be obtained. This is clearly impossible without the great Powers of the earth renouncing their imperialistic design. This again seems impossible without great nations ceasing to believe in soul-destroying competition and to desire to multiply wants and therefore increase their material possessions. It is my conviction that the root of the evil is want of a living faith in a living God. It is a first-class human tragedy that peoples of the earth who claim to believe in the message of Jesus who they describe as the Prince of Peace show little of that belief in actual practice. It is painful to see sincere Christian divines limiting the scope of Jesus' message to select individuals. I have been taught from my childhood and tested the truth by experience that the primary virtues of mankind are possi-

[1] The message was read out at the Sammelan on December 28, 1935.

[2&3] Of New York. This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", which says this was "Gandhiji's answer given three years ago . . . fresh enough to be repeated today."

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ble of cultivation by the meanest of the human species. It is this undoubted universal possibility that distinguishes the humans from the rest of God's creation. *If even one great nation were unconditionally to perform the supreme act of renunciation, many of us would see in our lifetime visible peace established on earth.*

Harijan, 18-6-1938

209. TELEGRAM TO A. I. S. A.

[*1935*][1]

SPINNERS ASSOCIATION

TAKE CHARGE SEND ABSTRACT STOCK WITH PRESENT PRICES AND LIST PERSONAL AND OTHER OUTSTANDINGS. CLEAR ALL SALABLE STOCK NOT BELOW COST WITHOUT PERMISSION.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

210. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
[*1935*][2]

CHI. CHAND TYAGI,

Rajkishori[3] is going there. Nothing much the matter but she was herself somewhat worried. Her temperature often rises up to 99°F. Even otherwise she intended to go there on a visit. She has taken permission to be away for a month. She is such a nice girl that we all like her. We find her simple, innocent and pure. She is leaving but with an assurance of writing to me every now and then. You should encourage her to keep this promise. Write to me often how you are faring.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6634. Also C.W. 4282. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

[1] In the source, this telegram is placed along with the material belonging to 1935.

[2] The source bears only the date '16', but this appears to have been written in 1935 when Gandhiji was staying at Maganwadi.

[3] Widowed daughter-in-law of the addressee. She had been staying in the Ashram since February 1935.

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211. LETTER TO AMRITLAL NANAVATI

WARDHA,
January 4, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

If you have anything to say to me, do write. Take full work from Lilavati. She can help a great deal in the job of cooking. She also wishes to participate in sanitation work at Sindi. She does not know how to recite *slokas* and bhajans in tune. Do give her the time if she wants to learn it. Ramjilal should be made to learn all the kitchen work. It would be good if he is trained to undertake light responsible work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10713

212. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

January 4, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I am distressed by my inability to come there but I could not accept the strict conditions laid down by the doctors. The better course indeed is not to go at all if my health is as bad as they think. Now, in any case, you should come here after finishing the work of raising contributions for the Harijan cause in a few days. Bring Rajen Babu also with you. Probably you will be able to raise the needed money at Ahmedabad itself.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 194

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213. INTERVIEW TO YONE NOGUCHI[1]

[Before *January 11, 1936*]

It was in the teeth of the doctors' advice that Gandhiji made an exception in favour of Japan's poet Yone Noguchi and invited him to visit him. He said:

He is not going to discuss anything with me. I shall simply have the pleasure of listening to him.

So the poet came and saw Gandhiji in his bed lying with a wet-earth bandage on his head. Gandhiji said:

I sprang from Indian earth and so it is Indian earth that crowns me.

NOGUCHI: In fundamentals, we are the same, in the virtue of negation, of simplicity, of the unification [of] poetry with life, and I am here to give you a few words of adoration.

On Gandhiji asking him his impressions of his visit to India, he said: "India has deeply interested me. So many things I have seen that I had never dreamed of seeing. Sometimes I have had disappointments, too. In the exhibition at Nagpur I found a new India, people very busy working." . . . He asked Gandhiji if he knew anything about Japan. Gandhiji said:

Nothing except through Edwin Arnold whose descriptions[2] of Japanese life I read exactly 45 years ago with great avidity as they were appearing in his letters published weekly in an English journal. He had married a Japanese wife and all that he wrote he did with intimate sympathy.

NOGUCHI: You are right, Arnold's book is true even today. Without love and sympathy you cannot give a correct picture of a people.

GANDHIJI: Yes, and it is easiest to see the darker side. You must have seen our darker side, as we know the darker side of Japan through Japan's traffic and trade rivalry. But it is best to see the brighter side, and Japan's brighter side I know through Kagawa[3].

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] In *Seas and Lands* (1891) and *Japonica* (1892)

[3] A Japanese sadhu who had stayed with Gandhiji at his Ashram

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Kasturba came and she was introduced to the poet. Gandhiji said:

Don't you think, she is the picture of a Japanese woman?

NOGUCHI: Yes, she is like my mother.

Gandhiji was apparently unsatisfied with the very little that the poet said about India. So he said once again:

Yours is the most hospitable country in the world, I know. I hope you found my country at least a second best.

NOGUCHI: Yours is the most hospitable.

He perhaps did not want to tax Gandhiji in his weak condition. He said: "I have nothing to ask you since your life is an open book to me. You have had nothing to conceal."

But as he was leaving he just asked if Gandhiji would give him any message for Japan. Gandhiji said:

My message is included in the message you have received from our poet Dr. Tagore. His message includes all the messages that many of us can give.

Gandhiji requested the poet to visit Ahmedabad and also arranged through Seth Ambalal Sarabhai an invitation to him.

Harijan, 11-1-1936

214. LETTER TO DR. SHUMSHERE SINGH

WARDHA,
January 15, 1936

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

You have I know forgiven me for keeping Amrit here so long. Her presence was a great comfort to me. The discovery of her great affection was a treasure. I hope you have found her in possession of good health. I am faring well. Amrit passed on to me all your carefully thought out suggestions. Thank you.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying from Prabhavati for Amrit.

From the original: C.W. 3560. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6369

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215. MESSAGE TO BIHAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

[Before *January 17, 1936*][1]

Let no one have any anxiety for me. If anyone has anxiety, let him work ten times greater than I am doing now.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-1-1936

216. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
January 18, 1936

Am well. Ever thinking of you, often your image is in front of me, smiling and loving.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3559. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6368

217. CABLE TO QUEEN MARY

[*January 21, 1936*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi has sent a cable to Her Majesty the Queen and members of the royal family expressing deep regret over the passing away of His Majesty the King and conveying sincere condolences.

The Hindustan Times, 22-1-1936

[1] The message conveyed through Rajendra Prasad, appeared under the date-line "Chatra (Hazaribagh), January 17, 1936".

[2] From *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*. King George V died on January 20, 1936.

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218. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *January 22, 1936*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

So you are laid low.[2] I hope you will soon be well and return to your post. You may certainly seek the solitude of the hills. I am making steady progress in spite of the blood-pressure. I think I have discovered the cause of the present increase. But I shall know more on Wednesday. There is no cause for anxiety. I am allowed plenty of exercise and solid food.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6308. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9774

219. LETTER TO ANASUYA JAJU

AHMEDABAD,
January 25, 1936

CHI. ANASUYA,

It pains me to think that I shall not be attending your wedding, but I am helpless. Be an ideal wife. Remain the ideal *sevika* that you are. Bring honour to dharma and to the country. Rest assured that you could not have a more suitable husband than Radhakisan.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9119

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, this letter is placed before that of February 8, 1936, and carries a note saying, "Bapu had been taken to Ahmedabad for a change". Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad on Wednesday, January 22, 1936.

[2] The addressee was suffering from fever.

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220. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

January 25, 1936

CHI. RADHAKISAN,

It is no small pain to me to think that I shall not be in Wardha at the time of your marriage. But what can we do, if God planned it that way? The hopes I have expressed for Anasuya in my letter[1] to her I have of you also, only with the necessary changes in their application to a man. I am convinced that you could not have a better match than Anasuya. I am having great expectations of your new relationship, which I urge you to fulfil. Along with this letter I am sending for both of you wedding garlands made from my hand-spun yarn, which you should both wear while circumambulating during the wedding ceremony. May you both live long.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9119

221. LETTER TO SAADULLAH KHAN AND SOFIA SOMJI

[*January 26, 1936*]

If Bapu had been well, he should have written himself what I am writing on his behalf. May the auspicious day of the 26th of January begin for you both a happy wedded life of service and dedication, made all the stronger and richer by the indissoluble tie that binds you.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-1-1936

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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222. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 26, 1936

When tyrants flourish rebels become slaves. I am flourishing! What about you?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3558. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6367

223. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

January 26, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

You must have got my letters. There has been no letter from you for quite some time. You should not be lazy in this regard. How are things with you now? You are now in charge of the kitchen, are you not?[1] Are you taking any medicine?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 329

224. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

[Before *February 5, 1936*][2]

BHAI JIVANJI,

I did hear from Sardar about your brother's death, but I did not know that you had been out of station. What consolation may I offer you? Being the printer[3] of *Anasaktiyoga*, you of course know that he whom you took to be your brother

[1] The addressee was at this time living in the newly-constructed Harijan Colony, Kingsway, Delhi.

[2] The delivery postmark bears the date February 5, 1936.

[3] The addressee was manager of the Navajivan Press.

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never died and cannot die. [The body][1] is here today but not tomorrow. Why should one worry about it? May the departed soul rest in bliss and may we be more devoted to our duty.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JIVANJI DAHYABHAI DESAI
CHHAPARA, *via* NAVASARI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9942. Also C.W. 6917. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

225. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 8, 1936*][2]

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter relieved me of all anxiety. I hope you will be able to keep the promise not to brood over the past mistakes but look hopefully to the future not to repeat them. I am sure you will be quite all right if in coming to decisions [you] never think of what others will say. Consult the Dweller within and He will never fail you. I am making steady progress. Doctors come tomorrow. You shall have their opinion.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6309. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9775

[1] Illegible
[2] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*; *vide* also the following item.

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226. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AHMEDABAD,
February 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I wrote to you yesterday.[1] Today I have your letter telling me of your conversation with Jamnalalji. It is a great thing to be able to bear with joy being humbled. You should do the work in front of you without thinking of the future. Jamnalal Bajaj is here. I have not met him yet. I shall surely see him and talk to him about you. No anxiety of any sort. Prabha is writing to you about the medical examination.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6310. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9776

227. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 12, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Wardha—not yet the corrections. Certainly your coming here was a good thing.[2] When it became a definite want of the soul, it would have been foolish to resist it. The thing now is to reap the fullest benefit from the visit. I had five minutes with Jamnalal Bajaj about you. He is quite agreeable that you should go on as you are and that you should have a cottage on the hill. More when we meet. I hope to reach there on 23rd. Carry no cares with you. Prabhavati went today to Patna. I thought that now that I was fairly well, it was necessary for her to join her husband. Let us see what now happens.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6311. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9777

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] According to *Gandhi—1915-1948: A Detailed Chronology*, the addressee visited Gandhiji on February 5, 1936.

228. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[*February 13, 1936*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

I see you dread going to Segaon.[2] Don't if you do not have the urge. You know the verse[3] in *Gita* निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ? What will compulsion avail? This is compulsion against oneself. Resistance up to a point is a duty. It becomes compulsion when the urge and the joy is lacking. All resistance is good and obligatory so long as it gives us strength. But when one is exhausted with every effort, be sure it is compulsion which must be avoided. The evil with you is that you have compelled yourself against your will to do certain things. This is an untruth. Therefore don't go to Segaon unless you feel you must and will be miserable if you did not go.

Is this quite clear? Kanti and Kanu are looking after me with great diligence and care.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6312. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9778

[1] From *Bapu's Letters to Mira*; *vide* also p. 189.

[2] The addressee explains: "A tremendous struggle was going on within myself. . . . I had always been torn between the longing for the countryside and the longing to be with Bapu. Now I had hoped that the time had come when the two longings could be fulfilled. The situation however became very painful. If living in Segaon was to mean perpetual separation from Bapu, my health and nerves would not be able to endure it. Already my health was giving way under the strain which was seriously aggravated by other people telling me that if I did not stay permanently in Segaon, Bapu's blood-pressure would get worse. When Bapu became aware of the fact that my nerves were giving out, he said, if I could not live in Segaon he would himself go there."

[3] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 33

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229. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

AHMEDABAD,
February 13, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your rebellious letters have all been delivered to me. I must not attempt a long reply. Prabha went yesterday to Patna to join her husband. I felt it would be wrong to keep her any longer when I was almost a discharged patient. The capacity to stand discussions, etc., will come slowly. That fatigue is no new thing. The disinclination came on me a year ago or even earlier.

Kanti and Kanu are looking after me and they are doing it quite efficiently. Manibehn is guiding them. And Manibehn is an adept in these things. In neatness she is not to be beaten. Ba is still in Bombay nursing Lakshmi[1].

God willing, we leave here on 19th giving two days to Bardoli and then we proceed to Wardha. We (Sardar and I) reach Delhi about seventh or eighth March. Your letters are partly responsible for the delay in coming to Delhi. For all your recent letters have warned me against going to Delhi before the end of February. And Sardar would take no risk.

Hope Shummy is quite well. Looking forward to having an account of your doings in the villages when we meet.

Cartloads of love from
BAPU OR TYRANT, WHICHEVER YOU LIKE

From the original: C.W. 3561. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6370

[1] Wife of Devdas Gandhi

230. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You forgot to see that I wrote a letter to Jayaprakash. I am now sending it with this. I hope you had no difficulty on the way. Kanti and Kanu have properly settled down to their work and the time-table is strictly followed. Manibehn is guiding them. I had the support of her shoulder during the morning constitutional today. Anandi[1] does the massaging with oil in the afternoon, and Kanti and Kanu in the evening. You should not worry about me at all. I felt better for not taking ghee yesterday. I didn't take it today also, though I took all the other things correctly. I had excellent sleep. The weather is not cold at all. Be regular in writing to me, and do please avoid grief on my account.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3455

231. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 13, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTULSALAAM,

Your letter. As regards your going to Patiala I instructed Kanti to write. You may take Rs. 300 from Thakkar Bapa and hand it over to Lala Dunichand. It is good that you are paying rent for your room. We shall consider the future course on my coming to Delhi. I like the idea of your going to Dhaka[2]. Consult Dr. Ansari about yourself; you have to become well. You shall have news of Ba from Kanti. Be content with this much from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 330

[1] Daughter of Lakshmidas Asar
[2] A Harijan village near Delhi

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232. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

AHMEDABAD,
February 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. I do not think you have quoted me correctly. But that does not affect your argument. My letter[1] of yesterday anticipates most part of your argument and answers it. I do not think you need go to Segaon by way of penance. You should go there only if you cannot be happy otherwise. Whilst I am in Maganwadi you can render all the personal service you like, only letting Ba share what she likes. When I go to Segaon, as I must, if you are not there nobody of the present company can be with me. I must make new friends and co-workers in Segaon. You can settle in any other neighbouring village if you like, so as to be near me. I do not contemplate much travelling—certainly none outside India in the near future. "I do not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for me!" My heart is in the villages. I want an excuse for going there. Of my own volition I lack the courage to go or to combat the argument of friends. But if you can persuade yourself to leave Segaon, as soon as I return from my convalescence, I would love to go to Segaon not as any punishment to you but as a welcome God-given opportunity for going to a village. The rains won't worry me in the slightest degree. I should find for myself all the comfort I may need there. Hence I would like you not to disturb yourself on my account. You should go to Segaon only if you feel the impulse to do village work. If you do not, you should quietly settle down in Maganwadi. Your hut is there. If you need better arrangement you have but to ask. In fine, you must do nothing in violation of the inner voice, whatever it may be. I am getting on. Yes, we halt for two days at Bardoli, reaching there on 23rd, D. V.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6313. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9779

[1] *Vide* p. 186.

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233. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

February 14, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter. Devote yourself entirely to your duties. Take care of your health, and engage yourself in some study. You should ask for Sushilabehn's help in the matter. She will guide you. Do some general reading also.

Ba is still in Bombay. We intend to leave here on the 19th and reach Wardha on the 23rd. It seems Ba will not be able to come even to Wardha. Convey my blessings to your mother's sisters. Ask Bhanu if he would still be afraid of me. Tell Kumi that she should not give up the idea of coming to Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1554. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

234. PREFACE TO "BE KHUDAI KHIDMATGAR"

It is a good thing that this concise account of the two servants of God is being placed before the Gujarati reading public. The lives of these two brothers are, in my view, very pure. Of the two, Shri Abdul Ghaffar Khan seems to be a veritable fakir. I see this trait in the letters he has been writing from prison. From day to day his self-abnegation has been increasing and the contemplation of God in his heart becoming more intense. No house where Gujarati is read should be without a copy of this book.

The book is not a mere translation of the original[1] English. The author[2] has tried to write an independent book of his own, and one acquainted with both the languages can easily see that

[1] Entitled *The Two Servants of God.* For Gandhiji's Foreword *vide* Vol. LX, pp. 77-8.

[2] Mahadev Desai

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he has succeeded in the attempt. This book has also something fresh to contribute.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI[1]

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH
AHMEDABAD
February 16, 1936

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9941. Also C.W. 6916

235. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
February 16, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have been getting your letters, but I was helpless. Of course I did have energy enough to write, but chose to follow the doctors' orders. Now I have got the permission to write a few letters such as this. What about the Agent's betrothal? You write nothing about it. Perhaps your next letter will bring the information. If you have not written to me of this already and if there is something I should know, do write. Write to me whatever you wish as regards *Indian Opinion*. Now my health may be said to be good enough. There never was anything to worry about. All I needed was just rest and no more, and I am still under orders to rest myself though I have started writing a little. You must have heard from someone about Lakshmi's illness. Ba is with her.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
I am enclosing a letter[2] to Medh.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4847

[1] This is followed by a note saying: "Please consider if the place and the date should be retained. Maybe it would be correct to omit them." They were finally omitted in the printed book.

[2] Not available

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236. SPEECH AT HARIJAN ASHRAM[1]

[*February 16, 1936*][2]

Though I have been having rest for the last two months or more I have been constantly thinking of the rules and vows[3] of our Ashram. Quite a number of the Ashram inmates, old and young, have given up or have failed to live up to the vows of the Ashram and I wondered if that meant that there was anything inherently defective about those vows. But I came to the conclusion that there was no such thing and that it was well that we had kept those vows in front of us and tried, each according to his or her ability, to observe them, and that there was absolutely no cause for regret that the vows had been taken. I am a devotee of the *Gita* and a firm believer in the inexorable law of karma. Even the least little tripping or stumbling is not without its cause and I have wondered why one who has tried to follow the *Gita* in thought, word and deed should have any ailment. The doctors have assured me that this trouble of high blood-pressure is entirely the result of mental strain and worry. If that is true, it is likely that I have been unnecessarily worrying myself, unnecessarily fretting and secretly harbouring passions like anger, lust, etc. The fact that any event or incident should disturb my mental equilibrium, in spite of my serious efforts, means not that the *Gita* ideal is defective but that my devotion to it is defective. The *Gita* ideal is true for all time, my understanding of it and observance of it is full of flaws. The same is the case about the vows. The vows are true for all time, our observance of them has been defective. The very contemplation of those vows is a source of perennial joy to me.

I know that several inmates of the old Satyagraha Ashram are staying here. They must be living here for some purpose; it can be none other than service of the Harijans. If they cherish the old vows and insist on their observance, they will be thereby rendering a service to the Harijans. Monetary help is not the only way to serve the Harijans. Our spirit of service and self-purification may take that concrete shape, but that

[1] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-3-1936.

[2] Gandhiji visited Harijan Ashram on this date; *vide* the following item.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXVI, pp. 398-401.

is not the only shape it can take. We can, for instance, never render monetary help to the extent that Government can do. The essence of our help consists in our passionate desire to help and suffer for them, and that desire can come only out of self-purification, out of the observance of the vows we have been endeavouring to keep all these years. That will be the measure of our service to them, and of our capacity to make them true 'Harijans'—men of God.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

237. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

AHMEDABAD,
February 17, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter. Remember Tyrant won't tolerate Rebel for long. Rebel will have to be tamed into a slave.

Of course you can come to Wardha if you can. That means Savli, a village about 150 miles from Wardha. There will be the A. I. V. I. A. meeting there among other meetings, too. There will be over 100 people—members of Gandhi Seva Sangh gathered there. We would be there for four or five days and then go to Delhi. Of course you will stay with me in Delhi. I shall let them know.

I walked yesterday to Harijan Ashram, 1½ miles from Vidyapith and met there Ghaniram and his son. Both of them are doing good work. He showed me his invention. I could not give him much time. I have asked him to settle down there. The workshop that used to be in Bardoli has been transferred to the Ashram. Therefore there is much scope for his ability. He seemed to be quite happy. Lakshmidas whom you know is looking after him.

Kanti and Kanu are looking after my wants. Manibehn is the supervisor.

Love.

Blessings from
TYRANT

[PS.]

I am glad you were villaging instead of watching games.

From the original: C.W. 3562. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6371

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238. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

February 17, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Though you are often in my mind I am writing a few words today now that I have obtained permission to write some letters. You seem to be acquiring good experience in London. Now tell me about the books you read and the diet you take and where. Do not stint yourself in the matter of warm clothing or bedding; you must keep warm. I am now all right. We shall go to Wardha in a couple of days. The month of March would be spent in Delhi. After that Wardha. What do you think of Miss Agatha Harrison now that you are acquainted with her?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 228

239. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
February 18, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today I shall write only this much. After looking up the books or inquiring of Chhaganlal[1], send to me at Wardha the details of the sum of over Rs. 1,000 which Bhanushanker paid to the Ashram in several instalments apparently in Chhaganlal's time. I have waited long for Kusum. Now I hardly expect her to come.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8483. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Chhaganlal Joshi, who was for some time secretary of Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati

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240. TRIBUTE TO DINSHAW E. WACHHA[1]

[*February 19, 1936*][2]

The country has lost a great patriot. The very first Congress I had the privilege of attending was presided over by him at Calcutta[3]. I have vivid recollection of his great industry and unfailing courtesy to all. I remember well how much his fearless criticism of Government measures and his grasp of financial questions were admired by all Congressmen.

The Bombay Chronicle, 20-2-1936

241. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD[4]

February 19, 1936

Do not forget that the aims and objects[5] of the Vidyapith continue to be what they were. They were framed after much thought and deliberation by the organizers and the teachers. You have to keep them all in front of you. They are all contained in the prayer you have just now recited. We have all to march from untruth to truth, from darkness to light. Truth is at the very root of all our aims and vows and the plant of truth will not grow and fructify if you do not water its roots with ahimsa. But for you the truth lies in cultivating true rural-mindedness. The Vidyapith was started in order to make the children of city-dwellers real servants of villages and we devised our curricula with that end in view. But you are not children of city-dwellers. You come from villages, you are children of villagers who have gone through suffering and sacrifice in the fight for freedom, and your duty towards the villages is therefore greater.[6] May you use all that you learn, for the benefit of the villages.

Harijan, 29-3-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-2-1936

[1] Who passed away on February 18 at Bombay

[2] From *Gandhi—1915–1948: A Detailed Chronology*

[3] In December, 1901

[4] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-3-1936.

[5] *Vide* Vol. XVIII, pp. 463-8.

[6] *The Bombay Chronicle* here adds: "They should help village industries. . . . They must make spinning a habit, so that they could spin the yarn required for their own clothing."

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242. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

BARDOLI, ON WAY TO WARDHA,
February 20, 1936

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

I got your letter. I was very glad to read it. The satisfaction you have from Anasuya is bound to find an echo in her too. May this mutual satisfaction last for ever. You will be able to build up your health there and also learn the art of nursing people in their illness.

I hope Narmada and Tara[1] also are improving in health.

I reached Bardoli today and hope to be in Wardha on Sunday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9120

243. LETTER TO ANASUYA BAJAJ

[*February 20, 1936*][2]

CHI. ANASUYA,

I have your letter. Sardar is accompanying me and we are going to Wardha *via* Bardoli. I have had a good certificate from Radhakisan about you and me as well, but I am still to get one from you about Radhakisan and myself. I take it that this omission results from your modesty.

I got the slivers which you sent me. They are very good. It is no surprise to me to learn that you have been doing much public service, for you have accepted service to others as your religion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9130

[1] Tara N. Mashruwala, Sushila Gandhi's younger sister

[2] From the contents it is obvious that this letter was written on the same date as the preceding item.

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244. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

BARDOLI,
February 20, 1936

BHAI FULCHAND,

I learnt only recently from Sardar that you had been quite ill. They have permitted me now to write a few letters and hence I am writing this. Write or ask somebody to write to me what your illness is. Do get well soon, for I have still much work to take from you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Send your reply to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9198. Also C.W. 2851. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

245. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

February 20, 1936

CHI. TARA,

I keep thinking of you though I do not write to you. Follow the treatment with faith, not giving it up unless and until Gaurishankarbhai admits defeat. Write to me. Write to me about Narmada also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7525. Also C.W. 5001. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

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246. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

BARDOLI,
February 21, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

How is it that I have heard nothing from you after your letter to Kanti from Hathras? I hope you got the letter[1] I wrote the very next day after you left. You shouldn't be lazy in writing. I write this from Bardoli. I am in good health, and Kanti and Kanu are doing your part of the work ably enough. At the time of leaving, my weight was 112 lb. and the blood-pressure 150-90.

I expect you are keeping good health and taking milk regularly. I am reminded of you by the daily use of your mirror, *pattu*[2], lamp and scissors. You have forgotten to take with you your khaddar shoes, which are in safe custody here. You ought to take up some studies there at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3456

247. INTERVIEW TO AMERICAN NEGRO DELEGATION[3]

[*February 21, 1936*][4]

GANDHIJI: Is the prejudice against colour growing or dying out?

DR. THURMAN[5]: It is difficult to say because in one place things look much improved, whilst in another the outlook is still dark. Among many of the Southern white students there is a disposition to improve upon the

[1] *Vide* p. 188.
[2] A kind of woollen cloth
[3] This appeared under the title "With Our Negro Guests" by Mahadev Desai. According to Mahadev Desai, "the meeting was the first engagement of an important nature undertaken by Gandhiji since the breakdown in his health."
[4] From *Gandhi—1915–48: A Detailed Chronology*
[5] A professor of comparative religion and philosophy

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attitude of their forbears, and the migration occasioned by the World War did contribute appreciably to break down the barriers. But the economic question is acute everywhere, and in many of the industrial centres in Middle West the prejudice against the Negro shows itself in its ugliest form. Among the masses of workers there is a great amount of tension, which is quite natural when the white thinks that the Negro's very existence is a threat to his own.

G. Is the union between Negroes and the whites recognized by law?

CARROL[1]. Twenty-five States have laws definitely against these unions, and I have had to sign a bond of 500 dollars to promise that I would not register any such union.

DR. T. But there has been a lot of intermixture of races as for 300 years or more the Negro woman had no control over her body. . . . Did the South African Negro take any part in your movement?

G. No, I purposely did not invite them. It would have endangered their cause. They would not have understood the technique of our struggle nor could they have seen the purpose or utility of non-violence.

This led to a very interesting discussion of the state of Christianity among the South African Negroes and Gandhiji explained at great length why Islam scored against Christianity there. "We are often told", said Dr. Thurman, "that but for the Arabs there would have been no slavery. I do not believe it."

G. No, it is not true at all. For, the moment a slave accepts Islam he obtains equality with his master, and there are several instances of this in history.

The whole discussion led to many a question and cross-question during which the guests had an occasion to see that Gandhiji's principle of equal respect for all religions was no theoretical formula but a practical creed. "Is non-violence from your point of view a form of direct action?"—inquired Dr. Thurman.

G. It is not one form, it is the only form. I do not of course confine the words 'direct action' to their technical meaning. But without a direct active expression of it, non-violence to my mind is meaningless. It is the greatest and the activest force in the world. One cannot be passively non-violent. In fact 'non-violence' is a term I had to coin in order to bring out the root meaning of ahimsa. In spite of the negative parti-

[1] Pastor of Salem

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cle 'non', it is no negative force. Superficially we are surrounded in life by strife and bloodshed, life living upon life. But some great seer, who ages ago penetrated the centre of truth, said: It is not through strife and violence, but through non-violence that man can fulfil his destiny and his duty to his fellow creatures. It is a force which is more positive than electricity and more powerful than even ether. At the centre of non-violence is a force which is self-acting. Ahimsa means 'love' in the Pauline sense, and yet something more than the 'love' defined by St. Paul, although I know St. Paul's beautiful definition is good enough for all practical purposes. Ahimsa includes the whole creation, and not only human. Besides, love in the English language has other connotations too, and so I was compelled to use the negative word. But it does not, as I have told you, express a negative force, but a force superior to all the forces put together. One person who can express ahimsa in life exercises a force superior to all the forces of brutality.

Q. And is it possible for any individual to achieve this?

G. Certainly. If there was any exclusiveness about it, I should reject it at once.

Q. Any idea of possession is foreign to it?

G. Yes. It possesses nothing, therefore it possesses everything.

Q. Is it possible for a single human being to resist the persistent invasion of the quality successfully?

G. It is possible. Perhaps your question is more universal than you mean. Isn't it possible, you mean to ask, for one single Indian for instance to resist the exploitation of 300 million Indians? Or do you mean the onslaught of the whole world against a single individual personality?

DR. T. Yes, that is one half of the question. I wanted to know if one man can hold the whole violence at bay?

G. If he cannot, you must take it that he is not a true representative of ahimsa. Supposing I cannot produce a single instance in life of a man who truly converted his adversary, I would then say that is because no one had yet been found to express ahimsa in its fulness.

Q. Then it overrides all other forces?

G. Yes, it is the only true force in life.

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DR. T. Forgive the weakness, but may I ask how are we to train individuals or communities in this difficult art?

G. There is no royal road, except through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon. Of course the expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance, and thorough cleansing of one's self of all the impurities. If for mastering of the physical sciences you have to devote a whole lifetime, how many lifetimes may be needed for mastering the greatest spiritual force that mankind has known? But why worry even if it means several lifetimes? For if this is the only permanent thing in life, if this is the only thing that counts, then whatever effort you bestow on mastering it is well spent. Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and everything else shall be added unto you. The Kingdom of Heaven is ahimsa.

MRS. T. How am I to act, supposing my own brother was lynched before my very eyes?

G. There is such a thing as self-immolation. Supposing I was a Negro, and my sister was ravished by a white or lynched by a whole community, what would be my duty?—I ask myself. And the answer comes to me: I must not wish ill to these, but neither must I co-operate with them. It may be that ordinarily I depend on the lynching community for my livelihood. I refuse to co-operate with them, refuse even to touch the food that comes from them, and I refuse to co-operate with even my brother Negroes who tolerate the wrong. That is the self-immolation I mean. I have often in my life resorted to the plan. Of course a mechanical act of starvation will mean nothing. One's faith must remain undimmed whilst life ebbs out minute by minute. But I am a very poor specimen of the practice of non-violence, and my answer may not convince you. But I am striving very hard, and even if I do not succeed fully in this life, my faith will not diminish.

"We want you to come to America", said the guests.

MRS. T. We want you not for white America, but for the Negroes; we have many a problem that cries for solution, and we need you badly.

G. How I wish I could, but I would have nothing to give you unless I had given an ocular demonstration here of all that I have been saying. I must make good the message here before I bring it to you. I do not say that I am defeated, but I have still to perfect myself. You may be sure that the mo-

ment I feel the call within me I shall not hesitate.

DR. T. Much of the peculiar background of our own life in America is our own interpretation of the Christian religion. When one goes through the pages of the hundreds of Negro spirituals, striking things are brought to my mind which remind me of all that you have told us today.

G. Well, if it comes true it may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world.[1]

Harijan, 14-3-1936

248. SPEECH AT VILLAGE WORKERS' MEETING[2]

BARDOLI,
February 22, 1936

The first question was about the duties of the village workers. The only duty of the village worker was to serve the villagers, said Gandhiji, and he could best serve them if he kept the eleven vows[3] in front of him as a beacon-light.

The other question was about the livelihood of the village worker. How was he to earn it? Was he to draw an allowance from an institution, or to earn it by labouring for it, or to depend upon the village for it? The ideal way, said Gandhiji, was to depend upon the village. There was no shame therein, but humility. There was no scope for self-indulgence either, for he could not think of a village which would encourage or tolerate self-indulgence. All that the worker need do was to work for the village all his working hours, and to collect whatever grain and vegetables he needed from the village. He might collect a little money too (for postage and other monetary expenditure) if he should need it, though Gandhiji did not think he could not do without it. The village would willingly support him if he had gone there at the invitation of the village. He could conceive an occasion when the villagers might not be able to tolerate his views and with-

[1] Before taking leave of Gandhiji Mrs. Thurman sang two famous Negro spirituals: "Were you there, when they crucified my Lord" and "We are climbing Jacob's ladder."

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 1-3-1936. The village workers gave a list of questions to Gandhiji and requested him to enlighten them.

[3] Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi (restricting oneself to the use and service of one's nearest surroundings in preference to those more remote) and spirit of unexclusive brotherhood

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draw their support, as, for instance, they did when he admitted untouchables in the Satyagraha Ashram in 1915 Then he should work for his living. It was no use depending on an institution.

The third question was about body-labour. The village worker was in the village to do as much body-labour as possible and to teach the villagers to outgrow idleness. He might do any kind of labour, but give preference to scavenging. Scavenging was certainly productive labour. He liked some of the workers' insistence on devoting at least half an hour to work entirely of service and of a productive kind. Scavenging certainly came under that category. Also grinding; for money saved is money got.

The fourth question was about maintaining a diary. Gandhiji had no doubt that the village worker must be prepared to account for every minute of his waking hours and must fill them with work and mention it distinctly in his diary. A real diary was a mirror of the diarist's mind and soul, but many might find it difficult to make a truthful record of their mind's activities. In that case they might confine themselves to a record of their physical activities. But it should not be done in a haphazard way. Simply saying, "Worked in the kitchen" would not do. One may have whiled away one's time in the kitchen. Specific items of work should be mentioned.

The fifth question was about work among Dublas who work more or less as serfs in certain parts of Gujarat. Service of Dublas, said Gandhiji, meant readiness to share their toil and their hardships, and to get into touch with their masters and to see that they dealt with them justly and kindly.

Summing up, Gandhiji said:

The village worker will leave politics alone. He may become a Congress member, but he may not take part in an election campaign. He has his work cut out for himself. The Village Industries Association and the Spinners' Association were both created by the Congress, and yet they work independently of the Congress. That is why they and their members steer clear of all Congress politics. That is the non-violent way.

He will also leave village factions alone. He must go and settle there determined to do without most of the things he does not do without in a city. If I sit down in a village I should have to decide what things I should not take with me in the village, however inherently harmless those things may be. The question is whether those things will sort well or ill with the life of an ordinary villager. He will be incorruptible and stand like a rock against the inroad of temptations and save the village from them. Even one pure soul can save a whole village, as one Vibhishana[1] saved Lanka. Sodom and Gomorrah were not destroyed so long as

[1] Ravana's brother who went over to Rama's side

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there was one pure soul left in them.[1] That is why I said long ago that I would far rather that India perished than sacrifice truth in order to save it.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

249. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
February 24, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Kumarappa handed me your welcome longish letter at the station. The prescription for flit is twice welcome. I needed it. It will duly appear in *Harijan* without your name. The parcel will arrive in due course. How wise of me to have let you cut out ½ yard! When the articles come the artless tyrant will duly examine [the] so-called art of the rebel. Let the rebel however know in advance that sometimes art lies in not interfering with nature's unevenness and irregular curves and lines. Fancy hammering the earth into a perfect sphere! Perhaps then we should cease to be. So you see, if I certify your art, it will be a feather in your cap. But then you will have to sport a cap to wear the feather!

This shows how well I must be in spite of the journey.

I am sorry you can't come to Savli.

We shall see, when we meet in Delhi, what you will or can do in the nature of service. Your appointments will leave you no time.

Love to you all.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3563. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6372

[1] *Genesis*, 13.4 and 18.9

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250. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

February 24, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your two letters together. You caused me a little anxiety, for you were told to write immediately after reaching, were you not? You may certainly go to Mother, if there is nothing for Jayaprakash that you might have to do, that is, if there is no service to render him. You may visit your other relatives, if you have to. However, you ought to stay with him if he accepts your services and eats the food you cook. You may come to me after seeing your elders if he is not at all in need of your services and you can gain your freedom gladly. Before coming, however, it should be clear that you will come not to render me any special personal service but to do the task that I might assign to you. Is this clear?

The language you write is good enough. You have secured a good command over Gujarati.

Mind you preserve your health. You should insist on Jayaprakash following the remedies needed for his health.

We reached Wardha safely yesterday. We are putting up at Kanya Ashram. Kanti and Kanu look after me. Ba is at Bombay still. Mirabehn is sitting near me; but she does not take part in any work of service.

Kanti will write the rest.

Don't be lazy in writing to me. Do not worry about anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3457

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251. LETTER TO DR. KHAN SAHEB

WARDHA,
February 25, 1936

DEAR KHAN SAHEB,

Since you won't attend Sofia's marriage, I may not complain of the absence of any letter from you. But the A. I. V. I. A. is a peremptory body with a strong constitution. You may not be eternally absent and still remain member and trustee. Your difficulty I can anticipate. If it is insurmountable, you should send in your resignation of both and we must wait till the prisoner brother[1] is out.

Love to you all.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

252. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO NARAYANLAL[2]

[On or after *February 27, 1936*][3]

NARAYANLAL

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI DISCUSSED BARODA AFFAIR WITH ME. HE WANTS APPOINT INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE. THOUGH DISINCLINED BEFORE FOR REASONS HEALTH AND OTHERWISE AM PREPARED INQUIRE AND GIVE DECISION ON POINTS RAISED. WIRE IF YOU WOULD LIKE ME INTERVENE.

From a photostat: G.N. 3072

[1] Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was arrested on December 7, 1934, and released on August 2, 1936

[2] Gandhiji drafted this for Jamnalal Bajaj.

[3] This and the following item are on the same sheet. According to *Bapu Smaran*, Jamnalal Bajaj discussed the Baroda affair with Gandhiji on February 26 and 27.

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253. A TELEGRAM

[On or after *February 27, 1936*][1]

JAMNALALJI PREPARED ACT SOLE ARBITRATOR. HAS WIRED NARAYANLAL ACCORDINGLY. YOU SHOULD NEVERTHELESS INQUIRE WHETHER PURUSHOTTAMDAS WILL ACCEPT NOMINATION IF REQUIRED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3072; also *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, p. 379

254. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
February 28, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Ghee from cow's milk I cannot take. I can take only goat's milk and its products. Have plenty of goat's milk in stock.

The dhotis have come. The ends are well made. But they will not suit dhotis as you will realize when we meet. But they will be used as upper sheets which as you know I wear. The yarn is very fine indeed. Everyone to whom I showed the things admired the texture and the ends-making.

We leave this evening for Savli and return here probably on 6th. Only one letter is likely to reach me in Savli if you write to that address. District Chanda, C. P. you will have to put. Savli is an unknown village so far as the public is concerned. I shall miss your presence there as I had almost expected you. Kanti and Kanu accompany me of course.

The date for reaching Delhi is not yet fixed. But I am still hoping it would be 8th March.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3564. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6373

[1] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 206. *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, however, places this telegram under March-April, 1936 with a question mark.

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255. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

February 28, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yesterday's blood-pressure was a fraud—just a result of garlic. It was taken immediately after the meal to test what effect garlic had. I would have felt miserable if I had been prevented from coming to Segaon. Jamnalal Bajaj was superb. He suppressed his feeling and let me come. It was bound to go down as soon as the immediate effect of garlic had abated.

I am glad you were not upset. Of course I would love to be among the people and chat away with them. Kamala had a setback and poor Jawaharlal will be delayed for eleven days. In the circumstances I may go to Delhi directly. I shall let you know.

Am quite well and preparing for Savli.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6314. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9780

256. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 28, 1936

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I did not write to you as you had told me not to. I have not still started dictating my letters. We are going to Savli today, and I hope to reach there [Delhi] on the 8th. I expect to learn more about this at Savli. I hope to see you much improved in health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 331

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257. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

February 28, 1936

BHAI FULCHAND,

I was very glad to have your letter. Would you not go to Ahmedabad and get yourself treated by Talwalkar[1]? I find his remedies work very well in certain diseases.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9199. Also C.W. 2852. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

258. TELEGRAM TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT[2]

February 28, 1936

JUST SYMPATHIES OF ALL OF US ARE WITH YOU ALL. YOU MUST ALL BE BRAVE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1936

259. TRIBUTE TO KAMALA NEHRU[3]

February 28, 1936

Kamala's death is a great national loss. I had the privilege of knowing her intimately for years. I have not known a truer, braver and more godfearing woman. May her life be a pattern for us all to follow.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-2-1936

[1] Dr. Talwalkar, a tuberculosis specialist of Ahmedabad
[2] On Kamala Nehru's death
[3] This was handed over to Mahadev Desai by Gandhiji as he left for Savli by the Grand Trunk Express.

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260. *NOTHING WITHOUT GRACE*

By the grace of medical friends and self-constituted gaolers, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Jamnalalji, I am now able by way of trial to resume to a limited extent my talks with the readers of *Harijan.* The restrictions that they have put on my liberty and to which I have agreed, are that, for the time being at any rate, I shall not write for *Harijan* more than I may consider to be absolutely necessary and that, too, not involving more than a few hours' writing per week. I shall not carry on private correspondence with reference to correspondents' personal problems or domestic difficulties, except those with which I have already concerned myself, and I shall not accept public engagements or attend or speak at public gatherings. There are positive directions about sleep, recreation, exercise and food, with which the reader is not concerned and with which therefore I need not deal. I hope that the readers of *Harijan* and correspondents will co-operate with me and Mahadev Desai, who has in the first instance to attend to all correspondence, in the observance of these restrictions.

It will interest the reader to know something about the origin of the breakdown and the measures taken to cope with it. So far as I have understood the medical friends, after a very careful and painstaking examination of my system they have found no functional derangement. Their opinion is that the breakdown was most probably due to deficiency of proteins and carbohydrates in the form of sugar and starches, coupled with overstrain for a prolonged period involving long hours and concentration on numerous taxing private problems in addition to the performance of daily public duty. So far as I can recollect I had been complaining for the past twelve months or more that, if I did not curtail the volume of ever-growing work, I was sure to break down. Therefore when it came, it was nothing new to me. And it is highly likely that the world would have heard little of it but for the over-anxiety of one of the friends who, on seeing me indisposed, sent a sensational note to Jamnalalji who gathered together all the medical talent that was available in Wardha and sent messages to Nagpur and Bombay for further help.

The day I collapsed I had a warning on rising in the morning that there was some unusual pain about the neck, but I made

light of it and never mentioned it to anybody. I continued to go through the daily programme. The final stroke was a most exhausting and serious conversation I had with a friend whilst I was having the daily evening stroll. The nerves had already been sufficiently taxed during the preceding fortnight with the consideration and solution of problems which for me were quite as big and as important as, say, the paramount question of swaraj.

Even if no fuss had been made over the collapse, I would have taken nature's peremptory warning to heart, given myself moderate rest and tided over the difficulty. But looking back upon the past I feel that it was well that the fuss was made. The extraordinary precautions advised by the medical friends and equally extraordinary care taken by the two 'gaolers' enforced on me the exacting rest which I would not have taken and which allowed ample time for introspection. Not only have I profited by it but the introspection has revealed vital defects in my following out of the interpretation of the *Gita* as I have understood it. I have discovered that I have not approached with adequate detachment the innumerable problems that have presented themselves for solution. It is clear that I have taken many of them to heart and allowed them to rouse my emotional being and thus affect my nerves. In other words they have not, as they should have in a votary of the *Gita*, left my body or mind untouched. I verily believe that one who literally follows the prescription of the eternal Mother need never grow old in mind. Such a one's body will wither in due course like leaves of a healthy tree, leaving the mind as young and as fresh as ever. That seems to me to be the meaning of Bhishma delivering his marvellous discourse to Yudhishthira though he was on his death-bed. Medical friends were never tired of warning me against being excited over or affected by events happening around me. Extra precautions were taken to keep from me news of a tragic character. Though, I think, I was not quite so bad a devotee of the *Gita* as their precautions lead me to suppose, there was undoubtedly substance behind them. For I discovered with what a wrench I accepted Jamnalalji's conditions and demand that I should remove from Maganwadi to Mahila Ashram. Anyway I had lost credit with him for detached action. The fact of the collapse was for him eloquent enough testimony for discrediting my vaunted detachment. I must plead guilty to the condemnation.

The worst however was to follow. I have been trying to follow *brahmacharya* consciously and deliberately since 1899. My definition of it is purity not merely of body but of both speech and thought

also. With the exception of what must be regarded as one lapse, I can recall no instance, during more than thirty-six years' constant and conscious effort, of mental disturbance such as I experienced during this illness. I was disgusted with myself. The moment the feeling came I acquainted my attendants and the medical friends with my condition. They could give me no help. I expected none. I broke loose after the experience from the rigid rest that was imposed upon me. The confession of the wretched experience brought much relief to me. I felt as if a great load had been raised from over me. It enabled me to pull myself together before any harm could be done.[1] But what of the *Gita*? Its teaching is clear and precise. A mind that is once hooked to the Star of stars becomes incorruptible. How far I must be from Him, He alone knows. Thank God, my much-vaunted Mahatmaship has never fooled me. But this enforced rest has humbled me as never before. It has brought to the surface my limitations and imperfections. But I am not so much ashamed of them, as I should be of hiding them from the public. My faith in the message of the *Gita* is as bright as ever. Unwearied ceaseless effort is the price that must be paid for turning that faith into rich infallible experience. But the same *Gita* says without any equivocation that the experience is not to be had without divine grace. We should develop swelled heads if Divinity had not made that ample reservation.

Harijan, 29-2-1936

261. LETTER TO NIRMALABEHN J. SHROFF

SAVLI,
February 29, 1936

CHI. NIRMALA,

This is no letter of condolence. Of course we do feel pained at the death of anyone and, from that standpoint, there is certainly pain at the death of your husband. You have not become a widow, and if you think you have, you were as much a widow in your married state. I expect you do not think that there has been any change in this state. Carry out your duty firmly. If you get the custody of your child, rear him. Do not ever get your head shaved. I see no need for any change in your way of life. In my view, it is your duty to continue your work of service as before. May God grant you the good sense and the strength to do your duty.

[1] *Vide* letters to Premabehn Kantak, 6-5-1936 and 21-5-1936.

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In fact, there is no need to write even this much as Nathji is already there by your side.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9718. Courtesy: Nilkanth B. Mashruwala

262. *SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–I*[1]

SALVI,
February 29, 1936

The truth is that I have come here after opening the exhibition. I thought that first I would see the exhibition and then tell you what was worth seeing there. Just now you have heard the reports of those who have brought exhibits from other parts.

When I was told that an exhibition was to be held here I had an impression that there would be things produced in Savli and the neighbouring villages. They would not be numerous. Khadi work is being carried on here. Fine khadi is made. The Harijans get their livelihood from it, because most of the workers are Harijans. From this point of view I feel the lack of the different processes and types of khadi. The reason given for this is—and it may be a correct one—that we would see Savli closely, study it well and would try to measure in a better way Savli's capacity in khadi production.

For the last two or three months efforts were being made for the members to meet here. For this reason I had expected that you would try in the mean time and exhibit articles made here. Had this been done, all of us would have had the opportunity to see what Savli could do. But this criticism should be borne in mind for the future. The sessions of our Sangh will always be held in villages. On such occasions we should undertake a study of the local industries and the products to explore the potentialities of the place and content ourselves with exhibiting only the things that it can produce. We must also see that we do not confuse the aims of such exhibitions with those of a museum. There can be a display of ancient things which have no connection with our economic life. But such museums should be where they belong; they have no place in our sessions. Our duty is to concentrate on only those industries and crafts which are capable of being revived. Now when you go and see the exhibition, also note what things are not there and what could have been included.

[1] At its second annual meeting

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A circular had been sent to you about what you were to bring when coming here. It asked you to bring a lantern, writing material, postcards, envelopes, stamps, etc. The circular was appropriate because these things are not available in villages. More than 80% of the villagers are illiterate. So who would store these things for sale? It would have been an unnecessary expenditure if lanterns were provided by the Sangh.

The circular also mentioned that it was difficult to procure milk in Savli and cow's milk was practically unprocurable. Those who needed cow's ghee were instructed to bring their own supply. After coming here you would have discovered that buffalo's milk has been provided for you. You would hardly know that your milk supply comes from Chanda[1] and vegetables from Nagpur[2]. I think it is sinful. It was our duty to have had cows here instead of getting milk and vegetables from such a long distance. So many of our people live here. They could always have kept some cows. Of course it would have meant some expenditure. It is possible that less expenditure is incurred in procuring milk from Chanda. But the higher expenditure would not have been improper. We should have also had vegetables grown here. We should have informed the farmers two or three months in advance that three to four hundred of our people were coming to stay here for a week. We would require so many maunds of vegetables daily and they should right then plan their farms to meet the needs. They would have gladly welcomed your suggestion and would have thanked you for having decided to have the session at Savli.

It is better to do without milk or vegetables for a week if such local arrangements are not possible. Arrangements should be made for sick persons or people like me who cannot do without milk or vegetables and that, too, from the supply that is locally available. A pertinent question is: why should they take the trouble of coming such a long distance? We should keep it in mind that we should be able to benefit the villagers to the maximum from our stay there. At least we should try to do so. We should try and get the necessary things made there. If we incur an expenditure of Rs. 3,000 over such a session, we should try and see that we benefit the local people to the same extent by our body-labour and purchasing power.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan(Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 25-7

[1] Thirty-four miles from Savli

[2] More than 120 miles from Savli .

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263. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–II[1]

SAVLI,
March 1, 1936

I shall devote one hour every day to the session. During that time I can speak for about half an hour at the most, and the remaining half hour will be spent in listening to your questions and so on. I have already received some questions from you and the President[2] has also raised some questions in the course of his speech. I shall first reply to his questions. If my reply raises any further questions in your minds, you are free to ask them.

The first question concerns the subsistence wages. In my view we cannot formulate any exact rule about it. We can no doubt say that we shall not go beyond a certain limit. For instance, the Sangh has set the limit of Rs.75 as monthly wage. According to me even this is too much, because our field of activity is in the villages. And we cannot allow Rs. 75 or Rs. 50 in the villages. Nor is so much money needed there. True, all people cannot go to the villages. They have their own difficulties. Then, there are some people who are good workers and whose ideas and actions are acceptable and whom we would not permit to leave the field of service. And they cannot maintain themselves on low wages either. To such people we can give even Rs. 75. But we give this reluctantly and they too accept it reluctantly. This, however, is not a matter to be considered by others. But, if one person can carry on with Rs. 5, why should he demand Rs. 50 merely because some other person is getting Rs. 50? The person earning Rs. 50 or Rs. 75 has either poor health or has some other handicaps which the person earning Rs.5 does not have. This should not be considered a matter of competition at all. Let a person take only what he needs. For instance, Mirabehn can manage with very little. But I told her that she should definitely take milk and fruits. Because of this her monthly expense goes up to Rs. 10 or 15. But Gajanan who works in her place in Sindi has such habits that he requires almost nothing compared to Mirabehn. This does not make him envy Mirabehn. And it should not make him en-

[1] Gandhiji arrived at the meeting at 4 p.m.
[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala

vious. Thus, no one should accept more than his minimum requirements. Any person who has lived in a city so far and has now gone to a village but has not been able to adjust himself to village life may take higher wages for some time.

The next question deals with body-labour. What I have said earlier includes my reply on this point also. Each person will function within his own individual limits. We cannot lay down more than this. Let every man put in the maximum body-labour he can. One worker wrote to me that he managed to earn his livelihood in the village; but all his time was spent in doing body-labour. He had resolved to take to spinning and also planned to make a living by spinning. But he found no time to do anything else. I have written to him that, if he continues his work with devotion, people will have a lesson to learn even from this. If the people of the village desire to accept his services, he can educate their children, clean up the garbage and in return earn his bread from them. If he puts his heart in his work, he will be able to earn his livelihood. But he must take only what is necessary. He may be able to have sweets, ghee, fruits, etc., if he asks for them. But he should not accept these things even if the people offer them on their own. I go round with the thought of the village in my mind, and so other problems do not arise for me. There can be no question at all of drawing the maximum out of public funds.

PRESIDENT: What should be the lowest limit of body-labour, so that, if a particular worker is not able to put in that much work, he would be justified [in withdrawing himself and thus] cease to be a drain on public funds?

GANDHIJI: I have understood your question. But it is not possible to set the same limit for all workers. In fact, each one of them should put in as much labour as he can. Let him earn whatever wages he can, and supplement the deficit from the funds of the Sangh. If his needs are not so great that it would be disturbing to others when they know about them, he should not hesitate to meet them from the Sangh. I cannot set any limit. I would not set any limit if the management were in my hands. I do not also wish to determine which type of work should be regarded as body-labour. I can only say that writing a book is not body-labour.

The third question—a very difficult one—relates to the family. Members should help the President in solving this problem. And the President also should be alert in the matter. We have changed our way of life. We have given up the old tradition. Nevertheless, we are born in the cities. We have got our parents, wives and

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children. They have been all brought up in the old tradition. They have not changed their way of living. We wonder what right we have to compel them to accept the way of life we have accepted. And we want to educate our children in the old method which we have discarded. That is the reason why the workers are worried about the future of their children. They wonder if they would be able to educate their children so as to make them lawyers or doctors. On the one hand, a member of the Sangh lives in poverty and on the other he feels that his duty to his wife and children is different from what he has accepted for himself. He believes that sacrifice is his dharma but not his family's. Renunciation is regarded as a duty in old age. At the root of this idea is the traditional Hindu sentiment that we should renounce the world in old age. That is why we want to educate our children in the old way. But we have given up the belief that renunciation is a duty only of old age, not imperative for youth. We have accepted it as our duty, even in youth, to renounce all pleasures and serve the country. If we believe that sacrifice is man's dharma and that our pleasures should be consistent with the dharma of renunciation, then it becomes our duty to recognize the appropriateness of this dharma for our wives and children as well. If they insist on having more than this, let us tell them that we can give them only this much, that we can give them only the food that we ourselves eat; that what we consider proper for ourselves, we consider proper for them too. What more could be done? Right from my South Africa days I have adhered to this ideal. There is nothing wrong in wanting to reduce one's income. And any ideal which is right for us is also right for our children. All problems would be easily solved if we accept this. But the conflict arises when we believe that our wives and children have a different dharma to follow. We must go as far along this path as possible. If, out of an impulse, we have gone too far, there should be no hesitation in retracing our steps. The Sangh should carry on with whatever means it may be having. Let us keep an eye on our resources and fix the maximum limit. But, in doing this, we shall have to look to the country as well. We are bound to be affected by whatever may be happening in the country. And it is our goal to take the country along with us. We must always try to pursue our activities taking the country with us. I cannot lay down any rule in such matters. These are matters concerning the individual and they depend on his sincerity. The highest limit of Rs. 75 has been set. Whether or not that amount should be drawn is a matter for individual decision.

JAMNALALJI: But, from the point of view of an organization, it becomes necessary to make some rules. It would not be a good rule that the organization should give what an individual considers proper to demand. One who is engaged in public work should also think of one's market value.

G. I think from the public viewpoint it is difficult to clarify the matter any further. A person's market value may be Rs. 25 merely because he knows only Marathi and Sanskrit and is ignorant of English. But why should we put his value merely at Rs. 25? Take the example of a woman spinner. She would not earn even a pice in the market. But we have decided to pay her three annas. The question of market value arises in the case of a lawyer or a doctor. He charges whatever fee he desires. But we should not make such distinctions. We may make some distinction if the lowness of one's wages is due to one's special quality. For instance, if the needs of Gajanan are fewer than those of Mirabehn, he has no need to take as much as Mirabehn. If a person who is a B.A. LL.B. and another with a knowledge of Marathi-Sanskrit have similar functions to perform, they should be valued at the same rate.

J. But, if a person who can earn only Rs. 25 outside can get Rs. 40 from the Sangh, he would remain with the Sangh merely because of the temptation to get Rs. 40 even at the cost of degrading his soul.

G. That is correct. But it depends on the firmness of the organizers of the Sangh; if there were any such person in the Sangh, they should convey it to him that he does not possess the abilities he was supposed to possess. But take the example of Ravishankerbhai[1]. He may not have any market value but he is a great worker.

J. What would be the correct policy with regard to the education of children and medical treatment?

G. The education of the boys certainly deserves our consideration. I have already said that the dharma which is proper for us should also be considered proper for our families. The children should not be converted to another dharma. If I have considered it my dharma to maintain myself through body-labour, it would be as good as converting my son to another dharma if I try to make him a barrister. I can only give him training in body-labour. Along with this, I should give my children whatever education I can within the income limits I have set for myself.

[1] Ravishankar M. Raval

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Let me now come to the point of medical treatment. Take the example of Timmappa. It is true that once we have gone to the villages, we should adjust our whole life accordingly. But we must also look to the results of our experiments. What was the result of Timmappa's not taking milk for a few days? He had to spend on railway fare to go to Bombay. He had to be under obligation to a doctor. But even that was a mistake. When we go to a village and live in poverty, we must avail ourselves only of such medical facilities as the poor villagers can command for maintaining their health. Even if you tell me that I do not follow this precept myself, I cannot conceal my ideal, though I may accept the charge. He who remains continuously ill should send in his resignation.

RAJENDRA BABU: Why do you stress so much the condition of the worker maintaining himself by body-labour? This would leave little time for service. It may be all right to set an example to the people but setting an example is not enough. The need for advice and consultation cannot be ruled out. A worker's usefulness is very much reduced by overmuch insistence on physical labour.

G. This involves the question of reforming the entire Indian society. Every human being should maintain himself only through physical labour. I consider it a divine law. That is the reason why I have fixed that ideal. Now, the question is about intellectual development. Yes, it is a relevant question. But, if I could have power over the world, I would make physical labour compulsory for everybody. Exceptions would have to be made even here, for example, in favour of sannyasis and such others. People would themselves make the means of livelihood available to them. Whether you call it society or people or State, the meaning is the same. I am not making any new or original point. Ruskin, in his *Unto This Last* (translated by me as *Sarvodaya*[1]) has said the same thing. Our Shastras also stress the same point. It may not be clearly mentioned, but it is there by implication. I am not well-versed in the Shastras. Vinobaji and Kakasaheb can talk with authority citing references from the Shastras. But I found the point clearly expounded in *Unto This Last* and that very night I transformed my life. The gist of Ruskin's argument is that a doctor or a lawyer should take the same wages as a labourer.

R. What should the present members do to pursue that ideal?

[1] *Vide* Vol. VIII.

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G. All the present members have this ideal before them. But in the pursuit of that ideal they may follow some honest occupation or take their wages from the Sangh. But the Sangh should give wages only to those whose services it values. It should not give the wages as a favour. The Sangh should not make anyone dependent on it. This Sangh is not to produce parasites. It may become dependent on them by taking the maximum work from them.

DEVSHARMAJI: Is not the limit of Rs. 75 too high?

G. All the better if it could be brought down. As for me I have decided upon Rs. 15 as the limit. You may lower it from Rs. 75 to Rs. 50 if you wish. But it does not seem likely.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 32-6

264. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

March 3, 1936

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Having obtained some dispensation from medical friends, I am able to write this to you. I hope to reach Delhi on 8th. I hope you will prevent people from coming to the station. I am not in a fit state to face crowds and cut my way through them. I should love quietly to be taken to Birla's new Harijan Home.

This must—could—have been written by Mahadev. I have taken up this letter to tell you that as soon as I received your great book[1] on regeneration, I began to read it and finished it the day following. I have called it great because it is evidence of much research and great labour. There is hardly a superfluous word in it.

But as I was reading it, I asked myself, "Does this book take mankind upward? Is it in need of that kind of regeneration? What is revival of youth worth if you cannot be sure of persistent physical existence for two consecutive seconds?"

Is mere physical restoration the end of true medical science? I wonder!

I asked myself these questions, because you were the author of the book and I have ever known you as a seeker of God. When

[1] *Regeneration in Man*

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you can spare a few moments, I would like to know from you how this form of regeneration harmonizes with a search after God.

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

265. LETTER TO P. M. NAIDU

March 3, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I attach no value to my son's letter of recantation, and if the job he has received is the price for his recantation, it is a premium put upon sin.[1] As my son is continuously under the subtle influence of drink he has become incapable of coherent thinking or constancy to his words. Nevertheless, if he is faithful in the performance of the job given to him, it is so much to the good. I can only hope that he only appreciates the extraordinary kindness that has been shown to him by you and others and that he makes good use of the money he is receiving.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

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

266. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SAVLI,
March 3, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter this morning. I read it immediately after having my meal, had a few rounds and am now writing this reply at 8.30.

I tore up your letter soon after reading it. What was so confidential in it that you had to doubly reassure yourself? Indeed, there was nothing private at all. And how could you have so pri-

[1] As Harilal had threatened to embrace Islam or Christianity if he was not provided with a job, the addressee, a lawyer, secured him one in the Nagpur Municipality. The former, however, gave it up and secretly embraced Islam on May 29, 1936. *Vide* also Vol. LXIII, "Statement to the Press", 2-6-1936.

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vate a thing as that? I shall, however, carry out your wish so long as you mark your letter confidential and ask me to tear it up.

Your going has of course lessened my anxiety because the going meant following the law of truth, and not to go would have been, I feared, its violation. But that had no relation to the blood-pressure, which had already been going down and so went down by itself. I was not so much worried about your staying on, as I knew all the time that you would at last do the right thing only, and you did so quite promptly. As for the blood-pressure, however, things will go on as they have been going. It had reached 188/110 at Wardha and once it went up to as high as 212/120, but the same day again it fell to 188/108. I don't know what it now is. It cannot, therefore, be said at all that the blood-pressure went down because of your going. You may come when you can, after staying there as long as you have the duty to stay on. Happiness ever goes with dharma. And there alone lies peace of mind. Never have any doubt that there can be no happiness in the violation of dharma.

Why do you want to be exempted from taking milk? Your good lies only in taking it. Of course, you have freedom to reduce its quantity when you cannot digest four lb. of it. There will be no difficulty in digesting four lb. of milk as long as you have regular exercise and sleep. As for fruit, take what is easily to be had. It will be good if Jayaprakash follows the same diet as yours.

Keep your diary day after day. I follow your point about studies. You may do what you can. Study Hindi grammar. Send for anything you need from here. I shall leave here on the 6th, hoping to reach Delhi on the 8th. I shall be spending at least a fortnight there.

You must have written, I think, to Swaruprani and others about Kamala. Ba is in Bombay, Rajaji, who has gone to Bombay, may perhaps come here.

We have a fairly good gathering here. The weather is fair and they see that I get good peace and rest.

It seems one of your letters has been lost in transit. I have noted that. I know it is unlikely that you would avoid writing out of laziness. The fear is you might grow melancholy, but you ought not to under any circumstances. Doesn't Mother *Gita* teach us to endure cheerfully the situation that we happen to be in?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3458

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267. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–III

SAVLI,
March 3, 1936

Ramnarayanji[1] has passed on a letter to the President. He showed it to me, and I read it too. Then I wished to know what this committee[2] for Gandhian thought was, who were the persons constituting it, what were its powers and so on. Then I was informed about all that happened yesterday. I was told at the same time that this committee was not a body authorized by this session. This session does not function by passing resolutions. When the occasion arose, a suggestion was made, and then those who favoured the suggestion formed a committee. At first I felt that I should not involve myself in this matter. I felt also that since I had not been able to be present at the discussion, I was not entitled to express any opinion. Nevertheless, I do have an opinion on the subject and I consider it my duty to express it even if it should be considered an impertinence on my part. I wish to make clear to the committee its scope. If it undertakes any work, it should only be one of collecting my thoughts and beliefs. If it does anything more, I am afraid the misgivings[3] expressed by Ramnarayanji are bound to come true.

I have conceived no such thing as Gandhism. I am not an exponent of any sect. I never claimed to have originated any

[1] Ramnarayan Chowdhary

[2] It was proposed that a committee for Gandhian thought be formed with D. B. Kalelkar as President and the following members: Shankar Tryambak Dharmadhikari, Mahadev Desai, Swami Anand, Kishorelal Mashruwala, Rangarao R. Diwakar, Haribhau Upadhyaya, Balubhai Mehta, Devsharma 'Abhay', Rajendra Prasad, Shankarrao Deo, Raghunath Shridhar Dhotre, Satis Chandra Das Gupta and Sitaram Purushottam Patwardhan.

[3] Namely: (1) Gandhism would end up by becoming one more sect. (2) It would give rise to more blind faith and intellectual dependence. (3) Differences would crop up among the Gandhians themselves with regard to the interpretation of Gandhian thought. (4) The importance of practice would decrease and undue importance would come to be attached to mere thought. (5) The evolution of Gandhian thought would slacken. (6) Gandhism would assume the form of a dogma and breed hypocrisy. (7) The bad habit of reading and writing will grow and inclination to do service would go down. (8) It would also increase Gandhiji's difficulty in giving decisions on doubtful points.

philosophy. Nor am I endeavouring to do so. Several people said to me that I should write a *smriti*[1] of Gandhian thought. I told them that I could not presume to vie with the ancient law-givers. I have no such plans. The right to codify my thoughts cannot belong to me. Whatever is lasting will take shape after I am gone. Without any elaborate scheme I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal principles of truth and non-violence to our daily life and problems. Like a child I did whatever occurred to me on the spur of the moment during the course of events.

Then I realized that what I was doing were experiments in truth. In doing so I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life has thus become for me a series of experiments in truth. In my pursuit of truth I came across the method of non-violence. By instinct I have been a votary of truth, but not non-violent. As the Muni Jinavijayaji once rightly observed, I was all for truth and was capable of sacrificing non-violence for the sake of truth. I confessed to him that it was true. For me "there was no dharma higher than truth" and "no dharma higher than the supreme duty of non-violence."[2] The word dharma in my opinion has different connotations as used in the two statements. In other words it means that there cannot be an ideal higher than truth and there cannot be any duty higher than non-violence. A man can pursue truth only by constantly adhering to this duty. There is no other means for the pursuit of truth. For the sake of truth one should not hesitate even to witness the ruin of one's country. One may even leave one's country. Paul Richard has severely criticized me in this regard. He had pointed out the difference between my ideas and those of *Manusmriti*. I do not regard it as dharma to have to resort to untruth either for the sake of argument or to protect the cow. This statement is correct. However, I do not think this is a subject which can be discussed academically.

Well, all my philosophy, if it may be called by that pretentious name, is contained in what I have said. You will not call it Gandhism; there is no ism about it. And no elaborate literature is needed about it. All that I have written is but a description of whatever I have done. And my actions alone are the greatest exposition of truth and non-violence. Those who believe in these can propagate them only by following them in practice. They call for no

[1] Code

[2] *Mahabharata*, Adiparvan, XI. 13 and Shantiparvan, CLXII. 24

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books. My work is there for them to emulate. But it may be said that this, too, is not permanent. A caustic critic once observed that the spinning-wheel would be so discredited that when I died the wheels would serve to make the funeral pyre. That, however, has not shaken my faith in the spinning-wheel. I will not despair even if you all forsook me. My faith will grow all the more. Indeed, I have never despaired nor have I had to repent. I do not regret the long struggle that I have put up nor the amount of money and the number of lives lost. Whenever I went to the villages I have returned with my vessel full of hope. But how can I convince the world that one cannot communicate this confidence with the help of books? Silent work alone can provide it. Hence no one should yield to the weakness that he would be helpless if the committee did not supply literature. The workers complain that pundits from the government and other circles go to the villagers and criticize our ideas. They misguide the people. What can we do, then, since we do not have their superior knowledge?

It is a real difficulty. But where is the need for books? Tell the villagers that you are there in their midst to serve them with your wheels, your brooms and buckets. Let them accept your service if they will. Must we then, you will ask, work away in silence, without bothering about our critics? Yes; I should not mind even your taking a vow of silence. Write if you feel you cannot do without it. But let not your real work suffer because you are busy writing books.

This, however, is the ideal. This committee was not so imperative. But now that it has come into being it will not be inconsistent with our work. There are no grounds for Ramnarayanji's misgivings. All we need is a little vigilance. I can understand your desire for some authoritative publications explaining the things we are striving to do. These you may have without entering into a controversy. The committee should function quietly without much ado. It will only spread poison, if it sets about to work with pomp and show. And of course it shall have to be self-supporting.

I should be satisfied if your Sangh became a register of workers who have complete faith in all activities which are a concrete expression of truth and non-violence, or rather simply of non-violence (for the practice of non-violence is impossible without acceptance of truth). Thus let no member say that he believes in truth and non-violence, but does not believe in handicrafts or khadi and service of the villagers therethrough, or that he be-

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lieves in truth and non-violence but does not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, or in the removal of untouchability. If you meet such a one you may tell him that it is possible that he is a believer in truth and non-violence according to his own conception, but not according to Gandhiji's conception of them, and that he cannot therefore be a member of the Sangh. Beyond this, your Sangh has no credal, regional or institutional limitations. Your members may belong to any caste or creed, any race or nation.

I agree with the President regarding this.[1]

There is no need to repeat that everyone should follow the ideal of celibacy. Of course it is not possible to ride two horses at a time. Those who are not married or, though married, are living like unmarried ones can serve better. But it is not possible to have a rigid rule regarding this. Moreover, there is no need for it. It is good if we get workers who do not wish to marry but if tomorrow Gajanan or Surendra wants to get married, he can do so and still remain a member of the Sangh. If their expenses increase they can take them from the Sangh. It is a personal question. Hypocrisy and unchastity will creep in if we form a rule for it.

Some of the shortcomings shown by the President are shortcomings of the whole of India. It is necessary for us to be alert about them. Those who are worshippers of truth and non-violence and want to serve India and humanity cannot afford to be lazy. Those who waste time waste truth, non-violence and service as well. This applies to cleanliness, too. If we are alert, do not waste time and observe cleanliness, we will not be lacking in knowledge. What we call lack of knowledge is actually lack of concentration. Mother *Gita* says that one who worships with faith will automatically gain knowledge.[2]

The President has shown three angles.[3] Possession is really mental. I have a watch, a rope and an undergarment. I am possessive, if I feel unhappy without them. A person can keep a large blanket if he needs one; if he is not distressed when it is lost he is not possessive.

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala had said that the Sangh would comprise workers who would help the various institutions in times of need. It would propagate Gandhiji's principles and would be ready to form a band of workers for a good cause. It would be a trustee of the property of the various institutions.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 39

[3] The President had suggested that a limit should be fixed regarding (1) the amount of balance an institution may have at the end of a year; (2) donations it may receive and (3) the property a worker may acquire in the name of the institution.

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What the President has said[1] is enough. There is no need to say more.[2]

I see that there is a tendency to believe that these programmes are mutually exclusive or antagonistic. Much of our misunderstanding arises out of this belief. The worker in the constructive field looks down upon the political programme and *vice versa*. But really there is no such opposition. I had thought that it was clear by now to every worker that there was no absolute division between the so-called political and the so-called constructive programmes. In our method of work there are no watertight compartments. Nevertheless I do maintain that for the sake of efficiency it is necessary for one to confine oneself to one item at a time or such items as conveniently run together. The governor of the Bank of England exercises considerable influence on the politics of England, but he never busies himself with what are called active politics. He has hardly the time to follow the debates in the House of Commons. But he is at least as important a member in the English public life as, say, a noted member of the House of Commons. As a general rule I would suggest that the members of the Sangh should occupy themselves with work which brings no kudos and which is ordinarily not liked by workers.

We have different programmes, such as the Spinners' Association, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Village Industries Association and *goseva*, which I have not yet placed before you. But one connected with *goseva* can also become a member of the Sangh. Those who wish may even take part in more than one activity. It is a matter of one's capacity. As for me, I can attend to other things even as I work for the Charkha Sangh. Everybody cannot do the same. For example, take the Parliamentary Board[3]. Even this I have brought into being. But would I ever join it? Today I cannot even think of entering the Legislatures. However, it is not a matter of principle. We must do whatever may be necessary at a given time. And tomorrow, if I deem it my duty to go to the Legislature, I may very well do it. It was I who started the civil disobedience movement. But I instructed the Hindi propaganda workers in South India that they should not court imprisonment, as the work would suffer. Only Anna (Shri Harihar Sharma) from

[1] That a satyagrahi should be firm about one thing: He should consider it his duty to help the oppressed and raise them, make them full of life and spirit. He should resist untruth under any circumstances in spite of his superior's anger.

[2] Mahadev Desai here reports: "One of the questions . . . was about the compatibility or otherwise of the constructive with the political programme."

[3] Formed in May 1934, with M. A. Ansari as President

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among them went to jail and that, too, with my permission. I had told Shankerlal [Banker] that the work of the Spinners' Association was as valuable as courting of imprisonment by thousands of men. Except for a few days in the beginning, jail-going became another name for taking rest. Those who remained outside faced a number of hardships and those who had gone to jail returned strong and sturdy. Once they went in, they violently defied the jail rules. What good did such people do by going to jail? It is a mistake to make a distinction between the constructive and the political programmes. In my opinion, political work also is constructive work. I once wrote in *Young India* that even civil disobedience was constructive work according to me. But from the point of view of the world, it may be described as destructive. In reality, they are two branches of satyagraha, and hence are akin. One cannot be complete without the other. But some people wonder how *goseva*, removal of untouchability or propagation of Hindi could be called political activities. Would these things bring swaraj? But it is my belief that swaraj cannot be attained without these. Many Congressmen, too, do not have faith in them. It is also our task to inspire such faith in them. These people do not consider these activities political. Hence, they describe them as constructive. A large number of people are ready to take to activities which they regard as political. Hence, we must consciously abide by a particular rule. The whole thing will break down if we do not observe the rule. That is the reason why the work is going on well in Gujarat. Today we have imperfect faith in these things. The plant is tender. We have to tend it with great care. It is my belief that if we could do these four or five things well, swaraj is as good as in our hands. It would also increase our efficiency. I am reminded of an incident. There was some discussion about the constructive programme at a meeting. Sapru[1], Chintamani[2] and Pal[3] were also present there. Chintamani was very critical of the constructive programme. Pal replied to him. He was considered my opponent; but his sharp intellect grasped the thing. Of language he was a master. He explained, much better than I could have done, that with it the prestige of the country would go up. He said we had come across something which would give us the strength that we would not derive from all our other works and all the journals. What he expressed in a beautiful language

[1] T. B. Sapru
[2] C. Y. Chintamani
[3] Bipin Chandra Pal

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I conveyed in my uncouth language. My faith in the constructive programme is probably ten times it was then.

The work of the Parliamentary Board is also my creation. But, if you wish to go to the Legislatures for this reason, I shall not allow you to do so. Today, I shall send Bhulabhai[1] there. He has faith in that work and he is also capable. What would I do with Satyamurti[2] here? If I have to attain swaraj through music, I would send Khareshastri[3] or Balkoba. And, if your faith in the constructive programme is deep enough, you must do only that work. Such is my faith in *goseva*. I even dream of the cow. Let us all concentrate on our own work and our own place. Let that be our dharma. And even if another's dharma appears to be best we should understand that it is fraught with danger.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan(Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 50-4

268. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–IV

SAVLI,
March 4, 1936

Before replying to the questions[4] I wish to say a few things on my own. I have of course no right to say anything. But it is my habit to express my opinion on whatever I hear. I am no doubt very eager to listen to your discussion. But I have held back my eagerness. Even so, things are conveyed to me by my jailor (the Sardar), sometimes light-heartedly and sometimes solemnly. Why have we all gathered here? Why are we wasting our time? I hear that votes were taken on the question of the wages for the members of the Sangh. Four hours were spent in unnecessary arguments over it, although it was self-evident. Where was the need to argue about it? Jamnalalji raised the question, because he has to find the money. But we must tell him that we do not expect wages. I do not know what Gandhism is. But I do know the Gandhian teaching. Let us try to carry on our work without money. Where there is non-violence, not even a cowrie is needed. Yes, I was telling you that we are arguing without a con-

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai
[2] S. Satyamurti
[3] Narayan Moreshwar Khare
[4] Raised by Jamnalal Bajaj

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crete resolution. Even this would be all right in a way. Everyone is engrossed in his own work. Where is the need for a resolution? Even so, some resolutions can be necessary. I cannot say what these resolutions should be as I am not able to fully participate in the session. If you cannot think of any resolutions and if there are going to be just arguments, do stop the exercise at once. Or, let some definite programme be formulated. Let something or the other be achieved here. Put back the money that has been spent here. Observe Savli very closely. So many of us who are workers have gathered here and if we do nothing for Savli, it would be a very harsh comment on the session. Mahadev is much pained by this thought. The sad condition as in Savli is to be found everywhere — there is dirt, there is the problem of water, there are quarrels. Let us do our utmost to remedy these things. There was a suggestion that there should be an eight-hour spinning programme one day. But it was voted out. The pretext was the difficulty about obtaining so many charkhas. If so many charkhas were not available, we could have carried on with half the number. Some could have done carding, while others did the spinning. But leaving aside the charkhas, let us at least clean up the filth in the village. I am reminded of Balasore. The Sanitary Inspector of the town said that, if only he could have 50 men, the local tank could be cleaned. I appealed to the people and 50 men volunteered. Many such tasks are waiting to be done in Savli. You can take up some such work. You have spent Rs. 4,000 on the session. Do some work here worth Rs. 4,000. We have long passed the age of resolutions. So, what new outlook will you take back with you from this session?

The most difficult question is the one of village industries. Then there is the question of health. Yes, let us not talk about the debts of the villagers. Let us not take up that burden. But let us at least improve their health. That, too, is the business of the Congress. But now it is getting late. So I leave this subject here, and come to the other questions.

Q. How can lifelong interest in work be developed among the workers?

A. The *Gita* has furnished the answer: through constant practice.[1]

Q. Can person who has taken the vow of non-possession become a trustee?

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 35

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A. Yes, he can. There can be no objection to this on principle. If I have given a different opinion in the case of Vinobaji, there must have been a personal reason.[1]

Q. What is your view about the position Dr. Ambedkar has taken?

A. Had I been in Dr. Ambedkar's place, I would have been as angry. In his position, maybe, I would not have been a believer in non-violence. When overcome by anger, a person does whatever comes to his mind. Whatever Dr. Ambedkar does, we must bear it in all humility. Not only that, it would be a service to Harijans. If he really hits us with shoes, we must bear even that. But we should not be afraid of him. There is no need to kiss Dr. Ambedkar's feet to convince him. That would be a disservice. If he and the other Harijans who have no faith in Hinduism embrace another religion, that too would make for our expiation. We deserve such treatment. Our task [now] is to wake up to the situation and purify ourselves. There is no need for flattery. That is why I expressed my sorrow at his announcement and suggested self-purification. I did nothing more.

Q. What are the points of similarity and difference between your point of view and socialism?

A. There are quite a few similarities. I too desire that everything should be considered as belonging to God. I too believe that all wealth belongs to the people. But the difference lies in that the socialists advocate collective effort, whereas I believe that the beginning should be made at once in our individual conduct. If we have such faith, we should dedicate to society at least our own property. One cannot be a socialist so long as one retains even a cowrie for oneself. They want to achieve their aim through legislation. Legislation implies coercion. If they are not saying all these things now, it is because that is not within their power. They are virtuous because they are weak. Socialists, that is Communists, want to use force, but they are helpless. But we are believers in democracy.

Q. What is the difference between your views and those of Pt. Jawaharlalji?

A. We have many differences, and they are well known too. The position as revealed in our correspondence still remains.[2]

[1] This was in reply to a doubt expressed by a member.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LV, pp. 426-30 and Appendix XIV.

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But in spite of our differences we respect each other and desire to work together as far as possible.

Q. What should be the limits of the worker's individual service?

A. A very fine criterion for this is to be found in the *sloka* [1] which lays down that for the good of the family the individual may be sacrificed. An individual may be served only as far as it does not hamper service of the society. Suppose that my son is ill, my mother is ill, or my wife is ill, but I am expected to preside over a meeting at Lucknow. In such a situation, I would leave my son, mother and wife in charge of my brother, etc., and go.

Q. Can people who believe in non-violence take unfertilized eggs?

A. It is a personal matter. Those who have no objection can take such eggs. The reason why we should take a neutral attitude on this point is that these days the Hindus' definition of non-violence is confined to the matter of food. I have regarded it as of secondary importance. If you say that we have to do it in order to live, well, strictly speaking, it would be an act of violence to eat even a single morsel. In such things we can have no rules which would be equally applicable to all. I have myself given cod-liver oil to some boys in the Ashram. Doctors frequently prescribe alcohol and meat. They have even started prescribing glands. If anybody objects, the doctors cite the authority of Manu and do not hesitate to tell a lie to save the life of a patient. Throughout the world only a section of Hindus has restrictions about non-vegetarian food on religious grounds. And these are confined to some Vaishyas, Jains and a few Brahmins. Shall we then abandon the Muslims, Parsis, etc.? I have seen many non-vegetarians who believe in non-violence and many vegetarians who believe in violence. Some abstain from non-vegetarian food because they do not relish it; it is not in their upbringing. When I took meat out of a sense of duty, I had a bad time of it. Let not the vegetarians feel proud. Non-violence is a unique thing. It is a matter of feeling, not merely of external behaviour.

Q. What should be done to check the increase in births among poor women?

A. Our duty is to explain to them the duty of self-control. Artificial measures would be as good as death. And I do not

[1] Which says: One should sacrifice the individual for the sake of the family, the family for the village and the village for the country; for the sake of *atman* one should sacrifice the whole world.

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think the village women will take to these measures. Why, Premabehn herself is a maiden with a mind completely free from passion. On her own she is a votary of *brahmacharya*. She should work with this faith. Women like her will have quite an impact. We must try to get milk for the village children.

Q. Women may be willing to exercise restraint to keep births in check. But what should be done if men use force?

A. This is a question of a women's true dharma. Premabehn has grasped it fully. I am a worshipper of the satis. But I do not wish to push them down the well. Draupadi has shown what a woman's true dharma is. Even if the husband falls the wife must not. It is pure lechery to stand in the way of a woman when she desires to abstain. If he forces himself on her, it is her duty to make him desist even by slapping him. She should close her door to the lustful husband. She must refuse to be the wife of a sinful husband. We must inculcate such courage in women.

Q. What is the duty of the middle-class women in the matter of birth-control?

A. Whether it be the middle-class or the aristocracy, indulgence is in our hands. But we cannot have control over the consequences. It is not for us to ask whether we shall be successful. Our task is only to teach them the dharma of truth. If the middle-class women wish to adopt the latest birth-control measures, we must advise them against it. Self-control alone can be the remedy. Premabehn should place before them her own example.

Q. What should a wife do if the husband has syphilis?

A. In such circumstances not even any birth-control measures can protect the wife. She must regard such a husband as impotent and remarry. But for this women should have sufficient education to be self-reliant.

Q. Like the socialists you also believe that 'all land belongs to the Lord'. But today one man tills the soil and another exploits him. We want to resolve this conflict of interests with the help of non-violence. And one does have to resort to evil practices if one wants to earn wealth. Under the circumstances, is it not sinful to accept financial help from the rich?

A. All that we can do is to try to understand the principle as fully as possible. But God alone fully observes the [ideal] dharma. We are but imperfect and limited souls. Therefore I do not hesitate to receive money from the rich in spite of my belief that

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piling up wealth is the opposite of dharma. I do not consider it wrong to accept money in this way because I believe that thereby I only serve the rich and society in general. Up to this point I can also hold my own *vis-a-vis* the socialist. But I must counter his arguments only with silent service. Those who believe that it is wrong to collect money from the rich should act up to their belief. But for the Sangh it is dharma although it seems the opposite of it. I am crazy about body-labour. It includes everything. "What more need be said for the wise?"

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan(Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 59-63

269. A LETTER[1]

[On or before *March 5, 1936*][2]

I had fully hoped to attend the function but God had willed otherwise. Though the embargo on my movements has been slightly relaxed, I am still under orders not to accept any public engagements. I could go to Delhi, I might as well have gone to Gurukul. I am not going to Delhi to fulfil any engagement but for rest and I hope everyone at the Gurukul will understand my inability and excuse it. I also hope that my inability to attend will not in any way affect the donations and other help that the Gurukul deserves in an ample measure. It had, always had, my blessings. Though I cannot go I am glad Sardar Vallabhbhai is going there. His going is as good as my going, because he goes there on my behalf and fully represents me.

The Hindu, 5-3-1936

[1]&[2]According to Mahadev Desai's telegram dated March 5, 1936, from which this is reproduced, Acharya Devsharma went specially to Savli to persuade Gandhiji to attend the convocation of the Gurukul at Kangri. Presumably this letter was sent through Acharya Devsharma. *Vide* also "Message to Gurukul Convocation", p. 251.

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270. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SAVLI,
[*March 5, 1936*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter, read it and tore it up. I see that you have been going through mental strain. You should, however, remember that happiness and unhappiness are passing fancies of the mind, and know that pain is no pain, the only real pain being unmindful of God. Yes, you may stay or move about with Jayaprakash as long as he wishes and you can serve him in some useful way. Giving him medicine regularly, cooking for him, looking after his personal belongings—all this is service, of course, and so doing you should gain whatever experience you can. You should certainly keep seeing relatives and acquaintances if you go to a place like Patna. Do all such acts with interest and yet without attachment. I shall of course be pained if you spoil your health. Be careful of your diet. Write to me the experiences you gather.

We shall leave Savli tomorrow. The marriage of Krishnadas[2] was celebrated here today. Both being in every way plain and simple, they had put on nothing more than their usual dress, and there were no presents, etc. I have never seen so simple a wedding as this.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We shall reach Delhi on the 8th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3312

[1] From *Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*, p. 78

[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son who was married to Manojna Devi

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271. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

March 5, 1936

CHI. ANASUYABEHN[1],

Your letter is worthy of you.

Of course, I do use the flask you gave me and it reminds me of your love. So also the mirror. Do you know where it came from? There has been no occasion to use the razor. The question therefore is one only of future. I am aware that the metal sheets are imported from abroad but the flask is wholly manufactured abroad. For the present the sheets will continue to be imported but the utensils worth crores [of rupees] ought to be made here. If German-silver sheets are no more imported, we should do without them. We should have brass utensils plated with tin or find some other remedy. What I mean is that the thought of the villager should be in our minds when we make any purchases.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am leaving Savli tomorrow and expect to reach Delhi on the 8th.

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 11562

272. LETTER TO RAMNARESH TRIPATHI

WARDHA,
March 5, 1936

BHAI RAMNARESHJI,

I have your letter and the annotated version of *Ramacharitmanas*, too. Daily for half an hour during these days of rest, I listen to the recitation from the *Ramayana*. For the last three days I have been reading your book. Apart from reading the passages

[1] Sister of Ambalal Sarabhai and leader of the Ahmedabad labour movement

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recited I also started on the preface and I have now progressed on to the biography. I have great faith in your rendering.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Shri Ramacharitmanas*

273. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SAVLI,
March 5, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter. You did the right thing. I write a few letters now. I have not noticed the effect you fear from the eating of sour things, but it does occur on giving up milk and ghee. Anyway you can watch the results if you eschew sour foods for a while. For constipation you can experiment with raw garlic weighing up to a *tola* and taken with the meals. I have personal experience of its great benefit. Continue with the *neem* leaves; no harm can possibly result from it.

What is your routine these days?

I expect to reach Delhi on the 8th instant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4284

274. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–V

SAVLI,
March 5, 1936

For the past two days I have been trying to get acquainted with each one of you. But I have failed. I had a desire to meet every one of you and resolve your doubts. That would have satisfied you as well as me. I have grown rather fond of meeting people individually. But I found I should overcome this temptation if I wanted to work. You exercised restraint and thus put a check on this fondness. None of you sought to meet me and with great reluctance I gave up my desire.

I had to restrain myself a great deal today. It pained me that I could not say anything at the wedding of Krishnadas.

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I did not address even a few words to the newly-married couple. Some day one will have to suffer even physical separation. Then why should we not prepare ourselves for it right from now on? The relationship between you and me should be so lasting that it would not be affected by physical separation.

Let me now reply to Prabhudas Gandhi's questions. He has asked me how we can become one with the poor. This means that he has been trying, but has not succeeded so far. The conclusion to be drawn is that it is only with difficulty that such a state can be attained. We have lived an urban life, and we still have a lingering desire for that life. On the other hand, the desire to serve the villages is growing.

I cannot prescribe any method for becoming one with the people. Nor do I have one. If Vinoba has suggested something, I am not aware of it.[1] One cannot say to what extent oneness with the poor in a broad sense is possible. Some may be able to attain it in full, and some partially and some not at all throughout their life. But we must attain that oneness at any rate in our own hearts. Once the heart has begun to experience such oneness, the mind would automatically follow, and we would gradually progress in that direction. Whether or not we succeed is in the hands of God. What really matters is the effort.

His second question is whether we should make it a rule that Rs. 4 out of Rs. 15 should be sent direct to some poor person every month. It is not up to me to make such a rule. Nor is it necessary. Even after giving away that amount it cannot be said oneness would have been established between us. An external act is no proof of the inner reality. If any such rule were to be enforced by the State, people would seek to evade it.[2]

Q. So long as we do not put an end to economic exploitation of our rural masses and bring them concrete financial gain, they will continue to be indifferent towards us. . . . How can we help them?

A. We face all these difficulties not because the village people do not understand us, but because we are not able to understand them. It is a pity. Even I have not been able to explain my ideas fully. Our work has just begun. It is not even a year since it started. We do not have enough experience to serve the people. I myself have not been able to settle down in a village so far. But I have done some research. In South

[1] Vinoba Bhave had replied to these questions on the previous day.
[2] Gandhiji then replied to the questions asked by Swami Anand.

Africa I lived in the midst of many villagers and I have experienced their difficulties. I also know from experience that we have not yet thought about the reasons why we have not been able to inspire confidence among the villagers. We must discover these reasons. We are working and spending money in the hope that the villagers will accept what we say. When we understand these people they, too, will cling to us. Till then, let us scavenge for them, distribute some medicines and teach them the laws of sanitation. Let us not go there as physicians. Let us be satisfied with giving the medicines which they accept. Let us not expect any further rewards. Let us not be worried whether or not we give financial help, whether or not they are indifferent. I have repeatedly told the village workers that they should not feel disappointed. Have they not turned themselves into sweepers? And a sweeper is satisfied even with the left-overs. Let us also go to them with such an attitude. If they abuse us, let us bear it in silence. If they beat us, let us bear that also. It is not that they are not coming forward because their economic conditions are not good. They would not come even if you offered them money. They would take the money and also expect us to do the scavenging for them. That is all. Let us work so that the sick are given medicines. Let the people defecate wherever they choose. Let us not even ask them to avoid a particular place or go elsewhere. But let us go on cleaning up without a word. That is non-violence. Protecting their health, showing them the way and going on cleaning up is the only path we have to follow. Some day they are bound to understand. If this does not work, then there is no such thing as non-violence.

Q. Is it or is it not necessary to do something more than this?

A. We may if we can. But it is not necessary to connect the two. They are two independent services. Even if we cannot take up the service that would bring them economic benefits, let us at least take up the first one. And let us not worry if we can do nothing more.

Q. Can a village worker, with a view to making consumer articles available to the villagers at low prices, run a shop and sell betel leaves, *bidis*, tobacco, fish, tea, etc.?

A. We can resort to every means to put an extra pice into the villagers' pockets. But whether or not a village worker can open a shop depends on his own capacity and resourcefulness. I cannot lay down any hard and fast rule as to the articles

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a village worker may have in his shop. Let each worker fix a limit for himself in accordance with his own ability. He will have to compete with the village shopkeepers and also consider the habits of the villagers. If I go to the villages and find that the people cannot do without tobacco and *bidis*, I would sell these, too, even though I consider tobacco worse than alcohol. A habit that has been entrenched for thousands of years cannot go in a day. My work has not been directed towards making people give up smoking. Ideal is one thing, practice is another and what other people can do is yet another.

Q. Then would you sell liquor also?

A. No. I would not sell liquor. I would not give them something which they hate and which even the drink addicts consider evil. But if I went to England and found that I could not rid people of this habit, I would sell liquor. And if there are people who eat meat or fish and want them clean, I would supply these, too, with my own hands .

Let my words not be taken literally and misinterpreted. I shall certainly try to make people give up things which are considered bad. But I would give them those things till I could persuade them to give them up and continue with my work. It is very difficult to run a shop. A resourceful man like Lakshmidas can do much. The path of village organization is arduous. There is no royal road. He who serves sincerely will find the right way.

Q. Should we not use bullock-carts instead of motor-lorries to transport the goods made or produced in the villages?

A. This is a ticklish question. I have no answer to it which can touch your heart. I shall only say that I am helpless. Motor-vehicles are invading the villages day after day. The question involved is that of service of the cow. We must continue our efforts in good faith. Shall I lay down the principle? If we do not try to understand aright this question of service to the cow we might start eating beef. Even today if the doctor advises, people would not mind taking beef as medicine. You cannot carry on with buffalo's milk. I have seen beef being consumed in the name of medicine even in Vaishnava families. But let us remember that if the cow perishes, we shall perish, too. The motor-car has been invading the villages. If this goes on, India will become another South Africa. I do not favour small holdings. But at the same time I do not wish to see that any

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single individual should own twenty or twenty-five thousand acres of land. Today service to the cow is more expensive than a motor-vehicle. But this question is similar to the question of khadi. I have sold khadi cloth worth two annas a yard at 17 annas a yard. I am talking of an ideal. Our duty is to carry on work with faith in our heart.

RAJENDRA PRASAD: But is it a proven fact that it is cheaper to use a motor-car?

A. Absolutely not. The question of expensive or inexpensive is not correct. The law of demand and supply is not a human law, it is a devilish law.

Q. Would it be proper, in the light of your definition of swadeshi, to procure for Bombay rice from Ahmedabad or wheat from Khandwa? Will it not be proper to fix a ceiling on profit in respect of every commodity?

A. Limits should be fixed both as to the quantum of profit and the distance. Let us not get all our rice from Bombay. Sitarama Sastri sends rice to Bombay. In fact, it should be [sold][1] in Guntur District. The proper thing would be to utilize rice where it is grown. My definition of swadeshi is old but it is valid. Only by following it can we evolve a new kind of economics. True economics must follow ethics. Even if we fail in this we shall have succeeded.

Q. The village workers employ middle-men instead of taking the help of the villagers. Is this proper?

A. There should be direct dealings as far as possible.

Q. Hand-pounded rice, hand-ground flour, oil, etc., can be made in cities also. Would you call them village industries?

A. Today we seem to be going in the wrong direction in the name of dietary reform. There is not enough milk in the villages. So Dr. Tilak recommends that milk powder should be brought from Bombay. It is a terrible thing. We must never do it. We must stop the exploitation of villages by all possible means. We must persuade the villagers not to sell milk.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan(Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 67-70

[1] The source has 'sent'.

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275. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING–VI[1]

SAVLI,
March 6, 1936

Q. With regard to the policy adopted by the Sangh last year under your advice on the question of the States, has not the time come, according to you, when the Sangh should concentrate more on the work in the States and make concerted efforts in that direction?

A. I have forgotten what I had agreed to. But I am quite clear about my attitude on the subject. We should no doubt make concerted efforts in the matter. But how can I say what kind of efforts should be considered concerted? Trying to do well what can be done through the State should be considered concerted efforts.

Q. Would you adopt the same policy of co-operation even in the States where Englishmen or their people have been appointed Prime Ministers, army commanders, police officials, etc., and where the administration is carried on in a large measure along British lines?

A. There can be no change in our policy even if the entire staff of the States consists of Englishmen. I can well imagine the difficulties that would arise in such a situation. But there could be no solution to it. Even if all the officials were Englishmen the administration could still be carried on in the name of the State.

Q. Is there now any change in your opinion that there should be no British interference in the affairs of the States? If not, why did you allow Shri Manibhai and Shri Jamnalalji to act as they did?

A. Whatever Shri Jamnalalji and Shri Manilalji have done has been with my consent. But my policy in that matter is the same as it was. Through a policy I arrive at a principle; but I do not wish to restrict the field of its operation. Even in my dreams I do not wish for British interference. But those who wish for such interference under exceptional cir-

[1] Gandhiji first replied to the remaining questions from Swami Anand and then to those put by Ramnarayan Chaudhari in regard to the States.

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cumstances have fixed their own limits. Everyone has a right to fix his own limit; and if somebody comes to consult me, I can even fix the limit for him keeping in mind the individual concerned. Someone asked me if, under the same circumstances, another person could do what Shri Jamnalalji was doing. I told him to come to me with Jamnalalji and then I would answer. Only when a person has full understanding of the situation, can he fix the limit after deciding the extent to which the principle can be applied in the given situation. His conduct cannot serve as an example to others. The qualification of the person is also to be considered. I can say that in letting Jamnalalji or Manilalji go it was not my intention to seek interference. But even supposing that the principle was set aside, it should be attributed to my failing rather than made a precedent. He who is firm must adhere to the principle.

Violent and non-violent activities are going on side by side. God is their witness. People see only the effects. We shall see the causes. The way I have been practising non-violence appears to be a novel thing. The Jains and the Buddhists also experimented in non-violence. But that non-violence has become restricted to diet. Political and social activities also are inspired by both violent and non-violent forces. On the surface they do not appear to be different. But the difference lies in their motivation. There would be no trouble if we remember this point in everything we do. And there would be no difficulties.

Q. Can newspapers concerned only with the problems of the States be run in accordance with your policy?

A. I am afraid such newspapers are not run in accordance with my policy. But how can I convince those whose point of view is altogether different? In my view, there is no need to have different newspapers for the States. Our work will not be done through newspapers. My advice would be that we work in silence. Let us do whatever the officials of the States permit us to do. If we cannot work like this, let us withdraw. We will achieve in the States what we achieve in British India. It is like the rule of three. The States' people are slaves of slaves. Those who work according to my idea cannot be slaves. But those who follow the path of non-violence must proceed after great thought. Whatever we may be able to do there must be done in such a manner that no British interference would be possible at all. India will not attain swaraj through agitation carried on in the States. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad once said that

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the whole country was a gurudwara. That very moment it occurred to me that the whole country was a prison. And the States are doubly so. The facilities available in the States are those available in a jail.

I wish to tell you a couple of things. I spoke without authority earlier, I shall speak without authority now also. I heard with a sense of pain that the committee for Gandhian thought[1] which had been formed has ceased to exist. Since it had not come into existence as a result of any resolution of the Sangh but voluntarily, it was within its right to wind itself up. But I hear that the committee has broken up because I was not in favour of it. But I could have been consulted. I was just here. If anybody says that I desire this and I desire that, do not believe it. It is my misfortune that my words can be interpreted in two or more ways. I do try to speak and write a language from which only one meaning can be drawn. But language is an imperfect instrument. And then I am no master of language. Where shall I find the power to put down in writing all that is in my mind? My words affect different people in different ways. I did not mean to say that you should not propagate my ideas. I do not believe it is [your] duty to explain my views. But I do have the vanity to believe that my ideas are right. And because of this I am also keen on explaining them to my colleagues. I possess the faculty of speech also. And that necessarily results in some propaganda. I also wish that my ideas are propagated. But I had a feeling that you were being pretentious. I wanted to avoid it. It was not that I did not want the committee to be formed. The committee could have been formed, but it should have been as I wanted it to be. I am bound to express my views so long as I am alive. What then is the harm in forming such a committee? This committee can be instrumental in propagating my thoughts and my words. So I wish the committee is formed again and functions within its limits. Is it ever possible that any work with which Kakasaheb is associated would be considered worthless by me? I had no apprehension that the committee would do any wrong. But why should I not caution you? And even if one believes that I wanted to undo the work of the committee, why did other members join me in undoing the work and why did it become necessary for Kakasaheb to carry it all on his own?

[1] *Vide* p. 223.

MAHADEV DESAI: Who gave you the information that the committee had broken up? It has only been adjourned. It can become active any time it is desired.

A. I am making these observations from something that I have heard. It is a happy thing if it has not broken up. Kakasaheb gave me the assurance that he was to do the work all by himself. Now the committee should give him its co-operation.

Another thing which I want to say relates to the functioning of the Sangh. When I said that every worker of the Sangh should work with the pickaxe during the day and at night there should be discussion for some two or three hours, I did not mean that the Sangh should be wound up. You are so many and you are also efficient; I would, therefore, say nothing on such an occasion. I am old and close to death. My memory also has grown weak. Hence, I say whatever I can remember. What I said has been only to encourage you in your work, and your progress. So do not think I want to criticize, rather think that I want to explain something to you. Try to learn something new from it. The Sangh is proceeding on right lines today. I am not so completely deprived of my reasoning as to suggest its winding up at such a time.

There is a new point, but I shall deal with it if there is any time left. I shall speak about the next session. Let the next session be held at a place which is not so far away from a railway station that one cannot reach there either on foot or by a bullock-cart. As for me it does not matter if the place is even fifty miles away. But then the condition should be that everyone should walk to the place. The luggage too should be taken in a bullock-cart, not in a motor-car. If some handicapped persons like me do not come, let them stay away. But I shall definitely come. You may provide for me a bullock-cart or carry me on your shoulders. I shall not fight shy of either. We have to go and put that village into shape. Let us select areas where there is no doctor or engineer. If there is paucity of water, let us dig wells. If there are no cows there, let us get cows for them. I would even insist that we should drink only cow's milk. Let us not give up milk on any account. If I pour out my heart to you about *goseva*, I could make you cry and break down myself. My heart is so full of sorrow.

I would insist that we should have only cows. How can we serve India if we cannot insist even on this much? When

one calls me obstinate I feel that I have some kind of insistence. And all that I insist upon is that we should not take buffalo's milk but only cow's milk and should never give up milk. I shall be content even to die while insisting on it. Let us find out a village where cow's milk will be available, where it would be possible to procure green vegetables, pure water, etc., and start our preparations right from now on. Let us not be worried if the place is far away. We shall serve the people living nearby and get new experiences every moment. I have placed before you what according to me is the most correct point of view. If the session is to be held, let us start the preparations right from today. Let us make a close study of the village. We have been passing through a long period of degradation. We have no strength to raise ourselves. All the work of the Congress is not being carried on according to my wishes. When I say this, I am not criticizing the Congress. But will they ever hold the Congress session in an obscure place?

Even if we can get eleven months to make our preparations for the next session it would not be too long. The place should provide enough work for the workers. If there is dearth of cows we should bring some from the surrounding areas. We should look after these cows while we are there and if the people of the village are prepared to keep them we may leave these cows with them. Otherwise we should take them back.

If we work in this manner we shall derive greater benefit than from a long speech. I am saying all this from the point of view of the purest ideal. This is not a matter of money. It is a matter of intelligence. The session is to be held twelve months hence. I can invite you to Segaon. But I am not allowed to do so. Whoever desires to invite the session, must do so within a month. We ourselves must perform the functions of the doctor, engineer, mason, carpenter, etc. I cannot understand how you can put up with buffalo's milk. Arrangements should, therefore, be made for cow's milk and green vegetables.

I wish to mention to you another subject. First I thought that Vinoba should discuss it. But since I have some time, I shall myself mention it. It is my nature to share a good thing with everyone. This thing arose many years back. Chhaganlal may be a witness to this. I was then in the midst of the Zulu War. Chhaganlal can tell you the year.

CHHAGANLAL GANDHI: 1906.

Yes, it was during that time and a great thing it was. Look, this is how the Divine play goes on. I realized there that

one who wishes to serve the world must practise *brahmacharya*. A married couple should also observe *brahmacharya*, by which I mean cessation of reproductive activity. I believe that those who procreate cannot be called *brahmacharis*. Hence I placed this ideal of *brahmacharya* before Chhaganlal and others. I was quite young then and a young person can do anything. If I ask all of you to practise *brahmacharya*, would that be practicable? It is only an ideal. So I myself preside over many marriages. While laying down the ideal, I do see that people will indulge in pleasure. I was under the impression that *brahmacharya* and procreation were contradictory.

But on Thursday Vinoba brought to me a problem. It was a quotation from the Shastras. I had not realized its significance earlier. It has filled my heart with a new light. I lost myself in pondering over it. I am still under its spell. The scriptural interpretation of *brahmacharya* is perfect. An avowed *brahmachari* is one who has practised it since birth, who has not lost semen even in a dream. But I did not know why a person who cohabits for the sake of procreation was considered a *brahmachari*. Yesterday this great truth flashed on my mind. The couple which, in a state of marriage, withdraw into privacy and cohabit for the purpose of procreation are *brahmacharis* in the right sense of the word. What we call marriage today is but its outward form. What we call pleasure is only dissipation. Although I maintained that the motive behind marriage was procreation, what I meant to convey was that neither party should dread having children or make efforts to avoid this natural consequence of the sex act in which both should be willing partners.

I did not realize that it had a greater purpose. But this also was not the perfect marriage. The perfect marriage is founded on *brahmacharya*. When can a marriage be called perfect? In a perfect marriage a couple may have children when they are necessary and cohabit only when they need a child. That is to say, procreation ought to be looked upon as a duty and sexual union resorted to for that purpose only. Apart from this they should never engage in the sex act. Nor should they allow themselves privacy. If a man controls his semen, except on the occasion of such purposeful cohabitation, he is as good as an avowed *brahmachari*. Just imagine, how many occasions for such cohabitation can there be in a lifetime? In the life of a healthy and virile man or woman, there may be only one such occasion. Why should such persons not be looked upon as avowed

brahmacharis? This truth, of which I had only a glimpse earlier, is now as clear as daylight. Those who are married should think of it. I had mentioned this subject earlier also; but I had not so much faith then. I used to think that it was impracticable. Today I think it is practicable. It might be different in the animal world. But it must be a rule in the married life of man, that no couple should procreate without the need for a child nor should they cohabit without the object of procreation.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Dwitiya Adhiveshan (Savli)ka Vivaran, pp. 78-82

276. A CONTRAST

Savli is a little village in the District of Chanda, C. P. It has a large Harijan population, and Harijans are for the most part devoted to khadi production under the aegis of the Maharashtra Charkha Sangh. Members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh and some other workers met there between 29th February and 6th March. In the Hindi notices sent to the invitees, among the things they were to bring were lantern, writing material, postcards, envelopes, postage stamps and soap. The notices mentioned that it was difficult to procure any milk in Savli and cow's milk was practically unprocurable. Those who would take no ghee other than cow's ghee were advised to bring their own supply. On reaching Savli, it was further discovered that for the 300 men and women gathered there, milk had to be brought all the way from Chanda, a distance of 34 miles, and fresh vegetables from Nagpur, a distance of over 120 miles.

Savli is a typical village. The difficulties mentioned above are to be met with in most of the villages of this land.

India worships the cow, and cow's milk is unprocurable in the majority of our villages! She has a climate fit enough everywhere for vegetable growth, and fresh vegetables are not to be found in many of her villages! It is no wonder that writing material and stationery are scarce in the thousands of our impoverished villages. The villagers are mostly illiterate and those who can write have not money enough to invest in writing material or stamps. It is profitless to find out whether the villages of India were always what they are today. If they were never better it is a reflection upon the ancient culture in which we take so much pride. But if they were never better, how is it that they have survived centuries of decay which we see going round us and of which Savli is but a type?

The task before every lover of the country is how to prevent this decay or, which is the same thing, how to reconstruct the villages of India so that it may be as easy for anyone to live in them as it is supposed to be in the cities. Indeed, it is *the* task before every patriot. It may be that the villages are beyond redemption, that rural civilization has had its day and that the seven hundred thousand villages have to give place to seven hundred well-ordered cities supporting a population not of three hundred millions but thirty. If such is to be India's fate, even that won't come in a day. It must take time to wipe out a large number of villages and villagers and transform the remainder into cities and citizens.

However, those who believe in the possibility of village reconstruction have to follow out their programme logically and truthfully and not be satisfied with any make-believe. For them Savli is an eye-opener. Any village ought to be able easily to accommodate a party of 300 men and women with perfect comfort and give them fresh open air, fragrant grass and good rich milk from healthy cows and fresh vegetables and fruit in addition. Surely there is something radically wrong if many of these things have to be brought from cities.

There is no trick of magic that can bring about this change overnight. But with patience and perseverance, the programme of reconstruction can be carried out without much difficulty. But nothing can be done if ardent workers do not settle down in villages with the fixed determination of reconstructing their villages in the right manner.

Harijan, 7-3-1936

277. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

March 8, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter was waiting for me when I arrived here.

The weather is not hot but there is nothing cold about it. It rained near Jhansi. We are all well. Ba and Navin[2] are the additions to the party. Puri too was with us.

I sent a wire as soon as we arrived.[1] I hope you received it.

You may be proud of the frilling to the 'uppers' miscalled shawls or scarves. I am proud of your spinning. For spinning is

[1] The telegram sent by Gandhiji on his arrival at Delhi is not traceable.

[2] Son of Vrajlal Gandhi

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real art. And for you—a 'novice'—the effort is quite worthy. There, once in a way, even a rebel may receive a compliment from a loving

TYRANT

[PS.]

You will drive directly to the Harijan quarters on 11th, D.V.

From the original: C.W. 3565. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6374

278. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 8, 1936

I see something troubles your mind, though you may try to conceal it. You may certainly come according to your wish, provided you get the permission. It will be the greatest service you render to Jayaprakash if you lay before him your correct position with the utmost firmness and calm of mind. I am afraid you have not fully stated your case to Jayaprakash and if you have, it did not make any impression on him, that is, he does not take the statement to be correct. He will calm down without doubt, if he is convinced that you have in you no such thing as sexual desire. Your freedom from desire should put out the fire of his, just as water puts out any fire. Why should you be afraid and lose peace of mind, when you do have faith in God? At the time of going you made me a promise not to get disturbed, and you ought to keep it. Keep writing to me. . . .[1] Take care to be true to the promise, remain calm and undisturbed, preserve your health, come if and when you can. We shall be here for about fifteen days.

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] Omission as in the source

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279. MESSAGE TO GURUKUL CONVOCATION

[Before *March 9, 1936*][1]

While giving his blessings to the outgoing graduates, Sardar Patel at first read out a message from Mahatma Gandhi sent to the outgoing graduates in which he had asked them to lead a life of truth, purity and service and to never forget that the institution to which they were bidding farewell was founded by the late Swami Shraddhanand who died while serving the nation to his last breath.

The anniversary of the Gurukul concluded when a message from Mahatma Gandhi asking the public to give liberal donations to the Gurukul was read out by Sardar Patel. In that message, Mahatmaji had expected everybody present there to fill the coffers of the Gurukul which was run by contributions from the public.

The Hindustan Times, 11-3-1936

280. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

DELHI,
March 9, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So you return leaving Kamala for ever in Europe. And yet her spirit was never out of India and will always be your precious treasure as it will be of many of us. I shall never forget the final talk that wetted our four eyes.

Heavy responsibility awaits you here. It is laid on you because you are well able to bear it. I dare not come to you, as I would have if my body had regained its original elasticity. There is nothing organically wrong with me. The body has even gained in weight. But it has lost the vitality it seemed to have only three months ago. Strange to say, I never felt any illness. And yet the body had become weak and the instrument registered high blood-pressure. I have to be careful.

I am in Delhi to rest for a few days. If your original plan had been carried out I would have remained in Wardha for our meeting. It would have been quieter there for you. But if it is

[1] The convocation was held on March 9, 1936, at Kangri.

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the same thing to you, we may meet in Delhi where I should be till 23rd instant at least. But if you prefer Wardha I can return there earlier. If you come to Delhi, you could stay with me in the Harijan quarters newly built in Kingsway—quite a good place. You will tell me, when you can, the date of our meeting. Rajendra Babu and Jamnalalji are or will be with you. Vallabhbhai also would have been but we all thought it would be better if he stayed away. The other two have gone there not for political discussion but for condolence. The political discussion will take place when we have all met and when you have finished domestic work.

I hope Indu bore well the grief of Kamala's death and the almost immediate separation from you. What is her address?

May everything be well with you.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

281. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

HARIJAN COLONY,
KINGSWAY, DELHI
March 9, 1936

DEAR SIR MIRZA[1],

Now that I am free to attend to correspondence to a limited extent, I write this to acknowledge your kind invitation which I treasure. You know how I love to be with you and under your care. But I do not know how I shall fare during the hot weather and where fate will take me. For the moment I can only say, the wish is there.

My love to you all.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2179

[1] Dewan of Mysore

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282. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 9, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Isn't there anyone else at the Ashram who can also go into Bhanushanker's account? We can roughly guess the year. Bhanushanker should be able to give the exact year at any rate.

We reached Delhi yesterday. Kanti, Navin and Kanu are with us. All are having a happy time. I brought Navin here for the sake of his health. This month is always cool here.

I believe I shall be here at least for a fortnight. I feel I am in fairly good health. Krishnadas's marriage was solemnized with great simplicity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8484. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

283. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

March 9, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I hope Sumitra is doing well. See that she writes in ink.

I am sure Ramji does not cause any trouble. The goshala must be working well.

I wish to spend a fortnight in Delhi. But let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9092

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284. LETTER TO JAIJI PETIT

March 9, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. God has been putting you to a severe test and you are going through it very well, which also is due to His grace. There is a verse which we have been reciting here during the daily prayers. It says, 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. It is good that Hira is with you.

Do write a few lines to me whenever you think it fit. Are you at all likely to pay a visit to the country?

I am quite well, though perhaps I may not now be able to put in the amount of work I used to formerly. I, of course, do need rest. At present we are in Delhi. Ba is with me. Probably we shall be back in Wardha in a fortnight.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3155

285. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

March 9, 1936

CHI. VANAMALA,

You must have learnt from Anandi why I could not speak to you. I had very much wished to hear from you all the news of Sumitra, but does God always let all our wishes be fulfilled?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5785. Also C.W. 3008. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

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286. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

March 9, 1936

CHI. SUMITRA,

How is it that you do not write to me? You must be enjoying yourself. Do play well and do study well, but understand that all work or all play is of no real use. Can you read this letter? Grandmother is here with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5786. Also C.W. 3009. Courtesy: Vanamala M. Desai

287. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

March 9, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have a letter from Sharma from which I learn that you are not keeping well. What is this? I am writing this, for I am now permitted to do some writing. As I am in Delhi it would be fine if you could come up to see me. Amtussalaam is of course here already.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 192

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288. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 10, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Your experiences are interesting. You must not count the days of my return. I shall do so as early as I can, especially as Jawaharlal is not coming before 3rd April.[1] This was a false alarm. He is coming tomorrow.

The weather here is still decidedly cool. Amtul Salaam is much better than what she was there. So is Brijkishan.

I hope you were able to get a good mare.

You are much below your normal weight. You must put on more. Do not hesitate to increase the quantity of milk or ghee or both and anything else you may need. You must put on more muscle.

I am keeping well and am getting plenty of quiet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6323. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9789

289. LETTER TO BACHUBHAI B. RAMDAS

March 10, 1936

CHI. BACHUBHAI,

Gangabehn has written to me about you. I think that Vaidya Jugatram's advice to you is right. For the present at any rate your diet should be milk and fruit. You may take glucose with it. At present it will be good not to take anything made of wheat or other cereals. In place of milk, you may take churned curds, which will be easier to digest and will cause no gas. A healthy cow's milk if taken fresh soon after milking does not cause any gas; this may be taken in small quantities. Instead of taking milk and fruit together, you should take them at intervals sepa-

[1] The following two sentences were added by Gandhiji after completing the letter.

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rately. For the present, take only juicy fruits, such as oranges, *mosambis*, grapes, pomegranate, pineapple and papaya. Take care that the curds are not sour. If Jugatram agrees, you would do well to take about ten bulbs of garlic. Recently I have heard much about the good that garlic does. It appears to help much in the digestion of milk. Dr. Talvalkar's brother prepares an essence of garlic. In my recent illness, I could take twenty-five big bulbs of garlic a day. I do not take them now as there is no need to do so. One may add glucose to milk and to fruit juice. Do not take buffalo's milk. It is likely to prove heavy for you. If you find even cow's milk heavy, have a goat at your place and take its milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 9719

290. A LETTER

March 11, 1936

CHI. RANCHHODLAL,

Ever since I left Ahmedabad I have been intending to write to you but could not, as it was left out or forgotten at the time of writing the few letters that I am permitted. Today, however, early in the morning I made a note of doing this. The reason for the letter is the pain caused to Bhai Mavalankar, who had put his entire trust in you and held you in great respect. Now, that confidence being no longer there, he writes to Sardar that you have yourself given him cause to lose his faith in you, as you neither consulted him nor so much as informed him of your going to Bombay. He feels aggrieved in the matter, has even begun doubting the purity of your motives, and repents that he put so much trust in you. You should explain to me all that has happened, as Mavalankar writes that he helped you in the nick of time trustfully though several friends had warned him against you. You should remove the doubts in Mavalankar's mind and see that you do not lose such an open-hearted and disinterested friend as he. You should not lose the faith your creditors put in you. No matter if you have to turn a penniless beggar, you ought not to lose your credit for truthfulness. I shall be waiting for your reply by return

of post. I hope Motibehn is doing well. I shall be here for the present at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

291. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 11, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I trust you get my letters regularly. The last of your letters was from Sitab Diyara. I have received the book[1] written by Jayaprakash and have been reading it. Tell him that I shall send him my opinion after finishing the reading. It is exceedingly cold today and it is windy. Dr. Ansari examined me today. The blood-pressure was 156/94, but last evening it was higher. The doctor, therefore, thinks that I should still be moderate in work and observe the restrictions. It is very good that at Sitab Diyara you get milk [from the cow] at home. You should increase the quantity as much as you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3459

292. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

[*March 12, 1936*][2]

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I read your book carefully and liked it although the attack on me which it carries betrays considerable ignorance regarding me. That can be removed but I am enchanted with your study. After these preliminaries I may say that I find in it no remedy

[1] *Why Socialism?*
[2] This was sent along with letter to Prabhavati; *vide* the following item.

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for our problem. Your solution does not suit the conditions in this country at least for the present. The goal you aim at is almost the same as that desired by me and many Congressmen. But our method of attaining it differs from yours. Your method in my opinion is not practicable in this country. I am not so attached to my own method that I cannot see the merits of anyone else's. But I am unable to appreciate your solution in spite of all sincere effort.

Your speech at the Bengal session had been travelling with me and I read it only today. I like your resolution regarding the committee of experts. Have you anyone in mind who can do justice to the work? Have you taken any further step in this respect? Your book has given rise to many thoughts with more to come but I cannot write anything just now on that topic. Prabha writes that you are totally negligent of your health; this is not good.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

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

293. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 12, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have had no letters from you of late. I wrote to you a brief note yesterday. I write this letter today as I wish to send the letter I have written to Jayaprakash on his book. Perhaps you are both at Allahabad by now. Jamnalalji, for his part, has already gone there. Rajen Babu too was there.

Jayaprakash's book is worthy of your reading and observation. Some of his ideas are wrong, if mine are right. Is a person great just because all want to follow him? Rajkumari is expected to arrive today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3460

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294. LETTER TO SHANKERBHAI B. PATEL

DELHI,
March 12, 1936

CHI. SHANKERBHAI,

I indeed made inquiries of you all, but none of you turned up. It was certainly good that narrow caste bonds were broken.[1]

SHRI SHANKERBHAI
JAMSI VILLA, ELLIS BRIDGE
AHMEDABAD, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4088. Also C.W. 51. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

295. LETTER TO MANGALABEHN B. DESAI

[*March 12, 1936*][2]

CHI. MANGALA,

A child may turn a bad child, but parents can never change; and hence I offer blessings to both of you. But you know the conditions going with them. Render service and bring honour to the Ashram. Life is not intended for enjoyment, but for service to others, and service is impossible without self-restraint. Hence, may you both be self-restrained and live long.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4088. Also C.W. 51. Courtesy: Mangalabehn B. Desai

[1] The addressee's daughter Mangala was married outside the caste.
[2] This and the preceding item are written on the same sheet.

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296. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

DELHI,
March 13, 1936

MY DEAR ANAND,

Of course you come when you can. Only here in the Harijan colony you may be crowded out. There will be an influx of visitors presently. And of me you will have precious little in the way of talking. Hope you are both getting well.

Love.

BAPU

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

297. BIRTH-CONTROL[–I]

A co-worker[1] who is a careful reader of my writings was disturbed to read that I was likely to approve of the 'safe period' method of birth-control. I endeavoured to make it clear to the friend that the safe period method did not repel me as did the use of contraceptives and that it was open largely only to married couples. But the discussion of the topic led us into much deeper waters than either of us had expected. The fact that my friend was repelled by the safe period method as much as by that of contraceptives showed to me that he believed in the possibility of ordinary persons practising the restraint imposed by the *smritis*, i.e., that the union between husband and wife was permitted only when the parties really desired to have children. Whilst I knew the rule I had never regarded it in the light that I began to do at the discussion. All these long years I had regarded it as a counsel of perfection not to be carried out literally and that so long as married couples carried on intercourse by mutual consent but without special regard to the desire for progeny, they were carrying out the purpose of marriage without breaking any positive injunction of the *smriti*. But the new light in which I viewed

[1] Vinoba Bhave

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the *smriti* text was a revelation to me. I understood now as I never had done before the statement that married people, who strictly observed the injunction of the *smritis*, were as much *brahmacharis* as those who were never married and lived chaste lives.

The sole object of sexual intercourse according to the new light was the desire for progeny, never gratification of the sexual instinct. Simple gratification of the instinct would be counted according to this view of marriage as lust. This may appear to be a harsh expression to use for our enjoyment which has hitherto been regarded as innocent and legitimate. But I am not dealing with custom. I am dealing with the science of marriage as propounded by Hindu sages. Their presentation may be faulty, it may be altogether wrong. But for one like me who believes in several *smriti* texts as inspired and based on experience, there is no escape from a full acceptance of their meaning. I know no other way of finding the truth of things and testing certain old texts in accordance with their full meaning no matter how hard the test may appear and how harsh its deductions may sound.

In the light of what I have said above, birth-control by contraceptives and the like is a profound error. I write thus with a full sense of my responsibility. I have great regard for Mrs. Margaret Sanger and her followers. She impressed me much by her great zeal for her cause.[1] I know that she has great sympathy for the women who suffer because they have to bear the burden of carrying and rearing unwanted children. I know also that this method of birth-control has the support of many Protestant divines, scientists, learned men and doctors, many of whom I have the honour of knowing personally and for whom I entertain high regard. But I should be false to my God who is Truth and nothing but Truth, if I concealed my belief from the reader or these great advocates of the method. Indeed, if I hid my belief, I should never discover my error if my present belief is one. Moreover, its declaration is due to those many men and women who accept my guidance and advice in many moral problems including this one concerning birth-control.

That birth requires to be regulated and controlled is common cause between the advocates of contraceptives and the like. The difficulty of control through self-restraint is not to be denied. Yet

[1] *Vide* pp. 156-60.

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there is no other way of attaining the end, if mankind is to fulfil its destiny. It is my innermost conviction that if the method under discussion gains universal acceptance, mankind will suffer moral deterioration. This I say in spite of the evidence to the contrary that is often produced by the advocates of the method.

I believe I have no superstition in me. Truth is not truth merely because it is ancient. Nor is it necessarily to be regarded with suspicion because it is ancient. There are some fundamentals of life which may not be lightly given up because they are difficult of enforcement in one's life.

Birth-control through self-control is no doubt difficult. But no one has yet been known seriously to dispute its efficacy and even superiority over the use of contraceptives.

Then, I feel that the full acceptance of the implication of the injunction of the Shastras as to the strictly confined use of the sexual act makes the observance of self-control much easier than if one regards the act itself as a source of supreme enjoyment. The function of the organs of generation is merely to generate progeny obviously of the highest type possible for a married couple. This can and should only take place when both parties desire, not sexual union but progeny which is the result of such union. Desire for such union, therefore, without the desire for progeny, must be considered unlawful and should be restrained.

The possibility of such control for the ordinary man will be examined in the next issue.[1]

Harijan, 14-3-1936

298. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KINGSWAY, DELHI,
March 14, 1936

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Profulla[2] gave me a sorrowful account of you and Hemprabha[3]. He says both of you are ailing and full of anxiety. I had a brief card from Hemprabha in reply to my inquiry.

Do please give me a full account of your condition and doings. Both of you are devotees of *Gita* and *Ramayana*. Of anxiety

[1] *Vide* pp. 278-79.
[2] Profulla Chandra Ghosh
[3] Addressee's wife

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therefore you should have none. From ailments we can hope to be free, if we would take reasonable care ourselves.

Throughout my illness, I have never ceased to think of you. And how is the mad *pujari* of yours ? How is Arun[1] ? Where is he ? What is he doing? What is Charu doing? What about the Harijan work? I know nothing of your many activities.

I am well and hope to be in Delhi till 23rd instant at least.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1628

299. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your second letter is before me. I hope you received mine[2]. I shall try to think of your message when Jawaharlal comes. He will be here on 17th and will stay at the Harijan colony.

Of course every intimate contact with the real villagers in their villages gives us new knowledge and new hope, though it also shows us the difficulties in our path. My heart is there. What my effort will end in I do not know.

I think I told you what Dr. Ansari found. He is satisfied with the condition but he is firmly of opinion that I have to go slow yet for a while. I am having all the rest I need.

Rajkumari is here and sitting by my side as before.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6315. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9781

300. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

March 14, 1936

CHI. MANILAL,

After I had written the letters today, I remembered your inquiry regarding the diet for diabetes. There should be no starch

[1] Addressee's son

[2] *Vide* p. 208.

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and no sugar in the diet; so one ought not to take bananas, potatoes, rice, wheat, jaggery, sugar, etc. One may take a little of porridge made of broken wheat—such as remains after the flour is sifted out. Salt may be added to the porridge. Or, one may grind the sifted wheat pieces into flour and make chapatis out of it. One may take milk, curds, leafy vegetables, green peas, gourd, and sour fruits but no sweet fruits. The main food should be milk and vegetables, and this should restore one's health fully.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4848

301. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

March 14, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I have your letter which I am sending on to Sharma. My [stay][1] in Delhi is certain till the [23rd][2]. I would like it if you could visit me in the mean while. I am keeping well but cannot tackle much work. I have strength but there is the doctor's veto.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 192 and 193

302. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

March 14, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I had your letter which prompted me to send for Draupadi and here is her reply. But I have repeated my invitation.

You are gaining good experience. It will be nice if you have nothing further to learn from any institution after you come here. You may remain there as long as your knowledge remains incom-

[1&2] From the printed version in the source

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plete in any respect. As for my opinion, I hold that nature cure requires a different kind of training though a complete knowledge of anatomy and chemistry is of course most essential.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 236 and 237

303. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

The diary must be filled in every day. As we eat daily, so must we pray daily and fill in the diary. Sometimes food has to be dispensed with but the diary is indispensable as long as we have any strength, and prayer too cannot be given up as long as the heart is pure.

If you start on garlic you will be totally relieved of wind and black pepper will become unnecessary.

Partaking of garlic and milk by way of medicine need not constitute a violation of *brahmacharya*. In the case of the weak, the proclivity to passion tends to grow and also results in involuntary discharge. Such men require milk and the like. My opinion regarding milk as expressed in my *Guide to Health*[1] has certainly undergone some change.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4285

[1] An English translation of a series of Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health published in *Indian Opinion* from January 4, 1913 to August 16, 1913; *Vide* Vols. XI and XII.

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304. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 16, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your third letter has arrived. I am delighted you have a horse. Never mind the cost. They will allocate it as they think best. You should do everything gently and take rest while the sun is blazing. All work before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m. during summer. You should take more fruit than you do. Cold bandage on the head is a necessity. Earth retains the cold longer than the mere wet bandage.

The weather is now getting steadily warmer. It is nearing 3 p.m. and I have nothing to cover the body. I can bear the *pankha*[1].

I thought I did see your dictionaries in Wardha. But I will inquire and see that you get dictionaries.

Yes, the more you can interest Jajuji, the better it will be for village work.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6316. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9782

305. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI[2]

March 16, 1936

MURABBI BHAI,

I had decided in the presence of Kashi[3] to write to you regarding Chi. Krishnadas's marriage. Yesterday I remembered the decision which I had forgotten because of my change of place. Such a marriage must be the consequence of the merits of the couple and their elders. The ceremony was performed by a true Brahmin, Ravishankar Maharaj, amidst the blessings of numerous loving

[1] Fan
[2] Gandhiji's father's brother's son
[3] Addressee's daughter-in-law, wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

friends. Instead of Krishnadas having to go to the place of the bride's father, the latter came with his daughter to meet Krishnadas at his place of duty. The bride wore a white sari woven from yarn spun by Krishnadas himself. For other ornaments she had garlands of yarn spun by Kashi and me. Vinoba, Krishnadas's guru, was of course present, and the very next day the couple joined the guru in doing their work of service. The bride did not have even a grain of gold as a wedding ring. The expense on the wedding is not likely to have been even so much as two rupees. I found the bride truly gentle. Never had I witnessed such a wedding before. The other marriages I attended had been simple enough, but nowhere else did I find the holy atmosphere of this one. I take it that this information will give satisfaction to you both.

Respectful pranams from
MOHANDAS

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

306. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

The enclosed letter[1] is for Father to read. I do know that all of you will of course do your best at the time of Purushottam's marriage. However, don't circumstances sometimes overcome us, just as we sometimes overcome them? The duel between destiny and human effort must continue.

I have asked for the dates from Bhanushanker. Are you sure we did not have his account in the ledger-books? Or, it might be that the sums were credited to the Goseva Sangh's account or some other account. I am here up to the 23rd at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8485. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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307. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 16, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You must have got my letter. This I am writing on purpose. There are bound to be some Hindi-English and English-Hindi dictionaries on the bookshelf. Give them to Mirabehn whether they belong to her or to Prabhavati. If the dictionaries are not to be found among the books, ask Ramjilal to find them out and give them to Mirabehn. On my return I shall arrange to get new ones for her and we shall return the borrowed ones.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
Deliver the enclosed letters yourself.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9338. Also C.W. 6613. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

308. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 16, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. It is likely that I may not reach Wardha on the 28th or the 29th. Shankerlal insists that I should go to Lucknow[1]. The date [fixed] is the 28th. I have no idea what I ought to do. Let me see where destiny takes me. However, I do see that this creates confusion for you. For the present I am helpless, but I will inform you as soon as I am able to decide the date. Certainly, keep to the 28th or the 29th, if you can manage without me. Fix your own programme while I am touring. I am of course sending a telegram to Bombay today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10894

[1] To open the All-India Village Industries Association Exhibition

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309. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

[After *March 16, 1936*][1]

I marvel at your Urdu handwriting. Milk should not be given up though sweets and ghee can be dispensed with.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 3265

310. LETTER TO DR. SHUMSHERE SINGH

March 17, 1936

MY DEAR SHUMMY,

Amrit has given me your message and something more—her tears. She felt most miserable as she was labouring through the message.

Amrit has told me so many things about your great love for her that I could and would not believe that a coolness had sprung up between you two and that too owing to my having entered Amrit's life. She tells me that my way of looking at life had begun to affect hers as early as 1915. For me her affection and co-operation are a precious treasure. But I want neither at the cost of abiding love between you two. You alone, I am aware, have [stood] by her through thick and through thin. My own connection with you all must, if anything, tighten that bond, never weaken it. So you will tell me what you will have me to do. This I can say that I shall never be guilty of weaning her from her present public activities. I would love to make them purer, i.e., I would have her to work in a much more detached manner than she has hitherto done. But in all my doings about Amrit, you shall be my guide. If ever I differ from you I shall tell you. But where the supreme good of Amrit is a common cause there can be no difference. She is too tender a flower to be allowed to wither.

[1] The letter is in reply to the addressee's letter of March 16, 1936.

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You must look after yourself and her village work.
Love.

BAPU

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

311. A LETTER

March 17, 1936

It is no strain for me to write to you. Dr. Ansari has allowed considerable latitude, I assure you. I am going very slowly and very cheerfully. But no amount of care would keep this body intact when its time-limit is reached. We merely infer, and probably after the event, that it happened because of such and such circumstances. But our inference is based on probability. Hence I think we should not worry about our own likes, or those of dear ones.

Mahadev has smelt in your letter a dislike for him. I have combated the view but I know you will tell me frankly whatever the matter is. Your letter does exclude him. Your conversation led me to think that you wanted me to be with you all alone. Gosibehn spoke to me differently. She gave me details about the place, too. I could understand your first proposal.

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

312. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

DELHI,
March 18, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

This time you were late in writing to me; you should not let that happen. What could keep you so busy? You ought to write a postcard at least.

Jawaharlal arrived yesterday. I shall have to go to Lucknow for the Exhibition so as to reach there on the 28th. My idea is to leave Lucknow on the 29th for Wardha. However, one never can tell. The rest Kanti will write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3468

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313. MY IDEA OF LIVING IN A VILLAGE[1]

DELHI,
March 19, 1936

If Ba desires then with her, otherwise I would live alone in a hut in Segaon.

Mirabehn's [hut] may not suffice for me.

As little expense as possible should be incurred in building the hut and in no case should it exceed Rs. 100.

Whatever help I might need, I should obtain from Segaon.

I should pay visits to Maganwadi as often as necessary. For that I should use whatever vehicle I can get.

Mira . . .[2] should stay with . . . .[3] She must not give her time to attend personally on me, but she can help me in my village work.

If necessary, Mahadev, Kanti and others might stay in the village. For them a simple hut should be erected.

Along with this, I will continue my other outside activities.

Unless there is some special reason, people from outside should not come to see me at Segaon. They may see me only at Maganwadi on the days fixed for my going there.

Whenever there is need for me to go out . . . .[4]

I firmly . . .[5] by doing . . .[6] the work of village industries will gain momentum and the attention of the people will be directed to village handicrafts. By doing this, full use could be made of Mirabehn's great capacities. And Mahadev, Kanti and others will also get a novel and good experience.

Whatever defects there may be in my way of thinking will come to the surface on my living in a village. Other people will, no doubt, get encouragement.

It is not . . .[7] to stay at Segaon alone, but Segaon seems to have come to my mind in the natural course. But, if there is any other more suitable village, I am prepared to consider it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2977

[1] This was sent to Jamnalal Bajaj.
[2] to [7] Illegible

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314. LETTER TO ANASUYA BAJAJ

March 19, 1936

CHI. GODAVARI[1],

Your letter. You do not tell me the time you get up. Sugar is unnecessary and can be even harmful if taken in large quantities. To chew sugar-cane when in season is preferable to sugar and so is jaggery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 9134

315. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
4 a.m., March 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yours this time is a revealing letter. What you say about the well on Jamnalal Bajaj's farm is disturbing.[2] But it merely shows the tremendous difficulties we have in our way. In the midst of all these you must keep well and calm, even as I am trying to do. For you might imagine that it cannot all be plain sailing for me here. I am having difficulty about the political part as also the village settlement part. But according to Dr. Ansari my progress is steady and he wants me to undergo more physical and mental exertion to test my capacity. And I am keeping calm. Blood-pressure was on 18th evening 154/92. I have to go to Lucknow on 28th to open [the] Exhibition. I am then supposed to go to Wardha. I do not know for certain what is going to happen after 28th. But I shall soon know.

[1] This was another name of the addressee.

[2] The caste-Hindu villagers had been objecting to Harijans using the well.

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I hope your fever has not returned and your pony is giving you satisfaction.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6317. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9783

316. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

2 p.m., March 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have another letter before me. These recurring attacks of fever disturb me. If you cannot keep well in villages, you must live in Maganwadi and do what you can from there. You may not use violence against yourself. Why do you not write about the difficulties there to Jamnalalji? When I mentioned the well difficulty[1] to him, he resented having to know it through me. He said the understanding was that you should let him know directly about all your difficulties. Perhaps you will answer that that agreement was cancelled. I would say 'not quite'. You are still bound so long as you attend to Segaon to write to him directly. That does not mean that you may not write to me.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall procure *palak*[2] seeds. You mean the *bhaji*[3], do you not?

From the original: C.W. 6318. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9784

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Spinach
[3] Leafy vegetable

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317. LETTER TO ABBAS K. VARTEJI

March 20, 1936

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. It is right that you are getting married. May you both live long and be happy. Both of you should observe the restrictions laid down for Ashram life. Is the girl educated? If so, she should write to me. How old is she?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6312

318. LETTER TO LILI H. SHAH

March 20, 1936

CHI. LILI,

You are now about to fly away. But you could not get time to write in ink the letter seeking my blessings! Are you so busy with work, or are you mad with joy? Whatever the case, you both certainly have my blessings. May you both live a pure life, continue to be pure and dedicate yourselves to the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

[C/O] SHRI HIRALAL AMRITLAL SHAH
CHAPSI BUILDING
PRINCESS STREET, BOMBAY 2

From Gujarati: C.W. 9720. Courtesy: Lilibehn A. Pandya

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319. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 20, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter only today. I shall be going to Lucknow, not on the 3rd, but on the 28th. I shall return from there on the 29th. I expect I shall go to Wardha most probably. Though I do not quite like it my life nowadays is spent in wanderings. However, it may all be only to the good and perhaps I gather experience at any rate. Do try to read Jayaprakash's book, though it is sure to be rendered into Hindi.

My talks with Jawaharlal are continuing and will, I believe, go on for some time more.

Dr. Ansari came to examine me again and expressed his satisfaction with the improvement in my health. The weight continues to be 111 lb. and it is a good thing that the blood-pressure was 154/92 though noted in the evening. It will indeed be good if you will be at Lucknow. I do not know yet where I shall be putting up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3461

320. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

March 20, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am indeed glad that you have taken up the propagation of village industries and sanitation. You should succeed in this work.

These activities are, according to me, an integral part of swaraj.

Bhanushanker does not remember the dates.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8486. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

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321. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

March 20, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

What a pitiable plight I am in! No one may explain anything to me fully. Lest any harm should come to my health, none would ask me anything in detail and I may not speak at length. The result was that I never realized that the proposed conference[1] was to have three or four hundred invitees and that I was to preside over it. Moreover, there is going to be a reception committee! How can you involve me in all this? I am still under orders not to do any such thing. For my part, I took it that I was to sit in a small room for a little while and offer whatever suggestions might occur to me. It is of course my fault that I did not understand things fully. I admit it, but the admission is not the end of the matter for us. Jamnalalji has been greatly surprised and even pained at this. I undertook the responsibility of replying to the letter and sent a long telegram. Of course the telegram was sent to Munshi since I did not know where you might be at the time. Rajendra Babu thinks that it would be good if this function follows immediately after the Hindi [Sahitya] Sammelan which is fixed for the 25th and the 26th April. That would mean saving the expenses that we might then have to incur. Do think over this. Does Jawaharlal take interest in this? He might choose to come if it takes place towards the end of April. And what if we made him the President? He will of course have a pleasant time as an honoured guest. Let someone else be Chairman of the Reception Committee. What about Jajuji, if at all you consider the Reception Committee necessary? Or, why not you yourself?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10895

[1] Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad

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322. *BIRTH-CONTROL–II*

There is nothing in our society today which would conduce to self-control. Our very upbringing is against it. The primary concern of parents is to marry their children anyhow so that they may breed like rabbits. If they are girls, they are married at as early an age as they conveniently can be, irrespective of their moral welfare. The marriage ceremony is one long-drawn-out agony of feasting and frivolity. The householder's life is in keeping with the past life. It is a prolongation of self-indulgence. Holidays and social enjoyments are so arranged as to allow one the greatest latitude for sensuous living. The literature that is almost thrust on one generally panders to the animal passion. The most modern literature almost teaches that indulgence in it is a duty and total abstinence a sin.

Is it any wonder if control of the sexual appetite has become difficult if not almost impossible? If then birth-control through self-restraint is the most desirable and sensible and totally harmless method, we must change the social ideal and environment. The only way to bring about the desired end is for individuals who believe in the method of self-control to make the beginning themselves and with unquenchable faith to affect their surroundings. For them the conception of marriage I discussed[1] last week has, it seems to me, the greatest significance. A proper grasp of it means a complete mental revolution. It is not meant merely for a few select individuals. It is presented as the law of the human species. Its breach reduces the status of human beings and brings swift punishment in the shape of multiplicity of unwanted children, a train of ever-increasing diseases and disruption of man as a moral being responsible to his Maker. Birth-control by contraceptives no doubt regulates to a certain extent the number of newcomers and enables persons of moderate means to keep the wolf from the door. But the moral harm it does to the individual and society is incalculable. For one thing, the outlook upon life for those who satisfy the sexual appetite for the sake of it is wholly changed. Marriage ceases to be a sacrament for them. It means a revalua-

[1] *Vide* pp. 261-3.

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tion of the social ideals hitherto prized as a precious treasure. No doubt this argument will make little appeal to those who regard the old ideals about marriage as a superstition. My argument is only addressed to those who regard marriage as a sacrament and woman not as an instrument of animal pleasure but as mother of man and trustee of the virtue of her progeny.

My experience of self-control by fellow-workers and myself confirms me in the view presented here. It assumes overwhelming force from the discovery in a vivid light of the ancient conception of marriage. For me *brahmacharya* in married life now assumes its natural and inevitable position and becomes as simple as the fact of marriage itself. Any other method of birth-control seems useless and unthinkable. Once the idea that the only and grand function of the sexual organ is generation possesses man and woman, union for any other purpose they will hold as criminal waste of the vital fluid and consequent excitement caused to man and woman as an equally criminal waste of precious energy. It is now easy to understand why the scientists of old have put such great value upon the vital fluid and why they have insisted upon its strong transmutation into the highest form of energy for the benefit of society. They boldly declare that one who has acquired a perfect control over his or her sexual energy strengthens the whole being, physical, mental and spiritual, and attains powers unattainable by any other means.

Let not the reader be disturbed by the absence of many or even any living specimen of such giant *brahmacharis*. The *brahmacharis* we see about us today are very incomplete specimens. At best they are aspirants who have acquired control over their bodies but not their minds. They have not become proof against temptation. This is not because *brahmacharya* is so difficult of attainment. Social environment is against them, and the majority of those who are making an honest effort unknowingly isolate the control of the animal passion from all other passions, whereas the effort to be successful must include control over all the passions to which man is prey. Whilst *brahmacharya* is not impossible of attainment by the average man and woman, it must not be supposed that it requires less effort than that required by an average student who has set his heart upon becoming a master of any one of the sciences. Attainment of *brahmacharya* in the sense here meant means mastery of the Science of Life.

Harijan, 21-3-1936

323. LIMITATION OF REFORMERS

Ever since Dr. Ambedkar has thrown his bomb-shell in the midst of Hindu society in the shape of threatened conversion, frantic efforts have been made to wean him from the proposed step. Dr. Ambedkar's threat has had its repercussions on Harijans, too, who are at all literate and are able to read newspapers. They have begun to approach Hindu institutions or reformers with a demand for posts, scholarships or the like, accompanying it with the statement that the writer might, in the event of refusal, be obliged to change to another faith, aid having been offered on behalf of the representatives of that faith.

Without a doubt these threats are a portent and a matter of grave concern to those who care at all for the religion of their forefathers. But it will not be served by coming to terms with those who have lost faith in Hinduism or for that matter in any religion. Religion is not a matter of barter. It is a matter for every individual to decide for himself to which faith he will belong. It does not lend itself to purchase in any shape or form. Or if such an expression can be used in connection with things of the spirit, religion can only be purchased with one's own blood. If therefore any Harijan wants to give up Hinduism, he should be entirely free to do so.

There must be a searching of heart for the reformer. Has his practice or that of his neighbours caused the defection? If it has and if it is found to be improper, it must be changed.

It is an admitted fact that the conduct of a vast number of Hindus who call themselves sanatanists is such as to cause the greatest inconvenience and irritation to the Harijans all over India. The wonder is that many more Harijans than already have, have not left Hinduism. It speaks volumes for their loyalty or for the innate virtue of Hinduism that millions of Harijans have clung to it in spite of the inhumanities to which in the name of that very faith they have been subjected.

This wonderful loyalty of Harijans and their unexampled patience render it imperative for every *savarna* Hindu to see that Harijans receive the same treatment that every other Hindu does. The course before *savarnas* is, therefore, on the one hand not to interfere with Harijans wishing to leave the Hindu fold

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by trying to keep them within it by the offer of bribes in the shape of finding employment or scholarships and, on the other hand, to insist on full justice being done to Harijans in every walk of life. Indeed reformers should anticipate the Harijans' requirements and not wait till they begin to complain. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is the biggest institution for the removal of untouchability. It has wisely adopted a most liberal policy of giving scholarships to deserving students. It employs as many Harijans as possible. But it is in no sense a bureau for finding jobs for unemployed Harijans. Generally speaking, there is no dearth of jobs for Harijans who are fit for the jobs for which they offer themselves. The greatest hardship felt by thousands of Harijans is want of pure water for drinking and domestic use, denial of access to public schools and other institutions, constant pinpricks in villages and, last but not least, denial of access to temples of worship. These disabilities are stern realities in the lives of the vast mass of Harijans. If they as a mass give up Hinduism, they will do so because of these common disabilities which brand them as lepers of Hindu society. Hinduism is passing through a fiery ordeal. It will perish not through individual conversions, not even through mass conversions, hut it will perish because of the sinful denial by the so-called *savarna* Hindus of elementary justice to Harijans. Every threat of conversion is, therefore, a warning to the *savarnas* that if they do not wake up in time, it may be too late!

One word to the impatient and needy Harijans. They must not use threats when they approach Hindu institutions or individuals for help. They should rely upon the strength of their case commanding a hearing. The majority of Harijans do not know what change of religion can mean. They mutely suffer the continuing degradation to which *savarnas* in their selfishness have consigned them. They must be the primary care of Hindu reformers whether they complain or do not. Those who are enlightened enough to know and feel the degradation and know also what change of religion means, are either too good Hindus to desert their ancestral faith and deserve every help they need, or being indifferent as to religion may not claim help from *savarna* Hindus in exchange for their condescending to remain in the Hindu fold. I would, therefore, plead with enlightened Harijans for their own sakes not to seek material betterment under threat of conversion. And whilst reformers must on no account yield to threats, they must ceaselessly strive to secure justice for Harijans at the hands of *savarna* Hindus.

Harijan, 21-3-1936

324. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

DELHI,
March 21, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Jamnalalji was greatly surprised at Kaka's letter to him on the subject of the conference, and I got scared. I have, therefore, sent Kaka a long telegram on behalf of Jamnalal but to your address. I have also written to him.[1] It would not be proper to expect a long speech from me. I am not yet in a position to preside over such a large conference. When I said yes, I imagined there would be just a handful of men attending and we would be exchanging a few thoughts with one another. Your idea, it appears, is to have a gathering on a big scale. It is of course my own fault that I did not gather full information in advance. You may now do as you think fit. Indeed, I like Rajendra Babu's suggestion.[2] He himself may even attend the function, and perhaps Jawaharlal too would. The latter may even agree to preside. Why should you not have Kaka or someone else as Chairman of the Reception Committee? If you hold the conference after the Hindi Sammelan and if they do have a Reception Committee, Jamnalalji might be available.

I hope you are both doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7598. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

[1&2] *Vide* p. 277.

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325. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

March 21, 1936

CHI. TARA,

After all, you didn't write to me. Anxiety or thinking about you—call it what you like—persists every day. I regard it as wrong that you should ignore your ailment. You have many excellent qualities, but this disregard of the body is hard to reconcile with them. You ought to make a "manly effort" to overcome your ailment. It does not matter if you have given up the treatment of Gaurishankerbhai. Try the prescription of any other in whom you have faith. I am certainly prepared to keep you under my care. You had, if I have correctly followed your words, no troubles when you were living with me. Try one thing for a week: take in two instalments, mixing it with your food, one *tola* of green garlic very finely crushed. It indeed had excellent effect on me. It helps greatly in eliminating viruses in the body—in relieving one of gas. This was the remedy prescribed by Dr. Ansari for Navin. Green garlic, which is to be consumed along with the bulb and the stems and the leaves, should be washed clean before it is crushed. It is meant not for imparting taste, but as medicine. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7526. Also C.W. 5002. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

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326. INTERVIEW TO M. C. RAJAH[1]

[*March 22, 1936*][2]

Rao Bahadur Rajah[3] . . . discussed the Delimitation Committee's recommendations which a Committee appointed by the Assembly had recently considered, and invited Gandhiji's suggestions as to how to proceed further. . . . I am not in a position to reveal these suggestions . . . Rao Bahadur Rajah was much exercised over the irresponsible talk of mass conversions and wondered if intensive religious propaganda among Harijans could not be undertaken. He instanced the formation of *bhajan* parties to travel from *cheri*[4] to *cheri* singing *bhajans* and giving *kathas*[5], and wondered if the Sangh could not send some parties from the North. Gandhiji said:

Whilst parties could be sent from the North, there is no need for the South to depend on the North. The South has its inexhaustible treasures of religious songs and it should be the easiest thing to organize *bhajan* parties from the province itself. I have heard soul-stirring *bhajans* of Thyagaraja, and Sjt. Rajagopalachari and Dr. Rajan would give you many a tip in this behalf. For Malabar you cannot think of a better guide than the poet Vallathol Narayana Menon. I assure you there is a lot of musical talent even among Harijan boys of which we have not availed ourselves. During the Harijan tour in Bhavnagar[6] I came across a Harijan boy who kept audiences spellbound by his simple songs. In her indigenous kindergarten school[7] for Harijan children Anasuyabehn has an infant prodigy who wields his tabors as an expert and she has equally good songsters.

Dr. Ambedkar has every reason to be bitter for he has had to suffer humiliations and insults which should make anyone of us bitter and resentful. If it is permitted to be bitter and to vent one's wrath, there is no reason why he should not do so. What he fails in my opinion to realize is that it is not the fault of Hinduism but of Hindus.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Hindu*
[3] Member, Legislative Assembly
[4] Slum
[5] Religious stories
[6] From July 1 to 3, 1934
[7] Balagriha which Gandhiji visited on June 29, 1934

RAJAH: But has he to suffer those humiliations even now? Those must be a thing of the past.

GANDHIJI: Those particular humiliations are a thing of the past, but even now he would not be welcomed in an orthodox Brahmin's house.

R. But why should he want to enter an orthodox Brahmin's house?

G. It is not that he wants to enter it, but he resents the attitude. Even that refusal he would not resent if the rest of the *savarnas* were on their best behaviour. Thus if an orthodox Hindu minister were to invite a number of Hindus, including Dr. Ambedkar, to dinner, and if he discriminated against the Doctor by asking him to sit apart, it is the duty of the rest of the Hindus to leave that house along with Dr. Ambedkar. If we all did so Dr. Ambedkar would easily feel like one of us.

R. I see. But, Mahatmaji, we have made rapid strides and we shall see the end of it.

G. There is no doubt. The monster of untouchability has been laid low, only he is so huge that even whilst he is in his death-throes he is capable of much mischief. But I cherish the dream when every one of the Harijans will be ransomed and brought up to the same level as the tallest among the so-called high-class Hindus. Dr. Ambedkar once pointedly asked me if when untouchability was removed the highest status that persons like him aspired to would be that of a Shudra. I said to him that if he would be classed as a Shudra every other Hindu would also be so regarded. Varna today has become a means of arrogating to oneself a higher status. The real varna of my conception does not exist today. In the purest type of Hinduism a Brahmin, an ant, an elephant and a dog-eater (*shvapaka*) are of the same status.[1] And because our philosophy is so high, and we have failed to live up to it, that very philosophy today stinks in our nostrils. Hinduism insists on the brotherhood not only of all mankind but of all that lives. It is a conception which makes one giddy, but we have to work up to it. The moment we have restored real living equality between man and man, we shall be able to establish equality between man and the whole creation. When that day comes we shall have peace on earth and goodwill to men.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, v. 18

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Rao Bahadur Rajah wondered if under the new Constitution the Harijans might identify themselves with any of the Parties—the Congress Party, the Justice Party and so on. Gandhiji . . . said:

You must not identify yourselves with any party. My views about the existing system of government have not changed, but with the peculiar disabilities that you have suffered for ages I would not expect you to identify yourselves even with the most forward party in India. You will accept whatever is given you by Government, but you will not sacrifice your self-respect. You will similarly endorse whatever is good in the Congress programme, e.g., prohibition, abolition of the salt tax, and say to the world that you would not allow the Harijans to be in any way isolated from the poor of India whose interests are identical with yours. Whilst you will join no party you will under no circumstance whatsoever sell the country. If you can do this, Harijans will be the greatest factor in India. When these Harijans awake, they will become an irremovable force.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

327. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 23, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter disturbs me in more senses than one. You are not yet well. If life in Segaon does not suit you, you must leave in time and not as you had to in Bihar where there was a collapse. I may or may not know my limits. But you certainly do need to be cautioned, again and again. You must not become a wreck.

And may this illness again be due to separation from me, though this time there are no such antecedent circumstances as there were last time. Re-read your letter to me; you have kept a copy. It will be terrible if it needs revision. But terrible or not, if there is the need, it must be revised. Only one thing must not happen and that is living with me for personal service. In my opinion you should be able joyfully to carry out the present understanding which is in no way arrived at under pressure of any kind whatsoever. Let the mere fact of my mention of this thing not disturb you.

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I would not have discussed this at all except for the fact my stay here is being unavoidably prolonged and I do not know how long it will be. It won't be beyond the middle of April in any case and it won't be earlier than 7th April. I am booked up to 5th April.

Yes, do not believe Press reports. Dr. Ansari is giving me more and more latitude daily. He found me last night fitter than I was four days ago. He now wants me to walk for one hour at a stretch twice daily and undertake greater mental strain. He is trying to test the extreme of my capacity for physical and mental exertion. I have written many letters today besides an article for *Harijan*.

The weather all over India is very funny this year. There is a howling wind blowing here just now. It is not thus ordinarily in March.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6320. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9786

328. LETTER TO BALIBEHN M. ADALAJA AND KUMIBEHN T. MANIAR

March 23, 1936

CHI. BALI AND KUMI,

There is nothing particular to write to you. However, I am writing to acknowledge the letter you sisters have sent me. I was indeed very glad that you both saw me at Sabarmati. I expect the children are quite happy and hope that Kumi is now quiet and peaceful.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1555. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

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329. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

March 23, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

I have your letter after a long time. If Ba and I do not happen to be in Wardha in the month of May, we shall consider what may be done. For your part, you should obtain the consent of your mother's sisters and get ready. Ba returned today from a visit to Amritsar. Madalasa accompanied her during the trip. I hope you are keeping fit.

Do not be lazy in writing to me.

I shall be in these parts for some more days still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1556. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

330. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELHI,
March 25, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. Just a line to say that I have to stay for the Congress. I shall not be there therefore before 15th April. I am sorry but it was inevitable. I am just off to see the Poet[1]. Dr. Ansari's diagnosis remains hopeful. The manometer showed a rise of 8 points but he is not disturbed. He insists on my taking garlic. I wrote to you yesterday.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6321. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9787

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

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331. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

March 25, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I read both your letters. If you find no peace in Savli or your health suffers there, you have my permission and blessings to go wherever you deem fit. Kishorelalbhai will write in detail. I have written to him at length.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1883

332. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 25, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter. I shall not write much as I am writing this at night.

I had long talks with Jawaharlal, but what shall I write about them? My stay at Lucknow may perhaps extend to the 3rd. On the same day I shall proceed to Allahabad, from where I would return to Lucknow on the 7th, perhaps, and stay on till the Congress session. Hence I take it that you will be meeting me somewhere or other.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3465

[1] The letter is not available.

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333. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

DELHI,
March 27, 1936

DEAR GURUDEV,

God has blessed my poor effort. And here is the money.[1] Now you will relieve the public mind by announcing cancellation of the rest of the programme. May God keep you for many a year to come.

Yours with love,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2288

334. DISCUSSION WITH HARIJAN SEVAKS[2]

[*March 27, 1936*][3]

HARIJAN SEVAKS[4]: We received our inspiration from Swami Shraddhanandji.

GANDHIJI: Not only you, but many of us received inspiration from the noble life of the late Swamiji. . . .

Why don't you take some steps to counteract the vicious propaganda of the missionaries? Why not have Hindu missionaries for counter-propaganda? Of course, Mahatmaji, you are there enough to cover the whole field. But *pracharaks*[5] are needed.

Let me explain to you. The Sangh was not created for that purpose. Our object was to end the disabilities of Harijans and to put them on the same social level as the rest of the Hindus. As for propaganda that you have in mind, the best propaganda is that of personal example. Let every Harijan sevak lead a model life of purity and simplicity, clothe the Harijans

[1] Gandhiji had sent a draft for Rs. 60,000 for the Visva-Bharati. *Vide* also p. 34.

[2&3] The workers, including some Harijans, met Gandhiji "on the last day" of his stay in Delhi, i.e., March 27.

[4] Those who belonged to the Arya Samaj

[5] Propaganda workers

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with love and, I am quite sure, no counter-propaganda will be necessary.

But there are places where the missionaries rush to the scene, do nothing but provide a few amenities like a water-pipe or a good road and make the recipients declare that they are Christians. The poor recipients often do so, but beyond the declaration they do nothing. They share in the life of their Harijan brethren, celebrate the same Hindu festivals, and remain Hindus in every respect, except perhaps for census purposes.

True. They will remain Harijans and even the missions will not set much store by them. Our duty is to work hard amongst the orthodox Hindus and to get them to admit the Harijans in their fold as their kith and kin and to end the disabilities they suffer from.

But how are we to persuade the orthodox? May we storm their fortresses? There are local board wells, for instance, which have been thrown open to the Harijans but the orthodox people will not allow them to use them. May we advise the Harijans to defy the opposition and challenge them to do their worst?

You might, where you are fearless and where you are sure that there will be no clash and that the Harijans will not be cowed down. But the opposition is melting away gradually everywhere and I trust no storming will be necessary.

When untouchability is no more, Mahatmaji, what varna will you assign to us?

Who am I to assign a varna to you? But if I had the power, I should declare that we are all Hindus, all of the same varna. As I have made it clear over and over again there is no real varna today. When we have come to our own, when we have cleansed ourselves, we may have the four varnas according to the way in which we can express the best in us. But varna then will invest no one with a superior status or right, it will invest one with higher responsibility and duties. Those who will impart knowledge in a spirit of service will be called Brahmins. They will assume no superior airs but will be true servants of society. When inequality of status or rights is ended, every one of us will be equal. I do not know, however, when we shall be able to revive true varnadharma. Its real revival would mean true democracy.

What we want today is not that the caste Hindus eat with us or have marital ties with us. We want the rights of true citizenship, equal opportunities.

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I want my son to have the liberty to be a *vakil* or a barrister or a doctor according to his own wish.

You know there is no legal bar against your son being anything he likes. There is custom, hard prejudice and blind superstition. That the Sangh is trying its best to fight. Dr. Ambedkar is a barrister and now a professor. But blind orthodoxy will not treat him as equal with the *savarnas*. You cannot force them by legal enactment. You can do it by education, by converting the orthodox. There was, for instance, a Harijan who used to sell *bidis* in Nasik. So long as no one knew that he was a Harijan, he had very good custom. The moment they came to know that he was a Harijan, they stopped purchasing *bidis* at his shop. How are we to compel people to purchase *bidis* at his shop, otherwise than by showing them that it is inhuman and irreligious of them to boycott anybody by reason of his birth?

But why should we be called Harijans and not Hindus?

I know that a small section of you resents the name. But you may know the genesis of the name. You used to be called 'depressed classes' or '*asprishyas*' or '*achhoots*' (untouchables). All these names the vast mass of you naturally resented. Some of you sent their protests to me and asked me to find out a better name. In English I had adopted a better word than 'depressed', viz., 'suppressed', but whilst I was casting about for a good Indian word a friend suggested the word 'Harijan' taken from the song of one of the best of our saints[1]. It appealed to me because it best described your condition and still had no bad odour about it. It means a devotee of God, and as God is the help of the helpless, and as it is the helpless who naturally turn to God, I thought you deserved the name better than I for instance. For whilst I have to aspire to become a Harijan you are Harijans in the very nature of things. But you will say, 'When your objective is to make Harijans Hindus why don't you start by calling them Hindus straightaway?' What am I to do so long as I have not succeeded in abolishing untouchability?

But today, sir, it is an opprobrious term. There is a Brahmin who threatens to hammer us if we call him a Harijan.

Then he is no Brahmin. You know the word 'Harijan' occurs in Tulsidas's *Ramayana*? There Lakshmana describes to Parashurama the characteristic of a true Kshatriya. He says:

[1] Narasinha Mehta; *vide* Vol. XLVII, pp. 244-5.

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सुर महिसुर हरिजन अरु गाई । हमरें कुल इन्ह पर न सुराई

(It is the trait of our clan never to use force towards a god, a Brahmin, a Harijan or a cow.) 'Harijan' there means a man of God, a devotee, no matter to what caste or varna he belongs. We all have to treasure the beautiful connotation of the word and try to be worthy of the name.

One more question. You call your Sangh "Harijan Sevak Sangh." You are unnecessarily exploiting our name. Fourteen annas in the rupee expended by the Harijan Sevak Sangh goes into the pockets of non-Harijans, 2 annas barely goes into the pockets of the poor Harijans.

Now, now, there you are betraying gross ignorance. I can prove to you the reverse of what you say. Have you got any proof in support of your statement? I make you a sporting offer. If you can prove what you say, you can come to Wardha, at the Sangh's expense, with all the evidence in your possession, and if you succeed in convincing me I shall declare myself beaten and do proper penance. In case you fail, I will not ask you to pay back to me the train fare. But I will expect you to publicly apologize for bringing a baseless charge against the Sangh. The Sangh's books are there open to inspection by anyone, and I tell you the books will convince you that the truth is the reverse of what you say.

There is one thing certainly that you can prove. It is that there are a few sevaks who are paid even as much as a hundred rupees per month. But where that is the case, through such a sevak we distribute thousands to Harijans. Also he who is being paid a hundred rupees could easily earn in the market much more than what he receives. I am ready to confess, too, that, there are some who have to be paid as much as their market value but if no volunteer workers are available, or if you cannot get the services of the present staff on better terms, what can be done? I can, however, assure you that our administrative charges do not exceed 15 per cent, and the balance goes for the benefit of the Harijans.[1]

Harijan, 4-4-1936

[1] Harijans who were present at the meeting repudiated the suggestion and admitted that the bulk of the funds went into Harijans' pockets.

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335. TEMPLE-ENTRY

The reader will recall the important resolution[1] on temple-entry passed recently by the Harijan Sevak Sangh. No one need run away with the idea that because not much is nowadays heard of the question, it has been forgotten or given up by the Sangh. Pandit Malaviyaji's visit to Nasik and the vast audiences that gathered round him show that the people as a whole are not averse to the removal of untouchability, though it showed also that orthodoxy was not yet prepared to give up its untouchability. But it is not possible to await developments. The local Sanghs should make a sustained effort to have the existing temples thrown open and even to build new ones, not for Harijans only but for all If they are situated in healthy localities and have a school, a meeting-place and a dharmashala attached to them, they must prove useful and popular among all classes of Hindus. There may be public prayers held there every evening or at stated periods and religious discourses may be occasionally arranged. If these temples are properly conducted, they would go a long way towards removing the prejudice against the opening of existing temples to Harijans. Care must be taken, where temples are opened to Harijans, that no discrimination is made against them. They must be opened on precisely the same terms as they are opened to the other Hindus.

It is hardly necessary to state that in different localities different methods may be adopted for securing the desired end. Perfect non-violence must of course be maintained in all cases. An all-India simultaneous movement of the same type is not contemplated. It will vary in intensity and method according to the circumstances in each locality. Nowhere should temples be opened where there is an active minority opposed to the opening. Practical unanimity should be secured before any temple is opened.

[1] At the annual meeting held in Delhi from February 6 to 8. It read: "Since any further delay in securing temple-entry for Harijans will result in great harm to Hindu dharma, and since such temple-entry is part of the immediate justice to which the Harijans are entitled, the Central Board of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh resolves that effective steps be taken immediately for achieving temple-entry for Harijans and, with a view to achieving this purpose, the Executive Committee be asked to take necessary steps in consultation with Gandhiji."

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Thus what is required is sustained effort to convert local public opinion in favour of temple-entry.

The position in the Hindu States is somewhat different. Where the Prince or his officials are favourably inclined, there should be no difficulty about opening them. The question has assumed great importance in Travancore. In most other places Harijans are indifferent about temple-entry. The position is otherwise in Travancore. The vast majority of Harijans of that State are far more advanced than in other places. They have many men belonging to the learned professions. Many have passed through colleges. They naturally chafe under any restriction on their liberty but most of all on the entry into temples. One hears that the large body of *savarnas* there are wholly in favour of the removal of the bar. Travancore has an enlightened Prince and an enlightened Maharani. Surely the opposition of a few orthodox persons, however influential they may be in their own spheres, cannot be allowed to prevent a much-needed reform which has become long overdue. But Harijan sevaks should by an accurate referendum or some such means show beyond all doubt that a great majority of *savarna* Hindus are decidedly in favour of the opening of Travancore temples to Harijans precisely on the same terms as themselves. The Maharaja may not march in advance of the public opinion of his State, but I can hardly imagine his flouting clearly expressed public opinion.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

336. FOR THE YOUNG

It is the fashion in some quarters nowadays for the young to discredit whatever may be said by old people. I am not prepared to say that there is absolutely no justification for this belief. But I warn the youth of the country against always discounting whatever old men or women may say for the mere fact that it is said by such persons. Even as wisdom often comes from the mouths of babes, so does it often come from the mouths of old people. The golden rule is to test everything in the light of reason and experience, no matter from whom it comes. I want to revert to the subject of birth-control by contraceptives. It is dinned into one's ears that gratification of the sex urge is a solemn obligation like the obligation of discharging debts lawfully incurred, and that not to do so would involve the penalty of intellectual decay. This sex urge has been isolated from the desire for progeny, and it is said by the protagonists of the use of contraceptives that concep-

tion is an accident to be prevented except when the parties desire to have children. I venture to suggest that this is a most dangerous doctrine to preach anywhere; much more so in a country like India where the middle-class male population has become imbecile through abuse of the creative function. If satisfaction of the sex urge is a duty, the unnatural vice of which I wrote[1] some time ago and several other ways of gratification would be commendable. The reader should know that even persons of note have been known to approve of what is commonly known as sexual perversion. He may be shocked at the statement. But if it somehow or other gains the stamp of respectability, it will be the rage among boys and girls to satisfy their urge among members of their own sex. For me the use of contraceptives is not far removed from the means to which persons have hitherto resorted for the gratification of their sexual desire with results that very few know. I know what havoc secret vice has played among schoolboys and schoolgirls. The introduction of contraceptives under the name of science and the *imprimatur* of known leaders of society has intensified the complication and made the task of reformers who work for purity of social life well-nigh impossible for the moment. I betray no confidence when I inform the reader that there are unmarried girls of impressionable age studying in schools and colleges who study birth-control literature and magazines with avidity and even possess contraceptives. It is impossible to confine their use to married women. Marriage loses its sanctity when its purpose and highest use is conceived to be the satisfaction of the animal passion without contemplating the natural result of such satisfaction.

I have no doubt that those learned men and women who are carrying on propaganda with missionary zeal in favour of the use of contraceptives are doing irreparable harm to the youth of the country under the false belief that they will be saving thereby the poor women who may be obliged to bear children against their will. Those who need to limit their children will not be easily reached by them. Our poor women have not the knowledge or the training that the women of the West have. Surely the propaganda is not being carried on on behalf of the middle-class women, for they do not need the knowledge, at any rate so much as the poor classes do.

The greatest harm, however, done by that propaganda lies in its rejection of the old ideal and substitution in its place of one

[1] *Vide* pp. 47-8 and also Vol. LXI, pp. 6-7.

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which, if carried out, must spell the moral and physical extinction of the race. The horror with which ancient literature has regarded the fruitless use of the vital fluid was not a superstition born of ignorance. What shall we say of a husband—man—who will sow the finest seed in his possession on stony ground or of the owner of a field who will receive in his field rich with fine soil good seed under conditions that will make it impossible for it to grow? God has blessed man with seed that has the highest potency and woman with a field richer than the richest earth to be found anywhere on this globe. Surely it is criminal folly for man to allow his most precious possession to run to waste. He must guard it with a care greater than he will bestow upon the richest pearls in his possession. And so is a woman guilty of criminal folly who will receive the seed in her life-producing field with the deliberate intention of letting it run to waste. Both he and she will be judged guilty of misuse of the talents given to them and they will be dispossessed of what they have been given. Sex urge is a fine and noble thing. There is nothing to be ashamed of in it. But it is meant only for the act of creation. Any other use of it is a sin against God and humanity. Contraceptives of a kind there were before and there will be hereafter, but the use of them was formerly regarded as sinful. It was reserved for our generation to glorify vice by calling it virtue. The greatest disservice protagonists of contraceptives are rendering to the youth of India is to fill their minds with what appears to me to be wrong ideology. Let the young men and women of India who hold her destiny in their hands beware of this false god and guard the treasure with which God has blessed them and use it, if they wish, for the only purpose for which it is intended.

Harijan, 28-3-1936

337. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION, LUCKNOW[1]

March 28, 1936

I am glad and thankful to be able to come to Lucknow to open this khadi and other village industries exhibition. I may tell you that I was eager to be here at the opening. Though I know that Dr. Murarilal and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker have devoted themselves heart and soul to organizing it, at the back of it all was my

[1] This appeared under the title "A Unique Exhibition".

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conception. This exhibition, to my mind, brings out concretely for the first time the conception of a true rural exhibition I have nursed in my breast for several years. In 1921 when we met in Ahmedabad in the first year of the new Congress Constitution, we took the first step towards rural-mindedness, and the exhibition organized under the auspices of the Congress held there was the beginning of the process which you find reaching its maturity today after 15 years. I have believed and repeated times without number that India is to be found not in its few cities but in its 7,00,000 villages. But we who have gathered here are not villagers. We are town-dwellers. We town-dwellers have believed that India is to be found in its towns and that the villages were created to minister to our needs. We have hardly ever paused to inquire if those poor folks get sufficient to eat and clothe themselves with and whether they have a roof to shelter themselves from sun and rain. Now I do not think any Congress worker has travelled through the length and breadth of India as much as I have done during the past twenty years. That in itself is hardly a thing to be proud of. I, however, humbly claim, as a result of those peregrinations, to know the Indian villages more than any other Congress worker or leader. I have found that the town-dweller has generally exploited the villager, in fact he has lived on the poor villager's substance. Many a British official has written about the conditions of the people of India. No one has, to my knowledge, said that the Indian villager has enough to keep body and soul together. On the contrary they have admitted that the bulk of the population live on the verge of starvation and ten per cent are semi-starved, and that millions have to rest content with a pinch of dirty salt and chillies and polished rice or parched grain. You may be sure that if any of us were to be asked to live on that diet, we should not expect to survive it longer than a month or should be afraid of losing our mental faculties. And yet our villagers go through that state from day to day. The Village Industries Association was formed last year[1] in order to study the conditions in which they lived and the state of their handicrafts, and to revive such village arts and crafts as may be revived. Simultaneously with the creation of the A. I. V. I. Association was passed a resolution[2] to the effect that future exhibitions should be organized by the Spinners' and the Village Industries Associations. This exhibition I am about to declare open today is the first of that kind.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LIX, pp. 449-53.
[2] *Ibid*, pp. 183-4.

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As I have told you the whole conception here is mine, and yet I must confess that we are still far from bringing out that conception fully. It is an evidence of the organizers' wonderful industry, and yet it is not perfect of its kind. It was not humanly possible to achieve it during the time at their disposal. It is no easy job to bring village artisans from their villages. You will find here villagers from South India who perhaps don't know where they have come to. It is the purpose of this Exhibition to show that even this starving India of the villages is capable of producing things which we town-dwellers may use both to the villagers' and our advantage.

This exhibition is not a spectacular show like its predecessors. Those earlier ones were bound to be big shows. They were designed for a different purpose. Congress expenses were generally found out of the takings of the exhibition. The whole outlook was changed last year. We decided not to have things of spectacular interest, but we decided to give the spectators a glimpse of the Indian villager and his craft. This therefore is a vast educative effort. Not that we will have no takings this time. Only they will depend on those Congressmen who are intent on freedom and will win it by rehabilitating the village. If they will establish a living bond between towns and villages, they will flock to the exhibition and will make a point of studying the various demonstrations in the exhibition.

This cannot be done by one visit only. You should visit it daily and carefully study every section. If you will do this, you will marvel at the energy and industry expended in organizing it. You will be deeply interested in it if you approach it in a spirit of service. You will find here craftsmen and craftswomen from Kashmir and South India, from Sind and Assam, and learn how they earn their scanty living. You will find that it is within your power to add a little to their income and to enable them to have a square meal, if only you will make up your minds to pay for their wares enough to ensure them a living wage.

You will not expect me to describe all or even one of the numerous sections of the exhibition. It is impossible for me to do so. Let me tell you that you will have an inkling of the inside even from where you are sitting. For in front of you are no triumphal arches but there are simply but exquisitely decorated walls done by Sjt. Nandlal Bose, the eminent artist from Santiniketan, and his co-workers who have tried to represent all the villagers' crafts in simple artistic symbols. And when you go inside the art gallery on which Babu Nandlal Bose has lavished his labours for

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weeks, you will feel, as I did, like spending there hours together. But even the other sections will attract you. You may not find in the exhibition anything to amuse you like music or cinema shows but I assure you you will find much to learn.

In conclusion, I want you all to be voluntary advertising agents of the exhibition so that numbers may be attracted to see it. The exhibition has not been organized for the villagers, it is organized for the city-dweller to enable him to see how the villager lives and what he is capable of. The Reception Committee has spent something like Rs. 35,000 in order to bring this exhibition into being. The least that you must do is to enable them to meet the expenses. This you can do if you become their enthusiastic advertising agents. Commission I can promise none, though I dare say you will get it for work dutifully done when you appear before the Great White Throne. I may tell you that I am staying here for some days and expect to visit the exhibition as often as I can. I shall therefore know how you have discharged your trust.

It is our intention to throw the exhibition open to the people from villages if the expenses are covered.

You will find in the exhibition many a drawback, but you and I are to blame for them, not the villagers. Let me tell you, however, that the organizers have attempted the stupendous task of achieving in a few weeks the work which should take many months to be properly done. You will therefore bear with us and forgive the shortcomings you will no doubt see.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

338. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

LUCKNOW,
March 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

It is nearing time for bed, 8.25 p.m. I have just taken silence.

Your letters have reached me in time. I was able to speak for over 38 minutes without any strain at the opening of the Exhibition. It is too early to say whether it will be a success. Shankerlal has worked like a Trojan.

We leave Lucknow on 3rd April night train and [shall] be in Allahabad from 4 to 7th reaching Lucknow on 8th. If all goes

well I expect to leave Lucknow for Wardha on 12th or 13th. I hope you are steadily getting better.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6322. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9788.

339. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 29, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your two letters—one reflecting a disturbed mind and the other a quiet one. I was glad to have both. I would be able to give you some guidance so long as you reveal your whole mind to me. It would be good indeed if your present peace of mind endures, but I will not be scared if you happen to lose it again. Trying in this way, some day you will certainly attain steadiness of mind. I have not at all given up the hopes I had of you. You, too, should not give up. Now I expect to return only on the 15th of April. It is unlikely that I might reach earlier, and don't be scared if I am delayed by two more days.

Take good care of your health. One may say you have made good progress in carding.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Deliver the enclosed letter to Mirabehn.[1]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9339. Also C.W. 6614. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

340. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

LUCKNOW,
March 30, 1936

I have received no communication whatsoever from Lord Halifax. The whole story is a fabrication.[2] I am sorry that responsible newspapers should publish sensational statements, the

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] Some newspapers had reported that Lord Halifax was arranging an interview between Lord Linlithgow and Gandhiji.

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truth or otherwise of which they could verify without loss of time.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-3-1936

341. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

March 30, 1936

CHI. OM,

I am well aware that you have in my illness a good excuse for not writing to me; but, as you know, your letters would not prove a burden to me. You would cease to be the 'Sleeping Beauty'[1]—won't you—if you thus began writing!

I write this because you do not keep cheerful there, you get homesick and sometimes even shed tears. When did you get so soft as that? Our home is where we happen to live. After all, aren't we sojourning in this world for "a few days"? I have not seen those parts myself, but I am told the region has a bracing climate and is equally beautiful, too. I expect you have seen Mr. Duncan[2]. I should have from you a description of the place.

All of us, including Kakaji and Madalasa, are here together at Lucknow. We shall go to Allahabad on the 3rd and probably return on the 8th. We hope to reach Wardha some time about the 15th.

One may say my health is now good enough. Do you try to get *Harijan Sevak*? I think you now understand English also very well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 342-3

[1] The addressee who accompanied Gandhiji during the Harijan tour of 1933 used to snatch naps as often as possible which earned her this nickname.

[2] Duncan Greenlees

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342. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

March 30, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

I don't know whether Sardar has replied to you. You should do as he says. For my part, I would say that you should not incur the trouble of having a house, unless you are required to stay there rather long.

You must have read in *Harijan* what I have written[1] about an ideal temple. Read it if you have not. While writing it I had you in mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3834

343. LETTER TO CHAMPABEHN R. MEHTA

March 30, 1936

CHI. CHAMPA[2],

The only person I know in Kashmir is Shri Surendra Mashruwala of the Khadi Bhandar. You may write to him direct. If you like, you may enclose this letter. You should do as he says.

The address is: A.I.S.A. Depot, Srinagar, Kashmir.

I expect you are all doing well. Mother must be well enough and Prabhashankar[3] completely restored and on his feet again.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI CHAMPABEHN
SHASHI BHUVAN
SABARMATI

From Gujarati: C.W. 9693. Courtesy: Mulubhai Nautamlal

[1] *Vide* pp. 294-5.
[2] Wife of Ratilal, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta's son
[3] Addressee's father

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344. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

March 30, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. As for Medh, Ba tried very hard. If no help is available there, it does not matter even if all the savings get exhausted. In no time can one earn the money again if one's health is restored. Failing that, one should cheerfully remain in God's keeping as He wills.

I follow the idea of leaving Sita in the care of A. You should do what you both think fit. In my view it would be a great thing if all preserve their health.

We are in Lucknow for the present and shall be here till the Congress session. To Wardha thereafter.

I may be said to be well enough now, though it cannot be said that I have regained my strength.

Krishnadas has come to Lucknow with his wife. Of course Prabhudas[1] and Amba[2] are already here. Prabhudas has been showing his spinning-wheel to everyone around.

Ramdas has taken up yet another job. After such trials, he would settle down somewhere. Devdas and Lakshmi are still at Bombay. Jamnadas has already started business there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4849

[1] Chhaganlal Gandhi's son

[2] Wife of Prabhudas Gandhi

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345. LETTER TO INDIRA NEHRU

March 30, 1936

CHI. INDU,

Kamala's passing away has added to your responsibilities but I have no misgivings about you. You have grown so wise that you understand your dharma fully well. Kamala possessed some qualities rarely found in other women. I am entertaining the hope that all the qualities of Kamala will be manifested in you in equal measure. May God give you long life and strength to emulate her virtues.

This time I have been able to have heart-to-heart talks with Jawaharlal. I shall leave here for Allahabad on the 3rd April. It has been decided that I should stay on till the Congress session but you should address your reply to Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Gandhi-Indira Gandhi Correspondence: Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

346. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

CAMP LUCKNOW,
April 1, 193[6][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Kindly have Rs. 15,000 (fifteen thousand only) sent to the Secretary, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras, out of whatever funds have been collected for the 'purse'[2] in connection with the Indore session of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2960

[1] The source has "1935", but Gandhiji was in Lucknow on April 1, 1936.
[2] The purse of one lakh rupees which was to be presented by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan to Gandhiji for propagation of Hindi; *vide* Vol. LX, p. 444.

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347. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LUCKNOW,
April 3, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Though you could have stayed here till today, it was well you went on Tuesday. Your wire was good and the letter quite in keeping with the past performances. Yes, we had the rain here, too, but not much damage was done at the Exhibition for the dust storm and the cold wind gave ample warning. The attendance is improving. Of course it was good to have told your sister-in-law to purchase khadi for you. I understand she went yesterday and bought a fair quantity, I hope, not all for you. I was tempted to buy an exquisite mat for Rs. 35 for you. But I resisted the temptation. Mahadev was inclined to purchase it.

I am glad Nabi Bux[1] told you why he would not eat at Harijan mess. I shall talk to Amtul Salaam about it. This is being written before the morning prayer. Don't be alarmed. I got up only at 3.50.

I miss you during my walks more than at other times. At other times, I saw very little of you.

Expect you in July at the latest.

Hope Shummy has got rid of his cold, etc., and that Beryl is thoroughly restored.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3566. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6375

[1] Addressee's attendant

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348. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

April 3, 1936

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI
BIRLA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

WIRE IF HEALTH PERMITS YOUR PRESENCE ALLAHABAD MONDAY[1] FOR CERTAIN.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

April 3, 1936

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have had your letters to which Mahadev has been replying. I have been permitted for some time to write a few letters daily and to write to a limited extent for *Harijan*.

This is however to inform you that Gurudev's presence in Delhi whilst I was there made it possible to collect the whole of the deficit, i.e., Rs. 60,000. Gurudev was pleased beyond measure and cancelled the rest of the tour. So you see how God worked. This news ought to help you to get rid of anxiety complex.

I am just now in Lucknow for the Khadi Exhibition and the Congress. I am not taking any active part in the latter. We hope to return to Wardha by the middle of the month.

I hope you are, i.e., your work is, prospering.

Love.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 988

[1] For the Congress Working Committee meeting on April 6

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350. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

April 3, 1936

DEAR AGATHA,

Every mail-day I think of you and then let it pass by so as not to add to the number of letters I am permitted to write. Though no numerical limit has been put, I try to carry out the spirit of their advice.

I have had very long and quiet chats with Jawaharlal. By the time this reaches you, you will know the result of the Congress deliberations.

You must have been filled with disgust as we have been here over the sensational and false news published in the Indian Press about the supposed interview to take place between the coming Viceroy and myself.[1] Poor Lord Halifax has also been dragged in. Nowadays I never believe anything that appears in the papers. I hope you, too, do likewise.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1493

351. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 3, 1936

DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your long letter and have read it carefully. Bapa's letter has not at all pained me. I know you are not the one to take defeat and I believe the taunting words of Rukmini-behn[2] will not affect you. However, Bapa's letter suggests that you are not really needed there. It is a different matter that you are sure to be of service wherever you may be. I wish to put you where they need your services, and you are indeed needed elsewhere. Hence I have written to Bapa to send you to me if you are not really needed there. Now do what Bapa says.

[1] *Vide* pp. 301-3.

[2] Wife of N. R. Malkani

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It is not true that people find fault with you because you are a Muslim. But do not mind if they do so because you are a woman and an unmarried one. Even in such a case, however, be assured that they are just a few, if any, whereas there are countless people who respect you and love you for your purity. But you never care for praise or censure, do you? You may start worrying when I entertain any suspicion of you. Go to Segaon. Get away from Bapa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 333

352. FOR CONTRACEPTIVES

A correspondent writes:[1]

I would like to say a few words on the report of the interview[2] between Mrs. Sanger and Mahatma Gandhi that appeared recently in the *Harijan*.

The cardinal fact that I see missed in the interview is that it has not been taken into consideration that man is above all an artist and a creator. He is not satisfied with bare necessity, but must have beauty, colour and charm as well. . . .He has made every necessity into an art and has spent tons of blood on them. His creative instinct impels him to add to his difficulties and problems and solve them over again. He *cannot* be 'simple' as Rousseau, Ruskin, Tolstoy, Thoreau, and Gandhiji would like him to be. War he must have as its necessary corollary which also he has transformed into a great art.

To appeal to him [to copy] the example of nature would be in vain, for it is totally incompatible with his very being. 'Nature' *cannot* be his teacher. . . . "From an artistic standpoint," says Nietzsche the iconoclast, 'nature is no model. It exaggerates, distorts and leaves gaps. Nature is the *accident*. To study 'from nature' seems to me bad sign; thus lying in the dust before trivial facts is unworthy of a thorough artist". . . To end sexual life when the need of propagation is no longer there, or to enjoin sex-communion expressly with the desire of begetting offspring, is too calculating, too natural, too 'matter-of-fact'. . . .

. . . I do not mean to underrate the value of the discipline of self-control or what is technically known as *brahmacharya*. I would

[1] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.
[2] *Vide* pp. 156-60.

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always admire it as the art of the control of the sex instinct carried to perfection. But just as the perfection of other arts does not interfere with the *science* of life, with the *whole* life (in the Nietzschean sense of the term), with the proper scheme of all the values of life, so also I will not allow the value of the ideal of *brahmacharya dominate* other values, far less use it as an *instrument* of solving problems, such as over-population. . . . I believe it was with an eye to such a scheme of values that the scriptures (प्रश्नोपनिषत्) said, "ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद् यद् रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यते", or, there is *brahmacharya* where sexual union occurs only at night (i.e., as opposed to abnormal cohabitation during the day time). Here normal sex-life itself is spoken of as *brahmacharya*, the rigid conception of which began after we had already topsyturvied the proper scheme of all values of life.

I gladly publish this letter as I should any such letter that is not full of declamation, abuse or insinuations. The reader should have both the sides of the question to enable him to come to a decision. I am myself eager to know why a thing which is claimed to be scientific and beneficial and which has many distinguished supporters repels me notwithstanding my effort to see the bright side of it.

Thus it is not proved to my satisfaction that sexual union in marriage is in itself good and beneficial to the unionists. To the contrary effect I can bear ample testimony from my own experience and that of many friends. I am not aware of any of us having derived any benefit, mental, spiritual or physical. Momentary excitement and satisfaction there certainly was. But it was invariably followed by exhaustion. And the desire for union returned immediately the effect of exhaustion had worn out. Although I have always been a conscientious worker, I can clearly recall the fact that this indulgence interfered with my work. It was the consciousness of this limitation that put me on the track of self-restraint and I have no manner of doubt that the self-restraint is responsible for the comparative freedom from illnesses that I have enjoyed for long periods and for my output of energy and work both physical and mental which eye-witnesses have described as phenomenal.

I fear that the correspondent has misapplied his reading. Man is undoubtedly an artist and creator. Undoubtedly he must have beauty and therefore colour. His artistic and creative nature at its best taught him to see art in self-restraint and ugliness in uncreative union. His instinct for the artistic taught him to discriminate and to know that any conglomeration of colours was no mark of beauty, nor every sense enjoyment good in

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itself. His eye for art taught man to seek enjoyment in usefulness. Thus he learnt at an early stage of his evolution that he was to eat not for its own sake as some of us still do, but he should eat to enable him to live. At a later stage he learnt further that there was neither beauty nor joy in living for its own sake but that he must live to serve his fellow-creatures and through them his Maker. Similarly, when he pondered over the phenomenon of the pleasurableness of sexual union, he discovered that like every other organ of sense, this one of generation had its use and abuse. And he saw that its true function, its right use, was to restrict it to generation. Any other use, he saw, was ugly and he saw further that it was fraught with very serious consequences as well to the individual as to the race. It is hardly necessary for me to prolong the argument.

The correspondent says well that man makes art out of his necessities. Necessity is not only the mother of invention, it is the mother also of art. We should therefore beware of that art which has not necessity as its basis.

Nor may we dignify every want by the name of necessity. Man's estate is one of probation. During that period he is played upon by evil forces as well as good. He is ever prey to temptations. He has to prove his manliness by resisting and fighting temptations. He is no warrior who fights outside foes of his imagination and is powerless to lift his little finger against the innumerable foes within, or, what is worse, mistakes them for friends. "War he must have." But the correspondent is wrong when he says that "as its necessary corollary he has transformed it into a great art". He has hardly yet learnt the art of war. He has mistaken false war for true even as our forefathers under a mistaken view of sacrifice instead of sacrificing their base passions sacrificed innocent non-human fellow-creatures as many even do at the present day. We have yet to learn the art of true war. Surely there is neither beauty nor art in what is going on today on the Abyssinian frontier. The correspondent has chosen unhappy (for him) names for his illustrations. Rousseau, Ruskin, Thoreau and Tolstoy were first-class artists of their time. They will live even after many of us are dead, cremated and forgotten.

The correspondent seems to have misapplied the word 'nature'. When an appeal to man is made to copy or study nature, he is not invited to follow what the reptiles do or even what the King of the forest does. He has to study man's nature at its best, i.e., I presume his regenerate nature, whatever it

may be. Perhaps it requires considerable effort to know what regenerate nature is. It is dangerous nowadays to refer to old teachers. I suggest to the correspondent that it is unnecessary to bring in Nietzsche or even *Prashnopanishad*. The question for me is past the stage of quotations. What has cold reason to say on the point under discussion? Is it or is it not correct to say that the only right use of the generative organ is to confine it solely to generation and that any other use is its abuse? If it is, no difficulty in achieving the right use and avoiding the wrong should baffle the scientific seeker.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

353. HINDI PRACHAR APPEAL

The following appeal[1] has been issued by Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj and others:

> The Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha is the body at present engaged in carrying out Mahatma Gandhi's work of propagating Hindi in South India, inaugurated by him eighteen years ago at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Prayag in 1918. Since its inception the Sabha has succeeded in laying the work of Hindi *prachar* in South India on a firm and sure basis. For the last five or six years it has been functioning in a self-sufficient manner. It is at present operating through its 450 centres in four different provinces with different languages in South India. Besides, the teaching of Hindi is being pushed forth through the various arts schools and colleges through the efforts of the Sabha. The total number of students receiving instruction in Hindi in South India through the agency of the Sabha today stands over 40,000.
>
> It is now proposed to erect a *bhavan* for the Sabha to house its various departments. The Madras Corporation has donated three acres and a half of land for the purpose. . . . The scheme would cost one lakh rupees and when completed will include, besides residential quarters for the workers, a college with hostel accommodation for at least 50 for training workers for Hindi *prachar* work, an arts school where Hindi will be compulsory and a prayer hall and a gymnasium for the use of students and workers of the Sabha and the neighbouring public. . . .
>
> All remittances should be sent to the Treasurer, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, 107, Armenian Street or to Indo-Commercial Bank, Madras.

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here.

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I heartily endorse the appeal and hope that it will receive adequate response.

Harijan, 4-4-1936

354. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

ALLAHABAD,
April 5, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter duly came today. You shall have the shawl if it is unsold when I reach Lucknow. But you will have to develop a kind of village art, cheap yet real beautiful. You must have seen something about art in my latest article[1] on birth-control. The wooden spoon made by Navin out of waste bamboo is, you have admitted, a thing of beauty and yet quite cheap.

The value of women like you taking up village work lies in your capacity for making it attractive in spite of the necessity of conforming to cheapness. Perhaps art to be real must be cheap in terms of coin.

No more today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3567. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6376

355. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 5, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

All your letters arrived here in due order.

The weather here too has been unsteady. We had storms and rain. Let us hope we shall have settled weather—till the rains overtake us.

The dates I have given you still abide.[2] We leave here on 7th reaching Lucknow on 8th morning.

At Anand Bhavan I have the same room, the same surroundings without Motilalji and Kamala—big gap. Old Mother is almost inconsolable. She is broken down in health. Her bravery persists.

[1] *Vide* pp. 309-12.
[2] *Vide* pp. 300-1.

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You will keep your health at all cost. I am so glad you have Sejila[1]. He must be a boon.

Yes, I envy you your life. Just now my mind is in the villages though the body thrives in the cities.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6324. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9790

356. SPEECH AT HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN[2]

April 5, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi read out a letter from Mr. Narmada Prashad, Secretary of the Sammelan, regretting his absence due to illness and announcing a donation of Rs.500. Mahatma Gandhi, speaking [in Hindi], said that these announcements[3] had made up for the debt the building had incurred but the building was still incomplete. It was sad to reflect that whereas Mr. Tandon[4] had appealed for four lakhs the response had been so small in a matter which concerned what India had declared was its national language. The country was undoubtedly starving. Of course physically crores of people did not even have one meal a day and poverty and hunger in India were worse than in any [other] country in the world. But he used the expression 'starving' in a different sense. Even lakhs of donations could not breathe soul into the language. This work could be accomplished if someone was born whose heart overflowed, as Tagore's had overflowed in Bengal and made Bangalee a living language. The language never died. Tulsidas and Surdas did not write for the sake of the Hindi language. Their hearts and thoughts flowed out and humanity was benefited. Such a person must be born and create the necessary activity to make the language of 23 crores of people again live.

The efforts of one or two persons cannot accomplish this work; it can succeed only with the efforts of all the Hindi-speaking people.[5]

The Leader, 7-4-1936, and *Hindi Sangrahalaya: Samkshipta Parichaya*, p. 8

[1] Addressee's horse

[2] Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony of the library and museum of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of which he was the President. *Vide* also the following item.

[3] Earlier, two donations amounting to Rs. 2,250 had been announced.

[4] Purushottamdas Tandon

[5] This sentence is translated from the Hindi in *Hindi Sangrahalaya: Samkshipta Parichaya.*

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357. ENTRY IN VISITORS' BOOK[1]

April 5, 1936

Performed the opening ceremony today.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Sangrahalaya: Samkshipta Parichaya, p. 8

358. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT, KERALA HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH

[Before *April 6, 1936*][3]

DIFFICULT TO GUIDE FROM DISTANCE. BUT DO NOTHING IN CONTRAVENTION OF ORDERS.[4] CANVASS SIGNATURES DOOR TO DOOR. HOLD MEETINGS.

The Hindu, 6-4-1936

359. LETTER TO ALBERT H. WEST

LUCKNOW,
April 8, 1936

MY DEAR WEST[5],

I was delighted to have your letter, and see your well-known signature, after a long time. Is it not years?

I am sorry about Sorabji[6]. Though I am far away from where I can get access to books I can say with confidence that for years I have received no payments either through Reuter's Agency or the East Indian Trading Co., or Dr. Nanji. Amounts received by me through the Trust were, upon recommendation

[1] Hindi Sangrahalaya, Allahabad

[2] Gandhiji then announced a donation of Rs. 5,000 to the Museum.

[3] The report has the date-line "Trivandrum, April 6".

[4] The batches organized by the Kerala Harijan Sevak Sangh to carry on propaganda in connection with the Temple-entry movement were banned in Travancore.

[5] Gandhiji's close associate in South Africa

[6] Sorabji Rustom, son of Parsi Rustomji

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of Mr. Doull if I remember aright, backed by other trustees, sent back for Sorabji's use as a loan, his policy being accepted as received security. The premium for the policy has not been paid and probably it has lapsed. I gave this loan with the greatest reluctance. But I felt that I could do so. For in those circumstances had Parsi Rustomji been alive he would have liked me to help Sorabji. Of course no part of the loan has been returned. I had years ago small payment for giving prizes to children. That sum still is held and prizes are still being distributed annually. Beyond that there is nothing to report as there is no money in my hands on behalf of the two Trusts. In order to get the authoritative statement I am forwarding your letter with this reply to Narandas Gandhi who is in charge of the books of the Ashram. And if there is any error in what I have said, I shall rectify it.

You will please keep me informed of the results of your investigations.

I hope you are all doing well including Mrs. Pywell who must be nearing her century. How are you doing now?

With love to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ALBERT H. WEST, ESQ.
256 MOORE ROAD
DURBAN, NATAL (S. A.)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

360. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 8, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am waiting for your wire in reply to mine. You ought not to catch cold as often as you do. I am quite sure that you can avoid these colds by a judiciously natural life. I have a vague fear that your silk underwear has not a little to do with the delicacy of your skin. There is also the constant irritation you subject your skin to by frequent baths and still more frequent face-washes. Add to this the criminal use of soap which destroys all the grease with which nature protects the skin. These three exterior causes perhaps largely account for your colds. Discuss this with Shummy and if the physician in

him endorses my view, make the necessary change, not perhaps all at once but one by one.

Khurshed is here and so is Perin[1]. I have sent your memo to them to make a selection. I have authorized not more than Rs. 600 investment. You should not incur any loss on the articles. The shawl and the knife will be packed with the other articles.

Prabha is sitting by me as I write this. She came in four days ago to Lucknow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3568. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6377

361. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

LUCKNOW,
April 9, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

I was longing to hear from you and to know how you were faring. I was therefore glad to see your handwriting and that, too, Gujarati. I observe that you have not forgotten your Gujarati as you have forgotten your khadi. But that is nothing. It is better to be perfectly natural and bad than to be artificially good.

I am glad your mother[2] would be with you very soon and that you are saving up for her. I hope you are keeping quite well.

We hope to return to Wardha by 15th inst.

I continue to call you Amala. But if you will have me to do otherwise, you will tell me.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Perin Captain, granddaughter of Dadabhai Naoroji
[2] Who was in Germany

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362. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

April 10, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I hope you are quite happy, undisturbed and absorbed in doing your duty. I still hope to reach there on the 15th or 6th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9340. Also C.W. 6615. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

363. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

LUCKNOW,
April 10, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. You always have my blessings wherever you go. May you live long. I regard you as a *bhakta*. No harm will ever come to you. If your constipation persists, take with curds or milk half a *tola* of crushed garlic, green or dry, with your meals. It would be good to do so one hour before you begin your meal. Continue it if you find relief after three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

PURUSHOTTAM NARANDAS GANDHI
OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL, NAVUN PARUN
RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

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

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364. DANGER FROM WITHIN

No movement or organization having vitality dies from external attack. It dies of internal decay. This is true at any rate of great all-India organizations like the A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. or the Harijan Sevak Sangh. I omit mention of others which are no less for all India than these three. I single out the first two for they seek to represent and promote the immediate welfare of the millions of villagers who do not earn enough to keep body and soul together because they have to live in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year for want of work. And I refer to the third because it seeks to represent the despised millions of society. The three causes are thus worthy. They should, therefore, not only be able to survive all external attack but even to thrive on it.

It is clear that they cannot flourish on mere pecuniary support. They will always need it, but it must come as a direct fruit of honest work. Therefore, what is necessary is character above suspicion, ceaseless effort accompanied by ever-increasing knowledge of the technique of the work and a life of rigorous simplicity. Workers without character, living far above the ordinary life of villagers, and devoid of the knowledge required of them for their work, can produce no impression on the villagers whether Harijan or other.

As I write these lines instances of those workers who for want of character or simple living damaged the cause and themselves recur to my mind. Happily instances of positive misconduct are rare. But the greatest hindrance to the progress of the work lies in the inability of workers of quality to support themselves on the village scale. If every one of such workers puts on his work a price which village service cannot sustain, ultimately these organizations must be wound up. For the existence of payments on the city scale except in rare and temporary cases would imply that the gulf between cities and villages is unbridgeable. The village movement is as much an education of the city people as of the villagers. Workers drawn from cities have to develop village mentality and learn the art of living after the manner of villagers. This does not mean that they have to starve like the villagers. But it does mean that

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there must be a radical change in the old style of life. While the standard of living in the villages must be raised, the city standard has to undergo considerable revision, without the worker being required in any way to adopt a mode of life that would impair his health.

Harijan, 11-4-1936

365. UNCERTIFIED KHADI

The Secretary of the Tamil Nad Branch of the A. I. S. A. writes to Shri Shankerlal Banker:[1]

> The old khadi merchants of Tirupur have started an association for certifying their khadi products.
>
> Their object is to sell their existing stocks at enhanced rates and allow liberal commission to retail merchants throughout the province and to continue khadi production at old system and pay low wages. Many an old spinner, who is either unable to purchase cotton from us or improve the quality of yarn, may continue to spin for these merchants. We are, however, making arrangements to counteract these merchants' efforts by vigorous propaganda among the villagers by pamphlets, private talks and lectures about the object and work of our Association and that of these merchants. Our workers go from house to house and teach the spinners how to hank and improve the quality of yarn.
>
> These merchants still continue to use our name for deceiving the public. Their sign boards, letter-heads, bills, invoices, labels on clothes are all printed as certified by the A. I. S. A. I sent them letters the other day asking them to strike out our name at once. One merchant has replied as follows:
>
> 'I am surprised to read your letter dated 2-3-'36. You say that if I do not strike off the words "Certified by A.I.S.A." within a week you are going to take legal action. The All-India Spinners' Association is not a registered body .... Neither you nor anybody else has the right to object or protest....'
>
> I have written to the Press. I am making arrangements to stock A. I. S. A.-certified khadi at every Congress sabha. ... Already two committees, the Mylapore Congress Committee and the Vedaranyam Town Congress Committee, have taken sales certificates. I hope before long other committees will apply for certificates and arrange to stock and sell khadi. ...

[1] Only extracts of the letter are reproduced here.

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I request that you will kindly explain the situation to Mahatmaji and request him to issue an appeal in the Press asking people who cannot spin for themselves to purchase only A. I. S. A.-certified khadi and also to sound a note of warning to the merchants of Tirupur.

It is certainly wrong of the erstwhile certified-khadi merchants to continue their trade in uncertified khadi after refusing to conform to the new rules about khadi and thus making themselves unfit for certificates. Their conduct is unpatriotic and unhuman. They ought not to exploit the poor spinners and to a much lesser degree the credulous buyers. I would urge them to conform to the new rules and take out certificates, or if they are not satisfied with the new scale, to take to some other business. It ill becomes them to retort that the A. I. S. A. is not a registered body and that therefore they can do what they like. I suggest to the objectors that their defiance of a body which they have hitherto obeyed is a breach of the moral and social code.

But whilst I hope that my appeal to the sellers of uncertified khadi will bear fruit, I would like the Secretary of the Tamil Nad Branch to acquaint the spinners of the new rules and persuade them not to spin for lower wages. The most effective remedy lies in the hands of the spinners.

Of course I heartily endorse the Secretary's appeal to Congress Committees and other lovers of the poor villagers to take out certificates for the sale of khadi and thus render concrete service to the toiling spinners. Their active co-operation will largely check the sale of uncertified khadi.

Harijan, 11-4-1936

366. TELEGRAM TO J. A. D. NAOROJI

April 11, 1936

J. A. D. NAOROJI
78 NAPEAN SEA ROAD
BOMBAY

AWAITING YOUR CONSENT KAMALA MEMORIAL APPEAL.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The Kamala Nehru Memorial Trust meeting was held at Allahabad on April 7, 1936.

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367. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION–II

LUCKNOW,
April 12, 1936

[Gandhiji] appealed to them to go and visit the Exhibition, once, twice, three times, even four times, with their eyes and ears open, and if possible with the eyes and ears of their souls open. They would then see miracles in the Exhibition.

When I told[1] you the other day that the Exhibition was not a cinema show, I meant more than I said.[2] If you move about this Exhibition with my eyes and ears, you will spontaneously exclaim, 'Hurrah! what a splendid exhibition!'

There may be many young men here who shout 'hurrah' on witnessing the dance and gesticulations of a woman. But God has given us eyes not to see and appreciate the dance of a woman, but to recognize the mother in her. The 'hurrah' that will spontaneously come to your lips on witnessing the Exhibition with my eyes and ears will be clean and not filthy. We go into raptures on hearing the name of Khuda or Rama in a *durgah*, mosque or a temple. You can look upon this Exhibition as an equally sacred place. You will not find here anything to captivate you in a sensual way. You have to see it with my eyes. It does not mean you should see it with the eyes of a mahatma. I am only a villager, a simple man. Therefore you have to look at this village industries exhibition with the eyes of a simple villager.

Anyone who pays a rupee, the charge for seeing the Exhibition four times, can learn four lessons in the bargain. I am sure you have heard about spectacles made of pebble. Now, here you can actually witness them being made. Where else would you go to learn this craft? But then this is a rather difficult job. They also make paper here. You will be amazed at the progress made by the paper industry. Even a lad of ten can make paper if he wants to. If you closely study here the process of paper-making you will be able to pursue the craft in your home. Here you will come across a novelty at every step and stop to marvel at it.

[1] *Vide* pp. 297-300.

[2] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". What follows has been translated from the Hindi in *Harijan Sevak*.

When you go to a cinema show you meet with things there to captivate in a sensual way your eyes and ears. I may tell you that we have tried to boycott from this Exhibition everything that had no educative value. We have tried to make the Exhibition a sacred and holy place, a feast for your eyes and ears, a spiritual feast capable of purifying the senses. I shall tell you why. Do you know Orissa and its skeletons? Well, from that hunger-stricken, impoverished land of skeletons have come men who have wrought miracles in bone and horn and silver. Go and see these things not only ready-made but in the making, and see how the soul of man even in an impoverished body can breathe life into lifeless horns and metal. A poor potter has also worked miracles out of clay.[1]

I have bought from the stall a nice little ink-pot to hold my ink. I thought its price would be six or seven annas, but I was surprised to learn that it was just one pice. Well, when you look at it you will no doubt wonder if it had not come from Germany or Japan. But the article is village-made. If this is not a wonder, what is?[2]

Things which I thought would be worth several annas are worth only a copper or a couple of coppers and yet they are delicate little pieces of art. A dear sister purchased the other day a little 'Krishna' in ivory. She was not given to worshipping Lord Krishna, but she now tells that she has begun to worship the exquisite little form.

The Exhibition is thus not a spectacular show, but a kind of fairyland. But our tastes have been so debased that miracles happening before our very eyes appear like so much dust or clay and trifles coming from abroad become exquisite pieces of art; water from a spring in far off Europe with the witchery of an unintelligible name becomes invested with miraculous quality, while the water of the holy Ganges which is said to be a purifier and a natural disinfectant seems to be no better than water from a dirty pool.

You can, of course, see that craftsmen from distant Travancore, Kashmir and Cuttack have congregated here. These poor people have come here to earn a few coins by exhibiting their crafts. Therefore those people on whom God has bestowed money ought to purchase here something or other. Things are not over-

[1]This paragraph is from *Harijan*. The following paragraph is from *Harijan Sevak*.

[2] What follows is from *Harijan*.

priced here. It is another matter if you yourself pay a fabulous price for a piece which pleases you. The price you pay here will not go to fill the pockets of any rich commission-agent. It will directly reach the purse of the poor villager to whom all of us are indebted. We are all living at the cost of the villagers. The city-dwellers are exploiting the villagers, and they must repay the debt, at least partially. A link has been built to bridge the yawning gulf between the cities and the villages; we have only to cross this bridge. Patronizing village industries will constitute the crossing of the bridge. This is not a matter of charity; I have placed a purely commercial proposition before you. Those who buy things here should also return with 'hurrah' on their lips; and the craftsmen from Kashmir, Travancore, Cuttack, etc., should also return to their homes saying, 'Hurrah, how well the people in Lucknow appreciated our handiwork.' If you engrave my words on your hearts, I shall also feel that I have been duly paid for my lecture.[1]

If a vision of the kind I have described to you fails to stir your hearts and urge you to make some little sacrifice for the ill-fed and the underfed, God help you. Iqbal whose poem "Hindostan hamara"[2] still stirs our hearts with emotion must have had some such vision before his mind's eye when he described India with her eternal sentry the Himalayas, and Ganges the eternal witness of the numerous stages through which our civilization has passed. We attend flag-hoisting ceremonies and are proud of our National Flag. Let me tell you that our pride has no meaning if you do not like things made in India and hanker after foreign ones. It is idle for those whose heart is not stirred at the sight of things made by our poor craftsmen and craftswomen and to make a little sacrifice for them to talk of independence for India.

Harijan, 18-4-1936, and *Harijan Sevak*, 18-4-1936

[1] This paragraph is from *Harijan Sevak*. What follows is from *Harijan*.
[2] "*Sare jahanse achchha Hindostan hamara*"

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368. A LETTER[1]

[Before *April 13, 1936*][2]

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter. Wisdom suggests and experience testifies that one should never grieve over the past, however sinful or awful it might have been. The past is worth remembering only in order to profit by it, to strengthen the good we might have done and to prevent, with all our might, a repetition of the bad. I hold that determination never to repeat a sin is the best form of repentance. The only remedy I can suggest is to rely upon Ramanama with an undying faith. It will surely give you mental relief and ultimately root out all the evil that may be in you in spite of yourself.

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

369. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

LUCKNOW,
April 13, 1936

DEAR HYSTERICAL IDIOT,

Your two letters before me. I may leave tomorrow and for certain the day after. On reaching Wardha I shall send you a wire if the change of scene does not produce a lapse of memory, as it so often does with me.[3]

The parcel is in course of preparation.

I have the Rs. 100 in mind. Add the amount to your donation to the Kamala Memorial. You will see the notice in a day or two. You may give as much as you comfortably can. And if you knew her well and that as a woman of rare spiritual beauty, make collections if you can, in an easy way. I do not want you to strain yourself in any way. Nor must you do it because I suggest it.

If I settle down in Segaon, I shall most decidedly be available to the outside world and certainly to idiots, lunatics and the

[1] The addressee, a retired accountant, had written that though he was 65 he was not free from passion and had broken certain vows taken in the past.

[2] In the source this letter is placed before those of April 13, 1936.

[3] *Vide* pp. 336-7 and 338.

like. And you may depend upon my taking care of brother ass. Therefore "Be careful for nothing".

I have asked K.[1] to expedite the purchases for you.

You shall certainly pay for the hospital building in Maganwadi.

No more time.

Love.

TYRANT

SMT. RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY
PUNJAB

From the original: C.W. 3770. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6876

370. NOTE TO S. A. BRELVI

April 13, 1936

No. I would not accept office[2] for table crumbs, but I would accept office for substantial gains. I told Masani not to use what I said and he endorsed what I said.

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

371. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 13, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. I have gone through the article on the Agent's marriage. It puts forth a good argument but it cannot be said that it is written in good English. Some mistakes have gone undetected. However, it does not matter. I say this only to draw your attention to it. What is essential is clarity of thought although it would be good to write a language faultlessly. Of course a mistake in a foreign language may be excusable.

[1] Khurshedbehn

[2] Mahadev Desai records: "Brelvi reported that Masani had said that Gandhiji's inclination was then growing more and more towards 'non-acceptance' of 'ministry'." Opinion in the Indian National Congress was divided over the question of accepting ministerships in provinces under the new Constitution provided for in the Government of India Act of 1935.

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We are still in Lucknow. Probably we shall leave here on the 15th. For the present we shall be going to Wardha. I am thinking of settling down in a village near Wardha.

Nimu[1], Krishnadas and his wife Manojna, Prabhudas and Amba, etc., are here at present. Umiya[2] and her husband Shankarlal[3] live close to us. Jaisukhlal also has come and has put up near the Exhibition. The Exhibition has been a success.

Kanti, Navin, Kanu, Ba are with me already, and also Jamnalalji, Janakidevi and Madalasa. Thus we have quite a good gathering here. The day after tomorrow, however, most of them will have dispersed.

Ramdas, Devdas and Lakshmi are staying on at Bombay.

I may say I am in fairly good health.

I believe Medh is improving steadily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Remembering that it is Jallianwala Bagh Day, some of us have been observing a fast.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4850

372. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 13, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have now two letters of yours to deal with. Not much to say. If I do not leave tomorrow, I leave for certain on 15th.

Segaon is on the brain. Jamnalalji is half converted.

It is a great joy to me that in Sejila you have found a faithful and intelligent companion. I dread your nightly adventures.[4] I know it is wrong to do so. We are all in His keeping. But I am anxious for you to avoid all mishaps which can be anticipated.

I expect to find you hale, hearty and joyful.

[1] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi

[2] Daughter of Jaisukhlal Gandhi

[3] Shankarlal Agrawal

[4] The addressee used to ride home in the dark over the long country roads.

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Yes, Ku.[1] has put his whole soul into making my rooms as attractive as possible and that after my style.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

We are all fasting today. I have just broken mine.

From the original: C.W. 6325. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9791

373. A LETTER[2]

April 14, 1936

Your letter surprises me although I rather like it, too. Your language does not appear to spring from your heart. Perhaps such language comes to you naturally. I am not impressed by the mention of your *jap*[3], etc. You had written a similar letter at Maganwadi. In spite of the several vows you took you were full of sensual aberrations and kept from me the fact. This letter gives no proof of your frankness. You seem to accept your guilt because you have no option. I see in it no feeling of remorse although it may be that I am mistaken. Maybe, you have turned a new leaf; on my part, I would of course wish it. Show all the papers to Ramjibhai and confess everything to him. Do away with such figurative and flowery language. Use adjectives sparingly. Your very first sentence irks: "Let us thank the gracious Dweller in the heart for bringing in the fortunate opportunity to confess with humility what was concealed by cowardice." Why "us"? I see nothing to be thankful for. I have not known such a thing happening to man all of a sudden, as you describe. By saying "If we went into the details I might perhaps win the point", you weaken your feeling of remorse, if you had any. Do go into the details, if you think you can win the point that way. The saints magnify their own fault if it were as small as a speck of dust and make it look as big as an elephant. You are, however, not at all obliged to do so; you kept back for long whatever you had [to confess].

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] Bharatan Kumarappa

[2] The name has been omitted.

[3] Repetition of a name of God or a *mantra*

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374. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA DEPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE, LUCKNOW

April 14, 1936

Speaking for five minutes Mahatma Gandhi said that the Harijans had all his blessings and asked them to have patience as the demon of untouchability was a long-standing one and could not be destroyed in a day. He exhorted them to be clean and neat and assured them that he was always with them and was one among them.

The Leader, 17-4-1936

375. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS[1]

[Before *April 16, 1936*][2]

"This book-cover is made by our women", said the lady from Poland. Thanking them Gandhiji asked:

Is it only the women who spin and weave there, and do the men do nothing?

Spinning is done exclusively by women. But men are not idlers either. They are engaged in other crafts. For instance this wooden casket is made by our men.

Is this a recent revival, or has the movement been on for some time? Has it touched the intellectual classes, or is there a gulf between them and the masses?

No; the intellectuals have taken keenly to it and we have had the movement now for some time, and it is daily growing.

And how do you happen to work together—you who must be as poles asunder, Poland an agricultural country and France a highly industrialized country?

[1] Two ladies, one from Poland and the other from France, representing the village industries movement in Europe, called on Gandhiji and presented a little hand-spun hand-woven book-cover and a tiny wooden casket.

[2] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" from which the report is extracted, the discussion took place at Lucknow. Gandhiji left Lucknow on April 16.

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We have been working together for several years. There is a village industries movement in France too, and we thought we should go together to India to study things first-hand. We must say we have had much to learn.

They were contemplating writing a book on India and wanted to know whether they could serve India by doing so.

You could, if you write for Poland and France or say Europe, but not if you write for India.

They paused for a moment wondering what Gandhiji meant.

I shall explain. If you have really learnt something from our villages, you can only give the benefit of that learning to your own people. What I learn from the West I give to my country. Fallen though we seem today, our villages have still to teach something to the world. And if what you say to your people appeals to them, that will have its reaction on us. What I say holds good only if you have really learnt something worthy from our villages. Perhaps the Exhibition has opened your eyes to many possibilities.

I should like to spend weeks there and fill my soul with the atmosphere of the past. You find there workmen actually at work—workmen from Orissa and Kashmir working with their crudest possible tools, if you please, and yet conjuring up with their aid some of the most gorgeous articles in silver and wool. The things you have brought for me are no patch on similar things you will find in the Exhibition. Look at the men from Patan working at their sari of exquisite pattern and design. The work is now confined to only four families whereas hundreds of families used to get their living in the past out of the work. They are so conservative that they would not let their nearest neighbour know the cunning of their craft. But we have drawn some of them out into light. Some of this work can be revived, in all its glory, if we are prepared to pay for it adequately, pay enough to feed them and to keep them in health and comfort. Now that is a nearly perfect Exhibition, i.e., as perfect as it could be looking to the limited time at the disposal of the organizers and to the numerous handicaps they had to contend against. And yet it is nothing compared to what it could be, if we could have brought all the representative men and women engaged in many other crafts.

Harijan, 25-4-1936

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376. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 16, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

You of course asked for a quick reply, but I didn't have the time. It remains for you to come over in accordance with your vow. Ba and I shall be at Wardha for the present. Do come over. I wonder if you have any other plan. We are going to Wardha today. I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C. W. 1559. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

377. SPEECH TO VILLAGERS

SEGAON,
[After *April 17, 1936*][1]

Mirabehn who is here in your midst came here with the intention of settling down for good. But I find that she is not in a position to carry out her intention. Even if she stayed on, she could do so not without considerable mental struggle. The will is not lacking but perhaps the flesh is weak. Now as you know an unbreakable bond of common service binds us both, and so I thought it my duty to do what she could not do. God willing, therefore, I shall come to stay in your midst. Maybe God will give me the strength that He did not vouchsafe to her.

But even God's will is expressed through various agencies and unless I have your goodwill even I may fail in my mission. Ever since my childhood it has been a principle with me that I should not think of inflicting myself on those who view my going in their midst with mistrust, misgivings or apprehension. I should not think of coming here, except to serve you. But in many places my presence and the programme I stand for are viewed

[1] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", from which the speech is extracted, Gandhiji visited Segaon soon after his return from Lucknow. He reached Wardha on April 17, 1936.

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with considerable dread. At the back of this dread is the fact that I have made the removal of untouchability a life's mission. You must have known from Mirabehn that I have cast out all untouchability from myself, that I hold all classes of people — Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, Rajput, Mahar, Chamar—all alike, and I regard these distinctions based on birth as immoral. We have suffered because of these distinctions, and this sense of high and low has vitiated our lives. But I may tell you that I should not think of imposing these convictions on you. I should try to do so by persuasion, above all by my own example. I shall try to serve you by cleaning your roads and your surroundings, by trying to render such help as I can if there is illness in the village, by teaching you self-help by way of helping you to revive your handicrafts. If you will co-operate with me I shall be happy, if you will not I shall be content to be absorbed among you as one among the few hundreds that live here.

I hope I shall come to settle here. But it depends on His will. For I did not know that He would move me from India to South Africa, and from South Africa I should come to Sabarmati, and from Sabarmati to Maganwadi, and now from Maganwadi to Segaon.

Harijan, 2-5-1936

378. FOR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS

DEAR BR. GANDHI,

> ...You have had your name blazoned abroad . . . as one of the greatest philosophers and sacrificial workers on earth. In India you have been proclaimed *the* Mahatma, and actually worshipped as one of *the* incarnations of India's many deities . . . Your practice also of fasting when sin has been committed . . . has had a tendency to make Indians believe that you can merit blessing which can be communicated to others, —but has anybody been loving and courageous enough to write and challenge you as to how personally you are going to obtain atonement for your own sin? All your self-denials and fastings and prayer and good deeds cannot blot out one sin of your early days. For thirty or more years of your life you lived the carnal, self-life, seeking and following your own plans and ambitions without seeking to know God's purpose for your life or to honour His holy name....
>
> Even if, as you profess to believe, Christ was only one of many incarnations of God, and the latest of them, you must either accept His tremendous claims as of Divine origin, or reject them as only human and fallible. And when He declares as He did to the Jews of His day—

> 'If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins' or 'I am *the* way, *the* truth, and *the* life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me', you must either believe Him to have been self-deceived, or deliberately false. ...I pray daily that Christ may grant you a revelation of Himself as He did to Saul of Tarsus, that ... you may be used to proclaim to India's millions the sacrificial efficacy of His precious blood.

This is a typical letter[1] from an old English friend who regularly writes such letters almost every six months. This friend is very earnest and well known to me. But there are numerous other correspondents unknown to me who write in the same strain without arguing. Since now I cannot for reasons of health write to individual writers, I use this letter as a text for a general reply. Incidentally this effort will enable the readers of *Harijan* who accept my guidance to understand the nature of my religious belief.

My correspondent is a literalist. He gives its literal meaning to every text of the Bible in spite of its clear statement that "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life." My very first reading of the Bible showed me that I would be repelled by many things in it if I gave their literal meaning to many texts or even took every passage in it as the word of God. I found as I proceeded with my study of the scriptures of the various religions that every scripture had to be treated likewise, not excepting the Vedas or the Upanishads. Therefore the story of the immaculate conception when I interpret it mystically does not repel me. I should find it hard to believe in the literal meaning of the verses relating to the immaculate conception of Jesus. Nor would it deepen my regard for Jesus if I gave those verses their literal meaning. This does not mean that the writers of the Gospels were untruthful persons. They wrote in a mood of exaltation. From my youth upward I learnt the art of estimating the value of scriptures on the basis of their ethical teaching. Miracles therefore had no interest for me. The miracles said to have been performed by Jesus, even if I had believed them literally, would not have reconciled me to any teaching that did not satisfy universal ethics. Somehow or other, words of religious teachers have for me, as I presume for millions, a living force which the same words uttered by ordinary mortals do not possess.

Jesus then to me is a great world-teacher among others. He was to the devotees of his generation no doubt 'the only

[1] Of which only extracts have been reproduced here

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begotten son of God'. Their belief need not be mine. He affects my life no less because I regard him as one among the many begotten sons of God. The adjective 'begotten' has, for me, a deeper and possibly a grander meaning than its literal meaning. For me it implies spiritual birth. In his own times he was the nearest to God.

Jesus atoned for the sins of those who accepted his teachings by being an infallible example to them. But the example was worth nothing to those who never troubled to change their lives. A regenerate outgrows the original taint even as purified gold outgrows the original alloy.

I have made the frankest admission of my many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders. If I am journeying Godward, as I feel I am, it is safe with me. For I feel the warmth of the sunshine of His presence. My austerities, fastings and prayers are, I know, of no value, if I rely upon them for reforming me. But they have an inestimable value, if they represent, as I hope they do, the yearnings of a soul striving to lay his weary head in the lap of his Maker.

The *Gita* has become for me the key to the scriptures of the world. It unravels for me the deepest mysteries to be found in them. I regard them with the same reverence that I pay to the Hindu scriptures. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews, are convenient labels. But when I tear them down, I do not know which is which. We are all children of the same God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, not everyone that sayeth unto me Lord Lord, shall enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven shall enter the Kingdom", was said, though in different words, by all the great teachers of the world.

Harijan, 18-4-1936

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379. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 18, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached here yesterday noon quite comfortably. I hope you had my wire in time. Sardar and Rajendra Babu came with me. So we were quite a large company. But we came by a train in which there was no discomfort caused to fellow-passengers. Only we came by the passenger train from Itarsi.

My programme is that I am in and about Wardha till the middle of May. May go to Panchgani after that for about a fortnight.

I hope your throat is quite in order. You must get rid of these ailments. How you can do so I do not know. But I do feel that there is a simple natural remedy.

Jawaharlal will be here about 24th instant.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3569. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6378

380. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

April 18, 1936

CHI. VALJI,

Do go to Nainital. It would be good if Jivram[1] gives up his insistence on attaching his mother-in-law's name to the donation. If he does not, we shall have the name.

There is little likelihood of getting an extensive grazing ground for Rs. 500. He might entrust it to Gopabandhu Chowdhary to utilize the sum for the service of the cow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Your letter was delivered only yesterday as it did not bear the correct address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7477 Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

[1] Jivram Kothari of Kutch who had settled in Orissa to work among the poor

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381. LETTER TO R. RAMASWAMI[1]

[Before *April 19, 1936*][2]

Gandhiji has your letter of the 8th instant. The contents surprised him, inasmuch as an educated man like you does not understand the reason why the price of khadi has slightly gone up. It has been increased in order to enable the poor spinner to have something like a living wage. We are far yet from giving him a real living wage, but the recent increase in khadi [prices] ensures him a wage just enough to secure him two full meals a day. Do you, poor as you are, grudge the little increase to the men and women who are much poorer than you?

The Hindu, 20-4-1936

382. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 20, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You are right in saying I worry about nothing and therefore not even about your persistent cough which you so lightly regarded. But not to worry is not to neglect or underrate such information. Why should you be so delicate? Why should the slightest change in the weather upset you ? If it is the diet that is at the bottom, you must revert to the old regimen. On no such account may you endanger your health. There are occasions in a person's life when everything has to be sacrificed. Surely a new regimen suddenly adopted is not such an occasion. My own inclination is always on the side of nature cure. But that you may not adopt unless Shummy co-operates, you believe in it, and you get a proper guide. A guide is obtainable but Shummy may not agree and you may not have *faith* in it. Mere liking is of no consequence. Please do not play with your ailments. Even a rebel has to submit to the laws of nature.

[1] The addressee, a clerk of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, had written to Gandhiji protesting against the increase in the price of khadi. In reply Mahadev Desai wrote to him.

[2] The report appears under the date-line "Cuddalore, April 19, 1936".

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I look forward to better news tomorrow.

You know all about the tragedy of the wire[1]. You began to crow before the dawn.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

The electric stand adorns my desk now. Bharatan brought it yesterday.

From the original: C.W. 3570. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6379

383. LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

April 20, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

Now that Sardar has communicated to you his permission to put up a hut, I have nothing further to write. You will, of course, incur the minimum expenditure.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3835

384. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

April 20, 1936

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter. At present nothing is certain as to where I may settle. Even after I have settled down you must obtain your father's permission. It would not be proper to let you stay with me against your father's wish. You have to have patience.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2638

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", p. 338.

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385. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI[1]

April 20, 1936

In my opinion *The Hindustan Times* has become a thoroughly worthless paper. It does not contain any news worth knowing. And if there are any they are harmful. If it cannot be improved you must wash your hands of it. I do not see a single newspaper which publishes authentic news. Of course I do not cite the instances. Mahadev wrote to Parasnath[2] but so far there is no improvement. You can hardly do anything! Who can?

From Gujarati: C.W. 8018. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

386. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 21, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter gives encouraging news. You do like to be told that letters from you are always welcome and wanted. Well, this is to tell you once for all that you must write regularly except when you can't do so without straining yourself. It must never be a task.

You are wrong as is usual for idiots. Your letters were duly received in Lucknow. But poor Kanu absent-minded forgot that you were in Simla. My memory is bad enough but it was quite in order for the purpose of sending you the wire. I must however confess that I thought of it a few hours after my arrival.

I must find the yarn you want. I shall try to get it twisted.

Don't be ill again. What is the use of having the car there? Surely it can be well looked after in Jullunder.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3721. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6877

[1] Devdas Gandhi had joined *The Hindustan Times* in 1934. The use of the second person singular and the contents of the letter indicate that the letter was addressed to him.

[2] Editor, *The Hindustan Times*

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387. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

April 21, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The notes make good reading. Your answers were fairly full and of course straight.

Why do you feel worried over the forthcoming meeting[1]? If there is discussion it would only be to convince one another of the soundness of one's views. You will stop the discussion when you think a proposition has been thoroughly argued. After all you want team-work and I have great hope of this happening.

I reach Nagpur 23rd evening.

I wish Ranjit[2] will take care of himself. I am glad he has gone to Khali. I expect Sarup to accompany you.

Sardar is still suffering and is just now on buttermilk only. I am taking him to Nandi Hill after 8th May. I wish you too could come.

Love.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 175

388. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 21, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Jamnalalji has given full authority to commence building operations[3]. If you come tomorrow evening or 23rd morning, I could explain everything. I leave for Nagpur 23rd evening, returning 26th evening or 27th morning at the latest.

More when we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6328. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9794

[1] Of the Congress Working Committee
[2] Ranjit Pandit, addressee's sister's husband
[3] For Gandhiji's hut at Segaon

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389. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

WARDHA,
April 21, 1936

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

A son must feel the sting of his father's death but it should not be taken too much to heart for we all have to go the same way one day or the other. Why grieve over what comes inevitably with one's birth itself? One should grieve, if at all, over one's birth.

I thought Rajkishori was not required to go there. We are poor and we wish to live like the poor. Why then should we spend needless railway fare ? Am I wrong in thinking thus or have you changed your opinion? Anyway, on my part there will be no restriction on Rajkishori; she can leave whenever she is so inclined.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6098

390. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
April 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Only idiots can think of idiotic interpretation[1] and because you are such a brilliant specimen and agent of the A. I. V. I. A., naturally you will like the rest to belong to your species. Heaven help poor me—their guide! ! !

Do you think anything on earth can be done without trouble? You can't do even your unpacking without trouble. Then what is the use of your saying that I should redeem my promise to send you honey if it can be done without trouble? I tell you that it cannot be done without some trouble. But

[1] The addressee had interpreted A.I.V.I.A. as 'All-India Village Idiots' Association'.

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that trouble is going to be taken and honey is being sent. You will cover the expense when you next send your cheque. The parcels to follow will be sent to you direct from Calcutta or Shillong, V. P. P. if you like. You will tell me when you will want the next parcel. Let all eat this honey, if they prefer it to the Australian. I am sure the Shillong honey is any day better than the foreign stuff, if only because it is fresher.

Your lace, mattress and the reversible sari must be in the box that was being packed for you. You must receive it by this time. I know there was some bungling about it. You are not the only idiot. You may be the princess among them ! ! Are you?

I go tomorrow to Nagpur, probably return on 25th, 27th for certain. I go to Segaon, 5 miles from here, on 29th or 30th, returning when required. I go with Sardar on 9th May or about the date to Nandi Hill, Mysore. Mahadev and others accompany me. Or else I would have insisted on Mahadev going to you for a month. We descend to Bangalore about 1st June and leave it about 10th June. This outing is necessary because Dr. A[nsari] wants Sardar to go to a hill-station. He would not go without me. If I had not to go to Mysore, I would have passed a fortnight with the sisters at Panchgani. I am sorry to disappoint them.

Of course I inflict myself on you, if I have to come to Simla. I do not think I shall have to just yet. As for you, I shall hold you to the three winter months with me and then you will diet yourself under supervision. What would Shummy say about it?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3722. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6878

391. LETTER TO RAMI K. PAREKH

April 22, 1936

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. If you do wish to have Manu with you let it be so. I shall be required to go to the Mysore region with Sardar about the 10th of May. We would be returning about June 10. So, Manu will be staying with you during that period, won't she? In June I may perhaps go to settle in a

village, where I may have Manu with me. However, I do not know whether I could stay there during the monsoon. Nothing has been finalized.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9725

392. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

April 22, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

My letter to Ramibehn contains my reply. I am not writing to your mother's sisters separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1557. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

393. LETTER TO KRISHNALAL

April 22, 1936

CHI. KRISHNALAL,

You are on the contrary finding fault with me. You yourself would not write and yet expect me to write. How is that? Shall I say that you did not even argue out my case properly? It is good that you have passed your examination. Become a very intelligent and equally nice boy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1558. Courtesy: Manubehn S. Mashruwala

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394. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

April 22, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. You must not go on grumbling. You should work within your capacity. Not much may be expected from Tyagi. He is a good man but he cannot keep his mind steady. You have to take the injections; start on them soon. Kanti is with me all along. I am keeping well. It is naturally hot. I shall leave for Bangalore about May 8, taking Sardar with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 332

395. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

April 23, 1936

MY DEAR GURJALE[1],

The troubles, such as you mention, will make us, if we can stand them in the right spirit. I hope that the persecuted family will come through the fire scatheless.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1385

396. LETTER TO CARL BUTTO[2]

April 23, 1936

I have just received your interesting letter. Yes, I am following the events in Germany and the other parts of Europe. It is all confusion worse confounded. It is a mere trial of physical strength, it is also a trial of diplomacy of the worst kind

[1] Alias Bhikshu Nirmalananda

[2] The addressee had explained the conditions prevailing in Germany and highly praised Hitler.

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ever experienced in history. As you know my attempt is wholly on a different plane. I can show nothing and yet my faith is growing stronger—more so for the events of Europe.

Love.

BAPU

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

397. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
April 23, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am going to Nandi Durg, taking Sardar with me. I am prepared to take Kusum[1] with me if you can send her and if she wants to come. We shall be leaving here on the 8th. She can accompany Sardar who is coming here from Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8487. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

398. SPEECH AT AKHIL BHARATIYA SAHITYA PARISHAD

NAGPUR,
April 24, 1936

Introducing his printed speech to the audience, Gandhiji said he was out of place in a conference of *litterateurs* especially as he knew better than anyone else that his knowledge of Hindi literature, and even of Gujarati literature, was nothing to speak of, that his knowledge even of Gujarati grammar was indifferent. But he had been told that it was an impossible task to get together formidable *litterateurs*, who were like lions safe enough in their own cages, but difficult to keep together and to be made to work together. It had been thought that he as a neutral man and a 'mahatma' might be of some service in bringing them together. There he was available to them for what he might be worth, but he wanted to make it clear that he was there simply to initiate the work of bringing [together] the literary men of every province speaking the

[1] Daughter of Vrajlal Gandhi

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different languages, and of serving the masses of India by making available to them the best in all the rich languages of our country.[1]

In the course of his extempore speech Gandhiji said that doctors had advised him not to exert himself too much.[2]

I am here for a brief while for the limited purpose I have told you, but you may know that my heart is neither here nor even in Wardha. My heart is in the villages. For days I have been striving with the Sardar to let me go to a village near Wardha. He is still unconvinced, but my mind won't rest, and God willing, I hope to go and settle in a village near Wardha in a short while. But that does not mean that I will not do the work I am doing now, or that I shall cease to be available for consultation to friends, or for advice to those who will seek it. Only my address will be a village where I would be living ordinarily. I have been asking all my co-workers who are doing village work to go and settle in villages and to serve the villagers. I feel that I cannot do so effectively until I go and settle in a village myself.

Proceeding, Gandhiji referred to the conflict between Hindi (Hindustani) and Urdu which was due mainly because Hindus and Muslims considered each other as enemies. He noticed disputes ever since he returned to India from Africa. In fact there was no cause for dispute because even if Muslims took the vow not to use a single Hindi word they were unable to keep it mainly because the grammatical systems of both were identical. Neither could the staunch advocates of Hindi abolish Persian or Urdu words as could be seen from Tulsidas's *Ramayana* which abounded in Persian and Arabic words.[3]

Gandhiji said that Hindi or Hindustani stood the best chances of becoming India's lingua franca since it was a comprehensive language and was receptive to outside influences, in that it had absorbed the best from every other literature. He favoured simplification of Hindi and deprecated the tendency to Sanskritize it. He also urged that all current expressions in different languages should be adopted.

Proceeding, Gandhiji deplored the tendency to translate Hindi books first into English and then into Bengali or other [languages]. If they wanted to revive the vernacular, if they wanted to achieve the object they had in view, they must banish English so far as Indian masses were concerned. He had no desire to underestimate the value of English which was a universal language and had international significance but Hindustani must become India's lingua franca

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The following paragraph is from *The Hitavada*.

[2] What follows is from *Harijan*.

[3] This and the following two paragraphs are from *The Hitavada*.

and the pernicious notion that they could produce excellent literature only in English must go.[1]

Gandhiji deplored the present state of things where people were, so to say, in a hide-bound way content to remain in their own linguistic and cultural wells, not ready even to acquaint themselves with the language and literature of their neighbouring provinces. A handful of our literary men may be studying different provincial literatures and exchanging the treasures of other provincial languages. But we had to seek to do more....

We must not only seek to know the picturesque language of the village folk, but also to spread a knowledge of modern useful literature among the villagers. It is a shame that Chaitanya's[2] lyrics are a sealed book to people outside Bengal and Orissa. Few of us here may know the name of Tiruvalluvar. People in the North are innocent even of the great saint's name. Few saints have given us treasures of knowledge contained in pithy epigrams as he has done.

In this context, I can at this moment recall the name only of Tukaram.[3]

But for that purpose not only the existing literary treasures had to be made available in a language which could be easily learnt by the masses in all the provinces, but even new literature had to be created—new literature of a healthy and health-giving type.[4]

If we were to enter the vast field of Indian literature, should we stop somewhere? In my opinion there should certainly be a limit. I never had the temptation of increasing the number of books. I do not consider it necessary that every book written or published in the language of every province should be introduced to all the other languages. Even if such an attempt were possible, I think it would be harmful. Such literature as fosters unity, morality, valour and such other qualities, and science, should profitably spread to every province.[5]

Today a plethora of highly objectionable erotic literature seems to be in evidence in every province. Indeed, there are some who say that barring the erotic there is no other *rasa*[6]

[1] The following two paragraphs are from *Harijan.*

[2] Founder of a sect of Bengal Vaishnavas

[3] This sentence is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu.*

[4] This paragraph is from *Harijan.* The following paragraph is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu.*

[5] The following paragraph is from *Harijan.*

[6] According to Indian aesthetics there are nine *rasas*, i.e., types of emotional responses.

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worth the name; and because the erotic is at a premium, those who insist on restraint in literature are held up to ridicule as devoid of all *rasa*. They forget that even those who are said to sacrifice everything do not sacrifice *rasa*. Each one of us feeds himself on some *rasa* or sacred passion. Dadabhai Naoroji sacrificed everything for the country, but he was fired by the sacred passion of patriotism. That gave him all his inner happiness. To say that Chaitanya was devoid of *rasa* is to confess innocence of all *rasa*. Narasinh Mehta, the poet-saint of Gujarat, has described himself as a *bhogi*[1], but his *bhoga* was that of single-minded devotion to God. If you will not be annoyed, I would go to the length of saying that the erotic is the lowest of all *rasas*, and when it partakes of the obscene it is wholly to be eschewed. If I had the power I should taboo all literature calculated to promote communalism, fanaticism and ill will and hatred between individuals, classes or races.[2]

How can all this be achieved? Munshiji and Kakasaheb have cleared our way to a certain extent. Literature of wider appeal can only be spread by a widely [spoken] language. Hindi-Hindustani is such a language compared to the other languages. The reason why Hindi is qualified by the word 'Hindustani' is that words originating from the Persian idiom may not be shunned in that language.

The English language can never become the medium for all the provinces. If we sincerely hope to enrich Indian literature, to carry the gems hidden in the different languages to the crores of Indian masses, we can do so only through Hindustani. It was with this end in view that Munshi started the monthly *Hans* with the help of the famous writer Premchandji. It is necessary to make it a success.

Harijan, 2-5-1936, *Harijanbandhu*, 17-5-1936, and *The Hitavada*, 26-4-1936

399. A YOUTH'S DIFFICULTY

A correspondent who prefers to remain anonymous seeks an answer to a question arising out of my article[3] in *Harijan* addressed to the young. Although it is a sound rule to ignore anonymous correspondence, I do sometimes make an exception when the question put is substantial as in the present case.

[1] One who enjoys the pleasures of life
[2] What follows is translated from the Hindi in *Harijanbandhu*.
[3] *Vide* pp. 295-7.

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The letter is in Hindi and is longer than it need have been. Its purport is:

> From your writing I doubt if you understand the young mind. What has been possible for you is not possible for all young men. I happen to be married. I can restrain myself. My wife cannot. She does not want children but she does want to enjoy herself. What am I to do? Is it not my duty to satisfy her? I am not generous enough to look upon her satisfying her desire through other channels. I read from the papers that you are not averse to promoting marriages and blessing them. Surely you know or ought to know that they are not contracted with the high purpose that you have mentioned.

The correspondent is right. The fact that I bless so many marriages, when they satisfy the tests that I have set as to age, economy, etc., perhaps shows somewhat that I know the youth of the country to an extent that would justify my guiding them when they seek my guidance.

My correspondent's case is typical. He deserves sympathy. That the sole purpose of sexual connection is procreation is in the nature of a new discovery for me. Though I had known the rule, I had never before given it the weight it deserved. I must have till recently regarded it as a mere pious wish. I now regard it as a fundamental law of married state which is easy of observance if its paramount importance is duly recognized. My object will be fulfilled when the law is given its due place in society. To me it is a living law. We break it always and pay heavily for its breach. If my correspondent realizes its inestimable value and if he has love for her and has faith in himself, he will convert his wife to his view. Is he sincere when he says he can restrain himself? Has the animal passion become transmuted in his case into a higher passion, say, for service of fellow-beings? Does he naturally refrain from doing anything to excite the passion in his wife? Let him know that Hindu science denotes eight kinds of unions which include sexual suggestions made even by signs. Is the correspondent free from these? If he is not[1] and if he is sincerely desirous that his wife should be weaned from the sexual desire, let him surround her with the purest love, let him explain the law to her, let him explain the physical effects of union without the desire for procreation, let him tell her what the vital fluid means. Let him

[1] Could this be a slip for "If he is"?

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further engage his wife in healthy pursuits and strive to regulate her diet, exercise, etc., so as to still the passion in her. Above all, if he is a man of religion he will try to transmit to his companion his own living faith. For I must confess that the observance of the law of continence is impossible without a living faith in God which is living Truth. It is the fashion nowadays to dismiss God from life altogether and insist on the possibility of reaching the highest kind of life without the necessity of a living faith in a living God. I must confess my inability to drive the truth of the law home to those who have no faith in and no need for a Power infinitely higher than themselves. My own experience has led me to the knowledge that fullest life is impossible without an immovable belief in a living Law in obedience to which the whole universe moves. A man without that faith is like a drop thrown out of the ocean bound to perish. Every drop in the ocean shares its majesty and has the honour of giving us the ozone of life.

Harijan, 25-4-1936

400. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

April 27, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your two letters. A copy of good *Ramayana* with notes which Mahadev has will be sent to you.

Your cheque has duly arrived. The amounts will be duly distributed as per instructions.

The Simla parcel should contain the soft fibre mattress, the reversible sari, your lace and two knives.

I returned from Nagpur last night. I did plenty of work but without much strain.

The W. C. is now on. But they are all at J[amnalal]'s place.

I hope your expectation will be fulfilled and you will be free from throat trouble at least for four months.

Love.

In haste
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3723. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6879

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401. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

If it is possible the boiling-pot will accompany the messenger. If not, it will go with me.[1] Ba is not quite well. Are there any goats in Segaon? If there are, I do not want to bring any with me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6329. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9795

402. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

April 28, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I shall bring the necessary things with me. I cannot come tomorrow. The W. C. is still sitting and I cannot leave so long as the members are here. In no case shall I have uninterrupted 10 days there. I must be here on Sunday and also for 1st and 2nd May, if Dr. Ambedkar comes.[2] Then I have to be absent from 5th or 6th. I expect to leave for Bangalore on 8th. Therefore there will be no returning after I leave on 5th or 6th. So the ten days will be reduced to 30th, 31st and 4th and 5th May, the latter only possibly. I shall be thankful even if I can be there even to that extent. Ba is still not well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6330. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9796

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* the addressee says: "Bapu was planning to come to stay for a few days in my camp under the trees in order to choose the exact site of his cottage and give me detailed directions as to how it was to be built."

[2] The addressee writes: "Dr. Ambedkar did come but saw Bapu in Segaon under the trees."

CWMG - LXII

403. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
April 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

God willing I am coming tomorrow. The paper is being sent. More when we meet. I expect to be with you at about 7 a.m.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6331. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9797

404. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

April 30, 1936

BAPA
"SEVAK"
DELHI

IF AMTUL'S SERVICES NOT REALLY NEEDED SEND HER HERE SOON.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

405. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON,
April 29/30, 1936[1]

BHAI BAPA,

I have written to Chimandas. To Choithram[2] I wrote from Lucknow itself. The case of Amtussalaam is a difficult one. She is not going to be happy with me, too, and I am now going to settle in a village. For the present, however, I am going to

[1] Gandhiji began this letter on April 29 and completed it the next day.
[2] Choithram Gidwani

CWMG - LXII

Nandi Durg with Sardar. He has been confined and I am being jailor to him; I mean he is ill and I am to act as his nurse. I am prepared to take Amtussalaam there. It is not good running away from Rukmini's harassment of her. That would encourage her in her ways. We must find out a way to reform Rukmini. Therefore, consider Amtussalaam's case in this way. Is it necessary to have her there ? If it is so, keep her there and clip Rukmini's wings. If she is not needed she should be sent to me forthwith. I sent her there with a view to satisfying her ambition to serve and under the belief that she was needed there. She is certainly not to be accommodated on the assumption that work may be taken from whoever is there. You are fully entitled to do what you think right after looking at the question from this angle. I am enclosing her letter herewith.

Now about Sastri. He was here and talked about many things. His mention of Ganesan's abuses is only an excuse. He is tired of the work because he has no energy to raise the funds. On my part I am disappointed about him. I believe he is fit for specified desk work and can perhaps maintain accounts and carry on correspondence well. But he has not the ability to run an institution. He lacks initiative, has no self-confidence, no interest in the work, no such thing as drive. However, he is a good man and he is honest. I advise you, therefore, to relieve him from the Kumbhakonam work and entrust the burden to Bhashyam Iyengar. Let him do as he wishes. As for Pratapmal, Jagannath Das may take him on if he wants to, but we should not shoulder the burden of expenditure. He may carry on by raising funds from Madras or any other place he likes. In no case can Ganesan continue. You might share the burden to any extent you choose provided Bhashyam Iyengar and Venkatasubbayya can shoulder the responsibility. You should boldly settle the matter as you wish. See that in whatever you do Sastri and Ganesan are carefully kept out. Sastri may be accommodated anywhere else. I wish you should no more burden me on his account. My heart turns towards the villages. I wrote the part concerning Amtussalaam at Wardha and then had to leave it incomplete as visitors came up. Now I complete it today, the second day, here at Segaon which is five miles from Wardha. You should take it that I have settled finally when I return here from Bangalore. Till then you may regard it as the Mahatma's imposture.

It is not that Sardar is taking me to Nandi Durg, I am taking him there.

CWMG - LXII

Is it not enough, considering that I have not written to you for a long time, that I wrote all this from a village on country-made paper with a country-made reed-pen and country-made ink?

I got a long letter from Amtussalaam. I am enclosing my reply[1] to her, which you should read to her.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

[PS.]
Reply to the Wardha address.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1158

406. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

Not revised

WARDHA,
April 30, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your letter of 17th instant. Nothing less was to be expected of Jawaharlal. His address[2] is a confession of his faith. You see from the formation of his cabinet that he has chosen a majority of those who represent the traditional view, i.e., from 1920. Of course the majority represent my view. I would love to kill the New Constitution[3] today if I can. There is hardly anything in it I like. But Jawaharlal's way is not my way. I accept his ideal about land, etc. But I do not accept practically any of his methods. I would strain every nerve to prevent a class war. So would he, I expect. But he does not believe it to be possible to avoid it. I believe it to be perfectly possible especially if my method is accepted. But though Jawaharlal is extreme in his presentation of his methods, he is sober in action. So far as I know him, he will not precipitate a conflict nor will he shirk it if it is forced on him. But there perhaps the whole Congress is not of one mind. A difference there certainly is. My method is designed to avoid conflict. His is not so designed. My own feeling is that Jawaharlal will accept the decisions of the majority of his colleagues. For a man of his temperament, this is most difficult. He is finding it so

[1] This is not available.
[2] As President at the annual session of the Congress at Lucknow
[3] Under Government of India Act of 1935

CWMG-LXII

already. Whatever he does he will do it nobly. Though the gulf between us as to the outlook upon life has undoubtedly widened, we have never been so near each other in hearts as we perhaps are today.

This is not for public use but you are at liberty to show it to friends.

I do not suppose you want anything more in answer to your question.

The rest from Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

MISS AGATHA HARRISON
2 CRANBOURNE COURT
ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, [LONDON] S. W. 11

File No. 3001/H/pp.13-15, Police Commissioner, Bombay. Also Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

407. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

April 30, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Sardar is taking a different route. Arrange to send Kusum to Wardha. She should be here before the 8th as we are leaving on that day. She should bring warm clothing and blankets, but not superfluous luggage.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am spending the day in Segaon, where I hope to settle down.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8488. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

CWMG - LXII

408. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON,
April 30, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I got your letter. You have done well in giving me an account. What a good thing it would be if by this time we had cultivated the strength to raise contributions!

I expect the Bharuch affair has been settled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4035

409. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

April 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got two letters from you. I understand what you say about money. Of course, your father's letter is excellent and I noted what he had to say about giving you money. Inform him that I have sent it.

It is all right if you have given up milk for health reasons. But you are not to undertake any experiment with a view to giving up milk. The fit was probably due to your going without milk. You are not to worry at all. As long as you have your parents' blessings and they have not the least dissatisfaction about you, what have you to worry about? How does it matter what the world says? You alone have to settle your account with Jayaprakash. His is a different case. Hence it will not do if you fall ill under the stress of worry. The true follower of the *Gita* is one who can remain calm and composed in any situation whatever, and you have to become such a one. For the present, write to me regularly.

Jayaprakash came to see me yesterday; Patwardhan was with him. He spoke to me about your future although he said nothing in reply to my letter. He said he wished to put you

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for three months at the school in Banaras where, he said, you might learn the Montessorie method. Then he mentioned Patna and asked my opinion about it. I told him I had no objection to the proposal. You should have the three months' experience at the Banaras school, and then we shall see what is to be done. In any case you must maintain your health.

My stay in Nandi and Bangalore will take up a month, after which I am returning here. I came to Segaon today and shall be here for three days at least. Then again, after another two or three days I shall be leaving for Bangalore on the 8th. I expect Jayaprakash took your luggage with him and you were able to speak to him. Pyarelal alone has accompanied me to Segaon. Ba has not come as she is unwell.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Note that my address continues to be Wardha. The Mysore address is: Nandi Hill, Near Bangalore.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3462

410. DISCUSSION WITH A WORKER[1]

April 30, 1936[2]

"Don't you think, Bapu," the worker asked, "rather than bury yourself in this village, you should undertake a tour through the country, just for the rural reconstruction programme? I cannot tell you what a godsend that Harijan tour[3] was, how it worked a silent revolution in people's minds. Nothing else could have achieved it. Couldn't you take a tour like that?"

[G.] Oh, no. There is no similarity between the two cases. In Harijan work the practical and the theoretical aspects were combined. Here I cannot combine the two. I have been talking theory all these days, talking and giving advice on village work, without having personally come to grips with the difficulties of village work. If I undertook the tour, say, after passing three seasons in a village and among the villagers, a year hence I should be able to talk with knowledge and experience which I have not got today. Yesterday I went to Sindi to see

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] Gandhiji had moved to Segaon early in the morning.
[3] From November 7, 1933 to August 2, 1934

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how Gajanan Naik was working. The condition of things there is scarcely better but he is carrying on his work, patiently and perseveringly. The moment I saw him last morning I said to myself: 'If I had been working with Gajanan, I should certainly have had intimate experience of the difficulties he is meeting with.' No. It is clearer to me than ever before that my place is in the village.

Harijan, 9-5-1936

411. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

[On or after *April 30, 1936*][1]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your long letter. I have read it with the deepest interest. You have a tough problem in front of you. If you can, you should come to Nandi Hill to see me. I reach there on 10th May, D. V. God will guide you. You must not worry. Take things as they come to you when you cannot alter them.

I am writing this from the village Segaon where I want to settle down. Mirabai is here already. She will go to some other village, if I settle down here. I do not want any of the old co-workers with me, if I can help it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 137. Courtesy: National Archives of India

412. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

[Before *May 1, 1936*][2]

That work[3] is for you to do provided you have digested what I told you.

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] From the reference to Segaon where Gandhiji moved on April 30, 1936

[2] The source states that this was written before the letter to the addressee dated May 1, 1936; *vide* pp. 358-9.

[3] The addressee had suggested that D. B. Kalelkar or Kishorelal Mashruwala should write a treatise to counteract the harangues on socialism.

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413. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 1, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You won't be a rebel if you were not an idiot. So it is always a question which title suits you most. And since no one can take titles for oneself and Rebel is your choice, I suppose I should prefer the use of Idiot. But though called Tyrant I pamper you so that the rebel of today may be a willing slave of tomorrow.

Well, I am at last in Segaon. Pyarelal is with me. I wanted him. Ba was to have come but she was unwell. You will be glad to learn that I walked almost the whole distance. I was none the worse for it. I took the *bandi*[1] for the remaining ¾ of a mile because we had missed the way and the others were getting uneasy about me. We came yesterday. The night was glorious.

The reversible sari was surely your own choice. Was it a shawl or sari, I forget. If the *khes*[2] has come back to you it is a mistake. It has to come back to me.

I hope you get your money. No more now as Mahadev must take this and leave at once.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3724. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6880

414. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

[*May 1, 1936*][3]

CHI. BAL,

My suggestion[4] was a considered one. You should indeed possess the ability to compile a volume explaining my ideas which can meet your need if you all really appreciated my

[1] Cart

[2] An upper garment for men draped across the shoulders

[3] Gandhiji had arrived in Segaon on April 30, 1936.

[4] *Vide* p. 357.

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thoughts. If you were convinced that the earth is round, you would not go to find out its proof from the best book of geography, but would rather prove your point by advancing arguments in your own way and in your own language. The same applies to my thoughts or those of others. Ultimately in the matter of dharma, too, the final authority is neither the Vedas nor the *Gita* nor the *Bhagavata*; the sole authority is our own unflinching faith and the resultant understanding.

This is what I mean when I say 'solely due to Kaka's greatness'.[1] He taught you both brothers Gujarati without reservations and, moreover, brought you up in Gujarat. Had he been narrow-minded he would [not] have let you speak any other language and would have had you brought up somewhere in Maharashtra. Is it not true?

This I am writing from Segaon on the second day of my arrival here. I surely like this place. Do you remember my tour of Orissa? Here we have a shelter like the ones in that tour. I am satisfied. My hut will come up in my absence. But, for the time being, I have to take Sardar to Bangalore—Nandi.

[From Gujarati]

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

415. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 1, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter quite in time.

Kanti will send you your luggage.

I am sending a money order for Rs. 25. Do not be so careless again. It is likely that there was not so much carelessness as a feeling of shame. If so, such shame, too, ought to be given up.

You should put your time to good use.

I am concerned about your giving up milk. What is wrong with your health that you should give up milk? You must not let your health suffer.

[1] Gandhiji had stated that the addressee's brother winning the Paramananda Prize was "solely due to Kaka's greatness".

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My health is good, of course. My weight taken last night was 110 lb., i.e., about the same as at Delhi. The food, too, is nearly the same as there.

I shall be going to Nandi, Bangalore, on 8th or 9th May from here accompanied by Sardar. Our stay is expected to last a month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3453

416. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
May 1, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Mahadev cannot leave today. One strong reason is given in the wire. The other is *Harijan*. If he finishes it, you may detain him even longer. I have explained everything to him and, therefore, I do not write anything more in this letter.

If you don't improve your health and make it perfectly fit, I am bound to quarrel with you.

The air of the place is fine indeed. It was very cool at night. My requirements about food, etc., can be met satisfactorily. But more about this when I get some free time. Doctor (Ambedkar) and Walchand[1] met me in Segaon. They are coming again.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD
BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 195

[1] Walchand Hirachand, an industrialist

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417. FOR WOMEN REFORMERS

From a serious discussion I had with a sister[1] I fear that my position on the use of contraceptives has not yet been sufficiently understood. My opposition is not due to their having come to us from the West. I thankfully use some Western things when I know that they benefit us as they benefit those in the West. My opposition to contraceptives is based on merits.

I take it that the wisest among the protagonists of contraceptives restrict their use to married women who desire to satisfy their and their husbands' sexual appetite without wanting children. I hold this desire as unnatural in the human species and its satisfaction detrimental to the spiritual progress of the human family. As against this is often cited the following testimony among others of Lord Dawson of Penn:[2]

> Sex love is one of the clamant, dominating forces of the world. . . . You may guide it into healthy channels but an outlet it will have, and if that outlet is inadequate or unduly obstructed, irregular channels will be forced. Self-control has a breaking point, and if in any community marriage is difficult or late of attainment, an increase of irregular unions will inevitably result. . . .
>
> Sex love has, apart from parenthood, a purport of its own. It is an essential part of health and happiness in marriage.... The attainment of mutual and reciprocal joy in their relations constitutes a firm bond between two people and makes for durability of their marriage tie....
>
> I will pass on to consider the all-important question of birth-control....The reasons which lead parents to limit their offspring are sometimes selfish, but more often honourable and cogent. The desire to marry and to rear children well-equipped for life's struggle, limited incomes, the cost of living, burdensome taxation, are forcible motives....Absence of birth-control means late marriages, and these carry with them irregular unions and all the baneful consequences....But say many, 'Birth-control may be necessary, but the only birth-control which is justifiable is voluntary abstention.' Such abstention would be either ineffective or, if effective, impracticable and harmful to health and happiness. To limit the size of a family to, say, four children, would be to impose on a married couple an

[1] Mrs. Margaret Sanger; *vide* pp. 156-60.

[2] Only extracts from the quotation are reproduced here.

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> amount of abstention which for long periods would almost be equivalent to celibacy, and when one remembers that owing to economic reasons the abstention would have to be most strict during the earlier years of married life when desires are strongest, I maintain a demand is being made which, for the mass of people it is impossible to meet; that the endeavours to meet it would impose a strain hostile to health and happiness and carry with them grave dangers to morals. . . .

Lord Dawson's eminence is not to be denied. But with all due respect to his greatness as a physician, I am tempted to question the value of his evidence, specially when it is pitted against the experience of men and women who have lived a life of continence without suffering any moral or physical harm. Physicians generally come across those who have so defied laws of health that they have contracted some illness. They, therefore, often successfully prescribe what sufferers should do to become well, but they cannot always know what healthy men and women can do in any particular direction. Lord Dawson's evidence, therefore, about the effect of continence on married people has to be taken with the greatest caution. No doubt the tendency among married people is to regard sexual satisfaction for itself as legitimate. But in the modern age in which nothing is taken for granted and everything is rightly scrutinized, it is surely wrong to take it for granted that because we have hitherto indulged in the sexual appetite in married life, the practice is either legitimate or healthy. Many old practices have been discontinued with good results. Why should this particular practice be exempt from examination especially in the light of the experience of those who even as married men and women are living a life of restraint with mutual benefit both physical and moral?

But I object to contraceptives also on special grounds in India. Young men in India do not know what sexual restraint is. It is not their fault. They are married early. It is the custom. Nobody tells them to exercise restraint in married life. Parents are impatient to see grandchildren. The poor girl-wives are expected by their surroundings to bear children as fast as they can. In such surroundings, the use of contraceptives can only further aggravate the mischief. The poor girls who are expected to submit to their husbands' desires are now to be taught that it is a good thing to desire sexual satisfaction without the desire to have children. And in order to fulfil the double purpose they are to have recourse to contraceptives!!!

I regard this to be most pernicious education for married

women. I do not believe that woman is prey to sexual desire to the same extent as man. It is easier for her than for man to exercise self-restraint. I hold that the right education in this country is to teach woman the art of saying no even to her husband, to teach her that it is no part of her duty to become a mere tool or a doll in her husband's hands. She has rights as well as duties. Those who see in Sita a willing slave under Rama do not realize the loftiness of either her independence or Rama's consideration for her in everything. Sita was no helpless weak woman incapable of protecting herself or her honour. To ask India's women to take to contraceptives is, to say the least, putting the cart before the horse. The first thing is to free her from mental slavery, to teach her the sacredness of her body and to teach her the dignity of national service and the service of humanity. It is not fair to assume that India's women are beyond redemption and that they have therefore to be simply taught the use of contraceptives for the sake of preventing births and preserving such health as they may be in possession of.

Let not the sisters who are rightly indignant over the miseries of women who are called upon to bear children whether they will or no, be impatient. Not even the propaganda in favour of contraceptives is going to promote the desired end overnight. Every method is a matter of education. My plea is for the right type.

Harijan, 2-5-1936

418. LETTER TO M. MUJEEB

SEGAON, NEAR WARDHA,
May 2, 1936

MY DEAR MUJEEB[1],

You were quite right in writing to me as you did. Aqil must have given you a full account of what I did and what happened. As your letter[2] is so good and so important, I propose to publish it without your name and answer it in the columns of *Harijan*.[3] I hope you will see the answer. If it does not satisfy you, you will not hesitate to write again. I want to give you

[1] Of Jamia Millia Islamia
[2] *Vide* Appendix II.
[3] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", 9-5-1936 and 16-5-1936.

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complete satisfaction if I at all can. There are parts of your letter where you have made mistakes.

My love to all whom I know.

Yours,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 1464. Courtesy: M. Mujeeb

419. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

May 2, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter from Madras. I hope to leave for Bangalore *via* Madras on 8th instant. I pass through on 9th evening. If you can you will find me out at the station. Ba, Mahadev, the same boys[1], Kumarappa, will certainly be with me. I am going to Nandi Hill for the sake of Sardar.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9606. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

420. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

May 2, 1936

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

We already have in our hands the work of *Harijan Sevak*; other kinds of service of Harijans are carried on everywhere. Now a third cause has come up. As desired by Jamnalalji the Hindi Sammelan has entrusted the work of Hindi propagation to a special committee which will have Wardha as its headquarters. We all want you to be the secretary of that committee. We have Baba Raghavdas[2], too, in mind. Can he not leave Gorakhpur? Do you like this work? Would you like to come over to Wardha? Can you leave your work of Harijan education without any harm? If not, do you know anyone who is a lover of Hindi and can handle the work of a secretary and who is also willing to stay in Wardha ?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1099

[1] Kanti Gandhi and Kanu Gandhi
[2] A prominent social worker from U. P.

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421. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 2, 1936

BAPA,

I have carefully gone through your 'circular letter' regarding the Harijans of Tiruchengodu. What may we do in such a case? The money given is in a way the price paid for proselytization and, in a way, it is not so either. To fill the belly man resorts to forced labour and flattery. The remedy could be only one. Let us remove their sufferings. But these 'our men' in Tiruchengodu are attached to money and therefore in such cases we are helpless. They would soon come over to our side if we paid them more. But this would be an unprofitable trade. "Therefore what is unavoidable thou shouldst not regret."[1] All the same, wisdom would consist in doing what Rajaji says since he is a man with experience of the place. I do not write to him because you have already written. Your letter had not reached me when he was in Wardha.

I have already written to you how the question of Amtussalaam is to be solved.[2]

Read my letter to Viyogi Hari and give it to him if you think it right. I mean it is no use giving him the letter if you are sure you cannot relieve him. It will be possible to make full use of him here if it cannot be done there.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1155

422. LETTER TO DRAUPADI SHARMA

May 2, 1936

CHI. DRAUPADI,

I, too, got a letter from Sharma after writing to you. I have sent it on to Ramdas asking him to pass it on to you. Yes, I shall leave on the 8th for Bangalore, Mysore, taking Sardar with

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 27

[2] *Vide* pp. 351-2.

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me. I have now come to settle in a village. Amtussalaam writes to you, I suppose.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, between pp. 192 and 193

423. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
May 3, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

My right hand needs rest. You will perhaps like to read the enclosed.[1] It need not be returned.

Khurshed has written to me about her new suggestion regarding the scope of Kamala Memorial. If it is a substitute for the hospital, it is in my opinion inadmissible. And it cannot be carried out for 3 lacs.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

424. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 3, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I spoke to Shriman Narayan. I like him. He has good poetic promise and is keen on improving it. The family seems to be good.

I visited the site of the memorial. I could not know what they were now doing there. I would certainly like to know.

Dharmadhikari will look after the garden at the site of the memorial. He seems to like this place. They are satisfied with him. He remains absorbed in his work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2978

[1] Presumably a copy of the letter to Agatha Harrison, dated April 30, 1936; *vide* also "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 12-5-1936.

CWMG-LXII

425. SPEECH AT A. I. V. I. A. EXHIBITION[1]

WARDHA,
May 3, 1936[2]

As I was coming to Maganwadi I saw the weekly bazaar that is held here every Sunday. That bazaar has the raw produce as well as manufactures from raw produce exhibited in abundance. This exhibition has these exhibited on a very humble scale. I therefore wondered how our exhibition compared with the weekly bazaar. The fundamental difference is that the exhibition is held entirely with a view to service of the village and the townsfolk, whereas the bazaar is a business concern in which the villager is exploited. He is made to sell his wares as cheap as possible, often even below cost price. At this exhibition there is hardly any buying and selling. This exhibition is an attempt to educate the residents of Wardha in their duty towards the villages surrounding them and to educate the villagers in what is possible for them to better themselves in every way. The exhibition teaches them how to keep their villages clean, what food to eat and how to improve their industries and thus earn a little more than they do today. So far as the town-dweller is concerned the exhibition forcibly brings to his mind the various ways in which he is exploiting the villager, and how best he may serve the villager by going in for his wares. The Lucknow Exhibition opened the eyes of those who visited it to the wonderful capacity of our village craftsman, and even this will do so somewhat. I may tell you here that though the admission here has been kept free, at Lucknow it was not free. Reports have been published that the exhibition there resulted in a heavy loss. They are wrong. The receipts from the sale of tickets exceeded Rs. 25,000. There were, besides, receipts from stall-holders. It is just possible that there will be a nominal profit. Those around Lucknow will not see such an exhibition in Lucknow for years to come. The Kumbh Mela recurs at long but regular intervals. The Congress and the Exhibition may not be held again at the same place, and even if it is, it may be held at an indefinitely long interval, espe-

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Gandhiji inaugurated the exhibition arranged at Maganwadi.

[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-5-1936

cially because the tendency, I hope, now will be to select not big cities but small towns for their venue. But local exhibitions like this should be inexpensive annual efforts of growingly educative value. The village oilman has, for instance, deteriorated nowadays. He adulterates the oil with cheap and spurious stuffs. He will learn here how it is profitable to make the oil absolutely pure and unadulterated. The paper-maker will learn here how to make the paper neat and lasting. As time goes we should be able to show improvements in these processes. I know that we have been able to produce little effect, during the year, on our surroundings or on the villages in the neighbourhood. But that does not disappoint me. We have to plod on. Those of you who have come here have to go forth to the villages as advertising agents and to draw the villagers to such exhibitions. The tragedy today is that the town-dweller is becoming increasingly indifferent to the villages, that he even believes that the villages are going to be destroyed in the near future. They certainly will be if we continue to prefer mill-made articles to hand-made. Those of you who have come here have to go out as preachers of the gospel of rural-mindedness.

A factory employs a few hundreds and renders thousands unemployed. I may produce tons of oil from an oil-mill, but I also drive thousands of oilmen out of employment. I call this destructive energy, whereas production by the labour of millions of hands is constructive and conducive to the common good.[1] Mass production through power-driven machinery, even when State-owned, will be of no avail.

But why not, it is asked, save the labour of millions and give them more leisure for intellectual pursuits? Leisure is good and necessary up to a point only. God created man to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, and I dread the prospect of our being able to produce all that we want, including our food-stuffs, out of a conjurer's hat.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

[1] The report in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 5-5-1936, here has: "The method of production of necessaries through power-driven machinery displacing tens of thousands of men and providing prolonged leisure was, in his opinion, *asuric*, whereas the ancient method of production by human labour in co-operation was *daivic*—that is to say, conducive to the progress of humanity. The ancient method had its effects. The All-India Village Industries Association was endeavouring to remedy the evil and exhibitions were a method of encompassing that end."

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426. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
May 4, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

As Mahadev is here and has brought your note, I must send this through him. Your post generally comes in the evening in Maganwadi. I am not, therefore, able to deal with your letters the very day. In Segaon, your post comes late at night which is the same thing. So there is no delay about incoming letters.

You are right. 'Idiots' must not meet in broiling heat. Next year we meet in February or early March unless you invite us to Simla!!!

Your Lucknow parcel must be with you by this time.

Yes, I have almost all the creature comforts I need. What I do not have, I do not miss. And I could have them, if I want.

Your suggestion about Ku.[1] was ever anticipated. He is going with me to Nandi and I hope to have the tonsils removed in Bangalore.

You may depend upon it I am having a royal time in Segaon. Therefore no anxiety.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3725. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6881

427. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI[2]

P. O. WARDHA,
May 4, 1936

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

Is there in your State a cool place having Gopnath[3] or some such name? I am sure you came across Vinoba's brother, Balkrishna, at the Ashram. He is a learned man, well versed in music, too, but his health has run down. He loves solitude and

[1] J. C. Kumarappa
[2] Dewan of Bhavnagar State
[3] A seaside health resort in the Bhavnagar State

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may not be able to stand noise. I wish he could use a quiet room in Gopnath or whatever the place is called. I have written to Bhai Jivanlal[1] to see if accommodation can be found for him at Chorwad.

I am in Segaon and Mahadev [will be] in Bombay. I am taking Sardar to Nandi Durg on the 8th. May I, therefore, ask for a reply by wire if this reaches you in time?

I hope you are quite well.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Please address the mail to Wardha.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5947. Also C.W. 3264. Courtesy: Mahesh P. Pattani

428. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
May 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Surely by this time you have had more than one letter from Segaon. I am sure in a day or two you would have begun to like the place and the life. Ba came with me yesterday. I walked the whole distance. It took me full two hours. But then we again missed the way a little. We were all novices without a guide. And I was silent. I can comfortably do the whole distance in $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours. I was none the worse for the walk and was ready for the evening walk. Mahadev and Lilavati walked in at 8.30 p.m., and slept on the ground where the operations are going on. We all sleep there, surrounded on all sides by double trenches supported by the excavated earth. We eat the vegetables grown here. We do not therefore get a variety but there is more than compensation in the thought that we are taking what is grown locally. This restriction, if persisted in, will soon induce a cultivation of other vegetables. So much for Segaon.

Now for the parcel from Lucknow. You wrote to me the other day saying you had advice of despatch of parcel by Miss Ala worth over Rs. 600. You even hoped that it won't contain the

[1] Jivanlal Motichand Shah who helped Gandhiji financially in his khadi and Harijan welfare work.

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khes you had sent. Where is that parcel? Instructions together with addresses were duly passed. But everything was topsy-turvy. All were overworked. I am sorry about the parcel having gone to Simla. I know what worry it is to have things wrongly addressed. I had spoken to Khurshed more than once and then to Jerajani[1]. Let us see what finally happens. You need not send your cheque before the receipt of the parcels. By way of curiosity I would like to know how much extra the wrong address has cost.

I am sure you should accept the Jullundur nomination[2] if it comes to you. And I take it, you have taken over the college responsibility. These things cannot be put away lightly.

You are right about Ku. He is coming to Nandi Hill. I shall see what is possible. I shall not have the operation performed unless I am sure that it is necessary and the surgeon knows his work. Bharatan too will be going probably to Kodaikanal.

Remember the date of my departure, 8th instant. I leave Segaon on 8th morning.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3726. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6882

429. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[*May*][3] *5, 1936*

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Herewith Akarte's[4] letter. It is difficult to make out what the truth is. I find it necessary to exercise restraint in giving publicity to Buva. It is all right to cultivate his acquaintance. I consider it improper to make use of him for public service without closer experience of him. I shall go deep into the matter when I get the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2979

[1] Vithaldas Jerajani, a khadi worker
[2] To the Municipality
[3] From *Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad*, p. 179
[4] J. S. Akarte, an advocate from Nagpur

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430. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 6, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

You can write to me now. We are leaving on the 8th for Nandi Durg.

You seem to have gathered good experience. Merely because we doubt a man's sincerity we cannot reject his application if he is prepared to sign the Congress Pledge. There will always be men who will wangle admission under one or the other pretext. If the majority of the members are sincere, ultimately all will be well.

The report of the Maharashtrian's letter is perfectly correct.[1] But his supposition was completely wrong. The correspondent's letter could be interpreted to mean that by resting my hands on girls' shoulders I used to gratify my sensual desire. His words of course were different.

But the truth is that my discontinuing the practice of resting my hands on the shoulders of girls has nothing to do with my sensual desire. It had its origin in my pampering the body with food while doing no work. I had a discharge, but I was awake and the mind was under control. I understood the cause and from that time stopped taking rest as prescribed by the doctors. And my state now is better than it was, if such a state could be imagined. If you wish to ask me more questions about this you may, for I have cherished high hopes of you. You may, therefore, know from me anything concerning myself that you wish to.

The articles I have written recently deserve careful pondering over. If you have understood them, the practice of *brahmacharya* will become very easy. If one is convinced that the genital organs are not intended for sex-gratification, wouldn't one's attitude change completely? As a man happening to see on the road the blood-stained sputum of a consumptive may take it to be a gem and long to pick it up, but will come to his senses as soon as he realizes his error, so is the case in regard to the function of the genital organs. The truth is that this belief has never been held with sufficient conviction and clarity. And now the new edu-

[1] A Maharashtrian professor from Poona had written to Gandhiji in connection with his article "Nothing Without Grace"; *vide* pp. 210-2.

cation denounces it, teaches that moderate sex-gratification is a good thing and asserts its necessity. Think over all this.

The experience of your friends that you have described is excellent.[1]

Let this suffice for the present.

Probably Lilavati will join you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10380. Also C.W. 6818. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

431. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 6, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I have your letter. What shall I write to you? I have a telegram from Dr. Ansari; you must follow his instructions. I wanted to take you to Bangalore with me, but let us now see how things take shape. You shall follow the treatment unquestioningly. The first thing is to get well. After that we shall see what we can do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 334

432. SPEECH AT KHADI YATRA[2]

PAUNAR,
[*May 6, 1936*][3]

Gandhiji said he had sense enough not to spoil the effect of that rapturous utterance[4] by inflicting another speech on them. But, he said, he

[1] Two women of Sasvad, who though married and living with their husbands had observed abstinence for several years, had narrated their experiences to the addressee.

[2] Mahadev Desai in his "Weekly Letter", from which this is extracted, explains that the "yatra" was an "annual gathering of believers in khadi in Marathi-speaking Central Provinces".

[3] Gandhiji visited Paunar on May 6, 1936.

[4] Earlier, Vinoba Bhave had "in a torrence of eloquence . . . explained the object of khadi yatra and in doing so brought to bear all the wealth of imagery and illustration".

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would offer one test whereby he would like to measure their sincerity and earnestness next year.

I should be satisfied if you were to follow the gospel of khadi with even a hundredth of Vinoba's faith. We have to demonstrate to the poor that khadi could be had for the price of unginned raw cotton, that is to say, those who produce cotton can have khadi free. That can happen only when we popularize the hand-ginning of cotton, a process which preserves the vitality both of the cotton fibre and of the seed. Jamnalalji would fain close his ginning factory tomorrow, if we were to ask him to do so. But it would have no value. If you were to take upon yourselves to gin all the cotton that you produce it would close down automatically. Vinoba's simile of the lamp was very beautifully expressive indeed. As darkness cannot stand in front of light, even so absence of khadi cannot exist in front of khadi. Your khadi will be infectious only if you will bring to bear on it all the devotion and the perseverance and, above all, the intelligent devotion and perseverance that it deserves. Only thereby will you be able to take it out of a narrow and exclusive groove and succeed in sharing it with those whom you come across.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

433. TELEGRAM TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

May 7, 1936

G. RAMACHANDRAN[1]
THAIKAD
TRIVANDRUM

HOPE UNDER WISE GUIDANCE SHRIMATI RAMESHWARI NEHRU[2] CONFERENCE [SUCCEED] AND SOLVE TEMPLE-ENTRY AND OTHER QUESTIONS SO AS TO PURIFY HINDUISM OF CURSE UNTOUCHABILITY.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Kerala

[2] President of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, who presided over the All-Kerala Temple-entry Conference

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434. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 7, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I am leaving tomorrow 8th. Amtul Salaam has not arrived. Dr. Ansari has detained her. Lilavati went to Bombay with Mahadev. She may join you in Segaon during the last week of May or beginning of June. I suppose you would not mind her coming and becoming initiated and knowing the people there. Balwant Singh may also pass the month with you. If he comes he can only help you. I suggested [it] to him this morning. The work you are just now doing is too much for you. If however you do not like any of my appointments you will tell me. I suggested Balwant Singh, as you were inclined to take Munnalal[1]. And of Lilavati you had shown readiness to take her. That was a different thing, I know. But this is a proper occasion if she would come in advance. I have my doubts as to her coming. She simply wants my company. But you will let me know your own wishes plainly and they will be given effect to.

The rammers should have gone to you this morning to be returned without fail on Sunday.

I understand about the sandals.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I walked the whole distance yesterday. The scenery was splendid.

From the original: C.W. 6332. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9798

435. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

May 7, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I entirely agree with you that if people had to be banished from the colony because of Rukmini's likes or dislikes, many more people than Amtul Salaam would have to leave. I have said as

[1] Munnalal G. Shah

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much to Bapa. Of course he has suggested A.'s leaving for your peace and A.'s. But I know you do not want such peace. To bear with Rukmini and yet not to yield to her[1] is your martyrdom. But if A. has to leave for the sake of her health she must do so. I now have a wire from Dr. Ansari that he has detained A. I now await his letter which he has promised.

My sympathies are all with you.

Here are letters for A. S. and Rukmini. You need not give the letter to R. if you do not like it.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 921

436. LETTER TO RUKMINI MALKANI

May 7, 1936

CHI. RUKMINI,

What is all this? What could a nice girl like Amtussalaam have done to you? It is not good of you to harass a husband like Malkani. Do you remember your promise to me? Be calm, assist Malkani in his work and live amicably with all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 920

437. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 7, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUSSALAAM,

I wrote no letters to you earlier as I was expecting you. Why need you go to a hill-station when Doctor Saheb has said that it is not at all necessary? You may well stay on. Now I understand why Thakkar Bapa said that there was no work for you; it was solely to avoid unpleasantness. Malkani frankly says that he needs you. Hence you have now to stay on in the Harijan Colony. There is no need at present to go to Dhaka[2] whatever might happen in future. Anyway, what could you do in Patiala? Now the problem of the Harijan girl is out of the way.

[1] The source has "him".

[2] A Harijan village near Delhi

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You should take no note of what . . .[1] says; let her say whatever she likes; she is silly. Anyway, I have written to her and I am writing to Bapa, too. Kanti and Kanu are with me. Mahadev and . . .[2] will come *via* Poona. Kumarappa will join us later.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Devanagari transliteration of Urdu]
Bapuke Patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam, pp. 70-1

438. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 7, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

Chandrashanker[3] is ill and Mahadev has gone to Poona; from there he will join me at Bangalore. I leave this place tomorrow for Bangalore. I shall be at Nandi Durg for a fortnight and then I go to Bangalore, for Vallabhbhai's sake.

Regarding Parameshwari[4] I have already obtained Parnerkar's[5] opinion and shall seek some more opinions. The sanction of Rs. 10,000 from the Goseva Sangh to Parameshwari is being delayed.

A meeting will have to be called as three members have voted against it. The meeting can be called only in June. There will be a further hitch on account of Parnerkar's recent adverse opinion. No doubt, he has experience behind him, having worked for years at Sabarmati. At present he is working at Dhulia on behalf of the Goseva Sangh.

Dinkar[6] met me and I told him not to accept defeat but to go on trying to give you satisfaction. I also told him that you certainly had some doubt about his application, none about his honesty or hard work. He will come to see you and you may do what is right.

I have come to like Segaon.

If necessary you may come over to Bangalore where the climate is of course good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 8019. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1&2] The names are omitted in the source.
[3] Chandrashanker Pranshanker Shukla, Editor, *Harijanbandhu*
[4] A dairy expert running the addressee's goshala in Delhi
[5] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar
[6] Dinkarrai Pandya, in charge of the dairy in the Sabarmati Ashram

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439. SPEECH AT A. I. V. I. A. MEETING[1]

WARDHA,
May 7, 1936

I take it that those who are members of the A. I. V. I. A. know the rules of the Association, one of which is that there is to be an annual general meeting. Either such a meeting is necessary or it is not. If it is, surely it is the duty of every member to attend the meeting unless he is unavoidably absent. What I cannot understand is that the absentees have not all written to say what prevented them from attending the meeting. The feeling on the part of an individual member that his absence alone cannot affect the quorum is obviously wrong.

Our ambition is to make at least one member for each of our 7,00,000 villages, but our actual membership is 517! And the bulk of the members are not present! It is deplorable, but it does not dismay me. Let those who are present carry to the absentees at least this message that it was their duty to inform the Secretary as to the reason of their failure. Failure even to intimate the reason argues lethargy, which certainly should disqualify one to be the member of an association like ours.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi observed that the duty of the workers was to serve the villagers and if they found that the atmosphere in some place was not congenial to them for the pursuit of service owing to the hostility of local officials, nothing would be lost by their shifting their centres of work. The country was wide enough to provide ample scope for work in places other than those in which conditions were rendered difficult owing to extraneous forces. Difficulties occasioned by internal forces it would be the duty of workers, however, to overcome.

Some members talk of difficulties created from outside. I think most of them are imaginary. How much have we been able to do where there are no difficulties from outside? Take Sindi and Segaon where Gajanan and Mirabehn have both been working with a zeal and rural-mindedness that every one of us might envy. How much have they achieved that could be shown?

[1] The first annual general meeting of the Association scheduled to be held at 3 p.m. had to be adjourned for want of quorum and was held at 8 p.m.

[2] This is extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The following paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

The reason is the inertia, the lethargy of our people, the masters. We want them to do something, i.e., to keep their surroundings clean, to eat wholesome food and to regulate their working hours so as to increase their income. They have no faith in all this. They have lost hope of bettering their lot.

We have to tackle the triple malady which holds our villages fast in its grip: (1) Want of corporate sanitation; (2) Deficient diet; (3) Inertia.

In Segaon where Mirabehn is working, all the outside circumstances are more favourable than anywhere else. The zamindars there are Jamnalalji and Babasaheb Deshmukh. They place no obstacles; they, on the contrary, help her. And yet, do you think she gets much co-operation from the people? Not that they are wilfully obstructive. They are not interested in their own welfare. They don't appreciate modern sanitary methods. They don't want to exert themselves beyond scratching their farms or doing such labour as they are used to. These difficulties are real and serious. But they must not baffle us. We must have an unquenchable faith in our mission. We must be patient with the people. We are ourselves novices in village work. We have to deal with a chronic disease. Patience and perseverance, if we have them, overcome mountains of difficulties. We are like nurses who may not leave their patients because they are reported to have an incurable disease.

The only way is to sit down in their midst and work away in steadfast faith, as their scavengers, their nurses, their servants, not as their patrons, and to forget all our prejudices and prepossessions. Let us for a moment forget even swaraj, and certainly forget the 'haves' whose presence oppresses us at every step. They are there. There are many who are dealing with these big problems. Let us tackle the humbler work of the village which is necessary now and would be even after we have reached our goal. Indeed, the village work when it becomes successful will itself bring us nearer the goal.[1]

He hoped to see Segaon become an ideal centre of persistent effort, and he trusted that workers elsewhere would apply to the work before them the same zest and energy. It was too early to judge the progress achieved, but he hoped that they would also attempt to understand thoroughly the implications of the threefold programme that had been placed before them by the Association. The first part of this was the improvement of sanitary conditions, removal of filth and the eradication of habits which gave rise to uncleanliness.

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

That meant the education of the village population by personal example and steady work.

The next part of the programme called for a radical change in the dietary of the people so that they might be enabled to draw greater sustenance from the articles of food ordinarily available in villages. This required that the processing of food-stuffs should be done in the villages, as in the past, and that pure food-stuffs should be made available in villages and not be drained away to towns. The last portion of the programme was the utilization of spare time of the cultivators, the revival of dead or dying industries, and teaching all classes of people the right use of leisure.

All these were difficult tasks, Mahatma Gandhi admitted, and those friends of his were not wrong who warned him that he had now in the evening of his life taken upon his head a heavier responsibility than the promotion of the charkha movement or the removal of untouchability. Both these activities, important as they were, formed only a part of the vast work of rural reconstruction.

Harijan, 16-5-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-5-1936

440. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 8, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your sweet letter. I leave by the Grand Trunk after 6 p. m. I had a long talk with J.[1] about the road through the village. His mind is working on it. Do keep yourself perfectly well and cheerful. Do not overwork yourself even though my cottage itself remains unfinished.[2] No fretting.

I hope you got the rammers.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6333. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9799

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] The addressee explains: "There were only six weeks in which to complete the cottage, the cowshed, the road and my hut on the hill. Balwant Singh, Munnalalbhai and myself worked at full speed from daybreak to night. Even so, rains began before we had fully completed everything. But the house was inhabitable when Bapu arrived in pouring rain to take up residence on the 16th of June."

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441. LETTER TO PANDURANG N. RAJBHOJ

May 8, 1936

BHAI RAJBHOJ,

I regard it as necessary to encourage the craft of leather-work. I hope you will acquire proficiency in this craft and you must not be satisfied till you attain it.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 795

442. SPEECH AT TRAINING SCHOOL FOR VILLAGE WORKERS

WARDHA,
May 8, 1936

I may confess that I was sceptical about the opening of the school.[1] We had not enough material, we had not much practical experience of village work, and I doubted whether we should be able to give the students anything helpful by way of training. I also doubted whether many students would be forthcoming and whether they would be the kind of men we need for village work. I am glad to say that my fears have been so far falsified, and that we have achieved during the brief three months more than was expected.

But today I propose to speak to you about the ideal of work and life that you have to keep in view and work towards.

You are here not for a career in the current sense of the term. Today man's worth is measured in rupees, annas, pies and a man's educational training is an article of commerce. If you have come with that measure in mind, you are doomed to disappointment. At the end of your studies you may start with an honorarium of ten rupees and end with it. You may not compare it with what a manager of a great firm or a high official gets.[2]

You should cultivate the true spirit of humility and appreciate

[1] The school was opened by the A.I.V.I.A at Maganwadi in January and had 37 students.

[2] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The following three paragraphs are from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

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properly the role you are to play in the life of the rural community.

Your ambition should be to serve the villagers more intensively and not to look to higher emoluments. You are not less valuable servants of India than members of the Indian Civil Service who draw a remuneration a hundred times higher than what you will get.

It is a topsy-turvy economics which is fashioning your destiny today when persons draw salaries which are nearly a thousand to two thousand times the average income of an Indian.

We have to change the current standards. We promise you no earthly careers, in fact we want to wean you from ambition of that kind. You are expected to bring your food-bill within Rs. 6 a month. The food-bill of an I. C. S. may come to Rs. 60 a month, but that does not mean that he is or will be on that account physically or intellectually or morally superior to you. He may be for all his sumptuous living even inferior in all these respects. You have come to this institution because, I presume, you do not value your qualifications in metal. You delight in giving your service to the country for a mere pittance. A man may earn thousands of rupees on the Stock Exchange but may be thoroughly useless for our purposes. He would be unhappy in our humble surroundings and we should be unhappy in his. We want ideal labourers in the country's cause. They will not bother about what food they get, or what comforts they are assured by the villagers whom they serve. They will trust to God for whatever they need, and will exult in the trials and tribulations they might have to undergo. This is inevitable in our country where we have 7,00,000 villages to think of. We cannot afford to have a salaried staff of workers who have an eye to regular increments, provident funds and pensions. Faithful service of the villagers is its own satisfaction.

Some of you will be tempted to ask if this is also the standard for the villagers. Not by any means. These prospects are for us servants and not for the village-folk our masters. We have sat on their backs all these years, and we want to accept voluntary and increasing poverty in order that our masters' lot may be much better than it is today. We have to enable them to earn much more than they are earning today. That is the aim of the Village Industries Association. It cannot prosper unless it has an ever-increasing number of servants such as I have described. May you be such servants.[1]

[1] What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle.*

He hoped, in conclusion, that this institution would serve to be an agency for forging links between the rural population in different parts of India.

Harijan, 23-5-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-5-1936

443. HINDI OR HINDUSTANI

Elsewhere the reader will find a deeply interesting letter[1] from an esteemed friend which was read to the delegates who recently assembled in Nagpur and who inaugurated the Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad. There is a similar letter from another Muslim friend enclosing leading article[2] on the subject in *The Bombay Chronicle* dated 27th April last. These letters and the *Chronicle* article generally represent my views on the question of common inter-provincial speech. However, I fear that there are perhaps limitations to my agreement which need to be publicly stated. The limitations if they may be so called are designed to compass the very end that my friends have in view.

At the outset I must dismiss from consideration the suspicion entertained by some Muslims. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with suspicion. No person's declarations or acts are above suspicion. The best way, in my opinion, for those who sincerely desire full communal unity and have themselves given no cause for suspicion is to act on the square without being swayed one way or the other by the passions of the moment, especially in matters like the Parishad which have nothing to do with the passions. The object of the Parishad is to gather together all that is best in all the languages of India and to make it available to the largest number of her inhabitants and therefore through a speech understood by the largest number. Urdu is undoubtedly one of the many languages and contains treasures which should be the common property of all India. No Indian who wishes to know the Muslim mind or to know all about Islam as it is being interpreted through the Indian medium can afford to ignore Urdu literature. And the Parishad just established will fail in its duty and purpose if it does not unlock for all India the treasures to be found in the current Urdu literature.

My correspondent has made a mistake which needs to be cleared. He could not have had before him the full text of Tandonji's speech[3] made not as the friend thinks at Banaras but at

[1] *Vide* Appendix II; also pp. 363-4.
[2] *Vide* Appendix III.
[3] At the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on April 5, 1936, at Allahabad

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Allahabad, or he would not have made the serious mistake of thinking that when Tandonji talked of 22 crores speaking Hindi, he had in mind only those who wrote the modern artificial Hindi. He made it clear that he referred to the vast mass of people of north of the Vindhya including the seven crores of Mussalmans who more or less spoke and understood the language which is evolved from Vrajabhasha and which has the latter's grammatical structure. The name Hindi given to it is not original. It was given by Muslim writers to what they wrote for the people of the North and what was undoubtedly like that which their Hindu brethren wrote. Later on a bifurcation took place and Hindi written in Devanagari came to be the speech of the Hindus of the North and Urdu written in Arabic or Persian script came to be the speech of the Muslims of the North. It is hardly true as yet to say that Urdu is common to the Mussalmans all over India. I know that the Ali Brothers[1] and I found it difficult to make ourselves understood by the Moplahs of Malabar through our Urdu. We had to have a Malayalee interpreter. We found a similar difficulty in East Bengal among its numerous Mussalmans. Both Tandonji and Rajendra Babu[2] therefore meant the same thing absolutely as my friend when they used the word 'Hindi'. The use of the word 'Hindustani' would not make their position clearer.

But the writer of the letter is on sure ground when he complains of the writers of the North who write a language which they call 'Hindi' but which very few persons even of the North would understand. It is an effort which is doomed to fail like Johnsonian speech.

Then why insist on 'Hindi or Hindustani' and why not simply say 'Hindustani', the writer may say. For one simple reason that it would be impertinent for me, a newcomer, to ask an association[3] of 25 years' standing to alter its name when the need for it is not clearly proved. The new Parishad is an offspring of the older Association and wants to cater both for the Muslims and Hindus of the North who speak the common mother tongue, it does not matter whether it is called Hindi or Hindustani. For me either word has the same connotation. But I would not quarrel with those who would use the word 'Hindi' if they mean the same speech as I do.

I do not understand the writer's objection to the adoption of the expression Akhil Bharatiya. It is an expression certainly

[1] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali
[2] As President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Nagpur
[3] Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

known to the Hindus all over India. And I make bold to say that even the majority of the Mussalmans of the North would understand it. The Indian culture of our times is in the making. Many of us are striving to produce a blend of all the cultures which seem today to be in clash with one another. No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive. There is no such thing as pure Aryan culture in existence today in India. Whether the Aryans were indigenous to India or were unwelcome intruders, does not interest me much. What does interest me is the fact that my remote ancestors blended with one another with the utmost freedom and we of the present generation are a result of that blend. Whether we are doing any good to the country of our birth and the tiny globe which sustains us or whether we are a burden, the future alone will show. So far as I am concerned the new Parishad and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan have the common good of all through a blending of the best in all India's languages. If they have not, they will perish. But blending to be that must not mean exclusion of everything that has an Aryan flavour any more than that of everything that has an Arabian or for that matter English or any other flavour.

I may not prolong the argument this week. There are still some important points to be covered. I hope to deal with them next week.[1]

Harijan, 9-5-1936

444. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 9, 1936

MY DEAR SLAVE-TO-BE,

This is being written on the train nearing Madras. We were in a crowded train at Wardha and were divided into three parties. Towards 10 o'clock we all had sleeping room quite comfortable. I wished you were with us. Except for the heat you would have enjoyed the journey. On way I have already collected Rs. 186 for the Harijan cause. I hope to make up Rs. 200 before reaching Madras.

I shall cease to be tyrant when you become a willing slave instead of a rebel for nothing—an imaginary rebel to an imaginary tyrant. Whether your idiocy will permit you to see such an obvious thing is another question. I shall wait, watch and see.

[1] *Vide* pp. 408-9.

I hope the parcel contains much you wanted. What about the bigger one for Ala? I can't understand why you have not got the lace. I must inquire.

Ku. and Shanta[1] will follow me in a day or two. I have asked Ku. to stop in Bombay a day or two longer, in order to have a thorough examination.

I hope you were a match for your opponents in the matter of birth-control argument. Non-violence is not an easy job. It is the subtlest force in the world. It easily eludes one. But I know that in the matter of non-violence you may be beaten in argument; you won't be dislodged from your conviction which had come to you before your reason had approved of it. Is that not so?

My address is Nandi Hill, Mysore State or simply Bangalore City.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3727. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6883

445. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
May 9, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

It was very good that you went to Trivandrum.[2] I gave you the trouble of travelling such a long distance only because of the importance of the work. I am sure much benefit has resulted from your visit.

I am writing this on the train. I had to send Mahadev to Poona as Chandrashanker who looks after the *Harijan* work has fallen ill. Mahadev will join me at Nandi Durg. Come to Nandi Durg and see me if you can and tell me how things are at Trivandrum. Write to me in detail if you cannot come over. I hope you were keeping well there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7982. Also C.W. 3078. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

[1] An Englishwoman
[2] *Vide* p. 374.

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446. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADRAS,
May 9, 1936

Declining to comment on Indian or world politics, Gandhiji told an Associated Press representative:

Talk to me about the weather, but politics—no. Having withdrawn from politics now, it will not be proper for me to talk about politics or politicians.

The Mahatma likewise declined to comment on the Abyssinian question, but read with interest Pandit Jawaharlal's rejoinder to the Italian Consul-General.

In reply to an enquiry about his health, the Mahatma said that he was now feeling very much better. The trip was not unpleasant. He had been travelling along the coast with a sea breeze blowing. At Wardha it was intensely hot, with hot winds continuing till midnight.

Referring to his visit to Nandi Hills where he will be staying for a fortnight and at Bangalore probably for a fortnight before returning to Wardha, Gandhiji said:

My jailor (Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel) will be there (Bangalore) half an hour before me to take charge of me. It may be that this time I may have to act as jailor to him (Mr. Vallabhbhai) because it is for his recuperation rather than mine that I am going to Nandi Hills.

The Hindu, 11-5-1936

447. DISCUSSION WITH C. V. RAMAN AND DR. RAHM[1]

[On or after *May 10, 1936*][2]

"He has discovered", said Sir Chandrashekharan, introducing Dr. Rahm, "an insect that can live without food and water for 12 years, and has come to India for further researches in biology."

[1] Introducing the interview, Mahadev Desai writes in his "Weekly Letter": "Sir Chandrashekharan Venkata Raman came up the hill one afternoon with Professor Rahm from Switzerland, a reputed biologist."

[2] Gandhiji reached Nandi Hills on May 10, 1936.

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[GANDHIJI:] When you discover the secret at the back of it, please pass it on to me.

[DR. RAHM:] But I am a scientist and a monk also, and when I decided to come to pay my respects to you, I thought of asking you a question or two. May I do so?

With pleasure.

Dr. Rahm was perplexed by the many warring creeds in the world and wondered if there was no way of ending the conflict.

It depends on Christians. If only they would make up their minds to unite with the others! But they will not do so. Their solution is universal acceptance of Christianity as they believe it. An English friend has been at me for the past thirty years trying to persuade me that there is nothing but damnation in Hinduism and that I must accept Christianity. When I was in jail I got, from separate sources, no less than three copies of the *Life of Sister Therese*, in the hope that I should follow her example and accept Jesus as the only begotten Son of God and my Saviour. I read the book prayerfully but I could not accept even St. Therese's testimony for myself. I must say I have an open mind, if indeed at this stage and age of my life I can be said to have an open mind on this question. Anyway I claim to have an open mind in this sense that if things were to happen to me as they did to Saul before he became Paul, I should not hesitate to be converted.

But today I rebel against orthodox Christianity, as I am convinced that it has distorted the message of Jesus. He was an Asiatic whose message was delivered through many media and when it had the backing of a Roman emperor it became an imperialist faith as it remains to this day. Of course there are noble but rare exceptions like Andrews and Elwin[1]. But the general trend is as I have indicated.

There was held the other day in Bombay a parliament of religions. Now a positive bar to a real parliament of religions is the refusal to accept an equal basis and a mutual regard for one another's faith. We must not forget that it is a parliament of religions, and not of a few religious-minded men. Did Christianity enter the parliament on a par with the others? When they do not do so openly, they secretly criticize us for our having many gods, forgetting that they have also many gods.

[1] Verrier Elwin

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Dr. Rahm was not perhaps prepared for this reply. He made no answer. He put another question in reply: "If we cannot unite, can't we fight atheism which seems to be so much on the increase?"

Sir C. V. Raman put in: "I shall answer your question. If there is a God we must look for Him in the universe. If He is not there, He is not worth looking for. I am being looked upon in various quarters as an atheist, but I am not. The growing discoveries in the science of astronomy and physics seem to me to be further and further revelations of God. Mahatmaji, religions cannot unite. Science offers the best opportunity for a complete fellowship. All men of science are brothers."

What about the converse? All who are not men of science are not brothers?

The distinguished physicist saw the joke and said: "But all can become men of science."

You will have to present a *kalma*[1] of science as Islam presents one.

"Science", said Sir C. V. Raman, "is nothing but a search for truth —truth not only in the physical world, but in the world of logic, psychology, behaviour and so on. The virtue of a truly scientific frame of mind is the readiness to reject what is false and untrue. It proclaims from the house-tops that there is no virtue in sticking to untruth. I think the latest biological discovery is that there is no fundamental cleavage between the life of man and the life of the lower creation and that salvation lies in the perfection of the biological instinct for the perpetuation of race—the instinct to sacrifice the individual for the sake of the species."

Harijan, 30-5-1936

448. TELEGRAM TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[2]

May 11, 1936

DR. ANSARI'S DEATH IS A STUNNING BLOW. HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST AMONG MUSSALMANS AS ALSO HINDUS. FOR ME HIS DEATH IS A PERSONAL LOSS. HE WAS MY INFALLIBLE GUIDE ON HINDU-

[1] Muslim prayer

[2] This was sent by Mahadev Desai with the following note: "We were all stunned this morning to receive the message from the Associated Press, . . . announcing the terrible news of Dr. Ansari's sudden death. Gandhiji immediately issued the following Press message." Dr. M. A. Ansari died on the train while going from Dehradun to Delhi on May 10.

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MUSLIM QUESTIONS. HE AND I WERE JUST PLANNING AN ATTACK ON THE GROWING SOCIAL EVILS. HE WAS THE POOR MAN'S PHYSICIAN IF HE WAS ALSO THAT OF THE PRINCES. HIS DEATH WILL BE MOURNED BY THOUSANDS FOR WHOM HE WAS THEIR SOLE CONSOLATION AND GUIDE.

The Hindu, 12-5-1936

449. TELEGRAM TO BEGUM ANSARI

May 11, 1936

JUST HEARD OF DOCTOR'S DEATH. YOUR LOSS IS EQUALLY MINE. I FEEL SUDDENLY FORLORN. I KNOW YOUR FAITH IN ALLAH IS GREAT. YOU THEREFORE STAND IN NO NEED OF CONSOLATION FROM POOR MORTALS LIKE ME. POOR ZOHRA. MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI WHO IS HERE JOINS ME IN THE CONDOLENCES.

The Hindu, 12-5-1936

450. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN[1]

May 11, 1936

I came to know of the Doctor's death before receiving your wire. I sent a wire to Begum Sahiba and a message to the Press. I have written, too, to Zohra. I expect from you a full account. Please tell me also who will look after the practice and the home. Few deaths leave me disconsolate as this has done. Quite wrongly, I know, but I had pictured Dr. Ansari as one destined to finish his century. When, therefore, I got the Press wire, I would not believe [it] at first. He had become part of the lives of many. But God is great. He gives and takes away. We never know His purpose. We dare not quarrel with His dispositions. Let us hope and believe that good will come out of this good friend's death, as nothing but good came out of his life. I know what this death means to the Jamia. My deepest sympathy with you all.

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

[1] Principal, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

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451. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 11, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have just got your letter. We reached here yesterday safe and sound. It was Sunday and so though I thought of you, I dismissed the talk of a wire. Those who try to approach the villagers have to forget that there is such a thing as telegrams. A weekly post is all they have and often not even that. In Segaon there is supposed to be a weekly delivery but I am told the postman in Wardha hands the letters to any Segaon man whom he comes across and whom *he* trusts!!!

Your letters are all torn [up] after I have read and answered them.

I hope you got my letter[1] written on the train in pencil hand. It was posted at Madras.

I walked up the hill from the base. It took me 2½ hours, the distance covered was over 5 miles. I walked very slow. Hence there was no fatigue. It was Dr. Ansari who wanted the Sardar to pass the summer on a hill. And he himself is no more. Evidently his death was quite sudden. For me it is a very personal loss. I relied upon his advice in so many matters.

The pressure put upon you not to resist your nomination to the Jullunder Municipality, I quite understand. Idiots being honest people and therefore impartial, are always in demand. How could it be otherwise—you, a princess among them—not the hereditary one but by right of merit.

I do not mind your trying to make Simla less insanitary. Only don't you catch the infection. Why don't you move the Municipal Committee? Of course, what is true of Segaon and Sindi must be true of the black town of Simla. I suppose you know that the old Indian part of Madras is to this day called black town. It has not occurred to any of the city fathers to change that name, though they give patriotic names to some of their streets. We cannot all of a sudden develop sanitary habits because we heave up to Simla heights. But the M. Committee can, if it will, enforce proper sanitation. Many things are enforced over there. Sanitary enforcement will be least open to objection.

[1] *Vide* pp. 385-86.

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Well, Nandi Hill is really a model of sanitation, of course enforced from above. The air is beautiful. The calmness is divine. No[1] cars or carts or even rickshaws. Only 30 families can live here comfortably. More are not allowed. I do not know a more secluded, cleaner, quieter hill. Sardar is in raptures over the stillness. I know you will love it, if you were here.

Ku. reaches Wednesday.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3571. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6380

452. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

NANDI HILL,
May 12, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

The reason why I sent you my reply[2] to Agatha was to know whether I had correctly represented your attitude.

But I am glad you have gone for me instead. I am not guilty of 'supporting a system which involves a continuous and devastating class war' or expressing approval of systems based essentially on *himsa* or 'of criticizing and condemning people for more or less minor faults and praising others who are guilty of far more important failings'.

It is possible that I am unconsciously guilty of the things you seem to impute to me. If so, you should give me concrete instances. I have already admitted that my method of dealing with things is different from yours as I see it. But there is no difference whatsoever about looking at the existing system.

Dr. Ansari's death is a severe blow. For me it was infinitely more than a political friendship.

I hope you are going to Khali or coming to me to breathe a little cool air.

Please tell Sarup I had her two notes. I will write to Sir Tej.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The original has "Not".
[2] *Vide* pp. 353-4.

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453. LETTER TO NUR M. MALIK

May 12, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter of 2nd ultimo. Much as I would like you to return to India I must not encourage you. I think you are better off as you are. It is a most uphill task to run a new hospital in India.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

NUR M. MALIK, M.D., ESQ.
7407 TWELFTH AVE.
DETROIT, MICHIGAN

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

454. LETTER TO SHARMA

May 12, 1936

DEAR SHARMA,

I am sorry that it is only now that I am able to reach your letter of 30th ultimo. Yes, I was delighted with the cartoons on swadeshi that I saw in the Lucknow Exhibition. I would like to possess a copy of them if it is available.

So far as khadi exhibits in a swadeshi exhibition which admits mill-cloth are concerned, it is a ticklish question. I wish you had discussed it with Shankerlal Banker when he was in Lucknow. If khadi is not exhibited in such exhibitions there are sound business reasons for the absence. But I am myself open to conviction. The first thing, however, for you to do is to convert Shankerlal Banker.

Yours sincerely,

THE MANAGER
ALLAHABAD SWADESHI LEAGUE
ALLAHABAD

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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455. LETTER TO M. B. GODBOLE

May 12, 1936

DEAR DR. GODBOLE,

Please forgive me for my inability to acknowledge your letter of 15th March last earlier. It was impossible as I was moving to and fro. I was able to read it only the other day. I am sorry to have to disappoint you for going through Dr. Lindlahr's volumes. It did not strike me that reprinting of the volumes would be of much use. Some of the conclusions of the author are dogmatic and some others are based on insufficient observation.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

DR. M. B. GODBOLE
P.B. 19
POONA CITY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

456. TELEGRAM TO PRABHAVATI

May 13, 1936

PRABHAVATI
BABU HARSUDAYAL
SITAB DIARA

WRITTEN REGULARLY. WRITING TODAY. HOPE YOU WELL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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457. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

NANDI HILL,
May 13, 1936

DEAR BROTHER,

Yes, I had need of sympathy on Ansari's death. Your letter was therefore most welcome. Few deaths make me disconsolate. This one has made me so. Not only were our hearts one but we had so much in common. We had some joint plans also in view. All these have been dashed to pieces at a stroke. Your recalling the old days in Delhi adds to the poignancy of the grief.

I do hope you are well. We must meet before Sardar and I leave this place.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 286

458. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your telegram last night. How am I to prevent your unhappiness ? I have of course written[1] to you in the matter of Jayaprakash's visit to me and the proposal to send you to Banaras. Do not be impatient. It is not likely that I won't write to you at all. It is another matter that you may get the letters at irregular intervals. As I understand from your telegram that you will reach Srinagar on the 15th, I am sending this to that place. I expect you are in good health now and are taking milk regularly. What about the Banaras proposal? Write to me frankly whatever you have to say without any reserve. I shall deal with your letter according as you wish. We reached here on Sunday. It is an excellent place. We have here peace and solitude. There are very few residents as the hill is a small one. I would have been happy to have you here with us. Ba, too, remembers you. Our party comprises Sardar, Mani, Kusum Gandhi, Tara Mashruwala, Navin, Kanti,

[1] *Vide* pp. 355-6.

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Kanu, Ba and me. Kumarappa and Shanta are arriving today and Kakasaheb in about four days. Sardar is keeping well. As for Tara one doesn't know when she will get well, though she is sure to. Even Kusum who has been weak is expected to recover here. Our stay here will, it seems, last till the 15th June, part of the time having to be spent at Bangalore.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3463

459. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 14, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is quite like you to be laid up. How I wish I could exercise the authority of a tyrant to drag you down to this beauty spot. No worry, no noises, not a particle of dust, perfect quiet, subdued foliage and refreshing coolness, no social functions, nice tennis ground, beautiful walks. But what can a poor tyrant do to an idiot-rebel? Therefore you will suffer and eat the dust of Simla rather than breathe the dustless fresh air of Nandi. I hope to have better news in your next letter. Don't you go near those dirty places in this state of your health.

Ku. and Shanta already feel much better. They are having good walks.

Of course when you come to Segaon, ever faithful Nabi Bux shall be with you.

Love.

TYRANT
WITHOUT AUTHORITY

From the original: C.W. 3572. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6381

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460. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter. Yes, it is very delightful here. My personal love wishes you were here to share with us the quiet and isolation of this beautiful hill. My impersonal love tells me you are better off where you are for it is the part of duty. Kumarappa and Shanta came in yesterday. Sardar is feeling much better here. He takes very long walks with impunity and eats much better than before.

Dr. Ansari's death was a great shock to me. I have hardly got over it yet. I feel the want of his presence in so many things.

I am glad you are making good progress with the hut. I understand what you say about the road. You will do what is the best. I have implicit faith in your judgment in these matters.

Balwantsingh and Munnalal must not be a burden on you in any shape or form. I enclose notes for them.[1]

I hope by the time this reaches you, the land[2] in Varoda will have been taken.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6334. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9800

[1] *Vide* the following item. The letter to Munnalal is not available.

[2] For the addressee's cottage

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461. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

NANDI DURG,
May 14, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Mirabehn tells me that you have reached Segaon. Good. Now help her and be cheerful. I hope you will not even want to go anywhere till I return. Train Govind and Dashrath well. Preserve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1884

462. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 14, 1936

MY DEAR CHILD,

May God give you full strength to live up to your motto, 'It is no easy matter to count always loss as gain, in joy as well as pain.' I know anyway that your life is not in vain. Of course you are right in not coming to me. You will come, when God wills it.

I hope Tangai[1] is quite well again. Kisses to the children. See if they would write to me. Here is a little note[2] for them.

Don't coax them to write.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 139. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] Addressee's daughter
[2] *Vide* the following item.

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463. LETTER TO NAN[1] AND TANGAI MENON

May 14, 1936

DEAR CHILDREN,

Do you remember that there was a time when you used to write to me? Should you not—now that you have grown in years and wisdom? I was sorry to hear of Tangai's illness. The hat for delicate children like you is a necessary article of wear.

Love and kisses from
BAPU

[PS.]

Esther will tell you all about where I am at present.

My Dear Child, p. 122

464. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May 14, 1936

BHAI BAPA,

I send with this a cheque for Rs. 200 received from Sophia Wadia[2]. The receipt need not be sent to her. Send it to me.

I understand what you say regarding Sastri. I enclose [a report of] the work done in Madras in four hours. Jagannathdas had arranged a prayer meeting in Kodambakkam, but I refused to go till an assurance was given that the institution would be continued. Jagannathdas gave the required assurance, which I send with this. Please preserve it. I met Pratapmalji also. He, too, has undertaken to solve the financial worries, but he asked for somebody who would be able to create there the atmosphere that we have in the Ashram. How can I find such a person? I met Venkatasubbiah here and discussed the problem with him. He and the others expressed their dislike of Sastri. Venkatasubbiah says, however, that they will do without

[1] Daughter of Esther Menon
[2] Madam Sophia Wadia, Indian representative on the P. E. N.

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Sastri and Ganesan. One of the four will visit the place daily by turns. This is what I have been able to do. Kindly write from there now and ask them clearly to relieve Ganesan. Sastri's resignation has already been accepted. You can mention Jagannathdas's letter and say that you hope that the four of them will carry on the work.

Since Dr. Ansari had detained Amtussalaam please accommodate her. Malkani, poor man, writes and tells me that he could not tolerate the thought that she had to leave because of Rukmini. The latter does not tolerate anybody. But does that mean that they should all leave? I have written a strong letter[1] to her. Amtussalaam is not likely to pay attention to Rukmini's words. She will remain happy if you go on giving her some work.

I hope that your letters are opened before they are sent to you. If there is any cheque or such things in an envelope, they should not follow you from place to place.

You, too, have been travelling a good deal. It seems you are becoming young again. If you share your experiences with the people, they will be of priceless value to them. Garhwal is a 'sealed book' for most people. I have heard that it is a very beautiful but a very poor region.

We are in Nandi Durg, enjoying its pleasant air.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1122

465. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM AND VIJAYA GANDHI

May 14, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM AND VIJAYA[2],

May you live a long married life, and may you both devote your life to service. These are my wishes and my blessings. There is no place for sensual pleasure in married life; the coming together of man and wife should be only for the sake of begetting progeny. Recently I wrote an article[3] suggesting this. You should try to live accordingly if you like my idea. A certain discipline has

[1] *Vide* p. 376.
[2] Daughter of Harakhchand Motichand Shah
[3] *Vide* pp. 309-12.

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to be observed to be able to live such a life. Only then can one find the aim within reach.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

466. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 14, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. Here are my blessings to the bride and the bridegroom.[1] I am also enclosing yarn garlands for them both. Other letters that I intend writing will also be enclosed in this packet.

Kanu is enjoying himself and remains absorbed in his work. He is full of idealism and will have, I feel, a bright future.

Kusum, too, is well enough. I hope you won't mind if she cannot reach there before the 20th or 22nd, as we shall be in Mysore till the 15th [of June] at any rate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8489. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

467. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 14, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter.

How can it be hot there? That is the beauty of a coastal place.

You are a rash and impatient person. You could not have seen your way even if you had not indulged in the adventure at Segaon. Adventure is a good thing if undertaken at the right time and for a right cause. Otherwise it is sheer rashness. Your coming to Segaon was no better. The point in recalling

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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this incident is only to prevent its recurrence. Yes, there you have of course to act with caution.

I have already written to Mirabehn[1] to accommodate you if you go there before me. I have also her reply in the affirmative. But if you go, do it realizing that it is your dharma; do not go merely to please me. I have already told you that I am surely going to take you to Segaon. I am not going to change my word. Do not neglect your health. We are all fine here. The place is very quiet and small.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9341. Also C.W. 6616. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

468. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

May 14, 1936

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your letter reached me only last evening. Your birthday falls today. Where shall I send the telegram? It may not reach you today even if I should send it now. It is 2.45 and we are in Nandi Durg. You have my blessings of course. May you live long and may your noble inclinations ever increase!

Pranams to Maji. Blessings to Gokibehn[2] and Sumati[3].

Blessings form
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4725. Courtesy: Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] *Vide* p. 375.
[2] & [3] Addressee's father's sister and wife

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469. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

May 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

My previous opinions have changed. In the past I insisted on eschewing quinine, etc., but now I do not. There is no harm in taking them as a temporary measure. We do not know all the natural cures and the ones that we know are not effective against all diseases. *Neem* leaves ought not to be shunned simply on account of their bitter taste; their efficacy is well known. Similarly, some qualities of tamarind also are universally acknowledged. However, there is no such rule that one or the other thing must prove beneficial to everyone. There is no reason, either, to believe that milk no more agrees with you because of the quinine. The rule about forgoing the morning meal [on the day] of the dose does not apply to those who do not take the evening meal. But you may discontinue the morning meal if it does not suit you. Nor do you need to make it a rule to have a weekly fast. In case of a feeling like indigestion you should of course abstain from food. It is good that the pain in your spine has disappeared. Yes, I do intend to settle in Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4270

470. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

NANDI,
May 15, 1936

JAMNALAL BAJAJ
WARDHA

WIRE PARTICULARS TARABEHN'S[1] DEATH.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 180

[1] Mary Chesley had taken ill while on a pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar. She died in a hospital, leaving all her property and money in Canadian banks to Gandhiji. *Vide* also "In Memoriam", pp. 433-4.

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471. TELEGRAM TO SATYADEV

May [*15*][1], *1936*

SATYADEVJI
KANKHAL

WIRE PARTICULARS OF TARABEHN'S DEATH.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

472. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

NANDI HILL,
May 15, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I have just had a wire saying that Tara died at Hrishikesh. The news is stunning, unbelievable. I have no further particulars. I had warned her against braving the pilgrimage. But she had an iron will. Once it was made up it was immovable. I have wired for particulars. Perhaps you have them already. Her forgiving nature and charity had captivated me. Her belief in the goodness of human nature was beyond all praise. She has sacrificed herself for the cause she believed in. Shanta is here and she has given Miss Blythe's address. Miss B. was her partner. You will tell me all you know and I ought to know about Tara. I got your letter yesterday. All these days I had taken you at your word and never wrote to you.

I am looking forward to Miss Madden's letter. I am glad she will be with you for one year. Tara wanted me to invite her to see me again. There was no question of doing so immediately as I was coming to Nandi. But I think the present arrangement is better. Only, she must go slow in making changes in her life. Europeans simply cannot make some changes. Each one has to recognize his limitations. Of course you can spend for the roof and the like what you might have saved from your

[1] The source has "14", obviously a slip. Gandhiji received the news of Mary Chesley's death only on May 15; *vide* the following item.

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expenses. You will take a lesson from Tara's life and not overdo things.[1]

The office is and still will be at Maganwadi. Segaon is a good place. You will see it one of these days, I hope.

This is a beautiful place. Not too high. It is isolated and quiet. Not many people can live here. No cars or carts or even horses. We walked up. It took me 2½ hours. Writing-paper has improved all over. Choudhary[2] the expert has revolutionized the making of hand-made paper. And an assured demand has cropped up for the time being. Kumarappa is with me. Of course Ba is and also Sardar and Manibehn. I have come here for Sardar's health. Dr. Ansari insisted on his having a change to a hill. And he himself is gone! ! ! God's will is there unmistakably in everything. Ours is only to strive in all humility.

Love to both of you.

BAPU

[PS.]

The enclosed is for Gopal.[3] Try to read it and hand it to him or send wherever he is.

From a photostat: G.N. 6060. Also C.W. 3390. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

473. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

Unrevised *May 15, 1936*

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Cholera cases need organized treatment. But I suppose nothing of the kind is yet possible in our country. There is not that corporate sense of responsibility. The few of us who have must persevere before a visible impression is made.

Do you suggest anything to make the exhibition less expensive, and more instructive? This one[4] was instructive enough as far as it went. It was not inexpensive. Later on it drew huge crowds and there will be practically no loss, if at all. We had Rs. 25,000 entrance fees and Rs. 5,000 from stalls. Khadi sold very well and so did many other things. You must have got

[1] The addressee was doing social work in Khedi, a village near Betul.
[2] Yadavrao S. Choudhary
[3] The letter is not available.
[4] At Lucknow

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the detailed guide-book. Go through it and make concrete suggestions.

If frequent change of residence keeps you in good form, you should arrange your work accordingly. It is no use making of one residence an inevitable thing. When you have many forms of service open to you, you have to take that which is most conducive[1] to your health. If Atrai[2] was the only thing open and obligatory, I should understand consecration unto death. You must do everything humanly possible to keep your body a fit instrument of service.

Pyarelal is there. I hope he will accept your guidance.

I hope both you and Hemprabha are well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1629

474. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

May 15, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your postcard. I understand what you say about Sumitra. Sardar told us about Vanamala's adventure. I am now trying to free Sumitra from the botheration. You were quite right in sending her. Ramdas has by now realized that Sumitra only harms herself by going to her mother.

I am sending herewith the letter which reports that a sum of Rs. . . .[3] has been paid to the Gandhi Seva Sangh on account of the Goseva Sangh. File the letter in the records there.

The climate here is beautiful, and Sardar says that [Mt.] Abu has now become stale, while this hill is an ideal one from the standpoint of sanitation. For quietness no other place can excel it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9093

[1] The source has "inductive".
[2] A place in Bengal
[3] Illegible

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475. A GREAT FRIEND GONE

It is not usual in these columns to have obituary notices of all the great men who pass away. This is a journal devoted to a special cause. Such notices are taken generally only of those who had specially identified themselves with the Harijan cause. I had to use extraordinary self-restraint to avoid noticing Kamala Nehru's death. It almost became an oppression. But I need exercise no such restraint about Dr. Ansari's death. For he was essentially a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity with Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan. Dr. Ansari never wavered in his faith even when it was put to a severe test. He was an orthodox Mussalman proud of his descent from the helpers of the Prophet when the latter was most in need of help. His very staunchness and his intimate knowledge of Islam made Dr. Ansari a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. It is no exaggeration to say that he had at least as many Hindu as he had Mussalman friends. He was one of the ablest physicians in all India. His advice was freely available to the poor of all races. And what he earned from the princes and rich men, he spent with both hands among his many needy friends. No beggar approached him without emptying whatever his pocket contained, and he never counted what he gave. He was a tower of strength to hundreds of men and women who swore by him. I have no doubt that he has left many literally weeping for the personal loss they have sustained. He has left a wife who is a philosopher though invalid. She is too brave and too much of a believer to shed a tear over her loss. But the many whom I have in mind are no philosophers. Their faith in God is vapoury; their faith in Dr. Ansari was living. It was no fault of theirs that their faith in God was weak as with most of us. They had many proofs of the Doctor's friendship when they thought God had forsaken them. They little knew that even the great Doctor could only help them so long as his Maker allowed him. Would that what he could not accomplish while he was alive would be accomplished by his death.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

476. *HINDI OR HINDUSTANI–II*

In the previous article[1] I have already showed how and why I regard Hindi and Hindustani as synonymous terms and why it is necessary to retain the use of the word 'Hindi'.

An objection to the use of the word 'Hindi' has been thus stated in the letter[2] reproduced in the last issue:

> It has been studied by Mussalmans in the past and they have done as much if not more than their Hindu brethren to raise it to the status of a literary language. But it has also religious and cultural associations with which Mussalmans as a whole cannot identify themselves. Besides, it is now evolving a vocabulary that is exclusively its own and is generally unintelligible to those who know only Urdu.

If the Mussalmans of old studied and enriched Hindi in the past, why should they of the present generation avoid it? Surely the Hindi of old had greater religious and cultural associations than modern Hindi has today. And should one avoid the use of a language because of its religious and cultural associations? Must I avoid Arabic and Persian for their religious and cultural associations? I may not be affected by the latter, if I do not want to be or if I have antipathy towards them. Surely if we are to live together as blood-brothers that we are, we may not fight shy of each other's culture. And why quarrel with the use of Sanskrit words in Hindi to the point of rebelling against the language itself? The unnatural process of using Sanskrit words in the place of simpler current words or giving the derived words their original Sanskrit form is undoubtedly a reprehensible practice and robs a language of its music. But a certain use of Sanskrit words, as the nation expands, is inevitable in the hands of Hindus who know only Sanskrit, as the use of Arabic is inevitable in the hands of Mussalmans who know only Arabic, though both write the same language and have no special likes or dislikes. Educated Hindus and Mussalmans will have to acquaint themselves with both the forms. Is this not true of all growing languages? Educated Englishmen know both 'sympathy' and 'fellow-feeling' or 'fatherly' and 'paternal' or 'yearly' and

[1] *Vide* pp. 383-5.

[2] For extracts from the letter, *vide* Appendix II.

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'annual'. The difficulty with us is that just now our hearts are not one and the best of us are affected by the virus of mutual suspicion.

Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are different names for the same speech just as the dialects of Cornwall, Lancashire and Middlesex are different names for the same speech. What is being aimed at today is not to evolve a new language but to adopt the language known under the three names as the inter-provincial language. I believe Shri Munshi was right when he defended the form of the language used in *Hans*. For rendering, say, a Tamil or Telugu piece into Hindi or Hindustani, the use of Sanskrit words is almost inevitable, even as the use of Arabic words would be inevitable if one was translating an Arabic piece into Hindi or Hindustani. Rabindranath's *Gitanjali* in Hindi would read much less musical than it does, if its Hindi or Hindustani translation studiously avoided the Sanskrit words with which Bengali is replete. Literary Mussalmans like Moulvi Abdul Haq Sahib or Aquil Sahib have but to make their own contribution to the common speech to avoid its degenerating into a language only spoken by the Hindus. I would if I could wean them from treating the Urdu form as the exclusive speech of Mussalmans, as I would wean literary Hindus from treating Hindi as the exclusive speech of Hindus. If none of them is weaned, there will be no common speech for Hindus and Mussalmans of the North, no matter by what name it is known. Here at least, therefore, we do not need to quarrel about the name. Call it by what name you like, if only you mean the same thing in all sincerity.

There remains the question of script. At the present moment insistence on Devanagari by Mussalmans is not to be thought of. Insistence on the adoption of Arabic script by the vast mass of Hindus is still less thinkable. What therefore I have suggested as the definition of Hindi or Hindustani is 'that language which is generally spoken by Hindus and Mussalmans of the North, whether written in Devanagari or Urdu'. I abide by that definition, in spite of protests to the contrary. But there is undoubtedly a Devanagari movement with which I have allied myself whole-heartedly and that is to have it as the common script for all the languages spoken in the different provinces, especially those which have a large Sanskrit vocabulary. Anyway, an attempt is being made to transcribe in Devanagari script the most precious treasures of all the languages of India.

Harijan, 16-5-1936

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477. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

NANDI DURG,
May 16, 1936

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You must have received an unexpected letter[1] from me even before I got yours. The noble hopes expressed in it could be entertained only of one like you brought up in the Ashram from childhood. Vijaya alone would know the state of her mind but you have to be a teacher to her. The circumstance is common in the Hindu family. If you wish to follow the duties of married life as I have suggested, I have also outlined its restrictions in my article. If you find these difficult, it only means that you have not really understood the one purpose of sexual intercourse. Even to the husband the wife is a mother. It has been said in a book that the woman giving birth to a child gives birth to a portion of the husband himself, and that therefore after she has conceived she deserves to be daily honoured with a *namaskara* much as his own mother. Such things are looked upon as intellectual indulgence. The conviction that such things need to be put into practice has not gone down people's throat. Hence they turn a deaf ear to any talk of acting according to it. "The path of God is for the brave alone." Read this to Vijaya if you think it fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 400-1.

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478. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 16, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith a letter[1] for Purushottam and Marybehn's letter to you. Yesterday I had a telegram telling me of the death at Rishikesh of a very benevolent lady, Tarabehn Chesley, whom you do not know. She was on her way to Badri-Kedar with two other women. She was a learned person, living an exceedingly simple life.

Kusum is having a nice time. She comes out daily for a walk with me. I do hope this place will help her recover her health. Kanu moves about, absorbed in his work. He has been trying to train his hand on the *dilruba*[2], and his instrument accompanies the *Ramayana* recitation every day. All the three brothers[3] sing the verses in unison, and now Kusum has joined them. Sardar walks for four hours every day, and Mahadev and Mani accompany him. It is beyond my capacity to take such long walks. Kumarappa and Shantabehn are of course here. Both are good company to each other and spend their time working. Ba keeps fairly good health. This is how our little world here goes on.

I learn from Kusum's talks that the Bal Mandir has been running at a loss. In my opinion, we should send an account of income and expenditure to the parents and notify to them that the Bal Mandir would be closed if they did not help to meet this expenditure. You may also mention that the house rent, etc., is not included in the accounts. You should, however, include Kusum's salary of Rs. 35 or 40 as also those of the other teachers, if any, whatever they are paid. We might go about begging to run the school if the children belonged to the Harijan or some other so-called lower communities, but certainly not for the others; and emphatically not a Bal Mandir. The very poor cannot afford to send their children there; nor is there any great need that they should. Please think over

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] A stringed musical instrument

[3] Kanti Gandhi, Kanu Gandhi and Navin Gandhi; in fact, cousins

this and, if you are convinced about it, you should consult the Committee and give the parents notice of one or two months. Kusum says that you have increased the fee already, in which case the increase should be only to the extent of meeting the increased cost. You must be aware that there are several schools in the country, which bring profits to the owners after defraying all expenses. Many schools, for example, the Bharda High School, are a source of income. Only the Proprietary High School of Ahmedabad and some others regarded as national schools and some experimental schools are run with the help of contributions raised from the public. I think we should get away from this kind of work and give our time to work among Harijans and in the villages.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8490. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

479. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 16, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I read the two lines you added to Nimu's letter to me. See that you preserve your health. Give the body as much milk, curds and ghee as it might need. It is only if you preserve your health that I shall be able to take from you all the work I want. Tell Bhanubapa that an obstacle has again cropped up. A fresh estimate is contemplated for the place where the building is to be put up. This is a complicated affair. Perhaps Mahadev will have to be sent to Nasik.

Did you hear anything further as regards the summons?

Let Nimu have her studies to her fill.

All are well and happy here. The coolness here and the hot winds there—what a contrast! Yet one may not say that here I am in better health than there. The fact is that heat does not affect me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10714

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480. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

NANDI DURG,
May 17, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,

All that you write about Doctor Saheb is perfectly true. We have no one to take his place. But we do not know if his death was for the good or otherwise. God alone is the best judge. He gives and He takes away. We should only learn a lesson from Doctor Saheb's death. We should carry on from where he left. Mourning and fasting serve no purpose. Those who believe in God have no reason to fear death. Those who are born are bound to die. You do not want any more clarification on your earlier letters, do you? Now you do not have to go to Patiala or Chitrakoot or even to join me. To me you can come whenever you feel like it. Otherwise the Harijan Ashram is all you should devote yourself to. This is not my own suggestion but deduced from the last letter from Doctor Saheb. You are taking, I hope, the medicine prescribed by him. We are all well. I do not write separately to Tyagiji. Rajkishori is happy, I suppose.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 335

481. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 18, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You must have seen all I have written about Dr. Ansari.[1] I may weep over his death selfishly. But there need be no sorrow over his death, if one is certain, as I am, that it is only the perishable body that has perished, not the indestructible soul within. Having put off the old garment, it will put on a new and better one.[2] His services are not lost. If we have

[1] *Vide* p. 407.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 20 and 22

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faith we may be sure that he is serving even now though in an unseen manner. Being used only to relying upon the feeble and often unreliable evidence of our senses, we refuse to believe that things go on which transcend our senses and which are far more durable and useful than the passing show our senses note and make us alternately weep and laugh. Enough of this wisdom-spinning.

Yes, I shall try to secure for you ivory goods and the rest within the limits assigned by you.

Ku. is flourishing. Dr. Subba Rao will examine him and Shanta about the 20th instant.

I hope you have been able to persuade Dalip to take "rest and be thankful". The court work will go on without him for a few weeks or months. The services have taken good care about their work.

Why do you worry about your inability to invite Mira? These are limitations of a joint family which both you and I must recognize. Friendships do not exist, must not, for selfish gratification. Mira is quite happy though she is melting in Wardha heat. She is joyous in that she is superintending the creation of my hut. She is looking after the minutest detail with the greatest care. And she is glad too that I shall be her neighbour in the very near future D. V.

You are exasperating. When you meet me you will forget all about Kallenbach[1]. Why not out with the talk? Let me share the joke or own up the shame, if I see any in what I might have said. But I hear so many things about myself about which I am an utter stranger that I shall not be surprised if what you have heard ranks among them.

Love to you all.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3573. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6382

[1] A German architect who became a friend and associate of Gandhiji in South Africa; *vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", p. 451.

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482. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 18, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you got my letter[1] from Nandi.

Yes, Dr. Ansari's death is a great personal loss. Both birth and death are great mysteries. If death is not a prelude to another life, the intermediate period is a cruel mockery. We must learn the art of never grieving over death no matter when and to whom it comes. I suppose that we shall do when we have really learnt to be utterly indifferent to our own and the indifference will come when we are every moment conscious of having done the task to which we are called. But how shall we know the task? By knowing God's will. How shall we know the will? By prayer and right living. Indeed, prayer should mean right living. There is a *bhajan* we sing every day before the *Ramayana* commences whose refrain is "Prayer has been never known to have failed anybody. Prayer means being one with God."

I am glad you are making progress with the buildings. Rs. 300 for the land and the building in Varoda should prove enough for the time being at any rate. I wish you would be able to squeeze in the fence. There need be no paid labour for it. Balwantsingh and Munnalal should be able under your direction to put it up. The material should cost practically nothing. Fence and some shade is the chief thing. We are all flourishing. But those who are profiting most are Sardar, Shanta and Ku. They were the ones who positively needed the bracing air of a hill. The others not so much and so they do not show visible signs of gain. I see we shall not be able to move away from Mysore before 15th June.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6335. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9801

[1] *Vide* p. 397.

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483. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

May 18, 1936

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are being tested. Why should you have 'flu even in a cool place like Kodai? But I know you will keep your peace even in the midst of tortures and live up to your motto.[1] You will tell me when you are free. My prayers and my love are with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: No. 140. Courtesy: National Archives of India

484. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

May 18, 1936

DEAR GURJALE,

I have your letter. Much as I should like to visit you, I cannot do it. I have come here for Sardar's health. I have other patients, too, with me. And I must keep time.

My advice to you is for you simply and solely to live like a villager. Therefore your own expenses can only be under Rs. 10 per month. If there is any productive work to be done, get it done by paid labour. Labour combined with intelligence must always be self-supporting.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1399

[1] *Vide* p. 398.

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485. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

May [*18, 1936*][1]

BHAI BAPA,

I see the point about Amtussalaam. Her silliness we can afford to suffer, but Rukmini's hurts.

I do not see how Rajaji's suggestion can be acted upon. We may procure ten thousand acres of land right now, but who will put it to use? How can it be colonized? Supposing we get the land in Dharampur[2]—would it be of any use? I think, therefore, the idea is not worth consideration. We have no remedy but that of exposing the missionaries' tactics and rendering more and more service if possible to Harijans.

Now about the Rs. 3,000. He has left it to me and hence I have not sent the sum on to you. I would soon spend it all if I came across a place suffering from acute scarcity of water. I understand that the sum is not such as could be included in our current fund. Do you know of any cause for which you can spend it right now? If so I shall send the sum for it or to you if you ask for it. Otherwise my idea is to spend the sum on the repair of wells for Harijans, which comes under my purview. Would it not be right to spend it that way rather than ask for money from you when such need arises? All the same, I am prepared to act according to your wishes.

Now the fourth thing, which is a new one. Hardly could we persuade Surajbehn[3] to quit when a demand for the building has come on behalf of the Women's Servants of India. For my part, I think that these women's idea is quite different. It smells of Western polish. These women do not wish to go along the lines that I have all along followed in the course of my work among women. There may well be need for their work, but I think we should not use this income for such a purpose. You should however give your opinion with a free mind, and explain to me if I am making any mistake. While you are roasting there, we are enjoying the coolness of this place. What can be done? I envy you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1157

[1] From the contents and the G.N. Register

[2] A small town in the inhospitable terrain of the Dangs

[3] A worker of the Bhagini Samaj, Bombay

486. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 18, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You have been causing some anxiety. It is over 12 days since I got your little note. There was a wire from you, to which also I have replied.[1] How are you keeping now? Have you started taking milk? How much milk do you take? What is your decision?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3469

487. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 18, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

Only today have I reached your letter of May 1. It was received during the days of our preparation for Nandi and it remained unattended to. Now Dr. Ansari is no more. I had such faith in his treatment that whenever a patient was under his care I used to rest fully assured. But I do not know what you will do now. Illness seems to be your constant companion. Now give me all the details.

It was the right thing to close down the Bhandar. Your health would not permit you to cope with this work. And it becomes difficult to carry on such an enterprise solely depending on others. I understand what you say about Nair[2]. If no one will stay with him the Ashram may be closed down. Nair may return to Malabar or work under the Harijan Sangh or come over to me. Coming to me implies that I shall post him anywhere. It will not be possible to keep him at Segaon where I am going to

[1] *Vide* p. 394.
[2] Krishnan Nair

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live. You may show this letter to him, so that I need not write separately to him. If not the whole of it, give him a copy of this paragraph.

If you have a balance of Rs. 50 or whatever the amount, please send it to me. I shall utilize it as I wish. You should keep with you only the amount required for your maintenance.

You have of course my permission to come to Wardha whenever you wish. You must not take up any work involving permanent responsibility. You may take up only such work as can be relinquished whenever you have to, or none at all. Your primary duty is to improve your health which you must somehow improve. It appears that the Delhi climate suits you best; therefore you should live there most of the time and engage yourself if you can in the kind of work I have suggested. It will be good if you live in a rented place in the Harijan Nivas. Kshama had offered to erect a room if some land near the colony could be acquired. You could live there paying rent if she accepts it. I have made all the suggestions I could, except one. Gadodiaji[1] has come across a hakim practising nature cure. Please see him. His treatment might prove beneficial to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2447

488. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 18, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,

Why are you quarrelling with Bapa? Was not whatever he wrote meant for your own good, to protect you from Rukmini? Is he to blame? Bapa asks me to explain it to you. Tell me what there is to explain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 336

[1] Lakshmi Narayan Gadodia

489. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

NANDI HILL,
May 19, 1936

DEAR TEACHER OF SLANG,

You are adding to your titles. Your breast won't hold them all. Then perhaps you will shed some or better still select one and reject the rest.

Terrible lightning has just now burnt up all the fuses and we are in utter darkness. A little light has been made up for me with cotton wicks and eating oil. This bungalow seems to have no substitute for electric lights.

It was good you got the Tr.[1] Maharani to give you Rs. 500.

I do hope they will accept your terms about Urdu broadcast. You certainly deserve congratulations.

Mrs. Marsden will be supplied with Mahadev's fine yarn. His is the finest.

I must trace the lace. It must not be lost.

I hope you are quite restored now.

Ku. and Shanta are flourishing.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3574. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6383

490. A LETTER

May 19, 1936

My search is not outward, it is inward. Perhaps the search is its own reward. If an embodied guru is a necessity in my case, God will send him to me.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] Travancore

[2] The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji to accept as his guru a certain person living near Madras.

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491. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 19, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

After many days I have your letter today. Apart from the letters I wrote to you in April, I wrote on May 1, 12[1] and 18. Whose fault could it be if you got none of them? You must take it that I do write in reply to yours and, in the absence of any letter from you, would certainly write a reminder card. I shall ask Kanti why he has not been writing.

You miscalculate the dates. Yours was [received] not on the 17th but on the 19th and was written on the 14th, and on that basis this should reach you on the 24th, and if you do not get my letters by then wire receipt of this. I shall await your wire on the 24th and the 25th unless I hear from you in the mean while. Yes, Jayaprakash saw me and spoke to me. Patwardhan had accompanied him. He said nothing in reply to the letter I had written. I understood that he did not want to reply. He spoke to me only of your future, proposing that you should undergo Montessorie training for three months at Kashi and then he wants you to live in Patna. He sought my consent, which I readily gave. There can be no harm in your learning the Montessorie method, though I don't fancy it. You should, however, follow his wish and train yourself in the Montessorie method. I expect you will then be staying in Patna or some such place. I believe you will decide this point with him in a personal talk. This is the substance of our talk. Your things have gone with Jayaprakash.

How very foolish of you that you did not write to me to say that you were unwell. Do you have the fainting fits now? What about taking milk? Why did you have to go to Banaras? And again why to Sitab Diyara? What is your routine at Srinagar ?

I have already told you about our party. All are fine. Sardar is daily having walks for four hours, Mani and Mahadev accompanying. Kumarappa and Shanta have benefited much.

[1] This appears to be a slip for '13'.

Kaka arrived the day before yesterday. Ba and I are well. Tari and Kusum continue to be weak. *Ramayana* recitation and the prayers go on as usual. I expect the Ayodhyakanda will be over tomorrow. The address is given in my letter of the 1st or 12th.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3470

492. LETTER TO RAMIBEHN K. PAREKH

May 19, 1936

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. You did well in writing to me. I shall send for Manu after I have reached Wardha, although, if Manu so wishes, she might even now go to Wardha since Nimu has taken up her stay at Maganwadi. I trust you and the children are keeping well. I hope Kunvarji is well enough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9726

493. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

May 19, 1936

CHI. MANUDI,

You managed all right to escape. You know that Taribehn is here, don't you? All are well and happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9726

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494. LETTER TO FATAH-ULLA-KHAN

NANDI,
May 20, 1936

The holy Koran I regard as a book of spiritual experiences, the same as, say, the Bible or the Zend-Avesta. I do not know the Quran offers more real solution to the modern problems than the other scriptures of the world. The competition today is not between the different scriptures of the world but between the representatives thereof and then between the latter on the one hand and those who reject the authority of the scriptures altogether.

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

495. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

May 20, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISAN,

I read your letter about the Union. Taking into consideration all the circumstances, I feel that you should dissociate yourself from this affair of the workers. You must put it out of your mind; it is beyond your strength. Your word will not carry weight. Hence your presence is in the long run likely to harm the workers instead of benefiting them. Your duty at present is only to recover your health. Who can come over from Ahmedabad? Whoever comes, can he succeed? We must content ourselves with the tasks within our capacity. There is therefore no need to offer any opinion about the scheme. Tell me all the details regarding Dr. Ansari.

You must have got my earlier letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G. N. 2446

496. LETTER TO ASAF ALI

NANDI HILL, BANGALORE,
May 21, 1936

DEAR ASAF ALI,

You have done well in writing to me. I can drink in all the news you can give me about the deceased brother. He was nothing less to me. I have already written to Zohra and Zakir Husain[1] about the details. I should receive their replies tomorrow or the day after. But you will now send me what they may not be able to.

As to the memorial, I fear we can get nothing worthy just now. Even the little thing about Kamala is causing difficulty. Since Lalaji[2] memorial I have discountenanced any memorials for big people like Dr. Ansari. I should wait for better times not materially but politically. Sardar who is here joins me in this view. But let me know what G. and R. have to say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

497. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 21, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here are two cuttings from *The Hindu*.[3] I have refused to believe that you are correctly represented by the reporter. But I would like the correct version, if you can send me one on both

[1] *Vide* p. 390.

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai

[3] The first cutting read: Bombay, May 18—Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing a ladies' meeting this evening, said that he was asked in several places why he had not included women in the Congress Working Committee. He was surprised that no such question was forthcoming from women.

He continued, "The responsibility of choosing the Working Committee members rests with the President, and you all know what the situation was at Lucknow. You know the price I had to pay for my views and I will have to continue to pay such price. Choosing the Working Committee members was

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the subjects.[1] The exclusion of women was entirely your own act. Indeed, nobody else had even thought it possible to exclude a woman from the cabinet. As to khadi I have understood you to say that it is indispensable in the present economy of the nation and that when the nation came to its own, hand-made cloth might have to give place to the mill-made.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

498. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 21, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This fever I do not like at all. I hope you have given yourself adequate rest. If your hut cannot be ready at the expected time, it does not matter, nor for that matter my hut. You must not put an undue strain on yourself and should take all the fruit you may need. I am glad both B.[2] and M.[3] were with you in the nick of time. I am impatient to be with you. But it cannot be before 17th or 18th.

Tara's death has disturbed me much. She was an extraordinarily good woman, possessing great strength of mind. Her love was amazing. I have a graphic description of her death. Brave Mahadevi[4] was by her side all the time.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Do you know the price paid for your plot in Varoda?

From the original: C.W. 6336. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9802

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not so easy. You are also aware, I, as President, encountered many odds at Lucknow and my wishes were not carried out. Possibly, another man in my place would have resigned but I propose to do my utmost."

The other cutting read: Bombay, May 18—Mr. Nehru when he visited the Khadi Bhandar today expressed doubts as to whether hand-spinning and weaving were an economic proposition. From his experiences in the United Provinces, he could say that it was not so. He, therefore, favoured development of machinery.

[1] *Vide* Appendix IV, also Vol. LXIII, "A False Alarm", 6-6-1936.

[2] & [3] Balwantsinha and Munnalal G. Shah

[4] Vinoba Bhave's disciple Mahadevitai

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499. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 21, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Tarabehn was indeed an extraordinary woman. Her single-minded devotion, firmness of mind, purity, generosity and love of India baffle description. Mahadevi, too, rendered excellent service and also showed courage.

Mirabehn writes to me of her illness. The lady's faults are negligible, but her merits are worthy of emulation. May God save her.

Madalasa, Om are fine. I am returning both the letters.

I expect you are taking care of your health. Are you following the instructions I sent you in the matter of diet? Do you take enough rest? Do you take a daily walk? Do not ignore Janakibehn's suggestion regarding the abdominal belt.

Everything is all right here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2980

500. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 21, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters here at Nandi Durg. The photos are excellent. I have sent them to Ramdas and Devdas. What is Ali doing? Are Ali and Ismail partners in business? What is the trade they carry on? I hope they are not baffled by the great rise in population.

I should be glad if someone would look after your work and you could make a trip here. But avoid the temptation to visit me if you cannot save the necessary money. Do not incur the heavy expense merely for the sake of a trip if you all keep well and enjoy other amenities too.

It does not surprise me to hear that *Indian Opinion* is under a boycott. Continue to publish it as long as the people want it;

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stop it if they do not like it. We surely ought not to be unduly insistent. What is the present number of subscribers? How many of them are Hindus and how many Muslims? Do you sell any copies otherwise?

130 lb. is too much weight for Sushila. She should and can easily reduce it by 10 lb. She should eat less of starch and take enough fruit, give up ghee for some time if necessary, but not milk. This will certainly bring down the weight. She must not omit to take exercise but walk at least six miles every day, that is to say, for two hours at her normal speed. She should also take hip-baths.

Maybe I have written to you earlier about our party here at Nandi Hill. If I have not, here it is. Sardar, Manibehn, Tari, Kusum Gandhi, Navin, Kanti, Kanu, Ba, Kumarappa, Shantabehn (the Englishwoman) and Kakasaheb. Sardar, Manibehn and Mahadev have daily walks for four to five hours. Kusum and Shantabehn, too, walk just as much, and the rest of us for two hours. The climate here may not be said to have proved quite beneficial to Tari, though she is better than on the plains. Her health has suffered pretty much on account of worry and indifference to treatment. Kusum, too, is weak, no doubt, but comparatively better.

Recitation from the *Ramayana* is conducted daily. A fairly good number of people attend it. The morning and evening prayers are of course held as usual.

Devdas may now be said to be well enough. I think the letter is now long enough.

We shall be going to Wardha on June 15.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4851

501. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

May 21, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Your weight has gone up fairly well. Hence you should be asked to stay on there. You did very well to have visited Gangabehn. You gave me no news of Bachubhai's health.

What is Tansukh's[1] salary?

[1] Tansukh Bhatt

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It was hasty of you to have begun walking. Never be impatient in anything. Rest your leg and have it completely cured. Why don't you use home-made paper? It is quite easy to make and is cheap, too. We ought to pay attention to things that are regarded as trivial. Now that you are confined there, should you not introduce as many country-made things as possible?

You may pay a visit to Nagpur. You may go wherever you want to before reaching Segaon.

It seems I shall reach Wardha on the 17th at the earliest. All here are doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tarabehn passed away on her way to Badri-Kedar. Mahadevi nursed her exceedingly well. She had a severe attack of fever.

Hoodbal[1] means rashness.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9342

502. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

May 21, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

Here in Nandi Durg, I may claim, I am able to dispose of each day's mail practically on the same day. I read your letter of the 18th last evening, and am replying to it today.

It matters little what hopes I cherish about you. You may go on striving according to what you think these hopes are and according to your ability.[2]

You have put the question very well. You could have put it still more plainly.[3] I have always had involuntary discharges. In South Africa they occurred at intervals of several years. I do not remember exactly. Here in India they have been of

[1] Gandhiji had used this expression in the letter dated May 14, 1936.

[2] The addressee had pleaded lack of confidence in her own capacity to grow into an illustrious *brahmacharini*, as hoped for by Gandhiji. *Vide* Vol. LIII, pp. 288-91.

[3] The addressee could not readily believe Gandhiji's confession of involuntary violation of *brahmacharya*. *Vide* "Nothing without Grace", pp. 210-2, and letter to the addressee, pp. 372-3. After an inconclusive discussion with and at the instance of Acharya Bhagavat the addressee had hesitantly sought clarification from him.

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months. I have mentioned the fact of my getting discharges in a few articles of mine. If my *brahmacharya* had been completely free from discharges, I would have been able to place before the world very much more than I have succeeded in doing. But it seems practically impossible that a person who has indulged in sex gratification from the age of 15 to 30, maybe with his own wife only, can, on taking a vow of *brahmacharya*, control the discharge of his vital fluid completely. One whose capacity for retention has progressively weakened from day to day for fifteen years cannot recover it fully all at once. Both his body and mind will have become too weak for that. I, therefore, consider myself a very imperfect *brahmachari*. But my position is like that of the castor oil plant which looks big on a heath where there are no trees. People know this shortcoming of mine.

The experience which tormented me in Bombay was a strange and painful one. All my discharges so far had occurred in dreams and they never troubled me. I could forget them. But the experience in Bombay occurred while I was fully awake and had a sudden desire for intercourse. I felt of course no urge to gratify the craving, there was no self-forgetfulness whatever. I was completely master of my body. But despite my best efforts the organ remained aroused. This was an altogether strange and shameful experience. I have already explained the cause.[1] As soon as that cause was removed the state of remaining aroused came to a stop, that is, during the waking state.

Despite my imperfection, one thing has always come easily to me, viz., that thousands of women have remained safe in my company. There have been occasions in my life when certain women, though aroused, were saved by God, or say, I was saved. I am a hundred per cent certain that it was God who saved us and, therefore, take no pride in the fact. It is my unceasing prayer to God that I might remain in the same condition till the very end of my life.

I have been striving to attain to Shukadeva's[2] condition. I have not succeeded in that aim. If I succeed, I would become a eunuch[3] though possessed of the vital fluid and discharges would become impossible.

However, the views which I have recently expressed[4] regarding *brahmacharya* have no flaw in them and contain no exaggera-

[1] *Vide* pp. 372-3.
[2] Son of Vyasa and the ideal *brahmachari* described in the *Bhagavata*
[3] *Vide New Testament, St. Matthew*, XIX, 12.
[4] *Vide* pp. 309-12 and 361-3.

tion. With effort, any man or woman can attain that ideal. This does not mean that the whole world or thousands will realize it in my own lifetime. Let it take centuries to be realized, but the ideal is correct, is realizable and must be realized.

Man has a long way to travel yet. His instincts are still those of a beast. Only his frame is human. Violence seems to reign all round. Untruth fills the world. And yet we do not doubt the rightness of the path of truth and non-violence. Know that the same is the case with regard to *brahmacharya.*

Those who strive but continue to burn inwardly are in fact not striving. They nurse lust in their minds and only wish to control loss of the vital fluid, to refrain from the physical act of intercourse. Such persons are correctly described in Chapter II[1] [of the *Gita*]. They may be regarded as hypocrites.

What I am at present striving to achieve is purification of thought.

Modern thought regards *brahmacharya* as *adharma* and recommends the 'dharma' of self-indulgence and control of progeny by artificial means. My soul rebels against this.

Sex-craving will always remain in the world, but its moral basis rests and will ever rest on *brahmacharya.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10381. Also C.W. 6819. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

503. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 21, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

You reached there quite in the nick of time. You could get the right type of work since you arrived when Mirabehn was really hard pressed. I am hoping to reach there on the 18th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8605. Also C.W. 6991. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] In fact Chapter III. 6

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504. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 22, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your note-paper is certainly very good. It shows the very great progress made by the hand-made paper industry. I think it is a good idea your sending for uncut paper and hav[ing] it cut to order there. Perhaps that would support a few poor people there, if you get enough orders there. The question then would be whether it would be worth while your devoting your time to such details. You must be the best judge. You have to make the best use possible of your time in Simla consistently with the preservation of your health such as you have.

You are quite idiotically reserving so many things to tell me when we meet. When that great event comes to pass, you will have forgotten most of the things. I am sure you are not making notes of these reservations. For once therefore you had better be a little wise and reserve nothing for the next meeting. There will be enough to discuss when we meet. And I hope you are telling the Adampur people whatever they need to be told. Certainly you should tolerate nothing fraudulent, no matter what it costs. No cost is too great to pay for your putting down fraud in a pure movement.

Did I tell you about Tara's death during her pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar? You will see all about this in *Harijan*.[1] She was one of the noblest of women I had the good fortune to meet.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3575. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6384

[1] *Vide* pp. 433-4.

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505. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILL,
May 22, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

My heart is with you though my body is here.[1] I had expected a word from you but I have one from Radhakrishna. His letter contemplates bringing you to Wardha. I hope it was not necessary. Of course whatever is thought necessary for quick recovery must be done. You must not allow the building programme or anything else to prey on your mind. Without good health, you can carry out no programme. I look forward to tomorrow bringing good news.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

We descend to Bangalore on 31st.

From the original: C.W. 6337. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9803

506. LETTER TO CHUNILAL

May 22, 1936

BHAI CHUNILAL,

I have your letter. Now that Thakkar Bapa is arriving there everything must settle down. From now on it is not necessary to send the papers to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The addressee "had gone down with a severe attack of malaria."

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507. *IN MEMORIAM*

Miss Mary Chesley, an Englishwoman, came to India in 1934 when the Congress was in session[1] in Bombay. As soon as she landed she came to my hut in the Congress camp and told me she knew Mirabehn and had expected to come with her but somehow or other she had preceded her by a week or thereabout. Her desire was to serve India through her villages. She did not prepossess me by her talk and I thought she would not stay in India many months. But I was wholly mistaken. She had come to know of Miss Mary Barr who had already commenced village work in Khedi, a village a few miles from Betul (C. P.). Miss Chesley found her way to Mary Barr. Mary Barr brought Mary Chesley to Wardha and we were together for a few days. Miss Chesley showed a determination that surprised me. She began work with Mary Barr in Khedi, adopted the Indian costume and changed her name to Tarabehn and toiled at Khedi in a manner that alarmed poor Mary Barr. She would dig, carry baskets full of earth on her head. She simplified her food as much as to put her health in danger. She had her own handsome income from Canada from which she kept only a paltry sum of about Rs. 10 for herself and gave the rest to the A. I. V. I. A., or to Indians with whom she came in contact and who seemed to her to give promise of being good village workers and who needed some pecuniary help. I came in closest touch with her. Her charity was boundless, she had great faith in the goodness of human nature. She was forgiving to a fault. She was a devout Christian. She belonged to a Quaker family. But she had no narrowness about her. She did not believe in converting others to her own faith. She was a graduate of the London School of Economics and a good teacher, having conducted together with a companion a school in London for several years. She realized at once that she must learn Hindi and was regularly studying it. For being able to pick up conversational Hindi she lived for a few months in the Wardha Mahila Ashram and there with two members formed a plan of going to Badri-Kedar during summer. I had warned her against the adventure. But it was difficult to turn her from such adventures when once her

[1] In the last week of October

mind was made up. So only the other day she started with her friends on her perilous pilgrimage. And I got a brief message on the 15th from Kankhal saying, "Tarabehn expired". In her love for India's villages she was not to be excelled by anybody. Her passion for India's independence was equal to that of the best among us. She was impatient of the inferiority complex wherever she noticed it. She mixed with poor women and children with the greatest freedom. There was nothing of the patron about her. She would take service from none, but would serve anybody with the greatest zeal. She was a self-effacing mute worker whose left hand did not know what the right had done. May her soul rest in peace.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

508. BRIBERY

Bribery in the name of *mamul*[1] and the like to railway officials and the others is not an unusual occurrence in Indian life. Any official with whom the public has anything to do is generally said to be open to receive bribes even for the performance of his duty, not to speak of committing breach thereof. I have had to suffer in my time for refusing to pay a paltry anna at the third-class ticket windows for getting my ticket in my turn which would never come because favourites had to be served first. I have had to wait for hours sometimes before I could get a chance of buying my ticket. The customs and the railways are the two departments with which the general public have to come in frequent touch. And it is there that the public suffer most. A correspondent draws my attention to the woes of public workers who want to despatch goods or receive consignments. At either end unless you are prepared to bribe officials, you are made to wait exasperatingly long. He wants to know how this evil can be remedied. There is desire among spirited workers to resist this immoral blackmail. It is difficult to advise in this matter. Obviously no bribe[2] may possibly be given. Equally obviously public work must not be allowed to suffer. There is no quick remedy against a petty official who misuses his brief authority. Threat to lodge a complaint produces no effect on hardened officials. They know their strength and use it mercilessly, for it is a matter of pecuniary gain for

[1] Custom

[2] The source has "bribery".

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them. They have come to think that these perquisites are a part of their pay. And he who questions their right to demand them needs to be taught a lesson. Lesson or no lesson, someone has to have the courage to bring to book those who will not recognize the new spirit that is seizing so many workers. Despatch or clearance work may suffer for the time being. It is worth while taking the risk, if thereby officials will learn the elementary morality of not taking bribes. If they are ill paid, let them demand a higher pay, but they may not take bribes from the public whom they are paid to serve. I hope the higher authorities will see these lines and deal effectively with the evil which they know does flourish widely.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

509. MARRIAGE BY PURCHASE

Some months ago *The Statesman* opened its columns to a discussion of the dowry system prevalent among many castes almost all over India, and dealt with it editorially. I used to write on the cruel custom[1] often enough in the columns of *Young India*. The cuttings from *The Statesman* revive the cruel memories of what I used to know then. My remarks were aimed at *deti leti* as the custom is known in Sind. Enough educated Sindhis were found who exacted large sums of money from parents who were anxious to see their daughters well married. *The Statesman* has carried on a crusade against the custom in general. There is no doubt that the custom is heartless. But so far as I am aware it does not touch the millions. The custom is confined to the middle-class who are but a drop in the ocean of Indian humanity.

Whenever we talk of evil customs, we usually think of the middle-class. The millions living in the villages have their customs and woes of which we have as yet but little knowledge.

This however does not mean that one may ignore the dowry evil because it is confined to a comparatively small number of the people of this country. The system has to go. Marriage must cease to be a matter of arrangement made by parents for money. The system is intimately connected with caste. So long as the choice is restricted to a few hundred young men or young women of a particular caste, the system will persist no matter what is said against it. The girls or boys or their parents will have to break the bonds of caste if the evil is to be eradicated. Then the age

[1] The source has "customs".

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for marrying has also to be raised and the girls have to dare to remain spinsters, if need be, i.e., if they do not get a suitable match. All this means education of a character that will revolutionize the mentality of the youth of the nation. Unfortunately the system of education has no connection with our surroundings which therefore remain practically untouched by the education received by a microscopic minority of the boys and girls of the nation. Whilst, therefore, whatever can be done to abate the evil must be done, it is clear to me that this evil and many others which can be named can only be tackled if there is education which responds to the rapidly changing conditions of the country. How is it that so many boys and girls who have even passed through colleges are found unable or unwilling to resist the manifestly evil custom which affects their future so intimately as marriage does? Why should educated girls be found to commit suicide because they are not suited? Of what value is their education if it does not enable them to dare to defy a custom which is wholly indefensible and repugnant to one's moral sense? The answer is clear. There is something radically wrong in the system of education that fails to arm girls and boys to fight against social or other evils. That education alone is of value which draws out the faculties of a student so as to enable him or her to solve correctly the problems of life in every department.

Harijan, 23-5-1936

510. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

NANDI HILL,
May 24, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I have your letter. You will see my note[1] on Tara in *Harijan*. Yes, she made in Rishikesh a will in Hindi making over everything to me. It is signed simply Tarabehn. Do you know who her relatives are? Do you know her address in Canada? If you do, please send [it]. Her friend in England is Miss. P. Blythe, Anthorn School, Quakers Lane, Potters Bar, London. I have written to her at length and so has Shanta. I am sending your letter to Sumitra through Satyadevji. His address is Gurukul, Kangri, U. P.

I have heard from Miss Madden. I am glad you have given me particulars about her. It is plucky at her age to come to

[1] *Vide* pp. 433-4.

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village work. But faith can overcome mountains. I am writing to her.

The climb up did not hurt me at all.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Address: Bangalore City. After 31st May till 15th June.

Herewith for Gopal.[1]

From C.W. 3391. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

511. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

The late-fee letter of 20 and the one of 21 reached me at the same time. It does often happen like that to late-fee letters. However, nothing is lost. I had R.'s[2] note the previous day. I do hope you had no further fever. I hope too that you are still taking rest. You never give yourself enough rest after these attacks of malaria. I wish you could become proof against them. You should go to some hill or seaside for that rest. I could easily send you to a Kathiawar seaside place where you would have quiet, would be happy and be doing some village work. Let us see what the coming rains have in store for us. No rooms as yet for Mahadev & Co.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6338. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9804

512. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I am glad you are free from fever. Of course you were quite right in ordering oranges. You should order from outside any other fruit you may need. And do take plenty of rest before beginning strenuous work. And you should seriously consider my proposal for a change at a seaside place.

[1] The letter is not available.

[2] Radhakrishna; *vide* p. 432.

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I would like you not to incur the expense of having partitions made. I would like to improvise them as they may be need-[ed] almost like what Chhotelal had arranged for my bathroom, you will remember. As it is I dread the cost of the hut. I hope Divanji is keeping within the limits prescribed by me. The plinth, four walls and a waterproof roof with open verandah and fence round is the indispensable minimum. But you are giving me in addition a kitchen and bath-room and a stable.

Let the other additions wait till after my arrival.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Ram[1] and Lakshmi[2]. Tell them I hope they will prove worthy of each other and the country.

From the original: C.W. 6339. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9805

513. LETTER TO FARID ANSARI

May 24, 1936

MY DEAR FAREED[3],

Your letter gave me an agreeable shock. Your handwriting is an almost exact copy of Dr. Ansari's. And I wondered how I could receive the Doctor's letter when I saw your signature.

Neither Ammajan's fortitude nor Zohra's grief surprises me. Zohra is a tender flower. She knows nothing of philosophy. She has tasted abundantly of human love that has sustained her all these years. Now the poor girl feels the void. It can never be wholly filled, not even when she is married. Dr. Ansari's love for Zohra was unique. There was nothing he would not do to make her good and happy. And all this was out of pure selfless love.

I can understand your grief too. He was to you all you describe him. The fact [is][4] he was a selfless friend and guide . . .[5]. Such was his [greatness][6]! May his spirit sustain us and enable [us to condu-][7]ct ourselves [so][8] as to prove worthy [of][9] him.

You vainly approach me [for][10] relief and strength. I have none of his great [nursing][11] skill nor do I possess the [devotion][12]

[1]&[2] Presumably, Rameshwardas Poddar's son Shriram and Purushottamdas Jajoria's daughter Lakshmi

[3] Dr. M. A. Ansari's brother's son

[4] to [12] Illegible

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of you all that he had. But if my love for Dr. Ansari can be sufficient passport for entry to the hearts of you, Zohra and others who were specially his care, I can present that passport. For his death has deepened that love whose bottom was as sound as that of human love can be.

I hope you are making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, between pp. 112 and 113. Also C.W. 9797

514. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 24,1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I was very happy to have your wire at the expected time. This document leads me to conclude that you did not get my three earlier letters.[1] Nor have they come back; I therefore do not know what happened to them. Whatever it may be, I have of course given you the substance of the earlier letters in the one you got. Kanti also did write two letters. Write to me what food including milk you take and in what measure, and also your daily programme.

Should you not speak frankly to him and seek his advice as you do with me because I am away? There should be no hesitation in doing so. By all means you may ask whatever can be asked through letters. But you may certainly seek Father's assistance in anything that calls for quick decision.

The chief mark of faith is that whatever the situation the inner joy should abide. Everything is all right here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Send your reply to Bangalore where we shall go on the 31st. Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3466

[1] *Vide* p. 421.

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515. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 24, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am sending to you Prema's first letter after the illness, as originally desired by her. I hope the wedding[1] passed off without any hitch and you received my letters.[2]

Has Balkrishna reached Chorwad?

Kusum keeps fairly well. She comes with me for a walk daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Leaving Nandi on the 31st, we shall go to Bangalore and most probably stay there for 14 days. The address is: Kumara Park, Bangalore City.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8491. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

516. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 24, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I think you did well in going there. You should look upon Mirabehn's company as a veritable *satsang*[3]. Serve her as much as you can and put your heart in doing what she bids you. Don't you be a burden to her in any way. Learn from Balwantsinha the entire processing of cotton.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8604. Also C.W. 6992. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Of Purushottam and Vijaya
[2] *Vide* pp. 400-1.
[3] Association with the good

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517. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

May 25, 1936

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

Your letter has just reached me. The same post has brought a copy of what Agatha Harrison wrote about the Doctor for *Hitavada*—Servants of India paper in Nagpur. I send it to show what he meant to me. I know he had interrupted his journey[1] to Europe. My pleading for the journey was in vain. He had run to me without [my] asking. And he had gathered round him all the best doctors he knew. It was almost worth fasting to have that extraordinary demonstration of love. It might be taken in another light. One might well say it was folly to fast if it was to cost the precious time of so many first-class physicians who during those three weeks deprived their many patients of the assistance they badly needed. Who knows how such demonstrations should really be taken? We can but obey, in all humility, the will as we can know it of Him who is the Controller-General of every second of our life.

This long paragraph shows you the state of mind I am in. Not that I have time enough and to spare here from the daily tasks. But I am in the position of poor Zohra. If I had not the peremptory call of duty from moment to moment, I should be as distracted as she is.

For the last three days I have been framing in my mind a letter to you alone and then I thought of Shwaib[2], then Khwaja[3] and then quite forgetfully of Sherwani[4], not just then realizing that the big man was also no more in the flesh with us. There are other Muslims I know. But for this moment these were the names vividly before me.

But I know that none of you can become the infallible guide Dr. Ansari had grown to be. It is not a question of merits. It is a question of faith.

As I am writing this I feel I must confine myself to you. The question I wanted to ask was and I still want to ask is, will

[1] During Gandhiji's 21-day fast which commenced on May 8, 1933
[2] Shwaib Qureshi
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXIII, "Letter to Khwaja Abdul Majid", 7-6-1936.
[4] Tasadduq Ahmed Sherwani

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you be to me what the Doctor was on the Hindu-Muslim question? What distracts me is not the absence of the warmth of a gentleman-friend, of a God-believing and godfearing doctor. It is the absence of an unfailing guide in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity. My silence at the present time on this question is not a sign of my apathy, it is a sign of an ever-deepening conviction that the unity has got to come. Then I ask, will you take Dr. A[nsari]'s place? In answer, do not think of your status in society. If you have self-confidence, you must say 'Yes'. If you have not, you must say 'No'. I shall not misunderstand you. I know and love you too well to misunderstand you.

Whether you become my guide or not, please answer the question I asked, among others, Dr. Ansari in my last letter. Is this step the Frontier Government has taken, that of practically refusing the grant to Sikh Hindu girls' schools that teach through Hindi and Gurumukhi right? I have been asked for months to express my opinion. I have resisted the invitation till now. But the question is one of principle and bears in its womb great consequences. I have approached Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qayum in the matter. He has sent me what is a painful reply. You can have a copy if you want it, before expressing your opinion.

I do not know whether you share the opinion Mujeeb expressed in his letter to me on Hindi-Hindustani question.[1] I would like you, him, Aqil and other friends to read my two articles[2] in *Harijan* and if they do not give satisfaction, I would like you all to argue the thing out with me, if you like through *Harijan* or privately. I see no cause for difference of opinion. But if there is, we must try to remove it.

Love to you all.

BAPU

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

518. LETTER TO BHUJANGILAL CHHAYA

NANDI DURG,
May 25, 1936

CHI. BHUJANGILAL,

I have your letter. Young people should never write with a pencil. In fact no one should. Pencil-writing fades out with passage of time. It presents difficulty in reading.

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.
[2] *Vide* "Hindi or Hindustani", pp. 383-5 and 408-9.

You should have patience and be polite. Your father will not come in your way if your conduct is faultless in all matters. He has the right to test your firmness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2603

519. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

May 25, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I send herewith Gopal's letter for you to read. He seems to have been greatly shocked at Tarabehn's death. He has some faults as also some good qualities. It now falls to my lot to guide him. I see no difficulty in it; I have only to direct him from a distance. For the present, I have suggested that he should stick to his insurance business and prepare himself for village welfare work.

The question of Sumitra and Subhadra is complicated. I think Tarabehn had taken them to Hardwar. I am inquiring. I am also trying to know Sumitra's mind. If, as Gopal says, Sumitra hands over custody of Subhadra, I think we might keep the latter at the Mahila Ashram. As for Sumitra, I have suggested that she should stay with Marybehn in Khedi. Perhaps she may have to be given something towards her expenses.

Do tell me your opinion in the matter. You must rest yourself.

[PS.]

In Nandi Durg up to May 30 and at Bangalore City from May 81 to June 15.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2981

520. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

May 25, 1936

DEAR SISTER RAIHANA,

It is wonderful to have your letter after so many months and in such excellent Gujarati! You seem to have been improving your knowledge of the language. How good if I could do the same with my Urdu! But then, is the teacher or the pupil to blame for it?

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What a way you have of telling me of Abbajan[1]! Inscrutable are God's ways of saving him He wishes to! What beautiful situations He brings about! A master Manipulator of strings, He makes us dance by plucking at any of the strings He likes. We do not even feel that He is pulling the strings if we dance as He wishes. It is when we resist Him that we feel the pull of the string, and then we begin complaining. Observe Abbajan's face as you read this to him and write to me what you notice. You should, however, suppress the letter if he does not have the strength to listen and the doctors do not permit it.

You have mentioned so many members of the family that most of them are no more than names to me. I do not remember any of the faces, and I have to commit to memory the names. All the same, I am myself a member of the family, am I not? And such a one as does not even know the names of his own family members or their faces either! But what can be done? That must be the plight of a person becoming one of a vast family. But what is great about knowing name and form? We are all children of the same Mother. If we truly understood this, we could do without name and form, couldn't we? Read this to all, apologize to them on my behalf and make them forgive me. Anyway, do convey my good wishes and blessings.

Yes, Dr. Ansari's passing away has created a big void which will be difficult to fill. Poor Zohra is lost in grief. I am sending her today a second letter[2] in my broken Urdu.

Sardar [and] Kaka are of course here and very much remember Abbajan and Ammajan.

My address is Bangalore City up to June 15.

Can you read my writing? Has Hamida[3] come?

SMT. RAIHANA TYABJI
SOUTHWOOD

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] Addressee's father, Abbas Tyabji
[2] Neither letter is available.
[3] Addressee's brother's daughter

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521. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

NANDI DURG,
May 25, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I was delighted to get your letter. Krishnaswami[1] must be happy now. Your daughter-in-law too is happy, I hope. You must be keeping well, physically as well as mentally. Your parents too must be doing fine.

The climate here is friendly. Sardar takes plenty of walks daily. The others too are all right and so am I.

Yes, we shall be in Bangalore for a fortnight, going there on the 31st instant. It will be good if [you] too can come. We have to go to Wardha *via* Madras only.

Kamala wants to spend two or three days with me. I have sent my consent.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell me if you can read the above with ease. There is Mrs. Esther Menon living there in Shamrock Cottage. See her if you can on my behalf and befriend her.[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 9607. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

522. TELEGRAM TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

May 26, 1936

MAGANLAL PRANJIVAN MEHTA
MOGHUL STREET, RANGOON

YOU MUST NOT GO WITHOUT SEEING ME. NANDI HILL TILL THIRTY-FIRST THEN BANGALORE FORTNIGHT. COME IF ONLY FOR ONE DAY.
BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Addressee's son
[2] The postscript is in English.

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523. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 26, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your two letters 23rd, 24th came in today.

Of course if you are happier and better in Segaon, you will go there. You must have rest and the food you want at the time you want. Tell someone quietly there and perhaps matters will mend. I return the maps.[1] No corrections. You have thought the thing out well and it stands.

No more today, as I am anxious to catch the post just now going.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6340. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9806

524. LETTER TO VIYOGI HARI

BANGALORE CITY,[2]
May 26, 1936

BHAI VIYOGI HARI,

Only today I got your letter. The telegram regarding Sukirti's[3] wedding will go tomorrow. It is a good development. Send my blessings to both. Convey to Bhagavati Prasad that I hope the motive behind this marriage was not lust but only pure religious feeling. The purity in Sukirti and Bhagavati Prasad's life from now on will have a great impact on the Hindu world.

I have already written about you. Your decision, I find, is correct.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Hand over the enclosed letter to Amtussalaam.

[1] The addressee had drawn "two alternative plans for the lay-out of the buildings, prayer-ground and compound".

[2] Gandhiji apparently meant this for the addressee's reply.

[3] An inmate of the Harijan Ashram, Delhi

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It must be made clear that Sukirti's marriage had no connection with the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It need not be announced to the Press. Does Bhagavati have parents or any other relatives? Has he been thrown out by his caste or is there any such possibility?

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1071

525. LETTER TO K. HAZAREESINGH

[As at] Wardha,
May 26, 1936

BHAI HAZAREESINGH,

I was about to leave for Nandi Durg when your letter reached me. I had already received your book which however has been left at Wardha. I have your letter before me.

I stayed in Mauritius for about ten days, while my boat was lying at anchor.[1] There was no other purpose in my visit and this is why only a few people may have been aware of my presence there.[2] I stayed in the house of some Muslim friends and that gave me an opportunity of meeting other people. I also met the Governor at a social function. Please convey my greetings to all my fellow-countrymen. *Vandemataram.*

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *A History of Indians in Mauritius*, Appendix E

526. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I gave a hurried reply yesterday to your two letters. I returned also the two plans for the fenced yard. I did not examine your maps critically, as I regard your judgment to be superior to mine. You have a natural faculty for these matters.

I think I have already told you[3] that Mahadev's hut need not be thought of just yet. I want first to feel my legs before incurring the expenses of further buildings. It is wise to move slowly. The experience of five days shows that contact can be retained

[1] Gandhiji, in fact, stayed in Mauritius for 20 days; *vide* Vol. III, pp. 249 and 576.

[2] What follows is a translation as given in the source, the corresponding Hindi original not having been reproduced.

[3] *Vide* p. 437.

even while Mahadev & Co. are in Maganwadi. This is merely said to justify cautious movement.

I must discuss with you the disorganization you noticed at J.'s[1] when we meet.

The storm you describe is an indication of what things can be in the villages in the rainy season. Perhaps the things were better in Segaon, because it is not on an eminence as Paunar is. Every position has both its advantages and disadvantages. It is better therefore not to make elaborate plans about things which are themselves unenduring.[2]

I think I have told you, we descend to Bangalore on 31st to remain there a fortnight. We leave Bangalore any day between 10th and 15th. It depends upon the engagements there. My inclination will be to hasten the date of departure. I have not needed the outing. I think Sardar has gained well. He won't need the full 15 days in Bangalore. Therefore if we stay on till the last day, it will be business that would keep us.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6341. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9807

527. LETTER TO MAULVI M. ASHRAF

AS AT WARDHA,
May 27, 1936

DEAR ASHRAF,

What can you expect from me? No doubt you have written to Kumarappa and Shankerlal Banker. They can send you what little literature the two Associations[3] have produced. I am sure you do not want *Harijan*, which deals with untouchability mainly and some moral problems.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULVI M. ASHRAF
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
SWARAJ BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

A. I. C. C. File, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] Explaining this the addressee writes: "While I was building Bapu's mud cottage, a pucca brick bungalow happened to be being prepared for Jamnalalji at Paunar. In the severe storm referred to the little mud cottage stood firm and the brick bungalow collapsed."

[3] The A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A.

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528. LETTER TO KANAIYALAL AND LILAVATI MUNSHI

May 27, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI AND CHI. LILAVATI,

If I could persuade myself to yield to your love, I would certainly accept your hospitality. But now I am a party to keeping even Sardar back. We had a talk yesterday and both of us came to the conclusion that he too should not go [to Ooty]. From the point of view of health, Nandi has agreed with us all, and especially with Sardar. Do not think for a moment that the place can offer Nandi's solitude. It is now cool in Bangalore too, and we hope to be able to do some work after going there. It, therefore, seems unwise that Sardar should part from me even for two days. Since my programme in Bangalore will be crowded, I suggest that you should come here and spend your last two days with us. If you do so, we shall be able to talk a little and also do some work. The climate of Ooty is certainly excellent, and so is the scenery. But I don't feel like going there just for that reason, nor can I summon the courage to do so. Sardar has already enjoyed your hospitality. I also shall enjoy it some day. As for your love, I am tasting it daily.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7574. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

529. LETTER TO VITHAL V. DASTANE

NANDI DURG,
May 27, 1936

BHAI DASTANE,

It appears you are expecting too much from me. You know my present limitations in placing the thing before the country. Publicity, however, is inherent in diligence in your own work.

In response to his letter I have asked Dev to let me know the location, plan and other facts. In the mean while here are my answers to your questions:

(1) In the rainy season you should grow there the requisite vegetables as also a few flowering plants. You should also grow

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such food grain as could be harvested by December. All this should be utilized at the time of the Congress session. Measurements of the land should be obtained right now. Make notes of places which are waterlogged during the rainy season. If there is any tank which gets filled up, this water too should be conserved. For this job you should immediately obtain the services of an expert agriculturist and an expert engineer. I take it that you will get their help gratis.

Do see Shankerlal right now. He knows about this more than anyone else. Mhatre the architect has worked for two sessions; so please take him there right now. Again ask Shankerlal about Nandalal Bose and the material from the Santiniketan exhibition. Contact Lakshmidas, as also Jajuji and Kumarappa.

Mhatre will help you with the calculations regarding the time and space for the *pandal*, barracks, etc. Assume that the minimum time required would be three months, so that the construction work should start soon after the monsoon is over. But first of all prepare a plan [of work].

The site should accommodate a hundred thousand people. Enroll the names of men and women volunteers right from today. Start with . . .[1], Vatsala[2] and others.

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

530. LETTER TO TIRUPUR KHADI-PRODUCING ASSOCIATION[3]

[Before *May 28, 1936*][4]

All I can say is that it is wrong for you to sell khaddar in the circumstances in which you are doing. It hurts the poor people in whose interest the affairs of the All-India Spinners' Association are conducted.

The Hindu, 30-5-1936

[1] Illegible

[2] Addressee's daughter

[3] The Association had pointed out that they were paying the spinners decent wages and...that if they had really reduced the wages of spinners, they would not spin for them but would forthwith go to the All-India Spinners' Association and that the prices raised by the All-India Spinners' Association were too high. *Vide* pp. 320-1.

[4] The report appeared under the date-line "Tirupur, May 28, 1936".

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531. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

May 28, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your letter came in yesterday. The post comes after the closing of the outgoing mail.

You are a proper family party—Judge, Government Member, Doctor, with rebellious sister in their midst and you want the Collector Brother in your midst to finish your happiness. Remember that feeding up an exhausted brother is not the only manner of expressing a sister's love. She has to know the food that is required for a given constitution. I know cases where rich and nutritious food has resulted in harm. But you have lived with me in vain if you do not know how to choose the correct articles. The manner of preparing them must be your very own.

When I read the sentence in your letter, attributed to me as having ever said to Kallenbach, I couldn't believe it. I re-read the thing and then I laughed. I never lay down the law like that even for little children. Though K. had immense faith in me, he would not tolerate the autocracy and arrogance attributed to me. And faith like his would not require such assertions of infallibility. You must now fill in the gap and tell me who regaled you with the precious information and I might be able to throw some more light on the grave problem! But my denial should not be taken to mean that I won't lay down the law for rebels and idiots and require obedience because it is given by me. I must live up to the title given to me if only to give you the satisfaction of proving your rebellious spirit! And then heaven help me, if such assertion being heard by somebody is quoted as an authentic example of my arrogance!!!

When we descend to Bangalore I shan't have time to give you such nonsense. Here there is quiet and therefore comparative leisure for giving you senseless things.

I do hope this hospitality even of nearest and dearest is not proving a strain on your weak body. I know what closest attention to the tiniest details, of which you are capable when it is a matter of loving service, means to the person giving such love. Happily Shummy is there to prevent you from overdoing it.

Mira was badly ill but she is better now. She was taken to J.'s bungalow. She must have returned to Segaon.

Rameshwari Nehru comes here today for three days. She had a very successful tour in the Harijan cause in Travancore.

There was no indication in your note[1] on Lucknow Exhibition that you did not want it published. I read it carefully, made alterations to hide your identity and let it go. You will tell me how it reads. And why did you not want it published? Next time you will mark all such things suitably so as to indicate your wishes. That note had little value if it was not meant to tell the people what a town-bred woman had felt about the Exhibition.

Here is a note received from Mr. Marsden which speaks for itself.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Remember we descend to Bangalore City on 31st and stay there not beyond 15th June.

From the original: C.W. 3728. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6884

532. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

May 28, 1936

CHI. AMTUSSALAAM,

I have a letter from you after a long time. Nowadays I am afraid of writing to you. You see in my words what was not intended because you have grown very suspicious. I am even considering whether I should stop writing in Urdu. You were hurt by an innocent letter containing nothing offensive because you put a contrary interpretation on it. I was only jesting when I wrote to you not to quarrel with Thakkar Bapa.[2] I know that you are not one to quarrel with anybody, and hence it can be only a jest if I talk of a quarrel with reference to you. I made the joke only after I had Thakkar Bapa's loving letter and understood that it was all over. Why should you then feel unhappy and not be glad about it?

Shall I henceforth give up all joking with you?

[1] Published in *Harijan*, 23-5-1936, under the title "A City Woman on the Lucknow Exhibition"

[2] *Vide* p. 419.

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What if there are all kinds of stories about you? Are you sure it is not your suspicious nature that is at work here again? You are concerned with your work alone. Tell me what other work can be better than cooking for the Harijan children, feeding them and keeping all things clean. Moreover, you have Tyagi and Rajkishori with you and you should therefore experience no difficulty.

It will pain me greatly if you ruin your health. You ought to forget the grief over Dr. Ansari's death and take up the work he has left behind.

The talk you had with your brothers at Patiala was not right. It was nothing but your foolishness and it evoked the response it deserved. What else would an unhappy member of the family say? All have to bend before your obstinacy.

I had already sent for Saraswati and her mother even before you made the suggestion. I believe they will come to Bangalore. Have no anxiety on Kanti's account.

The reply should now be addressed: Bangalore City.

I am writing to Sukirti and Raj. Write about your health.

Tell me whether you can correctly read this letter.

Have I not answered all your questions now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 595

533. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI TYAGI

May 28, 1936

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

Your letter. You need not return if you do not like to live in the Mahila Ashram. You should write a letter to Sethji[1] regarding this. Write to me in detail what you did not like at the Mahila Ashram.

It is better to stay with Amtussalaambehn and Tyagiji is of course there. Learn from him as much Hindi and arithmetic as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6637. Also C.W. 4285. Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

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534. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

May 29, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter of 25th instant.[1] So you are touring with almost feverish speed. May you have the requisite strength. Even a week at Khali will be a godsend.

I propose to make public use of your statement on khadi.[2] I have received so many inquiries. The distorted summary[3] has caused consternation among our people who have faith in khadi. Your statement will ease the situation a bit.

Your explanation about the omission of a woman on the W. C. does not give me satisfaction. If you had shown the slightest desire to have a woman on the Committee, there would have been no difficulty whatsoever about any of the older ones standing out. There was pressure if it may be so called only about Bhulabhai.[4] And the first time his name was mentioned you had no objection. There was no pressure about any other member. And then you had this unfettered choice of omitting a socialist name and taking a woman. But so far as I remember you yourself had difficulty in choosing a substitute for Sarojini Devi and you were anxious to omit her. You even went so far as to say that you did not believe in the tradition or convention of always having a woman and a certain number of Mussalmans on the cabinet. Therefore so far as the exclusion of [a] woman is concerned, I think it was your own unfettered discretion. No other member would have had the desire or the courage to break the convention. I must also tell you that in certain Congress circles the whole blame is being thrown on me, for I am reported to have excluded Mrs. Naidu and to have insisted on having no woman—a thing for which as I said to you I had not even the courage. I could not exclude even Mrs. N., not to mention a woman.

As to the other members too, I have been under the impression that you chose the members because it was the right thing

[1] *Vide* Appendix IV.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXIII, "A False Alarm", 6-6-1936.

[3] *Vide* footnote to "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", pp. 424-5.

[4] Bhulabhai J. Desai

to do for the cause. There was no question of *behaya*[1] or *hayadar*[2] when all were actuated by the noblest of motives, i.e., service of the cause according to their lights. I may say that your statement which your letter confirms has given much pain to Rajen Babu, C. R.[3] and Vallabhbhai.[4] They feel—and I agree with them—they have tried to act honourably and with perfect loyalty towards you as a colleague. Your statement makes you out to be the injured party. I wish you could see this viewpoint and correct the report if it is at all possible.

As to the third thing, I would love to have the thing cleared. I cannot guess what you want to say. But that must wait till we meet. I must not add to the strain you are already bearing.

About Dr. Ansari memorial, I have given[5] Asaf Ali my clear opinion that the memorial for the Doctor should await better times politically as it has for Papa[6]. Do you think otherwise?

The Kamala Memorial is making slow progress.

Herewith the Princess's letter containing a reference to Indu.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 10th.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

535. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

May 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

So you are in Segaon already. I do not mind. If you get there the comforts you need, it will be where your heart is. If you get the rains, of course there can be no building. Therefore let all labour that can be used be given to the walls and the roof. If these are ready and the walls dry, the rest can be finished even after the rains. But I am not going to worry, if in spite

[1] Shameless
[2] A self-respecting person
[3] C. Rajagopalachari
[4] *Vide* Appendix V.
[5] *Vide* p. 424.
[6] Motilal Nehru, who had passed away on February 6, 1931

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of all effort the building is not ready for occupation by the time we return. No strain should be put upon your weak body.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

The accompanying for Munnalal. I hope you got a basket of fruit sent by Janammal[1].

From the original: C.W. 6342. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9808

536. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

May 29, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. Both of you[2] are passing through a severe test. We ought to learn to live in a village, come wind, come rain. The city-dwellers have their own risks to run and yet live there, and so do the villagers. At present we have ceased to belong to the town nor have we come to belong to the village and, hanging midway between the two, we are in a miserable state.

Blessings to both from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8603. Also C.W. 6993. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

537. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

May 29, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

You must have got my reply to your telegram. The reason for replying by wire was that if for some reason Nimu should wish not to go she need not go. I am not enthusiastic about Nimu's going to Bombay. Her mother would not very much need Nimu's services as her sister is in Bombay and so are her sister's husband and her brother. However, I permitted her to go thinking that since Ramdas had sent a telegram she might think it necessary to go. Show this to her if she is there.

[1] Cousin of S. Ambujammal

[2] The other being Balwantsinha

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Dispose of the letters enclosed herewith. If no one from Mirabehn has turned up to receive the mail, make inquiries at Jamnalalji's. And if no one from Jamnalalji's is going, someone at Maganwadi should take it to her. Munnalal too is with Mirabehn.

Letters should now be sent to Bangalore City.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10715

538. SELF-CONTROL AGAIN

Your recent articles[1] on self-control have created quite a stir. Persons who are in sympathy with your views find it difficult to exercise self-control for any length of time. They argue that you are applying your own experience and practice to the whole mankind. And even you have admitted that you do not fulfil the definition of a complete *brahmachari*. For you yourself are not free from animal passion. And since you admit the necessity of limiting the number of children a married couple may have, the use of contraceptives is the only practical method open to the vast majority of mankind.

Thus writes a correspondent.

I have admitted my own limitations. In this matter of self-control *v.* contraceptives, they constitute my qualifications. For my limitations show quite clearly that I am like the majority of earth earthy and can have no pretensions to any extraordinary gifts. The motive for my self-control was also quite ordinary, viz., the desire to limit the progeny for the purpose of serving the country or humanity. Inability to support a large family should be a greater incentive than the very distant one of serving one's country or humanity. That in spite of thirty-five years of successful (from the present standpoint) self-control, the animal in me still needs watching shows in an eminent degree that I am very much an ordinary mortal. I, therefore, do suggest that what has been possible for me is possible for any human being who would make the required effort.

My quarrel with the advocates of contraceptives lies in their taking it for granted that ordinary mortals cannot exercise self-control. Some of them even go so far as to say that even if they can, they ought not to do so. To them, no matter how

[1] *Vide* pp. 309-12, 361-3; also 261-3, 278-9 and 295-7.

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eminent they may be in their own spheres, I say, in all humility but with utmost confidence, they are talking without experience of the possibilities of self-control. They have no *right* to limit the capacity of the human soul. In such instances the positive evidence of one person like me, if it is reliable, is not only of greater value but decisive. To dismiss my evidence as useless because I am popularly regarded as a 'mahatma' is not proper in a serious inquiry.

Far more weighty is the argument of a sister who says in effect:

> We, the advocates of contraceptives, have come on the scene only recently. You self-controllers had the field all to yourselves all these long generations, maybe thousands of years. What have you to show to your credit? Has the world learnt the lesson of self-control? What have you done to stop the misery of over-burdened families? Have you heard the cry of wounded motherhood? Come, the field is even now open to you. We do not mind your advocacy of self-control. We may even wish you success, if perchance you save wives from the unwanted approaches of their husbands. But why should you seek to decry the methods which we employ and which take note of and make every allowance for common human weaknesses or habits and which when properly employed almost never fail to accomplish their purpose?

The taunt is dictated by the anguish of a sister filled with compassion for the families that are always in want because of the ever-increasing number of children. The appeal of human misery has been known to melt hearts of stone. How can it fail to affect high-souled sisters? But such appeals may easily lead one astray, if one is lifted off one's feet and, like a drowning man, catches [at] any floating straw.

We are living in times when values are undergoing quick changes. We are not satisfied with slow results. We are not satisfied with the welfare merely of our own caste-fellows, not even of our own country. We feel or want to feel for the whole of humanity. All this is a tremendous gain in humanity's march towards its goal.

But we won't find the remedy for human ills by losing patience and by rejecting everything that is old because it is old. Our ancestors also dreamt, perhaps vaguely, the same dreams that fire us with zeal. The remedies they applied for similar ills, it is possible, are applicable even to the horizon that appears to have widened beyond expectations.

And my plea based on positive experience is that even as truth and ahimsa are not merely for the chosen few but for the

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whole of humanity to be practised in daily life, so exactly is self-control not merely for a few 'mahatmas' but for the whole of humanity. And even as because many people will be untruthful and violent, humanity may not lower its standard, so also though many, even the majority, may not respond to the message of self-control, we may not lower our standard.

A wise judge will not give a wrong decision in the face of a hard case. He will allow himself to appear to have hardened his heart because he *knows* that truest mercy lies in not making bad law.

We may not attribute the weaknesses of the perishable body or the flesh to the imperishable soul that resides in it. We have to regulate the body in the light of the laws that govern the soul. In my humble opinion, these laws are few and unchangeable, capable of being understood and followed by the whole of the human family. There would be differences of degree but not of kind in their application. If we have faith, we won't lose it because it may take a million years before humanity realizes or makes the nearest or visible approach to its goal. In Jawaharlal's language, let us have the correct ideology.

The sister's challenge, however, remains to be answered. The "self-controllers" are not idle. They are carrying on their propaganda. If their method is different in kind from the method of contraceptives, so is and must be their propaganda. "Self-controllers" do not need clinics, they cannot advertise their cure for the simple reason that it is not an article to be sold or given. But their criticism of contraceptives and warning to the people against their use is part of their propaganda. The constructive side has always been there, but naturally in an unfelt and unseen manner. Advocacy of self-control has never been suspended. The most effective is that of example. The larger the number of honest persons who practise successful self-control, the more effective becomes the propaganda.

Harijan, 30-5-1936

539. NOTES

Prize Essay on Barter

Those who are interested in the question of barter in the place of exchange are reminded that the date for closing the competition is drawing near. I reproduce below the notice[1] that appeared in *Harijan* dated August 31, 1935.

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 367-8.

CERTIFIED DEALERS, NOT CERTIFIED KHADI

The manager of the Burma Branch of the A. I. S. A. writes to the Secretary:[1]

> With reference to the article of Gandhiji under the caption "Uncertified Khadi" in *Harijan* of 11-4-1936, I beg to bring to your notice the fact that here in Burma also, spurious khadi is sold in large quantities and it is a common practice amongst the uncertified dealers to demonstrate to the buyers that they are stocking and selling khadi certified by A. I. S. A., by showing to them the words "Certified by A. I. S. A." stamped on (some) cloth or the label bearing these words affixed on (some) cloth....
>
> We have therefore often and often to bring to the notice of the public and the credulous buyers the fact that khadi or cloth is never certified by A. I. S. A. but it is only the dealer or the party that is certified, (and the public are advised to buy only from A. I. S. A. or A. I. S. A.-certified dealers or depots.) You will thus see that it is wrong for us to use the words "certified khadi" or "uncertified khadi" because it only strengthens the hands of uncertified dealers.
>
> Now that the use of these words is made even by Gandhiji . . . I have not been able to check myself from bringing to your notice the mistake that we unconsciously commit by using the words "certified khadi" or "uncertified khadi". . . .

I gladly make amends. It is undoubtedly an error to speak of certified khadi. It will be difficult to certify pieces and it is futile to expect buyers to make sure of every article they purchase, whether it is genuine or not. The A.I.S.A. has always therefore followed the practice of certifying stores and dealers selling only genuine khadi in the cloth line. I hope that, whether in Burma or elsewhere, lovers of khadi will make themselves sure that they buy only from *stores* or *dealers* certified by the A.I.S.A.

Harijan, 30-5-1936

[1] Only excerpts of the letter are reproduced here.

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540. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NANDI HILL,
May 30, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter of 28th.

Of course you will incur the expense of a latrine. It may be well to rig up a bathroom also side by side as we had in Sabarmati.

I would not want you to go to a seaside, if your hut on an apology for a hill serves the same purpose.

I hope we shall reach Wardha on 15th June, Monday, if not on 14th. My effort would be to reach there on a speaking day. That can only be Sunday. But if I cannot manage it, I shall be satisfied to reach there even on Monday.

You must have by now heard about Harilal's acceptance of Islam. If he had no selfish purpose behind, I should have nothing to say against the step. But I very much fear that there is no other motive behind this step. Let us see what happens now.

We descend to Bangalore City tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6343. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9809

541. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Saturday, May 30, 1936

. . .[1] just read in the paper about Harilal's exploit. There could be no harm in his being converted to Islam with understanding and selfless motives. But he suffers from greed for wealth and sensual pleasures. At Nagpur he gave me to understand that he would do anything whatever to satisfy his greed. I shall be spared all the mental pain if I find my impression wrong and if he turns a new leaf. But here it is

[1] Omission as in the source

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[like] adding meat-eating to drinking, and he had more or less assumed the freedom to eat meat. All the same none of you should be unhappy about it. What is destined must be. He had ceased to belong to any faith and now he has taken on the label of Islam. That does not make him a follower of the faith, though we should indeed feel satisfied if he truly practises in his life what is best in Islam. And if this is a mere show, it does not deserve to be lamented.

This instance should make us all alert and we should [try to] understand whatever religion we follow and bring credit to it.

Read this to Devdas and send an extract to Manilal.

[From Gujarati]

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

542. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

May 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter which arrived just today. I read it and promptly destroyed it. Hence I am writing this 'out of my head', i.e., on the basis of my recollection.

You are bound to have a burden to shoulder while there. God is there to take care of you. You are quite right in reducing your food when there is much work to attend to, but it would be good not to have to give up milk. Perhaps you will be getting more rest at Sitab Diyara.

I follow the point about Chandramukhi[1], Vidyavati[2]. You have well escaped it. You must have learnt about Tarabehn's [death].[3] My opinion is that you should go to Banaras and learn what you can. After all, you do wish to read. You should, therefore, welcome this new knowledge. You will meet some new persons and it will please Jayaprakash. It is a different matter if you could convince him with your arguments, but the better thing is not to have much argument. It is all right if you could

[1] Jayaprakash Narayan's brother's daughter

[2] Addressee's sister

[3] This sentence, being illegible in the source, is taken from *Bapuna Patro–10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*, p. 86. The book however places the letter under May 20, which is a slip.

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persuade him with a casual discussion. Only after the completion of the Banaras course shall we consider what is to be done.

Don't you think you have now my opinion of the Banaras proposal fully?

Give me an account of Chandrakanta's wedding, if you can. Where is Sumangal[1] and how is he? Do you know anything about him? Tomorrow we leave for Bangalore City from where we proceed to Wardha on the 13th at the latest, reaching there on the 15th. I shall be living at Segaon, five miles from there. Perhaps I shall be visiting Wardha once a week. My hut is under construction.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The newspapers report that Harilal has become a Muslim.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3471

543. DISCUSSION WITH C. V. RAMAN AND LADY RAMAN[2]

[Before *May 31, 1936*][3]

The young men wanted Gandhiji to go to their Institute. . . . If he listened to them, he would have to listen to many other requests, he argued in reply. Some of them wanted his autograph and had also thought of presenting him with a purse for Harijans.

[GANDHIJI:] I wish every one of you would want my autograph so as to swell that purse; but you must do all that where I am staying, but not drag me to the Institute.

The moment he was told that it was the Science Institute, he capitulated.

Of course, if it is the Science Institute you are talking of, I must make an exception in its favour, provided Sir C. V. Raman will show me some magic there.

He said to Lady Raman:

I have heard all kinds of good things about you from your husband, but I have to find out how far they are true. He told

[1] Sumangal Prakash

[2] Who were accompanied by some students of the Science Institute

[3] According to Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", from which this and the following item are reproduced, these discussions took place at Nandi Hill where Gandhiji stayed till May 31, 1936.

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me the other day that whilst he is absorbed in his science, you find time for all kinds of humanitarian activities.

[LADY RAMAN:] Not as much as I should be doing. But I am certainly interested in khadi and Harijan welfare and social service and things of that kind. You know, Mahatmaji, I have been a spinner since many years ago. Some fifteen years ago I sent you a quantity of my own hand-spun yarn to be woven into cloth and the late Maganlal Gandhi sent the cloth on to me. But my husband had no faith in the wheel then. He would put away my wheel, smash it and break it; but I am glad to tell you that in my own life-time the day has come when he no longer ridicules the wheel. He too believes in it.

I am very happy. Well, then, I want you to do a little work for me. Did you ever meet the late Kamala Nehru?

Once or twice, Mahatmaji. But I know the old Mrs. Nehru very well.

But you of course know what a good woman Kamala was. You know how she spent herself for the country. But what I prize most of her is not her political contribution but her great spiritual beauty which I should like every man and woman to know.

Yes, I know of her services and her moral beauty.

Then you must help me in collecting some money for the Memorial we are having for her.

And he explained to her the object of the Memorial.

"Oh yes, Mahatmaji," she said, "don't I know how you sat down in Calcutta after Deshbandhu Das's death[1] for a few months and collected as much as 8 lakhs? You can certainly collect a lot if you sat down like that here. I had the privilege of helping in that collection. I was in Calcutta then.

Oh yes, but I have not the time I had then at my disposal. But you can bring to bear all your influence and collect as much as you can.

Lady Raman heartily agreed. As this business was going on, in came...Sir C. V. Raman. She was talking in Hindi as he came in. "Now, is that Hindi any good ?" he asked jocularly.

Certainly as good as your science.

"Oh yes," spoke...Sir C. V. Raman, "she has an amazing capacity for picking up languages. She knows Hindi, she knows Bengali better than Hindi."

Of course, she has stayed in Calcutta for some years.

[1] On June 16, 1925; *vide* Vol. XXVII.

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"Not necessarily for that reason. I, too, have stayed with her. But I know not a word. And now here she has picked up Kannada and talks it." Sir Chandrashekhara [Venkataraman] then began wondering what language could be the language for the masses of India and seemed for a moment to be inclined to the belief that English had the chance.

Don't you think it will be a bad day for the many millions of India who know Hindi without learning it to attempt to know English?

And Sir Chandrashekhara [Venkataraman] immediately said he was glad that Hindi was making rapid strides in South India and added: "I know Hindi, too, Mahatmaji. I understand it very well. I learnt it from no less a teacher than Malaviyaji whose wonderful Hindi I had sometimes to hear for hours when I was in Kashi, and I could not help learning it. But I cannot speak Hindi. It is that conceit, you know, that I am full of as much as you."

Harijan, 6-6-1936

544. DISCUSSION WITH DR. ERIKA ROSENTHAL[1]

[Before *May 31, 1936*][2]

[DR. ROSENTHAL:] Could you teach me how to make them co-operate with us?[3]

[GANDHIJI:] I am trying to learn it myself. You may have heard that I am now going to settle in a genuine village instead of living in a glorified village that Wardha is. Well, all that I have been saying to the people and my co-workers will be there put to the test. But if I have said that I am going to learn the art, there is no doubting the fact that the only way is to go in their midst and do the things oneself. Dumping educated patrons amongst them or even mere enlisting the help of monied men cannot go a long way. One must do as the late Mary Chesley did.

And with that he narrated the pathetic life-story of Tarabehn Chesley who met her death on her pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar.

"But," said Dr. Rosenthal, "that was, if I may say so, a rash adventure and I should not imitate her."

[1] Daughter of Dr. Paul Deussen and wife of a doctor who, following the Nazi persecution of Jews, had come to India. She was doing welfare work in Mysore.

[2] *Vide* footnote 3, p. 463.

[3] She had asked Gandhiji "the secret of teaching people to help themselves".

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No, I do not want you to. I am talking of her spirit—the spirit in which she tried to identify herself with the poorest. There is Miss Mary Barr there who, if you please, is more sensible, who makes allowances for her own limitations and still has completely identified herself with the people. You must see for yourself the work she is doing.

I must. What I mean is that a foreigner cannot and must not adopt all the ways and habits of Indians. He should assimilate what is best in their life. Many an Indian goes to Europe and picks up the superficial things of European life, much to his own damage. That is what I don't like.

What you say is cent per cent true. The foreigners ought not to attempt to adopt more than they naturally and easily can. Miss Barr has, I think, struck the true balance.

"Yes, one has to sit down in the midst like missionaries," said Mr. De Souza who accompanied her.

"Yes," said Dr. Rosenthal but energetically added, "but not with the desire to convert the people. The religious motive is what spoils most of their work. I hate conversion."

No doubt you would, being the daughter of your father.

And yet, you will be rather surprised that I have come up against a sentence in my father's writings which I cannot understand. He says, in effect, that he could not understand why people were unable to accept a religion because of the outside temptations that were offered them.

It must be just the contrary. I should like to see that text. It cannot be as you say.

I shall send you the text.

Yes, do. And then if I am right and you are wrong you will have to admit that I am a better son of your father than you are his daughter.

Yes. I think, Mahatmaji, we have to contend against religion being mixed up too much with the daily life of our people.

No, if it is true religion we want more of it.

I do not want to exclude true religion. I shall give you an example. We have in one of our centres a very good Harijan nurse. One day a Brahmin came there with his son who was suffering from sores. The doctor with the help of the nurse washed the sores and dressed them and bandaged them. But lo and behold the consternation of the Brahmin when he found that it was a Harijan nurse who had dressed his boy's sores. He took him to the nearest river, bathed him and washed away the whole dressing and bandage!

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That is no religion. It is rank superstition. You will come across instances of that kind, but they are getting fewer every day.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

545. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

BANGALORE CITY,
May 31, 1936

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your postcard. It is surprising that you never are quite free from illness. However, watch the result of the serum injection. Why should Babu[1] write to me, now that she is a learned lady? However, I would not complain if she never wrote to me, so long as she does not fall ill or grow weak. I know complaining will not avail but I would not complain even to myself, if Babu made her body like copper.

How very seriously you take the Narandas episode! It is contrary to non-violence. Not to mind the pain inflicted whether by a friend or by a foe is one more form of non-violence. Such conduct is part and parcel of non-violence. Moreover, we must also think of the friend's point of view. Why should we be pained if he said or did something without ill will even though his words or act were improper? You could point out his error, if any, to Narandas in case you are convinced that he is not a man to take any step out of ill will. Be patient if he is unable to see his error, but never take offence. Even if you think that he had an evil motive, your heart should feel no shock because a malicious person deserves to be pitied. Should we take offence at the act of one who deserves pity? My purpose in writing this is that you may analyse the state of your mind, apply to it the touchstone of non-violence and, if you detect your error, rectify it, cleanse your heart and calm down.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[PS.]
We shall be here till the 12th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.G. 18

[1] Sharda, addressee's daughter

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546. SPEECH AT CHICKBALLAPUR

May 31, 1936

Addressing the gathering in Hindi[1], Mahatmaji said as the doctor had asked him not to overexert himself he did not propose to make a long speech to them. He was very glad to address them that day which happened to be the birthday of H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore. Along with the people of Mysore, he joined in praying to God to give long life and prosperity to their beloved Ruler.

He prayed further that it may be given to H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore to approach more and more to *Ramarajya* in Mysore. In olden days, *Ramarajya* meant a government in which everyone in the country, including the lowest ryot, had peace and plenty.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi thanked the people of Chickballapur for their cordial welcome. He and members of his party had all been very well cared for during their stay at Nandi Hills and they had all benefited greatly by their stay. The Government as well as the people had shown him great love and he and his party were duly thankful to them.[2]

The Hindu, 1-6-1936

547. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHINTAMANI[3]

May 31, 1936

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that medical advisers had prohibited him from raising his voice. Fortunately, it was one and the same thing to them whether he raised the voice or not. He wished he knew their own language. It would have been better perhaps if many of them could have followed his . . . Hindi or Hindustani. He still lived under the hope that before he died he would see educated India speaking the inter-provincial language—Hindi or Hindustani. He knew that there were some people who entertained, quite falsely, in these parts of India the notion that the movement of Hindi was conceived in order to supplant the provincial languages, but this

[1] Ismail Sheriff translated Gandhiji's speech into Kannada.

[2] A purse of Rs. 100 was presented to Gandhiji. Accepting the purse he smilingly said: "It is too small. Only hundred rupees. Three times shame!"

[3] An address on behalf of the Municipal Council was presented to Gandhiji. Over 2,000 people attended the meeting.

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belief proceeded from gross ignorance. This movement had contributed handsomely to further the working knowledge of Hindi or Hindustani. It had . . . intended to strengthen the vernacular provincial languages. But provincial languages would suffer stagnation so long as they could not extend help to other languages. The English language had a definite place and an international character. But it had certainly no place whatsoever in the heart of the masses of India.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that it was a great day for the people of the State as it was the birthday of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore. He would also join them in their prayers wishing the Almighty to give him long life and prosperity. (Cheers)

They all knew what views he held about the quality of the rule of Princes in India. Princes forgot their duty. In ancient days they carried their administration in a way which was called *Ramarajya*. In *Ramarajya*, there was no such thing as grinding poverty. People lived in absolute peace. There was no one high or low. He wished that that principle of *Ramarajya* was translated into practice in all parts of India.

Continuing, Mahatma Gandhi said that they had done well in presenting him with a little purse[1] for the Harijan Fund. He called it little because it was possible for them to give him a better purse. Nothing that they could give for the Harijan cause was sufficient penance. There could be no peace for them until the Harijans were levelled up to the highest status in Hindu society. They must enjoy absolutely the same rights as other Hindus. While they were entitled to take credit for what little they had done for Harijans, he was glad that they admitted that much more remained to be done. He therefore hoped that they would redouble their efforts in that direction.

The Hindu, 1-6-1936

548. SPEECH AT KOLAR

May 31, 1936

Mahatmaji thanked the Municipal Council for the address and the townsmen for the purse. He would like to join the people of Kolar in wishing His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore many a return of the birthday which his subjects all over the State were celebrating with great joy. He was glad to hear that the Municipality was doing some work in the cause of the Harijans. He was also very much pleased to hear that the Municipality had many more things to do for the Harijans. Unless untouchability was blotted out, root and branch, the Hindu society would perish. Therefore, so long as untouchability

[1] Of Rs. 201

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remained in the land in one form or another, they could not say that they had done anything for the cause of the Harijans.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji congratulated the Mysore Government on the establishment of khadi centres and appealed to the people to take to khadi. He wished he could go to other parts of India and say that in Mysore State at least, the people wore khadi and used swadeshi articles.

The Hindu, 1-6-1936

549. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING

KOLAR GOLD FIELDS,
May 31, 1936

Gandhiji, speaking to a mass meeting of mine-labourers for a few minutes, said he had paid a hurried visit to the labour huts which seemed to him too small, too ill-lighted and too low-roofed to be fit for human habitation. If the workers only knew what they could do for themselves by combining their training and intelligence they would realize that they were no less proprietors of the mines than the managers and shareholders. Their labour was better gold than the metal they extracted with their labour from the bowels of the earth.[1]

Gandhiji made an earnest appeal to the mining authorities to see to the betterment of the lot of coolies working in the mines, through whom the mining authorities derived their maximum benefit. Mahatmaji wanted that the mining officials should give the same facilities to the coolies working underground as they did to the highly paid officials.

Mahatmaji said that he could not congratulate the management on their efforts to house the poor. He understood that the labourers were charged about twelve annas to one rupee per hut. The rent should be much less.

He reminded the mine-owners that unless they voluntarily recognized the due status of labour and treated it as they treated themselves, time was not far distant when labour would dictate its own terms. He mentioned his theory of trust which he had propounded before the Ahmedabad mill-owners. He told the workers that whilst it was right and proper to assert their rights they ought to do their tasks as if the mines were their personal property. He also asked them to shun drink, gambling and other vices.

Mahatmaji observed that considering the cause for which the money was collected, this sum of Rs. 619 from the Kolar Gold Fields area was not much.[2]

Harijan, 13-6-1936, and *The Hindu*, 1-6-1936

[1] The following two paragraphs are from *The Hindu*.
[2] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A.I.S.A. RESOLUTION[1]

[On or before *October 11, 1935*]

1. This Council is of opinion that the wages now paid for spinning are inadequate, and therefore resolves that they be raised and a suitable standard be fixed so that spinners may at least receive a minimum wage calculated on the basis of eight hours' efficient work, sufficient at least to procure clothing (20 yards per year) and maintenance in accordance with a scientifically prescribed scale of minimum food requirements. All concerned should try, as circumstances permit, for a progressive rise in the wages scale, so as to reach a standard enabling each spinning family to be properly maintained out of earnings of its working members.

2. In order to guide the A.I.S.A. workers in the execution of the principle underlying the foregoing proposition, the following should be regarded by all branches and bodies, working in affiliation to or in any other way under the Association, as the settled policy of the Association until it is altered in the light of further experience by the Council:

(a) The mission of the Association is to make every home in India self-sufficing through khadi with reference to its clothing requirements, and to promote the welfare of spinners who are the least paid among khadi artisans and all others engaged in the different cotton processes beginning with growing cotton and ending with weaving of khadi.

(b) It is therefore imperative that those who work for the production of khadi, whether as artisans, sellers or otherwise, shall use khadi for their clothing requirements to the exclusion of every other kind of cloth.

(c) All the branches and affiliated bodies shall so work the scheme as to avoid all losses, that is, so as to restrict their production to the demand within their own selected areas commencing with their immediate neighbourhood and never extending beyond their province except in so far as they are called upon by other provinces to meet the latter's demand.

(d) In order to avoid surplus production, producers may restrict their operations only to those spinners who solely depend upon spinning for their daily bread for part of the year or the whole of it. Branches and other bodies

[1] *Vide* pp. 32 and 66.

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shall maintain an accurate register of all the spinners and other artisans employed by them and shall deal directly with them. In order to ensure the use of the wages for clothing and food, a part or the whole of them may be paid in kind, i.e., khadi or other necessaries of life.

(e) In order to avoid overlapping, undue competition, or duplicating of expenses where there are more khadi-producing organizations than one, the area of operation of each shall be previously defined. Private certified producers will not be encouraged by the Association. Among those that are already certified, those only who will work strictly under the same rules that govern the Association branches and take all risks without any prospect of recouping themselves from the Association will have their certificates renewed on the strict understanding that any breach of the rule that may be laid down from time to time or instructions given will involve automatic withdrawal of their certificates.

(f) It should be understood that it is the primary and imperative duty of all organizations working under the Association to promote the scheme of self-sufficing khadi. Production of khadi for meeting the demand of cities or of khadi-wearers outside cities who do not spin for themselves is a secondary or supplementary duty. No organization will be considered bound to produce or sell such khadi.

File No. 4/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX II

FOR HINDUSTANI ONLY[1]

That the Hindi-Urdu question is in imminent danger of becoming a communal issue is evident from the speech Mr. Purshottamdas Tandon delivered at the opening ceremony of the Hindi Museum at Benares in the first week of this month. He declared that next to Chinese, Hindi was the most widely spoken language in Asia. This means, in other words, that the problem of a common language is solved; it is going to be Hindi, because Hindi is spoken by the majority of Indians. Those who clamour for Hindustani can be outnumbered, therefore they cannot matter. But the counting of heads is no more a remedy than breaking of heads. Whatever Mr. Tandon may have really meant, it seems to me that ground is being prepared for another such indignity as the Communal Award.

It is only your prestige and the confidence inspired by your personality that can rescue us. I am giving below a number of points which in my humble opinion are rational in themselves and provide a sound basis for a common

[1] *Vide* pp. 363, 383, 408 and 442. Only the concluding portion of M. Mujeeb's letter is reproduced here.

language. If you consider them and find them worthy, not in your own estimation only but also of the cause they are meant to serve, you may make them known to others. What I am dreaming of just now is that they might become the basis of a public pronouncement by you.

The points are:

1. That our common language shall be called 'Hindustani', not 'Hindi'.

2. That Hindustani shall not be considered to have any peculiar association with the religious traditions of any community.

3. That the test of 'foreign' and 'indigenous' shall not be applied to any word, but only the test of currency.

4. That all words used by Hindu writers of Urdu and Muslim writers of Hindi shall be deemed current. This of course shall not apply to Urdu and Hindi as sectional languages.

5. That in the choice of technical terms, specially political terminology, no preference be given to Sanskrit terms as such, but as much room as possible be allowed for natural selection from among Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit terms.

6. That the Devnagari and the Arabic scripts shall both be considered current and official, and that in all institutions whose policy is directed by the official promoters of Hindustani, facilities shall be provided for learning both scripts.

There may be friends to whom these suggestions will look like Muslim demands. They are not. But I know that unless an assurance of some such kind is given by you and the Parishad, there can be no question of Muslim literary effort being harnessed in the cause of a common language. So I have submitted these suggestions to you. If they are extravagant, I know you will pardon me, and if they are unjustified, they will not offend you. So far as I am concerned I have only wanted to do my duty, and to show, by an appeal to you, my unlimited respect for your judgment and my confidence in your deep feeling of justice and tolerance.

M.

Harijan, 9-5-1936

APPENDIX III

POPULARIZE HINDUSTANI[1]

The All-India Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, the twenty-fifth session of which was held at Nagpur during the week-end, has two main objects before it: to develop Hindi literature and popularize Hindi throughout the country. We shall consider here the latter object mainly. The need for a national language is undeniable. That English cannot possibly be that language is equally

[1] *Vide* p. 383. Only extracts from the article are reproduced here.

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undeniable. The popular form of Hindi or of Urdu, generally called Hindustani, has alone the prospect of being a perfect national language if earnest efforts are made to popularize this form in every possible way, particularly by developing Hindustani literature, that is to say, Hindi and Urdu literature without a large admixture of classical words.

Call It Hindustani

Unfortunately, however, this national aim is not precisely understood. Many, who possess wrong notions of purity of language or literary elegance, persist in using too many classical expressions, the Hindus from Sanskrit and the Muslims from Persian and Arabic. Sometimes this tendency is deliberately fostered by communalists, whence has arisen the Hindi-Urdu controversy. Babu Rajendra Prasad much deplored this spirit of exclusiveness both because it hindered the growth of national language and because it widened the gulf between the authors and the common readers. He rightly commended the use of a simple language and at the same time urged the absorption of foreign words wherever necessary. He would have brought out his point more clearly if he had definitely suggested that the language which should be specially cultivated should be Hindustani. That is, we believe, the suggestion made by Gandhiji himself at the Nagpur Conference. The most effective way to end once for all the Hindi-Urdu controversy and to develop a national language is not only to propagate a simple or popular form of Hindi and Urdu but also to call that language Hindustani, which in fact is its most appropriate name. In order that much confusion and needless controversy regarding the respective claims of Hindi and Urdu may be avoided, may we suggest to the Congress President to issue definite instructions to all Congress organizations that the only national language to be recognized by them should be Hindustani and that Congressmen should not carry on propaganda in favour of either Urdu or Hindi being the national language ?

Use Both Scripts

The question of a common script for the national language has come very much to the fore during the last two years or so. Many suggest that the Nagari script should be the national one, with some improvements made therein, as it is the basis of the scripts of all the vernaculars derived from Sanskrit and, therefore, intelligible to a large majority of the people. A few have suggested the use of the Roman script, and the rumour was abroad some time ago that President Jawaharlal had supported it. He has now made it clear that, though he sees some advantage in it, he does not see any chance of its being adopted by any considerable community in the country. Even as regard the Nagari script there is not at present that consensus of opinion in its favour which can justify its exclusive adoption in writing Hindustani. Apart from this the claims of the Arabic script, which is being used in many Asiatic and African

and even European countries as well as in India, cannot lightly be ignored. In the circumstances the best immediate approach to the problem is for every Indian to learn both the Nagari and the Arabic scripts. That was Gandhiji's suggestion during the N.C.O. Movement and many national schools and colleges loyally followed it. We believe he has not changed his mind on this point.

The Bombay Chronicle, 27-4-1936

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

May 25, 1936

About women and W. C. I began by saying that I had received some protests for their non-inclusion. I would have welcomed even stronger protests for I wanted our women to be more aggressive and to insist on their rights, both political and social. I invited them to organize themselves to press for their rights which they were not likely to get if they waited for the goodwill of their menfolk. About the W. C. I said that it was formed under peculiar circumstances when I had to play an unusual part. The *hayadar* (self-respecting) president would probably have resigned and I being *behaya* (shameless) stuck on even though the majority of the Congress had decided against me on some vital issues. This peculiar position was reflected in the formation of the W. C., which certainly could not be under the circumstances of my choice although technically I was responsible for it. When various viewpoints have to be represented, the lesser ones go to the wall. You are perfectly right in saying that I was responsible for the exclusion of women. But yet this is not the whole matter. I would have liked to have a woman in the Working Committee but as the matters developed and a number of other names appeared and stayed, there was little choice left. Ultimately I felt that it mattered little to me who was in the W. C. and who was not. The Committee as it took shape was not my child, I could hardly recognize it and to some inclusions, as you know, I reacted strongly. Yet ultimately I submitted but inevitably with the thought that I was surrendering to others and almost against my own better judgment. At the very first meeting, almost without provocations, the inherent conflicts appeared. The whole purpose of a president nominating a homogeneous committee was thus frustrated.

File No. 32/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* p. 454.

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APPENDIX V

LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL TO RAJENDRA PRASAD[1]

May 29, 1936

I have received your letter . . . of 24th with Kripalani's letter to you enclosed with it.

His[2] Bombay speeches have disturbed me much. I am not worried so much about khaddar. It will recoil on him if he goes on in this fashion. But I cannot stand the attitude of injured innocence he has assumed regarding the nomination of members in the W. C., particularly his statement regarding omission of a woman. Rajaji feels equally strongly.

Bapu had written to him on these points and the extracts of his reply and the last letter of Bapu to him on the subject of the W. C. nominations are enclosed herewith for your information. Re: khadi—he says the report is not correct and he had issued a correct version of his speech next day though I have not seen it reported anywhere. His reply about the W. C. is bad enough and I don't think I can swallow it. It is a humiliating position in which I for one would not agree to stay at any cost. He was expected to act honourably with his colleagues but he cannot do so or if he feels that we are a drag on him we must clear the way for him.

I am going to Bangalore tomorrow where I am staying till the 12 th and then we disperse for our respective places. Hope you are doing well.

File No. 32/12/36, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

[1] *Vide* p. 455.
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru's

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CHRONOLOGY

(*October 1, 1935—May 31, 1936*)

October 1: Gandhiji was in Wardha.

October 2: Gandhiji's sixty-seventh birthday celebrated. Italy invaded Abyssinia.

October 5-6: Gandhiji discussed acceptance of office with Congress leaders.

October 11: Sent message for Indian immigrants of Suriname. Presided over A.I.S.A. Council meeting. Discussed spinners' wages.

October 12: Attended A.I.S.A. Council meeting.

October 13: Attended A.I.S.A. Council meeting. Assured Rabindranath Tagore that he would "strain every nerve" to collect necessary funds for Santiniketan.

October 14: B. R. Ambedkar advised Harijans to renounce Hinduism and embrace any other religion which guaranteed equal status.

October 15: Through Press, Gandhiji urged B. R. Ambedkar "to assuage his wrath and reconsider the position".

October 20: Gave interview to a delegation consisting of Patitpawandas, D. K. Bhagat, T. A. Purohit and D. S. Shende.

October 22: Addressed village workers.

October 24: Wrote foreword to *Shrimadrajachandra.*

November 7-8: Attended meeting of A.I.V.I.A.

November 10: Spoke on Rajachandra anniversary.

November 16: G. K. Deodhar died.

Before *November 23:* Gandhiji had talk with professors and students of Wardha.

November 23: In *Harijan* paid tribute to G. K. Deodhar.

November 24: Issued appeal to Gujaratis to donate for Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh.

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December 3: Gave interview to Margaret Sanger.

December 4: Sent message on Vidyagauri Nilkanth's sixtieth birthday.
Gave interview to Margaret Sanger.

December 7: Suddenly Gandhiji took ill and was advised rest.

December 13: Met Rajendra Prasad.

Before *December 27:* Wrote foreword to *Satyagraha in Gandhiji's Own Words*.

Before *December 28:* Sent message to Indian National Congress Jubilee Sammelan.

December 31: Met members of International Federation of Fellowship.

1936

January 7: Met Muriel Lester, Dr. Tomiko Koro and Mrs. Tyace.

January 9: Had some teeth extracted.
Mahadev Desai informed Associated Press that "Gandhiji had been having high blood-pressure during the past few weeks, but there was a distinct though slow improvement."

Before *January 11:* Gandhiji gave interview to Yone Noguchi.

Before *January 17:* Sent message to Bihar Political Conference.

January 17: Reached Bombay.

January 19: Had some more teeth extracted.

January 20: King George V died.

January 21: Gandhiji cabled condolence to Queen Mary.

January 22: Reached Ahmedabad.

February 1: Jawaharlal Nehru elected Congress President.

February 9: Gandhiji met Muriel Lester.

February 12: Met Prabhashankar Pattani.

February 16: Visited Harijan Ashram and spoke to inmates.

February 18: Dinshaw Wacha passed away.

February 19: Gandhiji addressed students of Gujarat Vidyapith.
Paid tribute to Dinshaw Wacha.

February 21: Reached Bardoli *en route* to Wardha.
Interviewed by American Negro Delegtation.

February 22: Spoke at village workers' meeting.

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February 23: Reached Wardha.

February 28: Kamala Nehru passed away.
Through Press Gandhiji paid tribute to Kamala Nehru, sent condolence to Vijayalakshmi Pandit.
Left for Savli.

February 29: At Savli spoke at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.
Opened A. I. V. I. A Exhibition.

March 1, 3 and *4:* Addressed Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings.

March 5: Attended marriage of Krishnadas Gandhi and Manojna.
Spoke at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.

March 6: Addressed Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.
Left Savli.

March 7: At Wardha *en route* to Delhi.

March 8: Arrived in Delhi. Stayed in Harijan Colony.

Before *March 9:* Sent message to Gurukul convocation.

March 9: Began practice of silence between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

March 10: Jawaharlal Nehru returned to India.

March 16: Gandhiji ended the practice of silence between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m.

March 17: Met Jawaharlal Nehru.

March 19: In note to Jamnalal Bajaj explained his 'idea of living in a village'.

March 21: Congress Working Committee began deliberations.

March 22: Gandhiji gave interview to M. C. Rajah. Attended Harijan Sevak Sangh meeting.

March 25: Discussed with Rabindranath Tagore finances of Santiniketan.

March 27: Sent draft for Rs. 60,000 to Rabindranath Tagore.
Had discussion with Harijan workers.

March 28: Arrived in Lucknow.
Opened Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition.

March 30: In statement to the Press contradicted report that Lord Halifax was arranging an interview between Lord Linlithgow and himself.

April 4: Arrived in Allahabad.

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April 5: Bhavani Dayal, South African Delegate to Congress session, met Gandhiji. Opened library and museum of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan.

April 6: Gandhiji visited Harijan Colony.
T. B. Sapru met Gandhiji.

April 7: Gandhiji attended Congress Working Committee meeting. Left Allahabad.

April 8: Reached Lucknow.
Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested on his return to India.

April 12: Gandhiji spoke at Khadi Exhibition.

April 13: Observed fast on Jallianwala Bagh Day.
Congress rejected new Constitution.

April 14: Gandhiji addressed All-India Depressed Classes Conference.

April 15: Addressed public meeting in Congress pandal in evening.

Before *April 16:* Had discussion with two foreign ladies.

April 16: Left Lucknow.

April 17: Reached Wardha in afternoon.

After *April 17:* Visited Segaon and in a speech to villagers explained his decision to settle there.

April 18: Linlithgow assumed office as Viceroy.

April 23: Gandhiji left Wardha in evening.

April 24: At Nagpur.
Presided over Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad in morning.

April 26: Harilal met Gandhiji at Nagpur.

Gandhiji arrived at Wardha at night.

April 27: Congress Working Committee met at Wardha.

April 28: Gandhiji attended C. W. C. meeting.

April 30: Moved to Segaon early in the morning.

May 1: Met B. R. Ambedkar and Walchand Hirachand.

May 3: At Wardha, inaugurated Exhibition of A. I. V. I. A.

May 4: At Segaon.

May 6: At Paunar, spoke at Khadi Yatra.

May 7: At Wardha, addressed annual general meeting of A. I. V. I. A.

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May 8: At Wardha, spoke at Training School for village workers.
Left for Bangalore in evening.

May 9: Reached Madras in morning *en route* to Bangalore.
In interview to Associated Press declined to comment on "Indian or world politics".

May 10: Reached Nandi Hills. Dr. M. A. Ansari died.

On or after *May 10:* Gandhiji gave interview to Sir C. V. Raman and Professor Rahm.

May 11: Telegraphed condolence to Begum Ansari.
Issued to Associated Press message on Dr. M. A. Ansari's death.

May 14: Met Captain C. Oommen.

May 15: News reached Gandhiji that Mary Chesley had died at Rishikesh.

May 29: Harilal Gandhi embraced Islam, assuming name Abdulla.

Before *May 31:* Gandhiji met Sir C. V. Raman and Lady Raman.
Had discussion with Dr. Erika Deussen Rosenthal.

May 31: Left Nandi Hills for Bangalore in morning.
Visited Chickballapur, Chintamani, Kolar and Bowringpet and addressed meetings.
Spoke at Labourers' meeting at Kolar Gold Fields.
At Bangalore visited Municipal colony.

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9 * Paragraph 2, lines 3-4	But one condition I make which you must fulfil, and is it	But I make one condition which you must fulfil, and it is that
17 * Footnote 3	pp. 172-3	pp. 171-2
30 * Paragraph 3, line 6	India beyond a point.	beyond a point.
78 * Paragraph 3, line 1	into look to	to look into
84 * Item 95, line 7	as in	a sin
174 * Footnote 1, line 1	Forward	Foreword
231 * Line 5 from bottom	ni believers democracy.	believers in democracy.
278 * Footnote 1	pp. 262-4	pp. 261-3
303 * Footnote 1	pp. 295-6	pp. 294-5
325 * Footnote 3	pp. 337	pp. 336-7
365 * Footnote 2	p. 354	pp. 351-2
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