THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXVI

(1937-1938)

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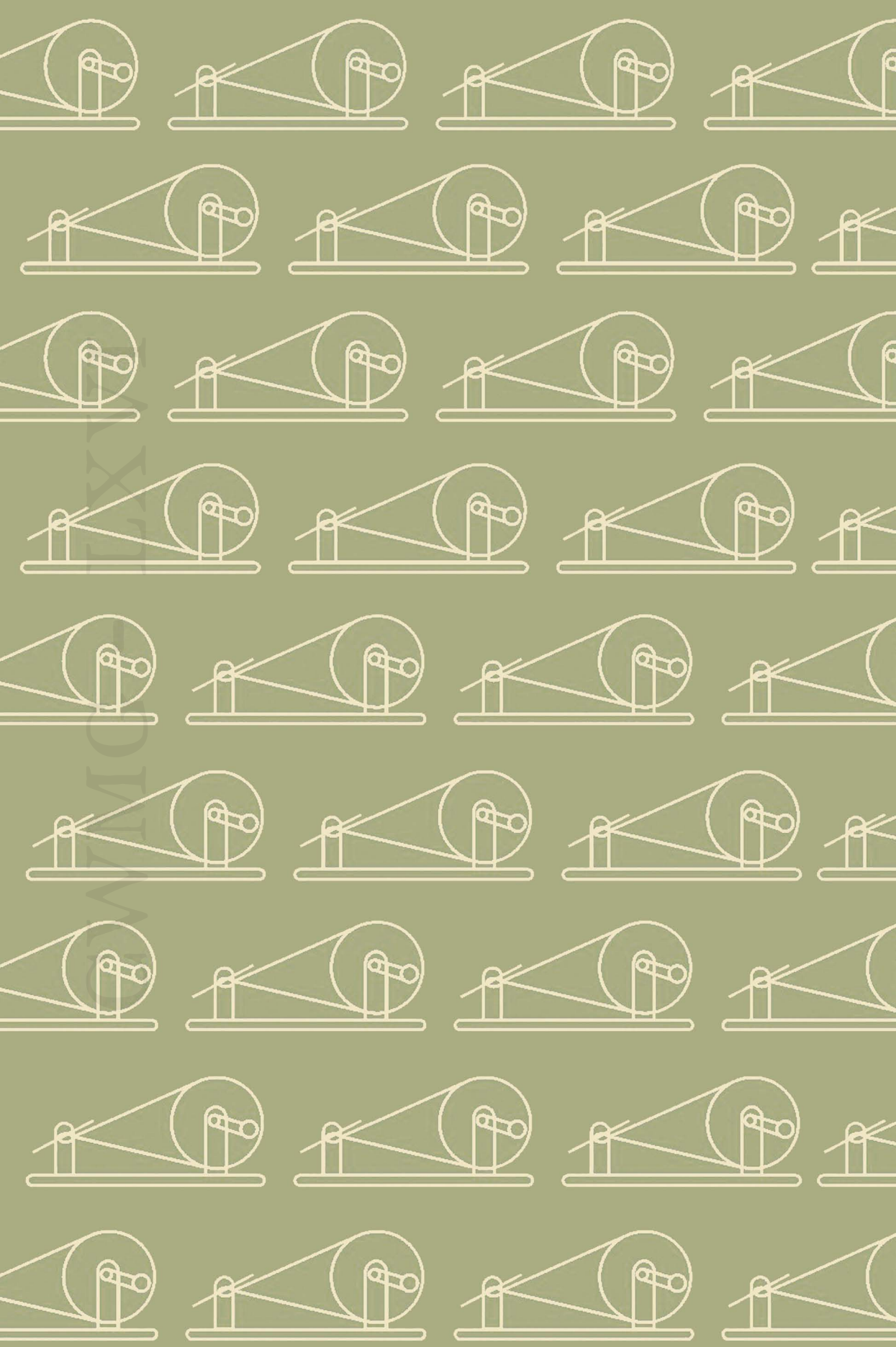


THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

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(August 1, 1937 – March 31, 1938)

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MORNING WALK AT JUHU BEACH, BOMBAY

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PREFACE

During the period August 1, 1937, to March 31, 1938, covered in this volume, Gandhiji was in poor health. He suffered from high blood-pressure and needed "prolonged mental rest", which he hoped to have during his projected visit to the Frontier Province in November (p. 208), but he had a breakdown in Calcutta in the last week of October and had to remain there up to November 17. From December 6, 1937, to January 7, 1938, Gandhiji rested on the Juhu beach in Bombay. Writing to Amrit Kaur on January 9, he reported: "The B. P. goes down to the ideal figure but jumps up on the slightest pretext. I dare not talk or even listen to any serious conversation" (p. 331). His health improved in Segaon and he was able to attend the annual session of the Congress in February, but when, during the meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh at Delang in Orissa in the last week of March, he learnt that Kasturba and two other Ashram inmates had visited the famous Puri temple which was not open to Harijans, he was so upset that the blood-pressure shot up once again to an alarming level (pp. 452-3).

Gandhiji attributed his blood-pressure to his failure to live up to the teaching of the *Gita*. "My non-attachment," he explained to Ramdas Gandhi, "is less than what is meant by the *Gita*; I am full of feeling. I am always pained by anybody's suffering." One must learn to remain non-attached without ceasing to be affected by others' sufferings, and Gandhiji had not, he confessed, "mastered that art" (p. 322). To a question by Rajagopalachari why he should "put so much passion in all your talk", Gandhiji gave the same reply: "Because I have yet to learn the lesson of the *Gita* to be passionless" (p. 329). Though his love, as he told Verrier Elwin, could stand many trials (p. 64), it also made him suffer, as when an Ashram inmate who had become as a daughter to Gandhiji temporarily lost self-control and left "in a huff"; his reaction to her behaviour made him doubt the reality of his ahimsa (pp. 115 and 116). Replying to Dadabhai Naoroji's granddaughter who had been a valued co-worker for many years, Gandhiji wrote: "You may forget me, disown me, I simply cannot forget you, what shall I do?" (p. 210). He cried out with the same love to his devoted secretaries Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal when, under pressure of momentary feelings, the latter left him (p. 307) and the former threatened to

do so. " . . . I will tolerate thousands of mistakes," Gandhiji wrote to Mahadev Desai, "but I can never part with you. Even death at the hands of a *bhakta* is preferable to salvation at the hands of those who have no love for one" (p. 455).

Despite the illness and mental tension, Gandhiji continued to guide the Congress and the country. Office-acceptance under the Government of India Act of 1935 was an experiment in co-operation with the British. As Gandhiji explained to a visitor: "Many feel that any form of co-operation is a mistake. Others disagree, feeling that perhaps our objectives can best be achieved by giving ground now and then" (p. 128). Though the Act of 1935 was intended "to perpetuate British rule", Gandhiji felt that it was "at the same time a bold experiment of wooing the masses to the British side, and, failing that, a resignation to their will to reject British domination." The Congress could defeat the British intention by implementing, through both official and popular action, the constructive programme which it had adopted since 1920. It was a programme of "organized national non-violence" and Gandhiji believed that successful implementation of this programme would make the Congress irresistible and it would be "able to have its way all along the line" (pp. 104-5).

This programme of a moral and social revolution through democratic means required patient education of the public and Gandhiji set about the task through his articles in *Harijan*. Ministerships, Gandhiji stressed, were not prizes but "avenues to service" and had "to be held lightly, not tightly" (p. 16). Gandhiji expected the Congress to rule "not through the police backed by the military but through its moral authority based upon the greatest goodwill of the people" won through "the service of the people whom it seeks to represent in every one of its actions" (p. 62). And he expected the same public spirit from the critics of the Ministers. While he asserted that "it is not only a right, but a duty for any Congressman to openly criticize acts of Congress officials . . .", he also insisted that the "criticism has got to be courteous and well-informed" (pp. 155-6). "Healthy, well-informed, balanced criticism is the ozone of public life," Gandhiji said (p. 292). Gandhiji's advice to the Ministers not to rule through the police did not mean however that they should tolerate violence. "Civil liberty is not criminal liberty," Gandhiji stated emphatically. The warning was necessary because it seemed "to be assumed by some persons that" in the Congress provinces at least "individuals can say and do what they like." "Non-violence in politics," he said,

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"is a new weapon in the process of evolution. Its vast possibilities are yet unexplored." Gandhiji wanted that the Congress Ministers should undertake such exploration, but if need be they should not hesitate to take police action against violent activities though only after consulting the Provincial Congress Committee or the Congress Working Committee (pp. 268-9).

In the programme of reform and reconstruction through legislation, Gandhiji gave the highest importance to education and prohibition. The two were linked as the excise revenue from liquor was then used to meet the expenditure on education. Gandhiji thought it "shameful and humiliating" that "unless we got the drink revenue, our children would be starved of their education." But the solution to this "educational puzzle", as Gandhiji called it, came to him "like a flash". It lay in freeing the children "from the incubus of learning their subjects in a foreign tongue" and in teaching them "to use their hands and feet profitably". The first reform would enable the children to go through the whole course up to the matriculation standard in seven years instead of eleven and the second would make education self-supporting by training the pupils in a productive craft (pp. 59, 118 and 192-3).

The child at the age of 14, Gandhiji argued, after finishing a seven years' course should be discharged as an earning unit. The scheme might not be completely self-supporting for the first few years, but Gandhiji believed that the total income and expenditure for all the seven years could be balanced at the end (pp. 137 and 151). Not only was self-supporting education an economic necessity for India's villages, but it could also be "the spearhead of a silent social revolution", providing "a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village" and placing "the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands" (pp. 169-70). The divorce of education from manual training had taught the people to regard manual work as something inferior. The new education would correct this by promoting "inventive skill" and giving the craftsmen an independent status (pp. 138-9).

Apart from such practical considerations, however, Gandhiji's new education was based on his conception of the all-round development of the child through the exercise of his physical faculties. The whole training, he claimed, would be "natural, responsive, and therefore the quickest and the cheapest in the land" (pp. 80-1). The craft-training would not be mere mechanical work, but would be used "for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge" (p. 193), for training the pupil's "mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense, and so on" (p. 138).

Gandhiji explained that what he had written about education was his personal contribution to the discussion on the subject and not the official policy of the Congress. He added, however, that he felt "most strongly about the vast injury that the existing system of education has done to the youth of the country and to the languages and general culture of India" (p. 80). His new system was intended to make the pupils the "true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation" (p. 266).

Gandhiji hailed the resolution of the Congress Working Committee calling for total prohibition in the Congress provinces within three years as "The Greatest Act" and appealed for "the sympathy and support not only of all the parties in India including the Europeans but the best mind of the whole world" in what he believed to be "perhaps the greatest moral movement of the century" (p. 82). Gandhiji, however, admitted that total prohibition could not be brought about by mere State effort. Legislation was only the first, though indispensable, step. It would have to be accompanied by an educative campaign in which Gandhiji appealed for the co-operation of teachers, doctors and others. To the standard argument that prohibition by legislation was impracticable because there was bound to be illicit distillation and secret drinking, Gandhiji replied: "Thieving will abide till doomsday. Must it therefore be licensed?" So long as the State, he argued, "not only permits but provides facilities for the addict to satisfy his craving, the reformer has little chance of success" (pp. 161-2).

Gandhiji's constructive approach to politics had to contend against the "turbulent wind" (p. 213) of agitations which had begun to blow right from the start of provincial autonomy. A virulent controversy had broken out in Bombay over the election of the Leader of the Congress legislature party and though Gandhiji offered to examine the charges levelled by K. F. Nariman against Vallabhbhai Patel and assured the former that "if I feel convinced that you have been unjustly dealt with by the Sardar, I shall unhesitatingly say so and do everything humanly possible to undo the mischief" (p. 1), the campaign continued unabated and caused Gandhiji "deep distress" (p. 39). After the allegation was inquired into by Gandhiji and Advocate D. N. Bahadurji, and Patel was exonerated, Nariman issued, on Gandhiji's advice, a public statement accepting the verdict and expressing his regret and Gandhiji hoped that the public and the Press of Bombay would "forget the past bitter and unseemly controversy that had robbed the public activity in Bombay of its usual zest" (p. 248).

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But Nariman recanted the statement (p. 274) and the reconciliation for which Gandhiji laboured for four months could not be brought about.

After the Congress Ministries started functioning, they also, particularly the Madras Ministry led by C. Rajagopalachari, came under powerful attack from a section of Congressmen. Commenting in *Harijan* on the A. I. C. C. meeting criticizing the ministries, Gandhiji said, "the resolution . . . and still more the speeches, were wide of the mark." The critics, he added, had "departed from truth and non-violence." Another resolution on alleged repression in the Mysore State, Gandhiji characterized as much more "offensive" (pp. 292-3). Differences over such issues led to a crisis in the Congress Working Committee and Gandhiji advised Vallabhbhai Patel and the other members of the Committee to resign, leaving Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the President, free to select a new Committee of his own choice. The discussions were so exhausting that Gandhiji felt he could "barely keep" himself "alive" and got an attack of unusually high blood-pressure the same day (pp. 285-6 and 287). There were other symptoms, too, of violence in the air. There was trouble in a settlement of so-called "criminal" tribes near Sholapur and labour unrest in Ahmedabad and Kanpur. Gandhiji called these "Storm Signals" and wondered whether they were signs of weakness of Congress control resulting from lack of faith in "truth and non-violence, in sustained work and discipline" and "in the efficacy of the fourfold constructive programme", and he warned Congressmen that if they lacked "that political faith in the means, office-acceptance may prove to be a trap" (pp. 300-2).

While the Congress was struggling with the problems of discipline within its ranks, there appeared on the horizon another and a more menacing "storm signal". Presiding over the annual session of the Muslim League at Lucknow, M. A. Jinnah made a speech on October 15 which appeared to Gandhiji to be "a declaration of war". Replying to Gandhiji's letter "written . . . out of an anguished heart" (p. 257), Jinnah said his speech was "purely in self-defence" (p. 470), but his later pronouncements confirmed Gandhiji's first impression. "In your speeches I miss the old nationalist," Gandhiji wrote to him, and asked him "on bended knees to be what I had thought you were" (p. 350). This appeal to his heart provoked Jinnah to reply back: "Evidently, you are not acquainted with what is going on in the Congress Press—the amount of vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood that is daily spread about me . . ." (pp. 479-80). This growing spirit of violence and distrust resulted in an outbreak of

communal riots in Allahabad in March and the Government had to call out the military to quell them. Gandhiji felt ashamed that Congress Ministers should have had to do so and told co-workers, "I feel as if the Congress had lost and the British had won" (p. 410). Writing in *Harijan* under the caption "Our Failure", he asked Congressmen to face the "naked truth" that the Congress had "not yet become fit to substitute the British authority." It had not yet developed non-violence of the strong and the powerful and had not therefore made good the claim that it represented the whole of India. The Congress, Gandhiji advised, "should be able to put forth a non-violent army of volunteers numbering not a few thousands but lacs" who would, in times of peace, "be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible" and would be "ready to cope with any emergency", risking their lives "to still the frenzy of mobs" (pp. 405-7). He poured out his heart again on the subject at the Gandhi Seva Sangh meetings in the last week of March and urged co-workers to consider how to preserve communal peace through non-violence.

Another problem which now weighed on Gandhiji's mind was that of political prisoners or detenus held for acts of violence. Gandhiji strove to generate an atmosphere of trust which would facilitate the release of all the prisoners and therefore appealed to the Andamans prisoners who had gone on hunger-strike from July 24 to give up the strike and give him an assurance that they no longer believed in terrorist methods. He also appealed to the public to hold no demonstrations when the prisoners were released (pp. 75, 101-2 and 304). On the assurance being given by the prisoners (p. 90), Gandhiji made their cause his own and during his visit to the prisoners in Alipur Jail gave them his word that he wanted to see them discharged before he died (p. 281). After long negotiations with the Bengal Government which in his then weak state of health were quite taxing, Gandhiji was able to persuade the Ministers to make a public announcement of progressive release of all the prisoners (pp. 303-5 and 472-3). Displaying a similar spirit of conciliation when a political crisis developed in Bihar and the U. P. over the release of prisoners as recommended by the Ministers and the latter resigned, Gandhiji brought about a peaceful solution after all the parties "had ample time for considering the situation" (pp. 384-5).

Gandhiji's love embraced the lower creation, too. Writing in *Harijan* in support of anti-vivisection societies in the West, he argued that alleviation of human suffering could never be "an end in itself justifying adoption of inhumanities involved in

vivisection.'' The human family must not sacrifice tenderness, for ''tenderness for others and other life,'' Gandhiji held, ''itself promotes alleviation in that it makes pain bearable'' (p. 140).

''I don't know where my ship is drifting,'' Gandhiji wrote to a correspondent after his illness in Calcutta. ''The Captain is God. . . . I am not worrying. It is bound to disappear some day. If so, why keep count of the days?'' (p. 298).

To a question how it was possible to be tolerant of people's faults even when they were quite evident, Gandhiji replied: ''I see countless faults in me every day and yet there is no limit to my tolerance of myself. . . . That is why I learnt to be tolerant of others in spite of seeing their faults'' (p. 179). This was ''tolerance'' springing from natural self-love developed through filial affection and the extension of the family attitude of mutual devotion to an ever-widening circle. And in a similar vein he wrote to Amrit Kaur: ''We must tolerate our neighbours' mannerisms, if we would love them as we would have them to love us. Who is there without his or her mannerisms, then let him or her throw the first stone. Are you? Do you know any? I know none including my poor or big self'' (p. 174).

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NOTE TO THE READER

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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1. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August 1, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SIMLA WEST

IF REGRET FOR FIRING EXPRESSED AND OTHER RELIEF MENTIONED BY YOU GRANTED NO INQUIRY NEEDED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3798. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6954

2. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

August 1, 1937

Your attitude is most bewildering. Before I issue my statement I make this offer. I am prepared to go through the whole of your charges and if I feel convinced that you have been unjustly dealt with by the Sardar, I shall unhesitatingly say so and do everything humanly possible to undo the mischief. If, on the other hand, I find [anything] against you and you are not satisfied with my findings, I shall request Bahadurji or Sir Govindrao Madgaonkar to go through the recorded evidence and review my findings. All these proceedings need not be public so far as I am concerned. If the findings are against you, you should have an opportunity of tendering an apology and making a full and frank confession of your weakness and the wrong done to the public, the Sardar and other colleagues. But if you want the proceedings to be public, I do not mind. You need not even know what is being done. I had no desire to be in this affair at all. But you wanted me to intercede. Many friends, including Mr. Bharucha, have been pressing me to do likewise. I may not now sit still. I hope you will understand my anxiety to see that full justice is done to you and avoid everything that may possibly harm you without cause. If you desire an enquiry by me, please send me your charge-sheet and a precis of your evidence. I would send it to the Sardar and any other colleagues against whom you have

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any grievance and after having had his and their reply, I shall call for such evidence as may be required, if any. These proceedings need not take more than a week.

You need not concern yourself with what the Working Committee or your friends may think; they need not be informed of this procedure.

Let me add that the information which has so far reached me does not substantiate your stand.[1]

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Vol. II, p. 240, and *The Hindu*, 14-8-1937

[1] On receiving this letter, Nariman sent a telegram to Gandhiji saying: "Strongly object publication one-sided impression. Desire to explain other side. Letter follows." In the letter which followed he said: "I find that in the last few letters you have been constantly threatening me with the publication of your conclusions. Am I not entitled to know what you think before you make it public? . . . I am confident that I shall be able to satisfy you on all points and remove any misunderstanding if only I am given an opportunity to do so. If, in spite of this request of mine, you decide to publish your views of this episode, I shall consider myself free also to give my explanation in public. . . ." Even before he received this letter, Gandhiji informed Nariman on August 2 that he and Bahadurji were prepared to arbitrate on the two issues connected with the election of 1934 and the election of the leader of the Congress Party in the Bombay Legislature in 1937, and asked Nariman if this proposal was acceptable to him. To this Nariman replied telegraphically on August 4: "Accept your and Bahadurji's judgement on both issues." On the 6th of August, however, Nariman asked Gandhiji's help on a few points. He suggested that lest his acceptance of this arbitral tribunal against a decision of the Working Committee might be interpreted to mean that he was disloyal to it, Gandhiji should obtain the approval of the Congress President to the proposed procedure. He asked further that all his witnesses should be protected against harassment of any kind; without such an assurance, an independent enquiry and the task of ascertaining the truth would be rendered impossible.

For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to K. F. Nariman", p. 25; *vide* also "Statement to the Press", p. 39.

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3. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
August 1, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Now I can send you a wire only tomorrow, is it not? If possible Mahadev will send it [today]. I can't issue my statement[1] immediately. It will be issued only at the appropriate time. Read my letter of yesterday. I can't decide whether it would be proper to publish the whole correspondence. It is not a question of permission, but one of propriety from our point of view.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE
BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 209

4. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 1, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The Simla-dweller and you have praised the reed with a fountain-pen and a typewriter! I have added a paragraph to your article.

If Shanta[2] can fit herself into the set-up, I don't think we shall need Devraj, provided you take work from Chhotelal also. But now we shall think over all this on the train on Tuesday.

Now Kanu is not going there today. He will go tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] On the Nariman controversy; *vide* "Statement to the Press", p. 39.
[2] An Englishwoman

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PS.

You may send a wire to Vallabhbhai as follows: "Statement not yet. Am considering propriety publishing correspondence."[1]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11542

5. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON,
August 2, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.[2],

Here is an interesting cutting for you.

Harijan is becoming a weekly letter to the Congress Ministers. You should therefore ask Ramanathan[3] to put before you such things that you should read. You must not wear yourself out.

I do hope you won't pay the Members for twelve months. I should regard [as enough] Rs. 2 per day *whilst* the Assembly is sitting plus 3rd class travelling and actual out-of-pocket for coolies and tonga not exceeding Rs. 2. But you know best.

Do read the leading article[4] in the current *Harijan.*

Let Lakshmi[5] write for you. I don't expect you to write to me yourself.

Am off to see the Viceroy on his invitation, the cause is the mere pleasure of meeting.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2065

[1] The draft is in English.
[2] Premier of Madras
[3] Minister for Public Information in the Government of Madras
[4] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 447-53.
[5] Addressee's daughter, Devdas Gandhi's wife

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6. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 2, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think it would be better if you come over today. I suppose Dastane[1] will come by car, as also Rajkumari. As soon as the mail comes tell Shanta to forward it with either of them. A wire is enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did you discuss with Shambhu Dayal who is responsible for his support, etc. ?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11543

7. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 2, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I devote all my time these days to writing letters. I am sending one article with this. Another which I have begun may go tomorrow. If somebody goes there in the evening, I will send it with him. Otherwise I shall myself bring it tomorrow morning. If somebody brings the evening post and returns the same day he may take the article with him. Doctor is there and will return in the evening. He can bring the mail. He will be coming by car. Perhaps I will send the article with the car.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

I am sending with this [copies of] my letters to Nariman. Send a copy to Jawaharlal.

Send the following wire:

[1] Vasudev Vitthal Dastane

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"Begum Ross Masood, Bhopal. My deepest sympathy in your irreparable loss.[1] Gandhi."

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11544

8. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 2, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I had a talk with Swami. Will Venilal accept whatever decision you give after going through the account books and examining any other evidence that he might produce? Frame the reference and get the signatures of both on it. After that take the plaint and evidence in writing. You may then fix a hearing if necessary. This will save time and help us to determine what is just.

Let me have your reactions to my article[2] on education.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9108

9. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 2, 1937

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[3]

Only now I read in the newspaper that Ross Masood died in Bhopal. I have sent a telegram[4]. The same Ross Masood, isn't he? I can understand how you must be feeling. Have faith in God, have courage. All of us have to face death, some may die today, some tomorrow. How many have passed away and how many will in future!

Blessings to Saraswati[5] and Paparamma[6].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 389

[1] Ross Masood had passed away; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", 2-8-1937.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 447-53.
[3] The superscription is in Urdu.
[4] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 2-8-1937.
[5] G. Ramachandran's sister's daughter, Kanti Gandhi's fiancee
[6] G. Ramachandran's sister

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10. FOREWORD TO "THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGES"

August 3, 1937

I have very carefully gone through Jawaharlal Nehru's essay[1] on the Hindi-Urdu question. The question has latterly become an unfortunate controversy. There is no valid reason for the ugly turn it has taken. Be that as it may, Jawaharlal's essay is a valuable contribution to a proper elucidation of the whole subject considered from the national and purely educational point of view. His constructive suggestions, if they are widely accepted by persons concerned, should put an end to the controversy which has taken a communal turn. The suggestions are exhaustive and eminently reasonable.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 239-40

11. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am writing this on the train taking us to Delhi. Herewith is my Foreword or whatever it may be called. I could not give you anything elaborate.

You have "perhaps"[3] before Pushtu and Punjabi. I suggest your removing the adverb. Khan Saheb for instance will never give up Pushtu. I believe it is written in some script, I forget which. And Punjabi? The Sikhs will die for Punjabi written in Gurmukhi. There is no elegance about that script. But I understand that it was specially invented like Sindhi to isolate the Sikhs from the other Hindus. Whether such was the case or not, it seems to me impossible at present to persuade the Sikhs to give up Gurmukhi.

[1] For the suggestions made therein, *vide* Appendix I; also "Hindi-Urdu", 21-8-1937.

[2] *Vide* also the following item.

[3] This was changed to read "to some extent"; *vide* Appendix I, para 1.

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You have suggested a common script to be evolved out of the four Southern languages. It seems to me to be as easy for them to substitute Devanagari as a mixture of the four. From a practical standpoint, the four do not admit of an invented mixture. I would, therefore, suggest your confining yourself to the general recommendation that wherever possible the provincial languages which have vital connection with Sanskrit, if they are not offshoots from it, should adopt revised Devanagari. You may know that this propaganda is going on.

Then, if you think like me, you should not hesitate to express the hope that as Hindus and Muslims are one day bound to be one at heart, they will also, who speak Hindustani, adopt one script, i. e., Devanagari, because of its being more scientific and being akin to the great provincial scripts of the languages descended from Sanskrit.

If you adopt my suggestions in part or *in toto* you will have no difficulty in laying your finger on the spots requiring the necessary changes. I had intended to do so myself in order to save your time. But I must not put that strain on my system just now.

I take it that my endorsement of your suggestions does not mean that I must ask the Hindi Sammelan to give up the use of the word Hindi. I am sure, that cannot be your meaning. I have taken it to the farthest limit possible as far as I can think.

If you cannot accept my suggestions, it would be better for the sake of accuracy to add the following sentence to the 'Foreword': 'At any rate I have no hesitation in heartily endorsing them in a general way.'

I hope Indu's[1] operation will go off well.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 238-9

[1] Indira, addressee's daughter

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12. LETTER TO ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTY

August 3, 1937

DEAR ATULANANDA,

I hope your daughter is well and wholly out of danger. I have gone through your articles carefully. I still do not see light. It seems to me that no culture league will answer the purpose you and I have in view.[1] It has got to be done by individuals who have a living faith and who would work with missionary zeal. Try again, if I have not seen what you see in your proposal. I shall be patient and attentive. I want to help if I can see my way clear.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Life of Mahatma Gandhi, p. 366

13. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am going to Delhi at the Viceroy's invitation and am writing this letter on the train. You say in your letter that you are prepared to get Manju married in another caste. Is Manju also willing? Would you accept an alliance if a suitable partner is available from any part of the country? It is certainly necessary to do so. The barriers ought to be broken. When the whole country is ours, why should we keep ourselves confined to one community or province or region? Pleasure should not be the end of marriage; there should be some sanctity about it and it should be entered into as a matter of dharma. All other barriers should be disregarded.

It is difficult to say when Kusum will settle down to something steady. She makes many plans but is not able to carry out any of them. Guide her as much as you can. By all means draw her there if you can.

[1] The addressee had proposed a culture league "to bring Hindus and Muslims together".

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Ask Manju to write to me. Bachu[1], one may say, has had a new life.

I have been acquiring more and more cows.

If at any time you are keen on paying a visit here, do come. The season following the rains is pleasant.

I hope your work is winning appreciation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 96

14. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN,
August 3, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Anyone who knows all the processes from the [growing of] cotton to weaving should be able to write an introduction to the science of khadi[2] in two or at the most seven days.

1. Cultivation of cotton, its varieties, yield of crops in the different regions and the use of each variety
2. Plucking, cleaning and ginning of cotton-pods
3. Carding, preparation of slivers
4. Spinning
5. Weaving

The booklet would give a description of the machines with illustrations, arithmetical calculations, improvements up to date, etc. From among the persons whose names you suggest, Mahadev or Mirabehn are more likely to take up the work. But nobody can surpass Rameshwari Devi[3]. She is a woman of powerful personality. She knows excellent Hindi. She has an insight into all our activities. She belongs to well-known families both on her husband's and her father's sides. After you have availed yourself of her services in Rajkot, take her on a short tour of Kathiawar. She will give considerable impetus to khadi and Harijan work. I cannot send anyone better. Still, if you want me to

[1] Bachubhai Bhimji Ramdas, addressee's brother's son
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 414-5.
[3] Rameshwari Nehru

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make some other arrangement, I will do so. I would certainly not send anybody in whom you may have no faith. She was with me for a month and is just now with me in a third-class compartment. She has a house in Delhi and also one in Lahore. She is going to Delhi today and I also am going there for a day. I have been invited by the Viceroy for an informal meeting. It was she whom I had sent to Travancore for Harijan work. You must have read in *Harijan* my article on education. You have to demonstrate its practicability.

If you feel that your services can be utilized best in the primary department only, I don't wish to shift you. I shall be more than satisfied if you popularize khadi and uproot untouchability all over Kathiawar. If you can achieve that, you will set an example to the whole country. I have no plan for any work for you outside Kathiawar. I had asked you just to make sure whether I could call you in case I needed somebody.

I feel better. I need a little rest, which I am taking. I am looking after Kanu[1]. He is passing through a difficult stage. At his age we also must have felt the same. But he is an obedient boy and will, therefore, become steady by and by. Most probably he will settle down with me in Segaon. I am trying to adjust myself to him as far as possible.

Lilavati gave me your letter. I for my part have permitted her, but I don't think she will go. She doesn't wish to leave my side. However, at times she does feel restless. Her condition also is somewhat similar to Kanaiyo's.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall return to Wardha on the 5th or the 6th. You must have seen Kamala's request for Rs. 5 for her mother. What do you think of it ?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8533. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's son

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15. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ON THE TRAIN,
August 4, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I am nearing Delhi. Mahadev and Pyarelal [are] with me. Hope to take the return train today, if not, tomorrow for certain.

I hope Akash will suit you equally well.

I never knew that both the Dharmavirs spun.

Did I tell you that Shanta did not go to England, her mother having practically stopped her? She is very happy with Mahadev and very helpful to him.

Balwantsinha has brought two more cows. We need still more.

Balkrishna[1] is flourishing in Segaon. He eats freely under Dr. Batra's coaxing. He is on Kepler's malt cod-liver oil. I thought I should relax the rule about fish oils, as there were so many other restrictions. He is fast putting on weight of which he had lost much.

Rameshwari Devi is with me 3rd class, returning to Delhi. I hope you will return proof against malaria. So far as I am concerned I do not mind how long you are there, so long as you keep fit and renew your body.

I am sorry about Subhas. The enclosed for him.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6395. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9361

16. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,
August 4, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am stupid. On receiving your letter I searched my file and behold! I found the cutting containing Meherally's speech. I referred to his, not Masani's speech.[2]

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 445-6.

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This is being written in a terribly jolting train taking me back to Wardha. It is now 10.30 p.m. I woke up from sleep, thought of the speech and began the search. Yesterday's compartment was better.

I saw the Viceroy. You will have seen the communique[1]. It correctly summarizes the interview. There were other incidental things which Kripalani will mention to you when he meets you. One thing I may mention here. He might invite you as he invited me. I told him that if the invitation was sent, you were not likely to refuse it. Was I right?

I am sorry for having inflicted Roy's speeches on you.[2] But I think you were bound to read them. However I am in no hurry to have your opinion on them. You may take your time unless you have already read them.

I note that you are having the operation for Indu in Bombay.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, p. 240

17. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

August 6, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

What nonsense! Why should you feel sorry or disappointed because I hold certain views about salaries?[3] I do not at all resent your not enforcing them. I have said, my views need not be accepted if found unworkable. We all marvel at the way you are managing things there. You have approached your task with faith and religious zeal. You must not feel the slightest disappointment. You know my deepest feeling. Then why

[1] Issued after the interview on August 4, it read: " . . . The Viceroy listened with interest to Mr. Gandhi's views on the matters in question and undertook to intimate them to the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province. The interview was entirely general and personal in character, the principal subject of discussion being rural uplift and improvement of the conditions of the peasantry."

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 445-6.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 406-8.

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should you worry? I hope you will be able to spare yourself for 17th[1]. My prayers and best wishes are with you always.

The talk with the Viceroy was formal though quite friendly. Devdas was looking well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2066

18. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 6, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I at once sent a telegram to Amtul[2] at Bhopal. I have already written about Kanti[3]. I think it is better for you to come back as you have already stayed there for a month. Ramachandran writes to say that he does not want Saraswati to go anywhere for three years. He wants her to complete her studies. In that case it would be best to leave her there. I have received no letters from Bari or Baqui.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am keeping well. I returned from Delhi only yesterday.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 390

19. ITS DEEPER MEANING

The thought-world of khadi workers had undergone a revolution since the objective of khadi became the steady improvement of the artisans engaged in its production rather than its supply at as cheap rates as possible. The fact that the increase in the wages has not much, if at all, affected the public has given a confidence to the workers which they had not when the policy was revolutionized. The workers are beginning to realize that they have to touch every department of the lives of the artisans and try to bring about an all-round improvement in their lot. Thus

[1] For the meeting of the Congress Working Committee which was to be held at Wardha from August 14 to 17

[2] Addressee's niece, widow of Ross Masood

[3] Harilal Gandhi's son

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one reads with joy the following in the *Maharashtra Khadi Patrika* noticed the other day in these columns:[1]

In Korutala khadi workers are using the paper prepared by the local paper makers and are inducing local artisans to make twine from flax which is locally grown.

Many artisans have the bad habit of spitting fairly often just where they are sitting. Eighty-two such have been supplied with small earthen spittoons for use.

The manager of a zamindar in Metpally has been induced to stop *begar*.

In Tendur the weavers have been induced to adopt measures to prevent incurring debts. Thus they have reduced marriage expenses to Rs. 30 as the maximum, stopped feasts at the time of the first shave, stopped drinking on ceremonial occasions, caste dinners on deaths. Measures have been adopted to induce the womenfolk to use khadi saris (cheap patterns have been devised for the purpose), to save the increase in the artisans' income against a rainy day.

In Savli a substantial rise has been given to those who will not incur debts and will card and spin one seer of not less than twenty counts of yarn of eighty per cent strength in one month. Thus the following speaks for itself:

COUNT	CURRENT RATE			INCREASED RATE		
	Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.
22	2	8	0	3	4	0
24	2	14	0	3	12	0
26	3	4	0	4	4	0
28	3	10	0	4	12	0
30	4	0	0	5	4	0
32	4	8	0	6	0	0

This new rate enables the workers to make four annas per day of eight hours.

In Sindevahi they have agreed to open a co-operative store.

I have given but a condensation of the original in Hindi which I commend to the diligent student of the working of the new objective.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 433-4.

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20. NOT A PRIZE

I have been receiving several letters from different provinces protesting against the exclusion of their or their friends' names from ministerships and asking me to intervene. I do not think there is a single province from which such complaints have not been received. In some such letters dire results including communal riots have been threatened, if the excluded person's claims are not considered.

In the first instance let me say that I have not intervened in any single case in the selection of ministers. I have no right, having completely withdrawn from the Congress, to intervene in such matters, even if I had the wish which I have not. My participation in Congress affairs is confined to tendering advice on the issues involved in office-acceptance and on the policies to be pursued in the prosecution of our march to the goal of Complete Independence.

But it seems to me that my numerous correspondents who have been writing voluminously think that ministerships are prizes for past services and that certain Congressmen can demand their inclusion. I venture to suggest to them that ministerships are avenues to service which those who are called to it should render cheerfully and to the best of their ability. There can therefore never be a scramble for these offices. It would be decidedly wrong to create ministerships for the sake of conciliating interests. If I were a Prime Minister and I was pestered with such claims, I should tell my electors to choose another leader. These offices have to be held lightly, not tightly. They are or should be crowns of thorns, never of renown. Offices have been taken in order to see if they enable us to quicken the pace at which we are moving towards our goal. It would be tragic if self-seekers or misguided zealots were allowed to impede the progress by imposing themselves on Prime Ministers. If it was necessary to have assurances from those who have ultimately to clothe ministers with authority, it is doubly necessary to have assurances of understanding, of loyalty beyond suspicion and of willing obedience to discipline. The grim fight in which the country is engaged cannot be won if Congressmen do not show in their conduct a sufficient measure of selflessness, discipline and faith in the means enunciated by the Congress for the attainment of the goal.

Thanks to the Karachi resolution[1], ministerships under the Congress aegis have no pecuniary attraction. I must say in parenthesis that considering Rs. 500 as if it was the minimum instead of the maximum was a mistake. Rs. 500 was the last limit. Had we not got used to the excessive scale of salaries imposed upon the country, we would have regarded Rs. 500 to be excessive. The Congress scale has been generally, for the past seventeen years at least, Rs. 75 per month. In its three great constructive all-India departments, national education, khadi and village industries, the authorized scale has been Rs. 75. These departments contain men who are good enough, so far as ability is concerned, any day to be ministers. They have distinguished educationists, lawyers, chemists and merchants, who if they were so minded, could easily command over Rs. 500 per month. Why should the fact of becoming a minister make the great difference we see? But the die is perhaps cast. My remarks represent my personal opinion. I have too high a regard for the Prime Ministers to question their judgment and wisdom. No doubt they thought that this was the best in the circumstances facing them. The point I wish to make, in answer to my correspondents, is that these offices have not been taken in view of the emoluments they offer.

And then they have to be given to those only in the party who are best able to discharge the duty to which they are called.

And, lastly, the acid test is that the choice must commend itself to the members of the party to whom the Prime Ministers owe their nomination. No Prime Minister can for one moment impose a man or woman of his choice on the party. He is Chief because he enjoys the full confidence of his party as to ability, knowledge of persons, and the other qualities that mark out one for leadership.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

21. A. I. V. I. A BULLETIN

The A. I. V. I. A. has issued its first bulletin. After describing the various activities conducted in Maganwadi, the Headquarters at Wardha, it ends:[2]

> There is a great deal of slackness on the part of members and agents in submitting their reports. Members are reminded that according

[1] *Vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 370-2.

[2] Only excerpts from the All-India Village Industries Association's bulletin are reproduced here.

to our rules if no report is received from a member for three consecutive quarters, his membership will lapse. We regret to say that in accordance with this rule the membership of several has lapsed. The reason for such slackness is probably that members think that it is not worth while reporting unless there is something noteworthy to mention. . . . Their work is in the nature of routine, and once they have reported they think that so long as they have not done anything new they need not report. This again is a mistake. It is quite essential for the proper working of the Association and for exchange of experiences through the medium of this bulletin that members and agents should carry on their work in close touch with the Central Office and keep it duly informed of their activities by means of full and regular reports. . . .

Harijan, 7-8-1937

22. *TEMPLE-ENTRY*

It looks very much as if the whole of Malabar, the citadel of untouchability, is going to lead the way, as Travancore has done already, in the matter of temple-entry. I draw attention to the two brief statements[1] given below. One is by the Cochin Temple-entry Committee and the other by the Malabar Harijan Sevak Sangh, both promising an energetic propaganda organizing the so-called *savarna* and so-called *avarna* opinion in favour of opening all public temples to the *avarnas* precisely on the same terms as they are for the *savarnas*. If there is an unimpeachable pronouncement of such opinion, no State nor trustees can long resist such opinion. The Malabar Committee has rightly laid stress on the necessity of legislation removing all doubt as to the right of trustees to open to *avarnas* temples under their charge, especially if it can be proved that the large body of *savarna* opinion is in favour of such an opening. Let us hope that the Committees will receive the enthusiastic public support which the great cause merits and demands.

Harijan, 7-8-1937

[1]Not reproduced here

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23. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 7, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
TRIVANDRUM

BETTER COME HERE NOW. RAMACHANDRAN UNWILLING SEND SARASWATI TILL HER EDUCATION FINISHED.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 404

24. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
August 7, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

For Sita's sake I would say let us not leave her as Editor just yet. She should be better known than she is among our own circle. Mere possession of literary merit is not enough for our purpose. Our readers should know her as a co-worker. Do you not agree?

The Education Minister[1], C. P., comes, sees me on Tuesday at 2.30 p.m. and the Excise Minister[2] at 5 p.m. I think you, Bharatan, Sita, if she is well, Jajuji[3], Nayakam[4] and Kaka should be present. Will you inform them all?

Love to you—the trio.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10127

[1] Ravishankar Shukla
[2] P. B. Gole
[3] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[4] E. W. Aryanayakam

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25. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

SEGAON,
August 7, 1937

CHI. KANCHAN,

Do come over tomorrow (Sunday) morning and have lunch here. If you can't come early, come after 1 p.m. But do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8293. Also C.W. 7020. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

26. LETTER TO JAMUBHAI DANI

[Before *August 8, 1937*]

SHRI DANI,

I have your letter. I have not received the report about the Bhangis. But as soon as I get it I will go through it and write something if it calls for comment.[1]

If the public life of Kathiawar is in a mess, it only means that the people are the same but the leaders are either useless or selfish or unprincipled or all this at the same time. It is observed at some places that life continues as before in different spheres and some workers go on working away in silence without others knowing about it. Are there any such workers in Kathiawar? Try to find this out honestly and with a view to service. Whether you do it as a member of the Sangh or as an individual, do it in a worthy manner.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-8-1937

[1] *Vide* the following item.

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27. *WORKERS OF KATHIAWAR*

A gathering of some workers of Kathiawar was held some time ago in Bhavnagar. After a great deal of discussion, a resolution was passed, at the instance of Shri Nanabhai, that they should do social work under my guidance and be governed by the restrictions imposed by me. Some of these gentlemen were to come to me to discuss the matter. On receiving their letter, I tried to prevent their coming by writing to them that their journey would perhaps be in vain as they would get from me advice only on what I regard as constructive work. However, this failed to convince them and, Shri Jagjivandas, Balwantrai[1], Fulchand[2], Dhebarbhai[3] and Vajubhai[4] came over. At the end of a discussion lasting two hours it was decided that I should write the substance of my advice in *Harijanbandhu*. I agreed to comply with this request.

The first discussion was about the letter[5] I had written to Shri Dani. I had been told that in that letter I had done grave injustice to the workers of Kathiawar by calling them useless, selfish, or unprincipled or all this at the same time. In my reply I had stated that I was not in the habit of writing such crude letters and I asked for a copy of my letter. In reply to this letter the above gentlemen came in person and produced the original letter[6], which runs as follows.

I said that those who took this letter to be censorious could be regarded as ignorant of Gujarati. Its meaning is clear. If public life in Kathiawar is actually in such a mess as described by Shri Dani, public servants must be guilty of one of the three or all the three shortcomings. These gentlemen agreed that my letter could not be construed in any other way.

With reference to this they inquired whether anyone had sent me names of persons who had acted in a manner not befitting Kathiawaris ? I replied that I had published the names which had been sent to me and regarding whom I believed the allegations to be true.

[1] Balwantrai Mehta
[2] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah
[3] U. N. Dhebar
[4] Vajubhai Shukla
[5] & [6] For the text, *vide* the preceding item.

The following points were then discussed:

1. Gandhiji to guide
2. [Kathiawar] Political Conference
3. The Prajamandal and the Conference
4. The restrictions and the injustices in the States
5. Organizing labour to improve their conditions
6. Constructive work like khadi, service of Harijans, etc.
7. Whether these activities should be carried on independently or under one organization.

Regarding my guidance, I declared that I could not shoulder the burden. I have neither the capacity nor the inclination to guide anyone from a distance, hence they should write off my name. If my advice is sought in a particular matter, I have always been giving it, and I regard it as my dharma to do so. In my opinion, Kathiawaris should appoint a leader from amongst persons living there and, such a leader should be reappointed every year. This would give them self-confidence and make them self-reliant. The belief, whether true or otherwise, that Kathiawaris cannot accept for long any leader selected from amongst themselves, will also be dispelled.

While discussing other activities, I gave the opinion that if I had my way, I would engage everyone in khadi work, service of Harijans and village industries. Even if everyone was to be engaged in this manner, many more workers would be needed than are at present available. But those who do not find that kind of service congenial should select whatever field they preferred and put their heart and soul into it. Having once made the choice one should not go on changing one's field of work. If a session of the Political Conference must be called, it should be called keeping in view the restrictions imposed by me in Bhavnagar and in accordance with the practice established in Porbandar. It must not be held outside the boundaries of Indian States. If permission is granted only in a single State it could be held there year after year. It could be held in Amreli[1], but it would be preferable to hold it in a State in Kathiawar.

There should be a Prajamandal in each State.

Everyone should render to the best of his ability whatever service he can to these bodies.

Within the limits imposed by me, the Political Conference cannot freely discuss such questions as injustices practised in different States, etc. This does not imply that these cannot

[1] A town in Kathiawar which however formed part of the Baroda State

be discussed anywhere. The people of a particular State may certainly discuss those questions, they should try and get justice in those particular matters, for it is their dharma to do so. Thus, in whichever States restrictive orders are issued or injustices perpetrated, they could be freely discussed there. Only truth and non-violence should be the restraining principles in these cases. Whatever is said should be hundred per cent true; it should be free from exaggeration and discourtesy. We should not hold out threats about anything which we are not capable of doing. We have to tolerate many things in this world because we are powerless.

In order to improve its condition labour must get organized. Everyone knows that I prefer the policy which has been adopted by Shrimati Anasuyabehn[1] in Ahmedabad. I have not adopted the principle of organizing labour for political purposes. They may take interest in politics as all citizens should. But politics should not be the motive in forming an organization. People should form organizations having regard to their vocations and their special circumstances. We already have in the Congress an organization to deal with political issues and to train men for the work. It has to protect the political rights of labourers in the same way as it has to protect those of others. As a matter of fact, the political rights of labourers are not and should not be opposed to those of others. This means that the work of the Congress safeguards [the interests of] and represents all. It is my experience that if labour unions are politically motivated, there is an unnecessary rivalry between [political] workers, labourers become pawns in their game and, as a result, labourers have to suffer and the unions get a bad name. Labour may also perhaps eye with suspicion those who come claiming to be their friends. Those who form labour unions in order to improve their conditions should also be adept in the art of doing so. If anyone without ability tries to form a union because he wants to, it cannot be done.

Amongst all these activities, I would give the highest place to khadi, eradication of untouchability, service of Harijans, village industries and prohibition. If this cannot be done, I believe that other activities are not worth while. The belief that constructive work can be carried on only if supported by other activities is, in my opinion, born out of ignorance. It is my opinion that the strength that can be generated by firm and determined adherence to constructive activity is far superior to the strength

[1] Anasuyabehn Sarabhai

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gained by any other type of work. I know that ordinarily no one is interested in these constructive activities. I can think of two reasons for this. One reason is that these activities bring one into contact with the villages. Our workers have been brought up in cities, they have been educated in English schools and colleges, hence they have little interest in the life of rural people. They do not regard themselves as fit only for living in villages and are ignorant of the art of mixing with the villagers. The other reason is our idleness and the ignorance born of it. Khadi and such other constructive work demand constant vigilance, effort, study and diligence. We are not prepared to render these; and later, when we cannot create interest in these great tasks, rather than blame ourselves we conclude that such work is dull. I regard this as a serious shortcoming and have, therefore, come to the conclusion that so long as we do not do credit to these tasks, our other tasks will not be wholly successful. And it is for this reason that, even after so many years, I give the utmost importance to these tasks.

Now the last question. If all the activities are being managed by the same body, this may well continue. I see no harm in each activity being carried on wholly independently. Even if these are being carried on under the same authority, each should become self-sufficient, and people should be allowed to be absorbed in the particular sphere which they have chosen.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 8-8-1937

28. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 8, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I forgot to cover one point in your letter referring to Meherally's speech. I mean Rajaji's communique releasing the summer school prisoners. I had read it before receiving your letter. But it did not offend me. I suppose because you approved of the action of the students of the summer school and I could not defend it any way whatsoever.[1] I think that it was necessary to draw attention to the fact that the release did not mean approval

[1] For Jawaharlal Nehru's statement on Kottapatam Summer School, *vide* Appendix II.

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of this breach or the offence which in law it was. I fear that often when the Congress is in power it will use language which its predecessors have used and yet the motive behind will be different.

I hope you will have a nice time in Bombay over the operation. You will wire when it is over.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

If Nariman comes to you please grant him the permission to have the inquiry. I am sorry you will be bothered about this affair in Bombay. Mahadev will tell you what I have been doing.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

29. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

WARDHA,
August 8, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

Your letter came in only today. I am not going to trouble Mr. B.[1] before I have all your evidence. I shall consult him only if my finding is against you and you don't agree with it. There should be no delay. Surely your evidence must be all ready. Of course, I shall go into the allegations against you regarding the election of 1934. Have I not made that clear? As to the witnesses' names being kept secret, you must leave that to me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A. I. C. C. File No. 747–A, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] D. N. Bahadurji

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30. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

August 8, 1937

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

All illness should be regarded as misconduct punishable under the I. P. C.! I do hope you will recover soon. If you cannot come I shall reconcile myself to the absence of your bulky contribution to the debate.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10128

31. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
August 8, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

I am not wrong in calling you a tyrant. You were a tyrant to Amtul Salaam when you idolized her. Now that that idolization has changed into a kind of repulsion, you are again being a tyrant to her. Ramachandran had been pressing her—so were Paparamma and Saraswati—and he had sent a wire. That is why she went. She is having some peace there. Now you wish that I should call her away from there. I, therefore, wrote a letter[1] to her asking her to return and even sent a wire[2]. I haven't told her that it was at your instance that I asked her to come away. I have given no reason at all. If necessary, I will tell her when she comes. I have not said all this to reproach you. I have only drawn your attention to your proneness to extremes. I have willingly called her back. What about Saraswati? She has been pleading to be permitted to come here. Ramachandran wishes that she should not come for three years. What do you yourself wish ?

I am returning the statement of accounts. It is excellent. Don't economize at the slightest risk to your health.

I had been to Delhi for a day. I returned the same day. The Viceroy had nothing particular to discuss. He just wished

[1] *Vide* p. 14.
[2] *Vide* p. 19.

to get acquainted with me. I on my part wished to talk to him about Khan Saheb, which I did.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My health is good. I do wish to live till you pass out and attain proficiency and get married. But is the thread of life ever in our hands?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7329. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

32. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 8, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I think I will have to send you to Dhulia for a day. Get ready soon. I am returning your article with this. I have deleted the paragraph about khadi. Try to understand the reason. If you can't, ask me when I am free.

I don't know when I shall be able to reply to the letters. Send the correspondence regarding Nariman to Jawahar. Or make a short summary of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11545

33. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1937

CHI. MIRA,

I have your disturbing letter. You need not stop there even till 24th if your mind is not there. It is distinctly harmful for you to be there, if you can't be happy there but will stay there because it is a duty imposed from without. You have tried that again and again and failed each time. Therefore you must follow your will no matter where it leads you to. You will learn only by making mistakes, if mistakes there must be through following your will. To paraphrase the alcoholic saying, I would rather find you always in error than find you correct only under compulsion. You can grow through error, never through compulsion.

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Therefore please feel absolutely free to anticipate the date (24th) fixed by you and so far as I am concerned come in reply to this letter. I shan't feel unhappy. On the contrary, I shall feel happy in the thought that you would exercise unrestricted freedom.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6396. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9862

34. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 9, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this an article[2] by Kishorelal which has been abridged. It was abridged by Rajkumari. She seems to have done a fine job of it. However, have a glance at it. And if anything of importance is left out, insert it. I think it will be better if you return the original to Kishorelal. A quotation remains to be copied from it. Please see that it is done. For this at least you will require the original. I will send my article with Janba or whoever comes. I shall be ready at 2.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I hope the ulcer is better now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11546

35. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
August 9, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith my article. A fair copy is enclosed along with the original. You can straightaway send the fair copy to Poona today. I suppose you don't need anything more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11547

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira*, Mirabehn explains: "The old struggle was again overcoming me, and I returned to Sevagram."

[2] "The Problem of National Funds" which appeared in *Harijan*, 14-8-1937

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36. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1937

CHI. JAYANTI,

I got your letter. Give the accompanying letter[1] to Dinkar if he is feeling better. Public workers ought not to fall ill.

I don't understand what you say regarding the reform of the Provincial Committee. Send me a copy of the rules. I am making inquiries, of course.

I am very glad indeed that you three brothers[2] have come together.

How I wish Indu would settle down to something.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6264

37. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your long letter. I will see how the problem can be solved. When we lack either time or space, we have to leave some things aside even though they may be important.

Please tell Vimu[3] that in her letter to me she was unwilling to promise 25,000 rounds in the spinning *yajna* and had asked my advice. But in the printed list of names with me, I see 51,000 against her name. Is 51 a misprint for 15? If it is not, how did she get the courage to raise 25,000 to twice as much, or to treble the 17,000 which she had intended? If she had the courage to do that, why couldn't she quadruple 17,000 and make it 68,000? If "scoffer-friends" then looked upon her as an idolator, she should pay no attention to them. On the contrary, she should welcome

[1] This is not available.
[2] The addressee, Indu and Kanti
[3] Vimala, the addressee's daughter

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their blessings. Spinning 68,000 rounds in 68 days would be no great achievement for a girl like Vimu. According to the calculations here, 1,000 rounds a day would require less than three hours, for the average speed is taken to be 400 rounds an hour. Even if, however, the work takes four hours, I wouldn't regard that as too strenuous for her. Moreover, anyone who does this job with zest and enthusiasm would learn to get absorbed in the work on hand and automatically acquire the ability to do a great many other things.

Narandas is hesitating to undertake the preparation of the manual [of the science of khadi] though there is not the slightest reason for such hesitation. If, however, you join him in preparing the booklet, I think it can immediately be done. Anyone who has complete mastery of most of the processes will find it easy to give a methodical description of them and of the equipment required. If you have not read any literature on the history of the subject, you should read it up. If at least one booklet, covering all aspects of the subject, is brought out systematically, it would be easy to do further work in the field in future. Think over this . . .[1]

It was good indeed that you came and stayed here, though it was but for a few days. If you can plan a ten to fifteen days' programme for Rameshwari Devi, counting from the day of her arrival, I think that would be more than enough. You will be able to use her services to get a lot of Harijan and khadi work done. She is a very capable, mature, thoughtful and experienced lady, and is full of noble aspirations. You of course have seen her here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5543

38. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. There can be no cause at all for worrying about Kanaiyo. What is necessary is to take care of him, to guide him, to understand the thousands of fancies that catch his mind, and to pacify him. Besides this, nothing more is necessary, for

[1] Omission as in the source

his mind is not devious. He is not secretive, doesn't wish to conceal anything and has faith in those whom he regards as his elders. It is, therefore, not at all difficult to guide him. One thing, of course, is true. If he is not given work which he can do and if nobody takes interest in him, he does feel lost. At present I have heaps of work to do. There is so much typing to be done that it leaves him exhausted and so many copies to be made that his fingers get cramps. And this is apart from spinning. I have also asked him to study Hindi and English, for which he has an expert teacher in Pyarelal. He gets his fill listening to the sweet music of Nanavati and, as he does so, tries to pick up as much as he can. Moreover all sorts of people visit me, from whom also he learns as much as he can. He is therefore not likely to feel at any time that he is rusting without work or that nobody takes interest in him. Please, therefore, have no worries on his account. Till he himself wishes to go there, you or Jamna[1] should not tempt him. There will be no difficulty then.

Lilavati, through her own thoughtlessness, is laid down with pain in the ribs. I am dictating this letter reclining against her body as against a pillow. She is listening and tells me that she neither desires nor has the courage to go to Rajkot or anywhere else. Please, therefore, forget her altogether for the present. When she herself wishes to go there, I shall not stop her. Narottam's[2] death is as much a matter for rejoicing as for grief. Such death would bring glory to any youth, for those who enter the jaws of death at such a tender age after having made holy resolutions are bound to attain bliss. And even though dead, he lives through his example. Read this to his father when you offer my condolences to him, and also congratulate him on having had such a son.

I have sent the article[3] sent by you for *Harijanbandhu* after some slight revision.

Read the letter to Chhaganlal and then pass it on to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8535. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] A student of the national school at Rajkot who died of typhoid. He had resolved to spin one lakh rounds of yarn.

[3] On *Rentia Baras* celebrations in National School, Rajkot, published in *Harijanbandhu*, 15-8-1937

39. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 10, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter.

If you find it impossible to write the *Khadishastra Praveshika*, you may give up the idea. But the fact that your brain doesn't work on this subject may perhaps be indicative of some deficiency in you.

I was not satisfied with the few lines that Jayantilal wrote. I got the impression that he had forced himself to write. The discussion with you doesn't seem to have given him a new light. That is, [he believes that] spinning and the other activities are conducted not as a means of intellectual development but only as training in crafts side by side with intellectual training. I hope you understand the difference between the two. If a carpenter teaches me his craft and I learn it mechanically, my hand will be able to use the carpenter's tools but there will hardly be any intellectual development. If, however, an expert on carpentry teaches me the craft, my intellect also will develop fully in the process. That is, I shall not only be a good carpenter but will also become an engineer, for while teaching me carpentry the teacher will have improved and embellished my language. He will have taught me the history of wood and, while explaining where and how wood is grown, will have taught me geography. He will also have taught me a little about agriculture and will have likewise taught me to make illustrations of my tools. While teaching me the economics of carpentry, he will have taught me arithmetic and geometry. All this will make up a course of some seven years. Maybe you do not link up spinning and the other crafts which you are teaching with intellectual development. Perhaps you consider knowledge of the alphabet and reading as the only means of such development. If this is not so, the writing of the *Praveshika* should be an easy job for you. I know that I have not previously explained these thoughts in the manner in which I have explained them in this letter. But I have been explaining in *Harijan* the ideas which are coming to me these days, and this idea is the first and foremost of them all. I have hitherto also said that there should be training

in crafts along with training of the intellect and that such training should occupy the primary place in a scheme of national education. What I am now saying is that an important means of intellectual training should be craft-training. I feel that talents are being wasted and the fact that thousands of young people who leave schools are good for nothing except clerkships is indicative not of intellectual development but of intellectual waste. True education is that which trains all the three abilities, spiritual, intellectual and economic, simultaneously. No boy on leaving school should have to ask himself: "What shall I do now?" His education should be a kind of insurance guaranteeing him a livelihood. I have dictated all this for you to think over. If you have followed what I have said, you will have to examine the art of spinning from a new point of view and also devise a new method of teaching it. Please read again from this point of view my recent articles[1] in *Harijan*.

Shankaran's is a painful case. I am of course writing to him. You needn't do anything at present.

I will make some arrangement from here for Kamala's mother.

How is Kumi?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not been able to revise any portion.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II Also C.W. 8534. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

40. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

This note will be given to you by Syed Saheb of the Siasat. He had four letters of recommendation from Dr. Satyapal[2]. One of them is for you. I told him that I could do nothing and advised him to approach you, assuring him that you would carefully listen to his case and, if you were convinced, you might

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 347-9 and 447-53.
[2] A prominent leader of the Punjab

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use your good offices to help him. You may now hear everything and do what is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY 4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 209

41. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[About *August 10, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Write a strong letter to that German. We should ask him to issue a public apology. It will be enough if he corrects his statement.

I don't intend to send you to Dhulia before Wednesday at any rate and I shall do so only if you are willing to go. When we meet tomorrow we will spare two minutes to discuss this too.

Herewith draft of a wire to Bharucha:

"Bharucha, Mahendra Mansion, Fort, Bombay. Come Wednesday nine morning half hour. Whole day engaged otherwise. Gandhi."

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Today I can send for *Harijan* only the material that is ready. I think I will be able to send tomorrow material for about two columns or so.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11548

[1] From the S.N. Register

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42. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 11, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM,
CARE "HARIJAN"
TRIVANDRUM

STAY WHILE YOU ARE HAPPY AND TAKING TREATMENT.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 405

43. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*August 11, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Janba hasn't come yet. But I am sending whatever is ready. Mohanlal's cheque also is enclosed. Credit the money to the account for Harijan work.

Bhansali[2] must have arrived there. I have sent some material with him, too. Send [the enclosed to] Amtul Salaam.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11549

44. LETTER TO G. V. MAVALANKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 11, 1937

BHAISHRI MAVALANKAR,

I got your letter. You have indeed been entrusted with a great responsibility[3]. But I am sure you will be able to do full justice to it and will prove yourself worthy of the honour.

[1] From the reference to the telegram to Amtussalaam which was enclosed with this letter; *vide* the preceding item.
[2] Jayakrishnadas Prabhudas Bhansali
[3] As Speaker of the Bombay Legislative Assembly

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Do please continue as one of the Trustees of the Harijan Ashram for the present. Perhaps your effectiveness in begging will increase. Is it not better that I should go on writing what seems right to me? But how can I expect you to do more than what all of you can accept out of the suggestions I make?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1247

45. DISCUSSION WITH D. K. MEHTA[1] *AND P. B. GOLE*

SEGAON,
August 11/12, 1937

It is understood that the discussions centred round land revenue and excise policies. It was pointed out to Gandhiji that the policy of flat reduction in land revenue was undesirable, inasmuch as there were areas which had been heavily assessed and needed immediate help, while in some areas the land revenue was so low that it would not be advisable to reduce it any further.

As regards the excise policy, it is understood that Gandhiji impressed on the Ministers that in all the six Congress Provinces the policy in this matter should be uniform and total prohibition should be the goal of the Congress Ministries. This goal should have to be achieved within the lifetimes of the present Ministries. The loss in revenue would be made good by drastic retrenchments, and, if need be, the Congress Ministers should be prepared to face fresh taxation measures.

The Hitavada, 13-8-1937

46. STATEMENT ON INTERVIEW WITH THE VICEROY[2]

August 12, 1937

I have read what are described as startling disclosures of the Delhi interview in *The Bombay Sentinel*[3]. It is from beginning to end a figment of imagination, pure and simple.

The interview, as stated in the Viceroy's letter, was without any purpose beyond that of establishing courteous contact on his

[1] Minister for Finance, C. P.
[2] Gandhiji had met the Viceroy on August 4; *vide* p. 13.
[3] Dated 10-8-1937

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part. Therefore, I studiously refrained from referring to any matter outside of lifting the ban on Khan Saheb's entry into his own Province, and an understanding of Government's wishes regarding my desire to visit that Province.

[The] other conversation was more or less of a general character. The word 'Federation' was not even mentioned at the interview.

The Hindu, 13-8-1937

47. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. Since I wrote to you only the day before yesterday, I have no special reason for writing this. But there is one point. You have written about Rs. 5 to 10 for Kamalabai. Her request is for Rs. 5 only. We have, therefore, to send only that much. How to remit the sum is for you to decide. No expense should be incurred in remitting it. Jivanlal's firm has an office in Madras too. You can make an arrangement with them and pay the money in Rajkot. If you cannot make such an arrangement, let me know. Ask Kamalabai where the money should be remitted.

Kanaiyo has now settled down to work with me. He says: "Now I am absolutely free from worry." There is no need at all for you to worry about him.

Lilavati's health will continue as it has been for some time. It will come round by and by.

When was the last remittance on account of Mirabehn received? There seems to have been some irregularity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8536. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

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48. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI A. MEHTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANJI,

What a sad description of your family affairs you have given! In spite of this, if you alone can practise perfect self-sacrifice I am sure you will be able to repair the broken ship.

You need never apologize to me. It will always remain my wish that your family, that is, the whole Karsanji family, should prosper and regain the illustrious name that it once had, and that you should be the means of bringing it about.

Vandemataram from
M. K. GANDHI

BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND, VAKIL, B.A., LL.B.
RAJKOT SADAR
KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5836. Also C.W. 3059. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

49. LETTER TO R. S. NIMBKAR[1]

[Before *August 13, 1937*][2]

So far as I am concerned, I would not create deadlocks but would cheerfully face them when they are forced upon me. I do not work the Act, when I work so as to end it. It would be foolish of me, having entered the Legislature, not to take all advantage I can of it, consolidate my position and strengthen it.

Mr. Gandhi informs Mr. Nimbkar that the points raised by him are for the Working Committee to deal with and he takes it they are already before the Committee.

The Hindu, 13-8-1937

[1] A communist labour leader, who had written "drawing Mr. Gandhi's attention to the non-release of all politicals and the necessity for labour legislation and the creation of deadlocks after some time."

[2] The letter appeared under the date-line "Bombay, August 13".

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50. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

I have seen what seems to be a distorted version of the part I have played in the Nariman episode. The virulent agitation that has gathered round it has caused me deep distress. I cannot do better than quote from my letter, dated August 1, to Mr. Nariman:[1]

Since that date, further correspondence between him and me has taken place. A telegram received from him today tells me that he will be ready with his evidence in both cases in five days. I shall lose no time whatsoever in applying myself to the task I have undertaken. I have not as yet worried Bahadurji in this matter, but if my findings are adverse to Mr. Nariman and he is not satisfied with them, I shall immediately request Bahadurji to review the evidence produced before me and my findings.

It has been suggested that what I have done now might have been done when the unfortunate controversy first burst forth. I am not free at this stage to publish the whole of the correspondence that has taken place between him and me. But I can say I have been always willing, as he has admitted himself, that he should have an independent inquiry if he desired it. Therefore, whatever has taken place, has not been due to my indifference or unwillingness to help. If I have been hitherto silent, my silence has been solely in the interest of Mr. Nariman as could be amply borne out by the correspondence referred to above.

I would appeal to the Bombay Press to stop the agitation altogether and ask the public to suspend judgment till the findings are in their possession.[2]

The Hindu, 14-8-1937

[1] The extract is not reproduced here; for the full text of the letter, *vide* pp. 1-2.

[2] In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Vol. II, pp. 242-3, Narahari Parikh explains: "On 14th of August, Shri Nariman requested Gandhiji, telegraphically, for permission to issue a statement in reply. Gandhiji, of course, had no objection, though he advised against it in Nariman's own interest. Nariman, in a long letter dated August 15, expressed surprise that the demand for an apology to the Sardar and public, etc., from him should have been

51. LETTER TO VITHALDAS V. JERAJANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I got your three letters. I don't remember Rajkumari to have made the criticism you mention regarding lace. It is 4 a. m. just now. She is asleep. I will ask her later. Her complaint to me is always regarding the khadi section in the Panjab. I have therefore received no complaint against your department.

I still feel that I did right in exempting Gosibehn[1]. The case of this embroidery work is similar to our use of foreign thread for stitching clothes. If she charges Rs. 2½ for an article made of khadi worth eight annas, the additional Rs. 2 are not spent on foreign thread but are paid to the women workers for their art. It is for this reason that I have exempted Gosibehn. This exemption does not in any way militate against the restrictions we have laid down, for as you admit we are still not able to supply exactly the same kind of thread that these women use. I therefore feel that by refusing the exemption we would harm the cause of khadi. We ought not to grudge the use of foreign things which harm nobody but, on the contrary, definitely benefit the country.

I don't advise you to join the Swadeshi Store, but you may give such help as you can from outside. If they have faith in your ability, they should accept your advice and stock only khadi by way of cloth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9794

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made by Gandhiji, for it seemed to him irrelevant and uncalled for. He knew he had nothing to apologize for and no confession to make."

[1] Gosibehn Captain, Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter

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52. LETTER TO DR. FRITZ MICHAELIS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. Here are answers to your questions of which, I hope, you have kept a copy.

Handicraft experts would be expected to live with us like ourselves and work side by side with us giving us the benefit of their labour and their experience.

We would adopt such European methods and tools which we need, consistently with our poverty.

There is no question of independent workshops being established. We are villagers. A village containing not more than 1000 souls all told.

No experts are required who cannot work without capital.

India's villages require to be revivified. Land is parcelled out in holdings, often even less than one acre. The idea, therefore, is to turn waste into wealth. Hence talent that is expensive or that can only express itself in bignesses will not serve my purpose. I want the use of that talent which can see the universe in an atom and, therefore, relates itself to and is rooted in the earth from which we have sprung, on which we are living, to which we have to return. Anyone, therefore, who comes from the West has got to be capable of living the life of the poor. Therefore he must [be] able-bodied and be prepared to live the life of the poorest in the land.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. FRITZ MICHAELIS
P. O. BOX NO. 1345
HAIFA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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53. LETTER TO E. K. PALIA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Not knowing anything of transactions relating to land, I cannot be interested in your scheme.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI E. K. PALIA
6/7 CUBBON ROAD
BANGALORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

54. LETTER TO M. MARGUERITE WIY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

DEAR MARGARET,

I was delighted to hear from you. Here is a letter for Maria Sevenich which please send to her.

Love.

BAPU

M. MARGUERITE WIY
LAGER OESCHINENSEE B.
SWITZERLAND

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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55. LETTER TO MARIA SEVENICH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*August 13, 1937*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have Margaret's translation of your letter. It is good that you have written so freely. Let me correct one opinion in it. You say I have had the experience of being not successful and that I had retired for some time from political work. In the dictionary of a seeker of truth there is no such thing as being "not successful". He is or should be an irrepressible optimist because of his immovable faith in the ultimate victory of Truth which is God. And, I have not retired, temporarily or permanently, from political work for I recognize no watertight compartments. What I have done is to retire from the Congress and Congress politics—and that I have done to serve the Congress and the politics of the country better than before. For the rest I await your promised letter.

Love.

BAPU
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

56. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[*August 13, 1937*][2]

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

The opinion[3] is a feather in your cap. That does not mean that I accept the reasoning. But it must stand till there is another opinion from a senior. For me it is unnecessary. I accept

[1] This and the letter to M. Marguerite Wiy, the preceding item, are written on the same sheet.

[2] The date, which is faded in the source, is confirmed from the reference to "the Working Committee" which met at Wardha from August 14 to 17.

[3] To amend the constitution of the All-India Village Industries Association so as to make provision for a President

Mangaldas's interpretation. The opinion must be circulated among the members [and you should say][1] that it was obtained at my instance and that it was being circulated too at my instance.

I am glad you are free from fever. I am in Wardha tomorrow for the Working Committee. This will be in your hands tomorrow. Therefore 'tomorrow' will be 'today' for you.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10129

57. LETTER TO GOKULDAS

WARDHA,
August 13, 1937

BHAI GOKULDAS,

It is the right and duty of the subjects to complain to the State against the menace of leopards and wild pigs. One should be polite and reasonable in whatever one does.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

58. LETTER TO SARLA

August 13, 1937

CHI. SARLA,

I got your letter. You are a wise girl. You have understood why I don't send for you here. Persevere and complete the training under Nayee Talim. Become an expert in it. You must be reading in the newspapers about things here. I have managed to write this under great pressure of work just now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8769. Also C.W. 1042. Courtesy: Champabehn R. Mehta

[1] The source is faded here.

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59. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SEGAON,
August 13, 1937

CHI. MANI,

The car should wait for me tomorrow morning 7.30 near the railway crossing. I expect to reach there about that time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please send the accompanying note[1] to Chhotelal just now or in the morning. Inform Mahadev so that he may put up to me whatever work he wants to.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11550

60. NOTES

UNSEEMLINESS IS INDISCIPLINE

The Daily Press reports that at the opening of the C. P. Assembly session the gallery which was packed to overflowing made an unseemly demonstration against Shri Raghavendra Rao[2]. Those who packed the gallery were presumably Congressmen or those who sympathized with the Congress. I suppose there will be parties even after we have Complete Independence of our make. It will go hard with us if the parties will not tolerate one another or show towards one another ordinary courtesy. And the Congress which claims to represent the whole nation can ill afford to be intolerant towards its political opponents or others. If it is, and it is, the only all-India body, it represents all interests. It represents even Shri Raghavendra Rao who was at one time a respected member of the Congress organization. It may be that the votes in the constituency for which he stood were tampered with. If they were, the law would look after it. But he must be presumed to be honest till he is proved guilty. And even if he is proved guilty, the guilt will be no warrant for unseemly demonstration against him.

[1] This is not available.
[2] The ex-Premier

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Intolerance, discourtesy, harshness are not only against Congress discipline and code of honour, they are taboo in all good society and are surely contrary to the spirit of democracy.

Harijan, 14-8-1937

61. AGAINST AHIMSA AND TRUTH?

A friend writes:[1]

> The following sentence in your article[2] "Criticism Answered" (31st July) seems to me to offend against the spirit of truth and non-violence as also against good logic.
>
> "Foreign liquors in prescribed quantity may be imported for the use of Europeans who cannot or will not do without their drink."
>
> The Congress Governments must feel as much concerned for the welfare of the European community within their provinces as for the Indian communities. I assume that the Congressmen, as prohibitionists, are agreed that drink is as bad for the European as for the Indian. In that case the mere whim of the drinker cannot count. If drink is to be allowed to the European—although it is bad for him—because he "cannot or will not do without it", the Japanese, the Americans and several other foreigners in India may seek the same permission; and if they are to be allowed to continue their evil habit on that ground, why should an Indian in his own country be not allowed to ruin himself in the same way? . . .
>
> If anyone is to be permitted to take (not take to) alcohol, it must be entirely on medical or some other universally applicable ground. There cannot be under the Congress regime a discriminatory legislation for or against a community. . . .
>
> A foreigner residing in India for a period only ought not to be exempt from the same obligation. Thus, even for those who feel that total abstinence is not absolutely necessary, it must be obligatory to give up drink during their stay in India if the nation has declared itself against it. They must be deemed to reside in India on the understanding that they will respect the laws, customs and rules of decent conduct of the people amongst whom they have come to reside.

I have no difficulty generally in following and often adopting this writer's criticism. But I must confess that though I have read the letter three times, I have failed to understand the argument.

Why is the proposed exemption against the spirit of ahimsa or truth? I fail to see even the bad logic the writer sees in it. In

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

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, pp. 447-53.

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dealing with living entities, the dry syllogistic method leads not only to bad logic but sometimes to fatal logic. For if you miss even a tiny factor—and you never have control over all the factors that enter into dealings with human beings—your conclusion is likely to be wrong. Therefore you never reach the final truth, you only reach an approximation, and that too if you are extra careful in your dealings.

Indeed it was my regard for ahimsa and truth that made me think of exempting Europeans. For I am unable to lay down a universal law for all human beings and for all climes that drink is an evil. I can well regard it as a necessity in the frigid zone. I would therefore be chary of imposing prohibition against Europeans who not only do not regard measured quantities of alcohol at each meal an evil but consider it a necessity. Drink is not regarded as a vice in European society as it is generally in India. I would therefore, even from the point of view of courtesy (a phase of ahimsa), leave it to their honour to respect the usage of the country of their adoption.

I would gladly accept the logic of allowing other nationals, if the necessity is proved, the modified freedom the Europeans will enjoy. Indeed it might be necessary to bring in a large number of Indians too under the medical certificate clause.

For me the drink question is one of dealing with a growing social evil against which the State is bound to provide whilst it has got the opportunity. The aim is patent. We want to wean the labouring population and the Harijans from the curse. It is a gigantic problem, and the best resources of all social workers, especially women, will be taxed to the utmost before the drink habit goes. The prohibition I have adumbrated is but the beginning (undoubtedly indispensable) of the reform. We cannot reach the drinker so long as he has the drink shop near his door to tempt him. One might as well prevent an ailing child, nay man, from touching sweets so long as he does not remove the open box in front of them.

Whilst on this question, I would like to answer an argument advanced in one of the newspaper cuttings which good friends send me that Shri C. Rajagopalachari in his zeal for this reform has brushed aside the question of the unemployment of the tappers who will be thrown out of work. I do not know what he has in mind for them. Shri Gajanan, who is becoming an expert in making palm *gur*[1], tells me that in the Southern

[1] Jaggery

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Presidency there are tappers engaged in the nefarious trade. He further suggests that the tapping need not stop at all. Only what they will tap under the prohibition regime will be sweet toddy which will be converted into *gur* instead of fiery liquid. Indeed I learn that in Andhradesh the tappers do not sell the palm juice they extract, but they convert it into *gur* which they sell to the arrack manufacturers who make arrack out of this *gur*. In such cases nothing need be done except for the State to take over this *gur* at a reasonable agreed price. From what I know of the tappers, they are not likely to lose anything by the impending prohibition, and the poor will get a rich but cheap food in the shape of good pure *gur* instead of a liquid which harms both body and soul.

Harijan, 14-8-1937

62. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 14, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I am enclosing a letter from Nimu. Only Maganbhai[1] and you can answer her questions. The question regarding her staying in the Ashram will have to be answered by you. I suppose the question regarding the Vidyapith will have to be answered for the present by Maganbhai. If he is here, I will show him this letter before posting it to you. Neither you nor Maganbhai need do anything which is found inconvenient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9109

63. RENTIA BARAS

I feel—and I should feel—hesitant to write about my own birthday. Readers should know that I would have forgotten it altogether if people in India had not kept reminding me of it. I had to recollect my date of birth only on my joining the school and again when I went to become a barrister. However, I do not recall my parents having customarily celebrated either

[1] Maganbhai Prabhudas Desai

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my birthday or that of any of my brothers. I have not celebrated the birthday of my parents or my sons. At one time, I used to keep a record of their birthdays but even that record was lost when like the [proverbial] cat we changed houses more than seven times. I do not know why I have never been interested in birthdays. But ever since my birthday was first celebrated with pomp in India, I made it known as *Rentia Baras*. With reference to this occasion which is to be celebrated this year also by the National School of Rajkot, Shri Chhaganlal Joshi writes as follows:[1]

If all Kathiawaris, whether living in Kathiawar or outside, do their part, the amount of Rs. 15,000, which Shri Chhaganlal expects to raise, is a very small sum in my opinion. I would regard no amount big enough where khadi propaganda and Harijan work are concerned. Propagation of khadi means a clear increase in national wealth. With an insignificant capital, the Spinners' Association has to date distributed three crore rupees amongst the poor, that is to say that khadi worth a minimum of rupees four crores was produced and, of these three crores found their way to the villages. Similarly, Harijan service should also be regarded as charity which earns immediate merit for the donor, as it is a form of atonement. And charity thus given yields immeasurable fruit. Those who are aware of this will contribute to the *Daridranarayana* fund not in a miserly fashion but in handfuls.

But why in the National School at Rajkot alone and why not elsewhere? This should be regarded as a relevant question. I can only say that the scheme drawn up by Shri Narandas Gandhi to celebrate this occasion strikes me as unique. Whatever is collected by means of it is managed by a prosperous organization. It has been found that the routine programme which has been in operation for three years has been steadily expanding. Hence, I can unreservedly request devotees of khadi and Harijans to contribute their utmost to this fund. Those who contribute to this fund should realize that persons contributing to the *yajna* in the form of yarn are certainly giving more than those who pay money, as the former pay with wealth produced by their own labour. Those who give money only transfer it to the charity-box, they do not produce new wealth, though of course they help to produce more.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 15-8-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to write in *Harijanbandhu* about Narandas Gandhi's scheme to celebrate *Rentia Baras*.

64. MY NOTES

'PLAIT DEED'

The Secretary of the Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, Shri Parikshitlal Majmudar, writes:[1]

If this is true, it is clearly a case of crime and it is necessary for the State to promptly stop it. Workers of the Sangh should make further inquiries. Are there documents to be signed in such cases, or are the commitments merely verbal? How many persons are engaged in such practices and where do they live? How many such cases have come to light?

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 15-8-1937

65. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

August [*15*][2], *1937*

CHI. MANI,

Kevalram's letter was among those you returned. I knew that the first part of the telegram was missing. I am sending both with this. Mirabehn is coming today any time between 6 and 8 by the train from Delhi. Rajkumari is arriving tomorrow morning from Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN PATEL
PURUSHOTTAM BUILDING
OPP. OPERA HOUSE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 119

[1] The letter is not translated here. Parikshitlal Majmudar had called upon the State of Baroda to prohibit the practice among Harijans of Mehsana Division of mortgaging their womenfolk's plaits to money-lenders who as a result of this deed enjoyed full rights over the women.

[2] The source has "26". From the reference to Mirabehn's expected arrival that day it is evident that this was written on August 15; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", p. 52. Amrit Kaur was already with Gandhiji on August 23; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 66.

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66. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[1]

[After *August 15, 1937*][2]

DEAR SIR VISVESVARAYYA,

You know the havoc wrought by the floods in Orissa. I have advised the Chief Minister Shri Vishwanath Das to approach you for advice and guidance. I have no doubt that you would give him such assistance as it may be in your power to give.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9836. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

67. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 16, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

You are aware of the havoc wrought in Orissa by the recent floods. Its Chief Minister was yesterday describing to me the area of destruction. I have long held the opinion that these annual disasters can be prevented by regulating the direction of the floods. I wonder if you could send any friendly engineer to advise the Orissa Government on the best way of dealing with the floods.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] This was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition held in Delhi in 1969-70.

[2] The letter appears to have been written after the Chief Minister of Orissa met Gandhiji on August 15, 1937; *vide* the following item.

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68. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 16, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending with this two articles at any rate. Kanu has typed the Hindi one. The other is getting ready.

You seem to be very sensitive indeed. I only described to you what I saw. What happened yesterday was worth seeing. How could I possibly be displeased by your remaining present? But I sensed the atmosphere. You did quite right of course in not coming yesterday. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11551

69. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

August 16, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. You must have received my wire allowing you to remain there as long as necessary. It will be a great thing for me if you get well. My consideration was only on behalf of Amtul Masood and Mother. As for the rest, what I wrote to Ramachandran should hold good. You should return only when he permits.

Mirabehn arrived yesterday. She has not gained much in health.

Kanti writes that he will have nothing to do with you as long as you are attached to him. And when you have become disinterested there will be no problem at all.

I have one more letter from you today. You need not be in a hurry to return. Prolong your stay if you are improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 391

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70. TELEGRAM TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

[On or after *August 16, 1937*][2]

GURUDEV
SANTINIKETAN

PRAY DEPEND UPON MY DOING UTMOST END ANDAMAN CRISIS.[3] LOVE.
GANDHI

From the original: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

71. LETTER TO SARASWATI

August 17, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

I have your letter. Kanti does not wish you to come to me till your final examinations are over. Ramachandran also wishes the same. Hence, get through the examination soon and then come over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6163. Also C.W. 3436. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] &[2] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 16, 1937, which read: "Have wired Andaman prisoners give up hunger strike. Their lives must be saved. Hope you and Jawaharlal will also exert your influence."

[3] On July 24, 1937, about 225 political prisoners in the Andamans Central Prison bad gone on hunger-strike. One of their demands was general release of all political prisoners and repeal of all repressive laws. But the Government of India had decided not to consider any of their demands unless they gave up the strike. *Vide* also "Telegram to Viceroy", pp. 74-5, and "Telegram to Andamans Prisoners", p. 90.

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72. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 18, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. I have carefully gone through it. I feel that there is nothing for me or the Congress to say in this matter. That is to say that none of you should take any step having regard to my approval or disapproval, as your viewpoint and mine are quite different. The stand I took in Lancashire during the Round Table Conference[1] still holds good, for I cannot see any economic agreement independent of political issues. The fact that you people are members of the Pact Committee only means that you no longer have the right to raise political issues. Hence treating this issue as totally independent you must concentrate only on its own merits or otherwise. And what can I say about either? My opinion would most probably coincide with yours. Moreover, I believe that it is your duty to adopt this course. If necessary, you may say that in spite of that being your opinion on the merits and demerits, it need not be given much weight. Since the Congress is the only popular institution, it is necessary that whatever agreement is reached should have the seal of the Congress. And that agreement should be considered binding. This would prove your integrity and sense of justice.

I am dictating this letter after the morning prayers. Your trip to Zurich must have proved beneficial.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7990. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] In 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII, pp. 68-9, 75-7 and 78-9.

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73. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON,
August 19, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was intensely dissatisfied with myself that we could not have a heart-to-heart chat. But that did not matter. That you take no rest during the day has alarmed me. It is wrong if not sinful. There is no merit in overdoing anything. The world won't go wrong if you took an hour's rest during the day. You must listen unless you want to precipitate a collapse. There is something rotten in the State of Denmark if the simplest thing like an hour's rest cannot be taken with perfect safety to the State. Please listen.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 2060

74. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

August 19, 1937

DEAR BHARATAN,

I have your note about Rao[1]. I got it during my walk at 7 a. m. This reply will go when Chhotelal leaves. You can come either at 1 o'clock or at 4 p.m. today. Between 2 and 4 I am fixed up. I hope you have taken all the papers and cash from Rao. I should like to see him if he could be induced to come.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3593

[1] *Vide* also Vol. LXV, p. 391.

75. LETTER TO LAKSHMI GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 19, 1937

CHI. LAKSHMI,

I am writing to you after many days or rather weeks. But I keep receiving news of you and the children. I write this letter because of Anna[1]. For, on enquiring about his activities, I learn he works without break from morning till eleven at night. This causes me great anxiety. I have also remonstrated[2] a bit with him. There is no dharma in working like this. In fact I consider it a fault. How long can anyone carry on in this fashion? How will he manage if he himself falls ill? To create all the conditions for illness, yet hope to escape it is to expect the impossible. Therefore I expect that you, your brothers and sisters will all collectively stop him and will not allow him at any cost to overwork like this. If all of you, brothers and sisters, make up your mind, you will surely succeed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2014

76. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
August 20, 1937

Mr. K. F. Nariman has sent me a statement containing his case against Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and others. In it he wants me to invite witnesses and give them certain assurances.[3] This I gladly do hereby.

[1] C. Rajagopalachari

[2] *Vide* p. 55.

[3] In *Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, Vol. II, Narahari Parikh explains: "Nariman . . . issued a statement on the 17th of August. In this he stated that he was not prepared to apologize and that an assurance of protection should be given to all the witnesses. He followed up the public statement by a letter to Gandhiji urging that as the President of the Parliamentary Committee,

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I would like all those members of the Assembly and the Council who took part in the election of the leader for the Congress Party and those who were influencing votes to send me their statements of what they know, especially whether they voted in the manner they did at the instigation of Sardar Vallabhbhai directly or indirectly, and also their reasons for voting. It is said that the election being unanimous there was no voting. Even so, I would like members who were present at the election to write to me, if they will, as to why they did not express their dissent. I would also like those who took part in influencing the decisions of the electors to write to me whether they acted at the instigation or advice of the Sardar and whether, as a matter of fact, they used his name in speaking to the electors and, if they did, whether they did so with his knowledge and consent.

There is another class of witnesses as to the part Mr. Nariman played in 1934 at the election of members from Bombay for the Central Assembly. I would ask those who can to throw light on the charge of betrayal of trust or improper conduct brought against Mr. Nariman.

It has been stated to me that the truth might be stifled for fear of victimization by the Sardar. I do not visualize how the Sardar can victimize. But I can give this assurance that in the event of the Sardar being found guilty of such conduct I should cut off the intimate contact I enjoy with him. If there are witnesses who wish to write to me in confidence I shall respect their confidence, but they should know that if their statements are such as need corroboration or contradiction by the Sardar or parties whom they may mention, their statements will have no weight with me if I could not show them—not necessarily the names—to the parties concerned.

Any evidence that any party may wish to give in the two matters mentioned above should reach me not later than the 31st instant addressed Maganwadi, Wardha, and marked "Confidential: about Shri Nariman". The statements should be written in clear hand without argument or embellishment and should be relevant to matters referred to by me.

The Bombay Chronicle, 21-8-1937

Sardar Patel enjoyed large and arbitrary powers and many witnesses who were members of the Legislature were afraid of incurring his displeasure. It was essential, therefore, and in the interest of truth, that assurance of complete protection should be given to the witnesses."

77. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Haven't I invited all this heavy labour myself? How shall I find time to read these essays on Nariman and education? Would it not be proper to send the accompanying statement[1] to the Associated Press by wire? Do as you please. I understand what you say about the fruit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11552

78. LETTER TO HARIHAR SHARMA

August 20, 1937

CHI. ANNA,

I have your letter. There was no need for you to feel sorry. It was imperative to give expression to the shock I received at the station. It would have been betrayal of friendship if I had not done so. Had I entertained suspicion before this I would have dealt with it. When you had intended to leave after obtaining my permission you ought to have handed over charge to somebody. No calamity would have befallen if I had not given permission. This is evident as you saw how it affected me and what I had to do suddenly since you did not hand over charge. And that too as soon as I got down at the station.

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

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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79. DISCUSSION ON PROHIBITION[1]

[Before *August 21, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: The cruellest irony of the new reforms lies in the fact that we are left with nothing but the liquor revenue to fall back upon in order to give our children education. That is the educational puzzle but it should not baffle us. We have to solve it and the solution must not involve the compromise of our ideal of prohibition, cost whatever else it may. It must be shameful and humiliating to think that unless we got the drink revenue, our children would be starved of their education. But if it comes to it, we should prefer it as a lesser evil. If only we will refuse to be obsessed by the figures and by the supposed necessity of giving our children the exact kind of education that they get today, the problem should not baffle us.

QUESTION: Then would you really abolish what is called secondary education and give the whole education up to matriculation in the village schools?

A. Certainly. What is your secondary education but compelling the poor boys to learn in a foreign language in seven years what they should learn in the course of a couple of years in their own mother tongue? If you can but make up your minds to free the children from the incubus of learning their subjects in a foreign tongue, and if you teach them to use their hands and feet profitably, the educational puzzle is solved. You can sacrifice without compunction the whole of the drink revenue. But you must resolve to sacrifice this revenue first, and think of the ways and means about education later. Make the beginning by taking the big step.

Q. But would just the mere declaration of prohibition mean prohibition? May it not be that we may sacrifice the revenue without touching the curse of drink, not to talk of abolishing it?

A. The declaration does not mean that you will thereafter sit still. You will impress everyone into your service. In fact the whole staff is there—the staff of excise inspectors, their superior officers, and the whole of their subordinate staff. You will tell

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "The Education Puzzle"

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them that they will serve on no other terms but those of working for total abolition of drink. You will convert every grog-shop into a recreation centre. You will concentrate on places where opportunities for getting drunk are greatest. You will ask the mill-owners and factory-owners to provide light refreshment stalls, you will provide there refreshing drinks for them like sugarcane juice, games for them, lantern shows for them, and make them feel that they are like you. Impress everyone, without exception, into your service. The village school-master and the other officials should be all prohibition workers.

Q. Very good. But in many places you will find the village Patel and others joining the drinking folk in their drunken revels. What about them?

A. Every one of your school children will be a prohibition worker. Ministers will be going up and down the country visiting the grog-shops-turned-recreation-centres, have their cup of refreshing drink with the common folk and make these houses fashionable.

Don't be deterred by the thought that prohibition failed in America. Remember that the stupendous experiment was tried there, where drinking is not looked upon as a vice, where millions usually drink. Here drink is held reprehensible by all religions, and it is not the millions who drink but individuals who drink.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

80. HINDI-URDU

From the valuable essay[1] written by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, being No. 6 of the Congress Political and Economical Studies Series, I copy his following seventeen main suggestions:[2]

Of course the reader should procure the pamphlet for himself and study it with the care it deserves. It is obtainable at the A. I. C. C. Office, Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad, at the price of 4 annas plus one anna postage.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

[1] For Gandhiji's Foreword, *vide* p. 7.
[2] *Vide* Appendix I.

81. NOTES

Not Instrument of Instructions

What I have been recently writing in connection with the constructive programme before the Congress Ministries has been described by some newspapers as "Instrument of Instructions". No one but the President of the Congress and the Working Committee has any power to issue instructions to the Congress Ministries. Mine is a very humble note. I can only advise on matters about which I may claim special knowledge or experience. My articles have a value only to the extent that they appeal to the reason of those to whom they are addressed. Though I enjoy the confidence of the Working Committee, the views I may express here need not be taken to represent its views or even those of any of its groups. Indeed the public should know that in several matters I do not represent the views of many individual members. Therefore, whatever I may say in these columns should be taken to be purely personal to me and in no way representative of the Working Committee.

But in matters relating to the struggle for swaraj through non-violent action, I do claim special qualifications. For me office-acceptance has a special meaning even in terms of the Congress manifesto and resolutions. It would be wrong if I did not put before the Ministers and the public my meaning of office-acceptance. But it may not always be the official Congress view, it may not be the view of Congressmen in general. My position and limitations being made clear, there need be no embarrassment to the Ministers or me. I should feel cramped if my writings were presumed to bear the imprimatur of the official or even the non-official Congress view.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

82. THE IMPLICATIONS

I have not hesitated to express my opinion that the salaries that the Congress Ministers have voted for themselves are much too high for the standard that should govern us in this the poorest country in the world. In the hurried note that Prof. K. T. Shah

has sent me and which the reader will find elsewhere, India's average annual per capita income will be found to be £4 against £50 of Great Britain. Unfortunately for us we have to bear yet a while the burden of the British inheritance, and in spite of the best effort we fail to achieve the ideal standard. The salaries and the allowances are now a settled fact. The question now is, will the Ministers, their secretaries and the Members work so hard as to deserve the emoluments they will receive? Will the Members become whole-time workers for the nation and give a faithful account of the services they may render? Let us not make the mistake of imagining that the things are what we wish them to be or what they should be.

And it is not enough that the Ministers live simply and work hard. They have to see to it that the departments they control also respond. Thus justice should become cheap and expeditious. Today it is the luxury of the rich and the joy of the gambler. The police should be friends of the people instead of being their dread. Education should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager instead of answering those of an imperial exploiter.

All those who were imprisoned for political offences even of a violent nature will shortly find themselves free if the Ministers can give them the freedom. This is a phenomenon not to be looked at lightly. Does it mean passport to violence? Certainly not in terms of the Congress creed of non-violence. The Congress abhors individual violence in a far more real sense than the Government it replaces. It seeks to meet the violence of individuals not with the organized violence called punishment but with non-violence in the shape of friendly approach to the erring individuals and through the cultivation of sound public opinion against any form of violence. Its methods are preventive, not punitive. In other words, the Congress will rule not through the police backed by the military but through its moral authority based upon the greatest goodwill of the people. It will rule not in virtue of authority derived from a superior armed power but in virtue of the service of the people whom it seeks to represent in every one of its actions.

Ban on all prohibited literature is being removed. Now some of the books banned will be found, I suppose, to inculcate violence and spread obscenity, or hatred among different classes or sects. The Congress rule does not mean licence to violence or obscenity or fomenting of hatred. Again the Congress will rely upon the unstinted support of enlightened public opinion in

dealing with objectionable literature. The Ministers who may find violence, hatred or obscenity spreading in their provinces will look to the Congress organizations and ultimately the Working Committee for active and efficient help before they resort to the processes of the criminal law and all it means. Indeed the triumph of the Congress will be measured by the success it achieves in rendering the police and the military practically idle. And it will fail utterly if it has to face crises that render the use of the police and the military inevitable. The best and the only effective way to wreck the existing Constitution is for the Congress to prove conclusively that it can rule without the aid of the military and with the least possible assistance of the police who may well have some new and friendly designation given to them as a correspondent suggests.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

83. LETTER TO VERRIER ELWIN

Unrevised

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1937

MY DEAR VERRIER,

Your letter to Jamnalalji and now the fuller letter to Bapa make distressful reading. God has saved you for greater service. You must not give way to dejection. Dejection is the measure of one's want of faith. You say in Bapa's letter: "I have lost most of my Christian or religious faith. How can a just and good God allow these sufferings of the poor?" Are you not judging God? Who are we to say why He allows certain things? There would be little play for faith, if we could reason out every act of God. We would then be co-equal with Him. I understand the persecution to which you have been subjected.[1] But that is the moment of your trial. Your faith must be immovable like the Himalayas. They will suffer decay, but not so your faith, if it is worth anything. No, no, it won't do. You must cheer up. No more of idle sorrow!

Thakkar Bapa in his covering letter to Mahadev says Elwin thinks Bapu is displeased with him. What is this libel on you by him, or by you on me? I have differed from you. That you

[1] Perhaps the reference is to the addressee's conflict with the Church authorities.

know. You have never given me cause for displeasure. My love can stand many trials. But you have not put it through any. It burns as bright as ever. Take of it a cartload and distribute it to Shamrao[1] and others.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

84. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Where is the book[2] that Prema writes about? I don't remember to have received it. I have entered silence at 6 this evening. Silence always suits me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Send over Verrier's letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11553

85. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1937

CHI. JAYANTI,

I have your letter. The years pass for all, old and young. The wheel of time never stops moving even for a moment.

All of you were but little children yesterday. Now you are all children no more. I have to make an effort to remember this. May your aspirations be fulfilled and your life be spent in relieving the sufferings of the hungry and other afflicted people. Why don't you write directly to Sardar drawing his attention to the unusual changes about which you have written in your

[1] Shamrao Hivale, addressee's co-worker

[2] On *brahmacharya*, by Premabehn Kantak; *vide* also "Letter to Premabehn Kantak", pp. 69-71.

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letter to me? Are you afraid that he will not pay attention to you? If you have any such doubt, dispel it. I hope Dinkar is getting stronger.

It would be very good if Indu's mind becomes steady.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6265

86. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I send with this a letter from Jayanti addressed to me. I replied[1] to him saying that it would be better if he wrote directly to you instead of writing to me. I think it is best that you yourself should reply to the accompanying letter.

I am getting papers from Nariman. I am not sending copies to you. I will of course send copies of papers which you ought to get.

Don't worry about my health. I am taking proper rest and will now increase the period.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
POONA

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 210

87. LETTER TO MULSHANKER NAUTAMLAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 23, 1937

CHI. MULSHANKER,

I do not seem to have received your letter of the 19th March.

It is certainly good that you are doing the work with your whole heart in it. Please keep it up.

This is what I believe to be dharma regarding marriage. Parents cannot force their children to marry, or to marry a par-

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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ticular person. While making their choice, the son or the daughter should listen with the utmost respect to their parents' advice, but need not marry anybody whom their heart does not accept. At the same time they should not form an alliance which would displease their parents.

I see no harm in restraining the desire for marriage as long as one can preserve self-control. But one must not deceive oneself in any way.

When the time for courting imprisonment comes again, those who have in them a strong spirit of self-sacrifice will have a right to do so. In this one should try to obtain the blessings of one's elders. But I can imagine cases in which it would be one's dharma to make such self-sacrifice even if the elders refuse their blessings. One can decide only after examining the circumstances in each case.

I think I have answered all your questions. If anything is left out, please ask me again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2585. Also C.W. 9464. Courtesy: Mulshanker Nautamlal

88. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
August 23, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Leaving aside important letters, I went on writing for *Harijan*. I have just finished the last article at 3.25. I have not been able to revise any of them. They have been revised by Rajkumari. Please go through them. I got as many of the articles typed as I could but the ones written after two couldn't of course be typed. I suggest that if there is no time you should send them as they are. However, if there is time and you get some copies made, send me one. All the copies of the articles which have been typed are being sent to you. Send me one copy [of each] if you can spare them. Today I cannot send anything more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11554

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89. MESSAGE TO TRAVANCORE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, QUILON[1]

[Before *August 24, 1937*][2]

How I wish Travancore women will play their part in purifying religion by removing from their heart untouchability and all it means and by taking their due share in the prohibition campaign now commenced.

The Hindu, 25-8-1937

90. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

MY DEAR NATESAN,

Many thanks for your letter and cutting. What you have done is wholly worthy of you. You differed honestly, you have revised your view openly.

As to education you will see the use I have made of your letter in the forthcoming issue of *Harijan*.[3]

I am under strict order to take rest if I am to escape serious consequences. Please therefore wait for me to overtake reading your Sanskrit abridgments[4].

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2237

[1&2] The conference concluded on August 24, expressing "its profound gratitude to the Maharaja and Maharani for issuing the Temple-entry Proclamation and resolved to form an All-Kerala Hindu Women's Conference."

[3] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Needless Fear", pp. 79-80.

[4] Of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, etc.

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91. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 17th instant. Evidently, I did not quite understand what H. E. the Viceroy said to me about trans-Frontier. I understood him to mean that he could not think of permitting me to cross the border. And I accepted what I understood to be the Viceroy's decision adding that I did not lose the hope that, when I have inspired sufficient confidence as to my integrity and ability, I could safely be permitted to cross the Frontier. But that is irrelevant to this letter. I would like to know the implication of "leaving all affairs connected with the tribes severely alone" during my visit. Not that I have the slightest desire to meddle in trans-Frontier affairs. My intention is, as it was when I first broached the subject to Lord Irwin[2], as Lord Halifax then was, to know the Frontier Pathan in his own home, to make the acquaintance of Khudai Khidmatgars, to ascertain for myself how far their claim to be utterly non-violent could be sustained and how I could promote the general welfare of the Pathans which is dear to the heart of Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He puts implicit reliance upon my judgment as I put on his transparency and trustworthiness. But I suppose it is inevitable that people will come to me to talk about trans-Frontier affairs. Am I not to listen to their narratives and even give my opinion if I were asked to express it and could form one on what they might tell me?

If I succeed in visiting the Frontier Province, I should certainly feel sorry if I had to leave it without having the pleasure of renewing the acquaintance we made during the time you were at Delhi.

I await your further letter about the Khan Saheb's question.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[1] *Vide* Appendix III.
[2] In March 1931; *vide* Vol. XLV, p. 259.

[PS.]

I just read in the papers the ban has been lifted. I am grateful.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR
N. W. F. P.

From a copy: C.W. 7991. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

92. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1937

BHAI MANGALDAS,

Kumarappa tells me that you have given up earning money for good and have resolved to devote the rest of your life to service. May you remain loyal to your noble resolve! Such self-sacrifices are certainly needed. I suppose our forefathers must have had a similar motive in entering the *vanaprastha*[1].

I hope to receive an exhaustive note from you regarding the Nariman affair. After all you were the President.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4678. Courtesy: Mangaldas Pakvasa

93. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1937

CHI. PREMA,

You must have heard about my ill-health. I have been ordered minimum mental exertion and maximum rest. Since both the brain and the right hand demand complete rest, I will content myself with writing what you want immediately.

I did tie your *raksha*[2] which I received in time.

[1] The third stage in one's life when one retired to the forest leaving behind all worldly connections

[2] A thread tied on *Shravana Shukla* 15 by a sister to the wrist of her brother or a person regarded as such implying that he would protect her

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I have completely re-written the reply to your question.[1] The old replies are not incorrect, but being incomplete they may lend themselves to misinterpretation. I am returning them. Cancel them. See that they are not published at all. If the new reply is useful, you may publish it. I have preserved your letters and will reply to them when I am all right. You may even receive my reply sooner if I am permitted to dictate.

There is no cause for worry about me. However, I have to be extremely careful.

Blessings from
BAPU

QUESTION: A professor who is married wants to observe *brahmacharya*. The wife doesn't agree. What is the professor friend's dharma in these circumstances?

ANSWER: This question could have arisen only if the idea of observing *brahmacharya* came to the husband after marriage. What I mean by marriage as a part of dharma is that intercourse between husband and wife is resorted to only when they desire children, and never for sex-gratification. Those who do not look upon marriage as a holy bond will of course respect each other's wishes. Intercourse without the consent of the other party is nothing but rape.

Let us now deal with the above mentioned question. In a case in which it is only the husband who wishes to observe *brahmacharya* but the wife does not, if the husband has become completely free from passion, that is, has, in the language of the *Gita*, Ch. II, v. 59, realized the Supreme, intercourse will be physically impossible. The wife will realize the husband's condition and her passion will subside. But the question refers to a man's striving for *brahmacharya*. A husband or wife can strive for any aim which was not present in the minds of both at the time of marriage, only with the consent of the other partner. In other words, a husband cannot take the vow of *brahmacharya* without the consent of his wife. Of course everybody should try to practise ordinary self-control. When either party is aroused, generally the other party also is agreeable or becomes so after a little persuasion. When this does not happen, bitterness results. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion, from the experiences of many people and

[1] The addressee had written a novel based on a discussion Gandhiji had with a friend about the case of a married professor aspiring to observe *brahmacharya*. The addressee included Gandhiji's answer in her novel, a Gujarati translation of which appeared under the title *Kama ane Kamini*.

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after careful reflection over them, that practice of self-control depends on mutual consent. I should therefore say that the question is defective. Where *brahmacharya* has become a natural condition, the question does not arise. And it has no room when passion is present and the person only wants to strive for *brahmacharya.*

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10393. Also C.W. 6832. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

94. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 25, 1937

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

What can I write? My mind can work in one direction only. I do not know how I can be of help. What opinion can I form on a matter I know nothing about? Hence I would only suggest that you do what is in the interest of India irrespective of the opinion of Congressmen. Rest assured that the Congress will have to accept what is for the country's good. And its prestige will suffer in rejecting it. The Congress has no other capital except its prestige which in turn depends upon the following of the poor millions. Thus the welfare of India means simply the economic, intellectual and moral welfare of its millions. I have said nothing new but at times such pronouncements of principle are most effective when made by a friend. One can say my health is quite good. A little weakness is there but it will disappear. There is no need for a change. But it will automatically be brought about if the trip to the Frontier Province materializes. For one thing the climate there is good and fruit, etc., are available in plenty.

You must be building up your health. The operation must have been of considerable help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 7983. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

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95. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 26, 1937

MY DEAR C. R.,

I wonder if you have a moment to think of Hindi Prachar Sabha. Raghavan is anxious about its financial condition. He seems to have no faith in the South and expects money from the North. The latter is a broken reed. Jamnalalji thinks that other provinces have been neglected. Do you think you can raise anything on your side? I do not expect you to give much time to this work but I am just putting you in mind of it.

I hope you have begun to give yourself an hour's rest during the day. That is a duty you may not neglect.

Love.

BAPU[1]

From a photostat: G.N. 2067

96. LETTER TO EDITH HUNTER

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
August 26, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Here is my message. You can do with it what you like.

Attainment of real world peace is impossible except for greater scientific precision, greater travail of the soul, greater patience and greater resources than required for the invention and consolidation of the means of mutual slaughter. It cannot be attained by a mere muster-roll signed by millions of mankind desiring peace. But it can, if there is a science of peace, as I hold there is, by a few devoting themselves to the discovery of the means.

[1] In his postscript to this letter Mahadev Desai writes: "Bapu's own condition is giving us no little anxiety. The pressure, as examined by Dr. Gilder, was 200/120, and the outward symptoms too are not at all happy. He is trying to give himself rest. But is there any rest for him?"

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Their effort being from within will not be showy but then it will not need a single farthing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MRS. EDITH HUNTER
SECRETARY, FRIENDS OF INDIA SOCIETY
47 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON S. W. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1534. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

97. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

SEGAON,
August 26, 1937

CHI. CHANDAN,

I have your frank letter. I have no further questions to ask now. You say that I should send that letter to Shankar[1] and not show it to anybody except Kakasaheb. Why? If we have got rid of a weakness of which we have been guilty, we shouldn't mind the whole world knowing about it. And why need we feel ashamed about it, either? Moreover, you wish to serve women. You wish to save girls from the clutches of . . .[2], for you believe that associating with him does them very great harm. How can you succeed in this unless you make public his misbehaviour with you? From every point of view, therefore, you should have no objection to your letter being read by any person. This does not mean, of course, that a letter like this should be shown to all. But I should be free to show it to anybody to whom I may think it necessary to show. Unless I make appropriate use of your letter, I can make no progress in my inquiry either. I will, therefore, keep a copy and send the original to Shankar.

If you want to be strong enough to see this matter through, you will need to have strength of heart. You will have to get some facts from your girl friends who have any knowledge of this matter. If any of them is willing to write to me, encourage her to do so. If the whole thing happened exactly as you have described, you have nothing to feel ashamed about. The fault was wholly . . .'s, for, as you say, was it not he who aroused passion in you? While gratifying his guilty desires, he made you

[1] Shankar *alias* Satish Kalelkar, addressee's fiance
[2] The name has been omitted.

take interest in his actions. Am I right? Continue to write to me without any constraint. I am sending a copy of your letter to Nanabhai[1] at any rate. I hope you will not be displeased by that. If I don't send a copy to him, my inquiry cannot proceed.

I hope your studies are progressing very well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 943. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

98. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

August 26, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The mail was received just now. Today all the articles have been typed here, and therefore you should have no difficulty. I leave to you the fate of the letters to be posted. Shivprasad is a wonderful man! Who is Kale, and who is Shridhar? I am not able to understand anything. Shivprasad must make a careful inquiry. Ask Ku[sum] and Chhotelal if either of them knows. How did he get those replies?

You must have received the mail sent in the morning. Keep taking enough fruit. About Nariman, let us see what happens.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11555

99. TELEGRAM TO VICEROY

August 27, 1937

IF HUNGER-STRIKE ANDAMANS STILL ON COULD YOU PLEASE WIRE FOLLOWING TO STRIKERS QUOTE. I VENTURE ADD MY ADVICE TO GURUDEV TAGORE'S[2] AND WORKING COMMITTEE'S[3] TO ABANDON STRIKE RELYING UPON US ALL TRYING BEST SECURE RELIEF FOR YOU. IT WOULD BE GRACEFUL ON YOUR PART YIELD TO NATIONWIDE REQUEST. YOU WILL HELP ME PERSONALLY IF I COULD GET ASSURANCE THAT THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN TERRORIST METHODS NO LONGER BELIEVE IN THEM AND THAT THEY HAVE COME

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Rabindranath Tagore", p. 53.
[3] *Vide* Appendix IV.

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TO BELIEVE IN NON-VIOLENCE AS THE BEST METHOD. I ASK THIS BECAUSE SOME LEADERS SAY DETENUS HAVE ABJURED TERRORISM BUT OPINION TO CONTRARY ALSO HAS BEEN EXPRESSED. GANDHI. UNQUOTE. I SHALL ESTEEM YOUR KINDLY ASKING FOR REPLY TO BE WIRED.[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7793. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

100. LETTER TO R. GANGADHARAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of the 10th inst.

Marriage is not an affair in which one person can dispose of his girls or boys against their will. My boy married Shri Rajagopalachari's daughter because they fell in love with each other in perfectly honourable manner and the couple had our blessings. I would be glad to think that you could also be similarly matched. I have absolutely no prejudices, but no third party can bring about such matches.

I see nothing unhygienic in a person carrying a moustache or a *shikha* or both. I cannot give any reason for this age-long custom but I do not believe in setting aside customs for which I can give no valid reason but which are not repugnant to my moral or sanitary sense.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. GANGADHARAN
THOPPIKAVILAKOM
VAKKOM, P. O. ANJUTENGU, TRAVANCORE

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] To this, the Viceroy's reply of even date read: "Many thanks for your message which I am having repeated to the hunger-strikers that they should telegraph reply to you." The telegram dated August 28 from Andamans read: "Your message was personally delivered by me this morning, August 28, to the hunger-strikers who asked for time to discuss the question of calling off the strike and are still deliberating at 7 p.m. Hope to send further report tomorrow." On August 29, Gandhiji received the following telegram: "Hunger-strike suspended unconditionally late last night by an overwhelming majority who broke their fast. Only seven remaining on hunger-strike." For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Telegram to Andamans Prisoners", p. 90.

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101. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEGAON,
August 27, 1937

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I got your letter only yesterday. I therefore sent a wire to Rajendra Babu asking him to attend the Conference and seek out Maulvi Abdul Haq Saheb. It is tragic that Nagpur should have so upset him. I have not yet traced the reason for his displeasure. I am glad you have sent Mujeeb[1] to Patna. You will please tell me what happens there.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ZAKIR HUSAIN
JAMIA MILLIA
DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

102. LETTER TO M. SUBRAHMANYA RAJU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 12th August. Of course it is possible to revive peaceful picketing and to reconstitute district temperance committees. Both these things will, I have no doubt, take place if it becomes necessary.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SYT. M. S. RAJU
SECRETARY, VILLAGE CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KARVATNAGAR
CHITTOOR

From the original: G.N. 11518

[1] Prof. Mohammed Mujeeb, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi

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103. LETTER TO RAGHAVDAS

SEGAON,
August 27, 1937

BHAI RAGHAVDAS,

What you say regarding machines is worth considering. I see that, as it is, the hand-operated grinding-stones are going out of use. It is even difficult to procure one. Even so, think over the matter and write to me. How many machines are operating in the U. P. and Gorakhpur? Find out if one can get as much flour as one needs if the use of machines is discontinued. Also consider whether, if the use of smaller machines is stopped, the tons of white flour prepared in Bombay and other places will not find its way into the villages. The flour of the smaller machines is much better.

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

104. LETTER TO RAMDAS GULATI

August 27, 1937

BHAI RAMDAS[1],

I have your letter. The work has increased . . .[2] I have told Om about matters here. I am writing to Shankerlal about the Exhibition. Probably he will himself come over and attend to everything. According to me the expense seems to be so great that the villagers cannot hold a session like this. This will not be a village Congress. The idea of a Congress in a village is that all the expenses are kept within two to three thousand rupees. Will not the expense on water supply also be a waste once the session is over? Isn't there any way by which we can avoid all this expense ? I feel that a Congress session for so many people will cost less in a city. If this is true, there is something wrong somewhere.

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

[1] The architect in charge of construction work at the Haripura Congress; *vide* "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", 26-9-1937.

[2] Some words are illegible in the source.

105. DISCUSSION ON PROHIBITION[1]

[Before *August 28, 1937*]

GANDHIJI: If we can achieve prohibition within the next three years, and if we can demonstrate to the world that we can do without the military in the provinces, we shall have raised India's name to a height that it had never reached before and to which no nation has yet reached. The task of making people sober is a task of the most vital importance and no amount of energy devoted to it is likely to be wasted. It will at once be a kind of true adult education and [a means] of improving the taxable capacity of the citizen.

[QUESTION:] What are the most effective agencies for the creation of a sober India?

G. I have said already that the existing excise force may be used to advantage. Up to now they had no belief in the Government's *bona fides* to achieve prohibition at even a distant date. They now know well enough that the Congress will not rest in peace and will not let others rest in peace until it has achieved prohibition, and they will gladly fall into line with the new policy and programme. But the voluntary agencies will be more effective. There are our professors and teachers, and students of colleges. They may well be called upon to devote a couple of hours each day to the task. They should go to the areas frequented by the drinkers, associate with them, speak to them and reason with them and do peaceful picketing of an educative character. I look to the medical profession to put their heads together to find out why people drink, how they can be weaned from drink, find out effective, wholesome and healthful substitutes of drink. Then there are our sisters. They did great work during the non-co-operation days. They should be organized again to revive the work under better auspices now. Whilst their presence will be a sure deterrent, they will have few difficulties in the way. Before, the police looked indifferently on, and even helped the ruffians in the days gone by. Now, women can count on their help in their holy crusade. Then there are the temperance associations. Most of them have been up to now inert and inactive. We should now ask them to pull themselves to-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "A Stupendous Task", under "Notes"

gether and engage actively in the crusade. We might well have a Prohibition League under which all these agencies may work in a regular and systematic manner. The revenue drawn from excise may rightly be used for the prohibition campaign. That will be no forbidden use of tainted money, but something like turning a channel of foul water into the holy Ganges and making it pure.

Above all, find out the plague spots, concentrate your forces on them. Have meetings of the liquor contractors and liquor dealers, teach them how to turn an honest penny by converting their liquor booths into recreation centres. I have already described[1] how these places may be turned into centres of harmless recreation and even of educative amusement.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

106. NOTES

Dangerous Even in Frigid Zone

Apropos of my remark[2] that alcohol might be required in a frigid zone, a friend sends me the following interesting paragraph from *Liquor Control* by G. E. G. Catlin who while discussing the apparent warming effect of alcohol says:

> A simple mechanical consideration should, however, warn us against a misinterpretation of these results. The body temperature has not been changed but the warmer blood has been sent to the surface where, if it is chilled, it returns to reduce the temperature of the whole system. In cases where there is serious need of protection against cold, alcohol is not only useless but dangerous. Fridtjof Nansen[3] stated that 'my experience leads me to take a decided stand against the use of stimulants and narcotics of all sorts' in Arctic journeys—in the case of alcohol owing to the increased risk of death by freezing.

We in India, however, do not need such testimony. We have no excuse apparent or real for taking alcoholic drinks in our temperate zone where the sun gives us all the warmth we need.

Needless Fear

A Liberal friend[4] after highly appreciating the Congress programme of prohibition within three years thus expresses his fear about education:

[1] *Vide* "Discussion on Prohibition", pp. 59-60.

[2] *Vide* "Against Ahimsa and Truth?", pp. 46-8.

[3] (1861-1930); Norwegian Polar explorer, who was awarded Nobel Prize in 1922

[4] G. A. Natesan; *vide* "Letter to G. A. Natesan", p. 67.

> The educational programme of the Congress seems to be causing some uneasiness. There is a fear that it may result in blocking the progress of higher education. I hope that till a well-considered scheme is adumbrated and sufficient notice given of the changes proposed, no precipitate step should be taken, at any rate without giving an opportunity to the public to discuss the Congress proposals fully.

The fear is wholly needless. The Working Committee has laid down no general policy. The Congress, except for being responsible for the existence of many national educational institutions, e.g., the Kashi Vidyapith, Jamia Millia, Tilak Vidyapith, Bihar Vidyapith, Gujarat Vidyapith and the like, has made no general announcement. What I have written is my personal contribution to the discussion. Indeed I feel most strongly about the vast injury that the existing system of education has done to the youth of the country and to the languages and general culture of India. I hold my views strongly. But I do not claim to have converted Congressmen in general. What then can be said of those educationists who are outside even the Congress atmosphere and who dominate the Universities of India? It is no easy task to convert them. My friend and those who share his fear may rest assured that the advice given by Shri Shastriar will be taken to heart by those concerned and no serious step will be taken without due consideration and consultation with the persons whose advice is of value in matters educational. I may add that I am already in correspondence with many educationists and am already receiving valuable opinions which I am happy to be able to say are in general agreement with my scheme.

What about Literacy?

I have received many opinions on the ideas I have been propounding in these columns on education. I may be able to reproduce the most important of them in these columns. For the moment I wish to answer a grievance a learned correspondent has made of the neglect of literacy of which he imagines I have been guilty. There is nothing in what I have written to warrant such a belief. For have I not contended that the children in the schools of my conception will receive every instruction through the handicrafts they may be taught? That includes literacy. In my scheme of things the hand will handle tools before it draws or traces the writing. The eyes will read the pictures of letters and words as they will know other things in life, the ears will catch the names and meanings of things and sentences. The whole training will be natural, responsive, and therefore the quickest and

the cheapest in the land. The children of my school will therefore read much more quickly than they will write. And when they write they will not produce daubs as I do even now (thanks to my teachers), but they will trace correct letters even as they will trace correct figures of the objects they may see. If the schools of my conception ever come into being, I make bold to say that they will vie with the most advanced schools in quickness, so far as reading is concerned, and even writing if it is common ground that the writing must be correct and not incorrect as now is in the vast majority of cases. The children of the Segaon school may be said to be writing in accordance with the orthodox standard; they spoil slate and paper according to my standard.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

107. THE GREATEST ACT

Inasmuch as prohibition has been one of the chief planks of the Congress since the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement in 1920, and thousands of men and women have had to suffer imprisonment and physical injury in furtherance of this cause, the Working Committee is of opinion that it is incumbent upon the Congress Ministries to work for this end. The Committee expects them to bring about total prohibition in their respective provinces within three years. The Working Committee appeals to the Ministries in other provinces, and to the Indian States also, to adopt this programme of moral and social uplift of the people.

I regard this resolution as the greatest act of the Working Committee[1] at any time of its chequered career. The cry of prohibition has been always fashionable. In 1920 it became one of the chief constructive items of the Congress. The Congress, therefore, could not but go in for total prohibition immediately it came into power in any part of India. The Ministers had to have the courage to sacrifice nearly Rs. eleven crores of revenue in the six provinces. The Working Committee has taken the risk for the sake of redeeming its pledge and conserving the moral and the material welfare of those who are addicted to intoxicants and narcotics. It is my fervent hope that the five provinces which have non-Congress majorities will not hesitate to follow the example of the six provinces. It is less difficult for them than for the

[1] Which met at Wardha from August 14 to 17, 1937

six provinces to achieve prohibition. And is it too much to expect the States to fall in with British India?

I know that many are sceptical about prohibition being achieved. They think that the financial lure will be too strong for them to resist. They argue that the addicts will procure their drinks and drugs anyhow, and that when the Ministers discover that prohibition means mere loss of revenue without any appreciable diminution in the consumption, though illicit, of drinks and drugs, they will revert to the tainted revenue and the then state will be worse than the present.

I do not share any such fear. I believe there is the requisite moral momentum in the nation to achieve the noble end. If prohibition is to be a reality, we shall begin to see the end not with the end of the three years but inside of six months. And when the reality dawns upon India, those provinces or States that have lagged behind are bound to bow to the inevitable.

We have the right, therefore, to expect the sympathy and support not only of all the parties in India including the Europeans but the best mind of the whole world in this, perhaps the greatest moral movement of the century.

If, then, prohibition is to mean a great moral awakening in India, the closing of liquor shops should merely mean the indispensable beginning of the movement ending in the complete weaning from drink and narcotics of those poor people and some rich people whom the habit has ruined, body and soul. Such a consummation cannot be brought about by mere State effort. At the risk of repetition of what is stated by Mahadev Desai in his notes, let me summarize what should, in my opinion, be the comprehensive programme:

(1) A drink-drug map showing the locality of liquor and opium shops in each province.

(2) Closing them as liquor shops on the expiry of the licences.

(3) Immediate earmarking of liquor revenue, whilst it is still being received, exclusively for the purpose of prohibition.

(4) Conversion, wherever possible, of the liquor shops into refreshment and recreation rooms in the hope that the original visitors will continue to use them, liquor contractors being themselves persuaded to conduct them if they will.

(5) Employment of the existing excise staff for detection of illicit distillation and drinking.

(6) Appeal to the educational institutions to devote a part of the time of teachers and students to temperance work.

(7) Appeal to the women to organize visits to the persons given to the drink and opium habits.

(8) Negotiation with the neighbouring States to undertake simultaneous prohibition.

(9) Engaging the voluntary or, if necessary, paid assistance of the medical profession for suggesting non-alcoholic drinks and other substitutes for intoxicants and methods of weaning the addicts from their habit.

(10) Revival of the activities of temperance associations in support of the campaign against drink.

(11) Requiring employers of labour to open and maintain, under first-class management, refreshment, recreation and educational rooms for the use of their employees.

(12) Toddy-tappers to be used for drawing sweet toddy for sale, as such, or conversion into *gur*. I understand that the process of collecting sweet toddy for drinking, as such, or for making *gur* is different from the one for fermenting toddy.

So much for the campaign against drink and drugs.

Now as to how to make up for the loss of revenue in some provinces to the extent of one-third. I have unhesitatingly suggested cutting out the educational budget for which purpose mainly the excise revenue is used. I still maintain that education can be made self-supporting. With this I must deal elsewhere.[1] It cannot be made so in a day even if the possibility of its being made self-supporting is accepted. Existing obligations have to be met. Therefore, fresh sources of revenue have to be tapped. Death duties, tax on tobacco including *bidis*, have already been given as some suggestions. If these are considered impossible of immediate accomplishment, short-term loans may be devised to tide over the deficit; and if even that fails, the Central Government should be approached to curtail the military budget and give the provinces the proportionate grant. The demand would be irresistible especially if it is demonstrated by the Provincial Governments that they do not need the military, at any rate for their internal peace and tranquillity.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

[1] *Vide* "Self-supporting Education", pp. 123-5.

108. "SUFFICIENTLY ACQUAINTED"

A professor writes:

> You have suggested that even if an M. L. A. can express himself in English it is open to him to declare that he is not 'sufficiently' acquainted with it and thus enable the Speaker, who is of course not expected to question his *bona fides*, to allow him to speak in Hindustani. I have read your remarks[1] with the greatest care but have not been able to see how a person having a scrupulous regard for truth can take this course, much less how you can suggest it. Section 85 obviously refers to persons who find themselves unable to express their meaning in English well enough to make it intelligible to those who know English and not to those who do not know it. There can be no question of 'sufficient' acquaintance with English for making oneself intelligible to the latter. The wording is too clear to permit any other interpretation, and in face of it for anybody to declare himself insufficiently acquainted with English simply because there are some fellow Members who do not understand English, looks like mere casuistry. In U. P. they have got out of the difficulty by interpreting the words, 'unacquainted or not sufficiently acquainted with the English language' to mean less acquainted with the English language than with Hindi. But I think the question of comparative acquaintance is also ruled out by the context. I agree that the Section is highly obnoxious and must go. If you suggested that it should be deliberately disobeyed, it would be a perfectly straightforward course and there could be no objection at least of the conscientious type. As it is, however, you must have some justification for the course you have suggested, which I have been unable to see. There must be others in the same position and we shall all benefit if you elucidate the point in the *Harijan*.

"Sufficient" can only have a relative meaning, not absolute. Even an M. A. may not have "sufficient acquaintance" with English for the purpose before him. Thus an M. A. from U. P. will surely not have sufficient knowledge of English to make himself understood by Hindustani-speaking matriculates. My teachers had often to speak in Gujarati in order to make themselves understood to the class they were teaching. The reason was that they,

[1] The reference is to Mahadev Desai's interpretation of Section 85 of the Government of India Act of 1935; *vide* Appendix V.

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most of them graduates, had to struggle through their English to make themselves intelligible to their class. Speaking in Gujarati they became fluent, and our eyes sparkled as we drank in the wisdom they distilled into us. If I was Speaker of an Assembly, I would certainly allow a most polished speaker in English to speak in Hindustani if he believed that he did not know sufficient English for the audience before him. It is not a question of grammar or fluency. It is a question of intelligibility. To give any other meaning to the Section would be to frustrate its very object. An ungrammatical English speech would amount to sufficient acquaintance with English if the audience could only understand English and no other language. Such things have often happened during my numerous tours in India. The meaning given in these columns is an honest attempt to deal with a difficult situation. My well-known partiality for the Indian languages for India had nothing to do with the interpretation. If I could not have honestly subscribed to the interpretation which Mahadev Desai's ingenious brain conceived, I would certainly not have allowed it to go in and would have gladly advised a battle with the Government for a just and workable interpretation of the phrase "sufficiently acquainted". No doubt the proper course is to have the Section amended as the Punjab Premier has already suggested.

Harijan, 28-8-1937

109. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
August 28, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

I wonder if Rao has left Maganwadi. Particulars have been pouring in upon me about his dishonest ways. Pandit Hrishikesh Sharma walked with me today—he seems to know him most, he says he has cheated every institution to which he has gone; he has spent extravagantly; he has quarrelled everywhere and nowhere has he earned a good name, and he instances Madras, Andhra, Benares, Punjab and other places I cannot remember. He tells me he is not a man to be trusted—his confession too has to be taken with a grain of salt. I think you should find out how his defalcations which went on for long remained undetected.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10131

110. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 28, 1937

DEAR ATULANAND,

I have your letter. I am glad your daughter is wholly out of danger. May she be found better still when this reaches you.

I have very carefully gone through your article "Not by Politics Alone". I still cannot visualize the "League", much less its ramifications. Your article drives me to what I suggested before.[1] It resolves itself—and quite properly—into spreading your message through your book, other writings and through your speeches. The sale of your book would be simply a bye-product and may incidentally give you maintenance money. You seem to be a man with a mission. The "League" of your imagination may come into being later when people recognize your mission. If you form a "League" now, you are in for a disaster. You will be enmeshed in humdrum work and feel cramped and would want to bite your way through the meshes of your own creation. You can see from what I am telling you that there is no lack of interest in you on my part. Only I cannot yet see eye to eye with you. It may be that there is something which I have not yet understood. If such is the case you will continue to strive with me until you make me see the thing as you see it. I know I am, at times, very dense. You will have to be patient with me. I am going to unearth your book that you gave me and if I succeed I shall try to read it. Before, I merely glanced through the pages.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1477. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", pp. 330-1.

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111. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
August 28, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Nimu (Ramdas's) has come here. I have encouraged her to learn Hindi, so that she may become qualified to spread knowledge of Hindi among women and may also, within limits, earn a living through that work. She will need some knowledge of English, too, for my plan for her is that she should go to the South. She has now become eager to learn Hindi as soon as possible. I also suggested Allahabad to her for that purpose, for she will hear nothing but Hindi there. But when she got ready to go to Allahabad, I was in a fix. Where in Allahabad? I, therefore, decided to send her to Vidyavati of the Kanya Gurukul at Dehradun. But as soon as I started thinking about the matter last night, I felt I might ask your opinion too. Would you prefer that she should be taught here? Or would you like some other arrangement? Give me your considered opinion.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7704

112. UNDER SHADOW OF LYNCH LAW[1]

The following is a free translation of a letter[2] of Shri Narahari Parikh on the conditions of Harijans in Kheda District.

If this is a correct picture of the actual state of things, it should not be beyond the power of the Kheda District Congress Committee to cope with it.

Harijan, 4-9-1937

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 29-8-1937.

[2] Not reproduced here. Narahari Parikh had written about the Harijans of Kheda District who could not get their children admitted to public schools.

113. A SUPERSTITION

There is no limit to superstitions in Kathiawar. One such superstition concerns the taboo on the castration of calves. It is found particularly in Kathiawar. Peasants cannot earn their livelihood without oxen. Hence they would buy oxen, allowing their own calves to wander about or die or let them be led to the slaughter-house, and consider this as their dharma. Such superstitions can be wiped out only when the rulers and the intelligent section of the public work against them whole-heartedly. A policy of punishment is perhaps pardonable in such instances. Such a policy, when aimed at public welfare and not meant as punishment for its own sake, should be carefully devised. Depriving the owners of their calves if they refuse to get them castrated may be the best punishment, and it may be accompanied by the condition that the owner could have his calf back provided he pays the charge of castrating it and the cost of keeping it. If the fees for castration and the daily expense are fixed in advance, the public would not be handicapped and even a superstitious man would feel satisfied that the sin of castration is committed not by him but by the State. The State must have a team of workers who would do the necessary propaganda about it, and it should be their job to remove such superstitions. I would consider such a thing part of education, for, what value can knowledge have if it is not used for ending wrong practices among people?

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 29-8-1937

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114. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

If you have been able to draw up Rameshwari's programme, send it to me. When should she reach there, by which train and for how many days will you want her there?

I read the few lines written by Jayantilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8537: Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

115. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1937

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your two letters. I keep writing something or other about the cow. Write to me when you have ghee made from cow's milk ready for sale. It is not difficult to sell your ghee but there are a few easy methods you must learn. Just now if you come over to Segaon you can be trained. You should visit a few places in order to learn this. There is a machine in Segaon, too, and it is operated every day. You have to make the ghee yourself. You must collect only milk. You should be able to judge which cows would yield milk. You should know about the bulls. You ought to know something about all this. I will tell Parnerkar[1], who is here, to write something on this and send it to you. There is no alternative to buying a machine. I think I shall be able to do something about what you wrote regarding forced labour, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9863. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

[1] Yashwant Mahadev Parnerkar, a dairy expert

116. TELEGRAM TO ANDAMANS PRISONERS

August 30, 1937

THANKS TELEGRAM. GLAD ALL BUT SEVEN BROKEN FAST. DO SEVEN GIVE REASONS FOR CONTINUING FAST? I PLEAD WITH THEM NOT PERSIST ALLOWING COUNTRY CHANCE SEEK RELIEF. WILL DETENUS NOT ANSWER MY QUESTION ABOUT NON-VIOLENCE?[1]

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7796. Courtesy: G. D. Birla. Also *Congress Bulletin*, No. 6, September 1937; File No. 4/15/37, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

117. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

[*August 31, 1937*][2]

I gladly release the messages[3] that passed between the Andamans prisoners and me. In view of the prisoners' noble response to my appeal for a declaration of their present attitude on terrorist methods, let us hope that all of them will be unconditionally discharged. I have appealed to the proper quarters for relief, in which I am sure the whole country will join.

The Hindu, 1-9-1937

[1] At 7 p.m. on the same day, Gandhiji received the following reply from the prisoners: "Touched by nationwide appeal and your message. We suspend hunger-strike on assurance that the whole country has taken up our demands and because we are confidently hoping that within a reasonable period of time you will succeed in getting all our demands fulfilled. We are glad you have given us the opportunity to express our firm opinion on terrorism. We feel honoured to inform you and through you the nation that those of us who ever believed in terrorism do not hold to it any more and are convinced of its futility as a political weapon or creed. We declare that it definitely retards rather than advances the cause of our country."

[2] Mahadev Desai released the correspondence to the Press on this date.

[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", pp. 74-5, and the preceding item.

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118. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 31, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your letter last evening. I am sending a wire[1] today about your coming here or sending Nrisinhprasad. If you can, please do come. You do not seem to have improved in spite of such a long tour. There is no cause for worry about me. The hand and the brain need plenty of rest, which I am giving them. How can your coming here or sending someone be any trouble to me? Can a friend ever cause inconvenience? I used to receive your cables. They didn't call for a reply.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5952. Also C.W. 3269. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

119. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHAGANJ,
August 31, 1937

SIR PRABHASHANKAR
BHAVNAGAR

YOUR LETTER. SEND NARSINHPRASAD. BETTER COME YOURSELF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5953. Also C.W. 3270. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

[1] *Vide* the following item.

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120. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SEGAON,
September 1, 1937

MY DEAR KU.,

Of course nothing is required to be done before the meeting of the Association about the President.[1]

Have you considered Shankar Lal's suggestion that the meeting be held on the 23rd instead of the 16th inst.

I understand what you say about Rao. If missing Chhotelal is not found when you get this letter, apply your ingenuity and see whether you can find a way of tracing him.

If you have not done so already I suggest your collecting specimens of all hand-made paper that is produced in India and their present prices.

If Joshi can come here on Saturday at 3 p.m., it will be convenient for me but if the morning is more convenient you can bring him at 8 a.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10132

121. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 1, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

"Let neither joy nor grief affect you, for both are with the body born." Considering all the circumstances, I feel that Chhotelal has not committed suicide but has run away somewhere. But who can say for certain what has happened? Do you expect me to go over there in the car? What help can I give in the search for a man who is missing? I would definitely go there for the sake of anybody who was ill. If Chhotelal is found, then also I would go there to twist his ears. If, therefore, any

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju had resigned from the Presidentship of the All-India Village Industries Association.

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discussion is called for, please come yourself. If none is needed, then you too should save your time. If Chhotelal is not found or no information about him is received by the time you get this letter, then report at the police station. Inquire at Bhaiya's place. I won't be surprised if Chhotelal comes here. Make sure that his body is not in the well.

There is no need for any special search.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11568

122. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1937

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Whether I write "love" or do not makes no difference in my attitude towards you. It all depends under what pressure I write letters. There is no royal road to becoming moral. You do so by prayer and penance and by living for the service of humanity. When you do that you have no time to become immoral. Of course, marriage is the ordinary thing for all. I overcame the impulse to the extent I have done simply because the impulse for service was greater than the sexual impulse. I do not know how many people who are associated with me are pure—nor have I any desire to pry into their lives. I assume their purity until their impurity obtrudes itself upon my gaze. A celibate is wedded to his work with which he has fallen in love. If you see any difference between the two states I must accept defeat.

Love.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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123. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I enclose herewith the name and address of Kamala's mother. I would like you to send her or pay her on my behalf Rs. 10, being Rs. 5 p.m. as from her daughter. This Rs. 10 will, therefore, be for two months. I am asking you to undertake this commission so as to avoid the trouble of having to send an M. O. per month. To send it through you means the saving of some expense also. But you must be prepared to receive this amount from me. I propose to send it to you in a lump sum. If this mission of sending the money to Kamala's mother proves in any way embarrassing to you inasmuch as you do not wish to have any relations with her, you will not hesitate to tell me so. In that case I shall make other arrangements. There is no immediate hurry.

I had the usual basket of fruit. You will take care not to send anything expensive and no fruit that is not grown in the South—for other fruit is cheapest when imported from Delhi.

I hope Father[2] is keeping good health and you yourself are well and cheerful.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Here is the address: Sri Lakshmi Ammal, 29 M. P. Koil Street, Mylapore, Madras.

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

[1] The superscription is in Hindi.
[2] S. Srinivasa Iyengar

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124. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 1, 1937

BHAI JETHALAL,

The accompanying letters were written on the same day on which I had the postcard written [to you]. They are, however, being dispatched two days later since I had not been able to read them whereas the postcard was ready.

You will please acquaint yourself, within a month, with all those subjects that Bhai Parnerkar has listed under the different heads. This will simplify your task. I would therefore advise you to cheerfully accept one month. I believe this will satisfy you. I stipulate one month at the most.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9864. Courtesy: Narayan J. Sampat

125. A SILENT CO-WORKER GONE[1]

[*September 1, 1937*]

The inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram of Sabarmati are today a scattered family, joined together only by their common vow of silent service. No one, perhaps, with the exception of the late Shri Maganlal Gandhi, personified so nearly this self-effacing ideal as Shri Chhotelal Jain whose death, through suicide, has just stunned me. I have not adequate language to describe his insatiable capacity for silent service. He dreaded publicity and loved to live and serve unknown. In fact it may be said of him that his right hand did not know what his left hand was doing. I do not remember his ever visiting his relations or being visited by them. He never even mentioned them to anyone. At the time of writing I do not even know their names or whereabouts.

[1] The original in Gujarati of which this is an adaptation by Pyarelal appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 5-9-1937.

I have the good luck to have a band of co-workers who are to me as my hands and feet. Without their willing and loyal co-operation I should feel utterly helpless. Prominent among these was Chhotelal. He had a versatile and powerful intelligence which shirked no task however difficult. He was a born linguist. Rajputana being his home, Hindi was his mother tongue, but he knew Gujarati, Marathi, Bengali, Tamil, Sanskrit and English as well. He knew the Urdu script. I have seldom seen anybody with such aptitude for quickly mastering a new language or a new task. He was one of the foundation members of the Sabarmati Ashram. He went through the whole range of Ashram activities with natural ease, and hardly touched anything that he did not adorn. Thus he felt equally at home whether he was engaged in kitchen work, conservancy, spinning or weaving, accounts, or translation work, or correspondence. He had an equal share with the late Maganlal in, the writing of *Vanatshastra*[1].

The riskier a job the more it was welcomed by Chhotelal, and once he took it up, he knew no rest till he had seen it through. He threw himself, with the indefatigable energy which was his characteristic, into any task that he took up, and at the end of it he would still be fresh and ready for the next. The words weariness and fatigue were not in his dictionary. To render service only, never to receive any, was the passion of his life. When the All-India Village Industries Association was started at Wardha, it was Chhotelal who first learnt and then introduced the art of *ghani*[2] in Maganwadi. It was he who introduced the wooden hand-mill for rice-husking. Again, it was he who started bee-culture there. Today I feel disconsolate and crippled by his loss. And I am sure, if we could only know it, the same must be the feeling of the bees whom he had gathered and was looking after with a mother's care. I do not know who else will look after them with the loving care of Chhotelal. For, Chhotelal had literally become apiculture-mad. In the course of his quest he had contracted paratyphoid fever which had a fatal ending. He had been bed-ridden for hardly six or seven days, but the very thought of being a helpless charge upon others evidently ate into him, and on Tuesday night, the 31st of August, leaving everybody asleep, he put an end to his life by throwing himself into the Maganwadi well. The corpse was recovered from the well today, Wednesday, at 4 p. m. and even as I pen these lines at Segaon, at 8 p. m., his body is being cremated at Wardha.

[1] A Gujarati treatise on the science of weaving
[2] Oil-press

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I have not the heart to rebuke Chhotelal for his suicide. He was no coward. He was guilty of no unworthy deed. He could laugh at suffering. I cannot account for this self-immolation except on the supposition that he could no longer brook to be nursed. No doubt that is a sign of subtle pride. But there it was. He was not conscious of it.

His name figured in the Delhi Conspiracy Case of 1915. He was acquitted. He had told me he did not desire acquittal. A casual reading of some of my writings gave a new turn to his life and outlook. He studied my activities in South Africa, and from a violent revolutionary became a votary of ahimsa. He shed his cult of violence as completely and naturally as a snake does its outworn skin, but he could never completely control the proneness to anger and pride that were deeply ingrained in his nature. Did he expiate with his life for these?

By his death (he was 42[1]) he has left me heavily in his debt. I had entertained high hopes of him. I could not tolerate any imperfection in him and so he had often to bear the brunt of my impatience as, perhaps, only one or two besides him have borne. But he never complained, never even winced. Had I any right to put him through this fire as I used to? I had hoped one day to discharge my debt towards him by offering him as a sacrifice at the altar of Hindu-Muslim unity, untouchability or cow-protection. To my mind these are some of the altars in the great *yajna* of the swaraj of my dream. And Chhotelal was in the front rank of the few who, to my knowledge, had the strength and capacity to claim this privilege.

The country needs an army of silent warriors like him. The achievement of swaraj, which to me is synonymous with *Ramaraj*, is no joke. Let these few glimpses of Chhotelal's life serve as an inspiration in our striving for India's freedom.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

[1] *Harijanbandhu* has "45"

126. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 3, 1937

Still the right hand rests. Your good wire has come. I am better.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3799. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6955

127. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Today we all waited eagerly for the car for a long time. We expected it every moment. But it didn't turn up. At last I thought that perhaps you might have forgotten about it because I could tell you only at the last minute when you were leaving. But it doesn't matter. Now either send or bring a cart or a car tomorrow. If you are arranging for a cart, then it would be better if it comes empty.

Gosibehn wants to reach Wardha today at two o'clock in the afternoon. The car, therefore, should be sent for her. Just now the doctor and Chimanlal have come in the cart. The cart will take the doctor back to Wardha. If, therefore, the cart has to come again in the afternoon, it will be hard on the bullocks. I am writing to Damodar about this. He will, therefore, make the arrangements for today. You needn't do anything about it. I have written this in order that if you or anybody else wishes to come here, you may ascertain from the bungalow the time when the car will be leaving so that you can get a lift.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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[PS.][1]

It is 10.30 [a.m.]. I am going for my bath. I am detaining your man[2]. I shall write and send you a reply[3] after my meal.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11569

128. TELEGRAM TO HOME SECRETARY, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

WARDHA,
September 3, 1937

HOME
SIMLA

THANKS YOUR TELEGRAM[4] WHICH DESPATCHED YESTERDAY TWO-THIRTY WAS RECEIVED AFTER SEVEN TODAY. PLEASE WIRE SEVEN PRISONERS, QUOTE. DEEPLY APPRECIATE MESSAGE WHICH IS HELPING ME GREATLY ACHIEVE COMMON OBJECT. I PERSONALLY ACCEPT YOUR INTERPRETATION OF 'RELIEF' AND PROMISE TO WORK FOR FULL FRUITION WITH ACTIVE COOPERATION OF PRISONER FRIENDS. URGE YOU, THEREFORE, ABANDON FAST AND SEND ME HAPPY NEWS. UNQUOTE.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7797a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] The postscript was dictated to Kanu Gandhi.
[2] Shahji
[3] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 100.
[4] Dated September 2, 1937, which read: "The seven prisoners are continuing hunger-strike send you following message. Begins: Thanks for your telegram regarding terrorism. We declared it will harm rather than help the cause of country. We take this opportunity to convey through you our appeal to all sufferers in jails and detention camps, and to all organizations if there be any who still believe to attain independence of India through terrorism, to give it up, once for all. We further request you to clarify what you mean by 'relief'. We think after Government inaugurating provincial autonomy, relief can only mean release of all political prisoners, detenus, State prisoners, internees, removal of ban on exiles and repeal of all repressive laws. If we get assurance from you on these questions, we can suspend hunger-strike. Ends. Telegram therein mentioned is your message of August 27th. Your message of August 30th had not by then been delivered." For Gandhiji's telegrams dated August 27 and 30, *vide* pp. 74-5 and 90. For the telegrams dated September 8 and 11, *vide* pp. 110 and 125.

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129. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

When I received your letter it was time for me to take my bath. I am, therefore, writing this after finishing the daily morning routine. Shahji has had his meal here.

The mistake which occurred about the car today is bound to occur occasionally. It was good that today's trip was not so important. I assume that the car will definitely come tomorrow. Send a wire to Devdas when Nimu[1] entrains.

The wire[2] to be sent to the Home [Secretary] is on the back of his telegram. Since all the wires are with you, preserve this also there. Please send [me] a copy of this correspondence.

For the present preserve Chhotelal's ashes in a box. I am [not] at all inclined to send them as far as the Ganga, nor to have them immersed even in the river Paunar. But I don't wish that they should be thrown away either. Ba says that his father may, perhaps, wish to have them immersed. This seems likely. From that point of view also, it is better to preserve the ashes in a box.

Rameshwar[3] is a very straightforward man. What does he say about the two persons from Dhulia? Ask Ganga to go over to Wardha.

I was not at all satisfied with Khanchand's letter. Report to Kishorelal[4] what you have heard.

It is good news indeed that Bablo[5] took an enema. The bowels may become loose even through fear.

You did well of course in sending the letters sealed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11563

[1] Nirmala, wife of Ramdas Gandhi
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.
[3] Rameshwardas Poddar
[4] Kishorelal Mashruwala
[5] Narayan, addressee's son

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130. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 3, 1937

BHAI BEHRAMJI,

I got both your letters, and also the bank-notes for Rs. 1,000, being Rs. 500 from Behn Dinbai Khan and Rs. 500 from you. I shall send Behn Dinbai Khan's amount to Verrier Elwin for constructing wells for the Gonds and use your amount for Harijans. I will not publish your or Dinbai's name. Please thank Dinbai on my behalf.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7560. Also C.W. 5035. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

131. NOTES

APPEAL TO DISCHARGED PRISONERS

My congratulations to the Congress Ministries who are discharging prisoners who had been condemned for proved violence done from political motives, and also the discharged prisoners. Personally I draw no distinction between violence done from a private motive or from a political motive. The effect on the sufferers does not vary with the motive of the authors of violence. But as an out and out believer in non-violence I do not believe in the system of punishments for crimes, whether private or public. Therefore, I should welcome an extension of the principle which guides the Ministers in discharging prisoners; but I am aware that they do not share my extreme views on non-violence. Their reason, therefore, for discharging the prisoners condemned for violence is not the same as I would apply. They have been guided, naturally and rightly, by the purely political motive, viz., to establish contact with those who have hitherto believed in the efficacy of a species of violence for the attainment of India's freedom. They want to wean these men from violence and harness their energy for the Congress

method of non-violence. If my reading of the Congress method is correct, the large public demonstration that took place on the discharge of Kakori prisoners was, to say the least, a political mistake. Did the thousands of demonstrators approve of the acts said to have been committed by these prisoners, let me hope, in mistaken zeal? If they did, they have evidently not understood the Congress method; what is more, they have embarrassed the Ministry and made more difficult the task of giving the fullest liberty to the people in their Provinces. We ought to learn to take such ministerial acts as in the natural course and, therefore, with calmness. Kakori prisoners are no fools. They are able, intelligent men, with unyielding love of their country. They and all such prisoners will pave the way for the liberty of others, if they use their liberty to help Congress Ministers by their exemplary conduct and by proving themselves true Congressmen, taking their full share in strengthening the Congress organization by silent and selfless service. For they should know that Congress Ministers seem to be having their own way in many matters because they have inspired the respective Governors with confidence in their ability to handle efficiently all the departments under their charge, especially that of law and order, without the intervention of the police and military. The moment they lose their credit in this respect and are obliged to fall back on these two so-called limbs of the law, the confidence will be weakened and their authority all but gone. Whilst power, superimposed, always needs the help of police and military, power generated from within should have little or no use for them.

Gambling and Vice

In the provinces where the Congress has a majority, all kinds of hopes have been raised. Some are legitimate and will, no doubt, be fulfilled. Some others cannot be. Thus the people who indulge in gambling, which unfortunately is ever on the increase in the Bombay Presidency, think that gambling will be legalized and surreptitious dens that cover Bombay will be no longer required. I am not quite sure that even if gambling is legalized on a universal scale, as it is already in a restricted manner, there will be no illegal dens. Thus it has been suggested that the Turf Club, which has the monopoly of gambling on the racecourse, should be allowed to open an additional entrance to make it easier for poor people to gamble. The bait offered is a larger revenue. A similar suggestion has been made for the regulation and licensing of brothels. The argument advanced, as in all such cases, is that the vice will continue whether it is legalized or not and, therefore,

it is better to legalize it and make it safe for those who visit the brothels. Let me hope that the Ministers will not fall into this trap. The proper method of dealing with brothels is for the women to carry on a double propaganda, (a) amongst women who sell their honour for a livelihood, and (b) amongst men whom they must shame into behaving better towards their sisters whom they ignorantly or insolently call the weaker sex. I remember years and years ago in the early nineties when the brave Salvation Army people, at the risk of their own lives, used to carry on picketing at the corners of notorious streets of Bombay which were filled with houses of ill fame. There is no reason why some such thing should not be organized on a large scale. As for gambling on the racecourse, it is, so far as I am aware, an importation, like many other importations, from the West, and if I had my way [I] would withdraw the protection of the law that gambling on the racecourse enjoys even to the extent it does. The Congress programme being one of self-purification, as is stated in so many words in the resolution[1] of 1920, the Congress can have nothing to do with income derived from any vice. The Ministers will, therefore, use the authority that they have obtained for educating public opinion in the right direction and for stopping gambling in high quarters. It is useless to hope that the unwary public will not copy the bad manners of the so-called high-placed people. I have heard it argued that horse-racing is necessary for breeding good horses. There may be truth in this. Is it not possible to have horse-racing without gambling, or is gambling also an aid to the good breeding of horses?

Harijan, 4-9-1937

132. MY MEANING OF OFFICE-ACCEPTANCE

Shri Shankerrao Deo[2] writes:

> In your note "Not Instrument of Instructions"[3] in the last *Harijan*, you say in the second paragraph, "For me office-acceptance has a special meaning even in the terms of the Congress manifesto and resolutions. It would be wrong if I did not put before the Ministers and the public my meaning of office-acceptance." As I have understood you, you are

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, Appendix I.
[2] President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee
[3] *Vide* p. 61.

for office-acceptance for serving the masses and consolidating the Congress position through constructive programme. But I think you should explain in greater detail your meaning of office-acceptance.

Rightly or wrongly, since 1920 the Congress-minded millions have firmly held the view that the British domination of India has been on the whole a curse. It has been as much sustained by British arms as it has been through the legislatures, distribution of titles, the law-courts, the educational institutions, the financial policy and the like. The Congress came to the conclusion that the guns should not be feared, but that the organized violence of which the British guns were a naked emblem should be met by the organized non-violence of the people, and the legislatures and the rest by non-co-operating with them. There was a strong and effective, positive side to the foregoing plan of non-co-operation, which became known as the constructive programme. The nation succeeded to the exact extent of its success in the programme of action laid down in 1920.

Now this policy has never changed; not even the terms have been revoked by the Congress. In my opinion all the resolutions since passed by the Congress are not a repudiation but a fulfilment of the original, so long as the mentality behind all of them remains the same as in 1920.

The corner-stone of the policy of 1920 was organized national non-violence. The British system was wooden, even Satanic; not so the men and women behind the system. Our non-violence, therefore, meant that we were out to convert the administrators of the system, not to destroy them; the conversion may or may not be willing. If, notwithstanding their desire to the contrary, they saw that their guns and everything they had created for the consolidation of their authority were useless because of our non-use of them, they could not do otherwise than bow to the inevitable and either retire from the scene, or remain on our terms, i. e., as friends to co-operate with us, not as rulers to impose their will upon us.

If Congressmen have entered the legislatures and have accepted office with that mentality, and if the British administrators tolerate Congress Ministries indefinitely, the Congress will be on a fair way to wreck the Act[1] and to achieve complete independence. For an indefinite prolongation of the Ministries on the terms mentioned by me means an ever-increasing power of the Congress till it becomes irresistible and is able to have its

[1] Government of India Act of 1935

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way all along the line. The first indispensable condition of the attainment of such a consummation means willing exercise of non-violence by the whole mass of the people. That means perfect communal co-operation and friendship, the eradication of untouchability, willing restraint of the addicts to the drink and opium habits, the social enfranchisement of women, the progressive amelioration of the toiling millions in the villages, free and compulsory primary education—not in name as it is today, but in reality, as I have ventured to adumbrate—the gradual eradication of superstitions of proved harmfulness through adult mass education, a complete overhauling of the system of higher education so as to answer the wants of the millions instead of the few middle class people, a radical change in the legal machinery so as to make justice pure and inexpensive, conversion of jails into reformatories in which detention would be not a course of punishment but a complete course of the education of those miscalled convicts but who are in fact temporarily deranged.

This is not conceived as a terribly long plan of action. Every one of the items suggested by me can be put into motion today, without let or hindrance, if we have the will.

I had not studied the Act when I advised office-acceptance. I have since been studying *Provincial Autonomy* by Prof. K. T. Shah. It is an energetic but true indictment of the Act from the orthodox standpoint. But the three months' self-denial of the Congress has changed the atmosphere. I see nothing in the Act to prevent the Congress Ministers from undertaking the programme suggested by me. The special powers and safeguards come into play only when there is violence in the country, or a clash between minorities and the so-called majority community, which is another word for violence.

I detect in the Act a profound distrust of the nation's capacity to rule itself running through every Section and an inevitable desire to perpetuate British rule, but at the same time a bold experiment of wooing the masses to the British side, and, failing that, a resignation to their will to reject British domination. The Congress has gone in to convert these missionaries. And I have not a shadow of doubt that if the Congress is true to the spirit of non-violence, non-co-operation and self-purification, it will succeed in its mission.

Harijan, 4-9-1937

133. THE NATIONAL TRICOLOUR[1]

A friend writes:[2]

> In accordance with President Jawaharlal's instructions Cawnpore observed the 1st of August as a National Flag Day and national flags were flown from all parts of the city. But these flags were manufactured anyhow by the individuals concerned according to their whims without any regard . . . to uniformity of size, shape or colour. . . . Some of the flags had the figure of the spinning-wheel printed on them; in others it was conspicuous by its absence. Today, after the lapse of a fortnight, most of these flags present a sorry spectacle. . . . I would, therefore, suggest that arrangements should be made to see that only flags of standard sizes, shape and colour are manufactured. . . .
>
> It seems to me that this can be effectively done only by bringing the manufacture and sale of national flags under a centralized control. . . .

If the facts are as described by my correspondent, it calls for serious thought. We have been using this flag for the last seventeen years.[3] A national flag would lose all its value if it did not strictly conform to the standard laid down. Even in the matter of ordinary articles we like to satisfy ourselves as to their size, shape, colour, etc., before we go in for them. How much more so must it be, then, with our national flag for which we are pledged to live and die? The national flag symbolizes a nation's self-respect and dignity, its ideals and aspirations. It must, therefore, be capable of easy identification like coins. Only the strictest conformity to the standard specifications can invest it with the desired sanctity. It should hurt our sense of national pride and self-respect to use a flag that is slipshod or slovenly made. How can a flag that is a mere clout and is dyed anyhow evoke the feelings of deep reverence that one associates with a national flag? I am, therefore, in entire agreement with my correspondent that our national flag should be strictly standardized. And this can be best done by having its manufacture centralized as coins are in mint. In my opinion the All-India Spinners' Association,

[1] The Hindi original appeared in *Harijan Sevak*, 11-9-1937.
[2] Only extracts are reproduced here.
[3] This sentence is from *Harijan Sevak*.

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working under the guidance of the All-India Congress Committee, would be the fittest agency for this purpose. The collaboration of the two bodies would provide the surest guarantee of strict conformity to the standard specifications as to its size, shape, colour, etc.

Harijan, 4-9-1937, and *Harijan Sevak*, 11-9-1937

134. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 4, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

Your letter. Amtul Salaam has arrived and has given me all the news. Now you have to concentrate on your studies and complete them. After that you can come over as and when you please. But all this is two years away. Let us see what God wills. Write to me regularly. Amazing that the sick ones here should go to Travancore, but what about all the sick persons in Travancore itself ? If there are such expert vaidyas in Travancore who can cure even leprosy, why then should there be any sick people there at all? Are you taught in your school answers to such questions?

Amtul Salaam enquired if I had sent you blessings on your birthday. I do not remember distinctly. If I have been remiss you may now have them fourfold and with *sood*. *Sood* means *vyaja*[1]. You will learn at least one of the two words or even both.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6164. Also C.W. 3437. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

135. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 4, 1937

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. Amtul Salaam has arrived here. It was almost impossible for you to accompany Ramdas as he himself

[1] Interest

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left with Kallenbach. Let us see what happens now. . . .[1] Tell me what kind of patients you admit. Is fruit available there? And vegetables? Can you get cow's milk?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 264

136. MY NOTES

HARIPURA CONGRESS RECEPTION COMMITTEE

That Darbar Saheb[2] has been chosen President, that three women have been made Vice-Presidents, that a woman has been appointed commander of women volunteers—all these are auspicious signs. Again the Reception Committee has a good number of members. The work has begun on schedule. If all the members have been chosen for actual work and not for mere names' sake, the forthcoming Congress ought to prove the most successful and the simplest held so far. Often it so happens that everything goes well without any effort and not because of elaborate arrangements. The hand of God is sure to be there in a great task such as the Congress and even possible human failures are got over. The forthcoming Congress should be so organized from now on that there should be no error which human endeavour can avoid and everything should come off as planned.

[From Gujarati]
Harijanbandhu, 5-9-1937

137. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 5, 1937

MY DEAR GLADYS,

I like your idea of throwing yourself heart and soul into the Chinese movement. But I do not know how I can give the lead. No external power can guide you. The direction and the strength have to come from within.

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Darbar Gopaldas, ex-ruler of Dhasa, who had been deposed during the non-co-operation days

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I have just heard from Muriel[1]. She too wants me to do something for China. I must confess that I am fairly groping. China wants to give battle to Japan on her own ground. And in this kind of business I am totally at sea. I do not know how the message of non-violence can be delivered to China as I do not know how it can be delivered to Spain. My theatre of action is, therefore, only India. If India imbibes the message through and through, then there is hope for whole world. If India does not, so far as I can see, a world catastrophe cannot be prevented.

Love.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10571

138. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 6, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

No more than a few words. Your telegrams duly came in and so your letter. The last was destroyed as soon as read.

I am well, b. p. 160/105. Of course I am weak. Am taking plenty of rest.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3800. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6956

139. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEGAON,
September 7, 1937

I may occasionally write in Hindi also, may I not? I am improving day by day, and I sleep a great deal.

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 3801. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6957

[1] Muriel Lester
[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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140. TELEGRAM TO DESHBANDHU GUPTA[1]

[Before *September 8, 1937*][2]

I AM CERTAINLY OPPOSED TO THE LAHORE ABATTOIR[3] AS I AM TO ALL SLAUGHTER-HOUSES. IF MUSSALMANS ALSO JOIN THE LAHORE ONE WILL NOT BE BUILT.

The Hindustan Times, 8-9-1937

141. A TELEGRAM[4]

September 8, 1937

REFERENCE MY MESSAGE[5] ADDRESSED TO SEVEN PRISONERS AWAITING ANXIOUSLY THEIR REPLY. IS HUNGER-STRIKE STILL CONTINUING? IF IT IS, PLEASE TELL THEM MY ENDEAVOUR BEING FRUSTRATED TILL THEY BREAK FAST.[6]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

142. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
September 8, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
SUMMER HILL

JAMNALALJI PRESS STATEMENT OVERDRAWN.[7] REALLY BETTER THAN YOU LEFT. PRESSURE 160/105. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3803. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6959

[1] An M. L. A. from the Punjab

[2] The report is date-lined "New Delhi, Wednesday". Wednesday fell on September 8.

[3] In the Cantonment area

[4] This was addressed to the Andamans authorities at Port Blair.

[5] Dated September 3, 1937; *vide* p. 99.

[6] In reply the authorities telegraphed: "Your telegram delivered yesterday to hunger-strikers who although appreciating your acceptance of their interpretation of 'relief' decline to suspend strike."

[7] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 114.

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143. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your frank and exhaustive reply to my telegraphic solicitation. I will not try to combat the position taken up by you which I understand.

The incompleteness you see in the prisoners' reply[1] to my request had not escaped me, but I was very much struck by the frank and unequivocal manner in which they gave me satisfaction so far as terrorist methods are concerned. I shall not despair of enlisting your active co-operation in the pursuit of my mission of procuring a lasting and honourable understanding with the class of patriots whom the Andaman friends represent.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY
THE VICEROY

From a copy: C.W. 7798. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

144. LETTER TO G. CUNNINGHAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.[2] I understand what you expect of me. I hope not to disappoint you for the simple reason that I want to accumulate more credit than I possess with the powers that be, so that I can trade upon it with them on better terms.

At the present moment I am trying to rest under medical

[1] *Vide* footnote 4, p. 99.
[2] Presumably in reply to Gandhiji's dated August 24; *vide* p. 68.

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orders, and I have asked my friend the Khan Saheb not to hurry to call me to the Frontier.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR
N.W. F. P.

From a copy: C.W. 7798a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

145. LETTER TO M. V. SRINIVASAN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope that your conference will be a success, and that it will be marked by a whole-hearted endorsement of the programme of complete prohibition. Also that it will supply a large enough number of volunteers who will offer their services for carrying on the campaign amongst those who are to be weaned from the drink habit by loving care and attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHAIRMAN
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
SECOND POLITICAL CONFERENCE
TIRUCHENGODU TALUK
PALLIPALAYAM, (*via*) ERODE

From a photostat: G.N. 99

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146. LETTER TO D. B. BARVE[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 8, 1937

I thank you for your letter and your suggestions.[2] I shall think [of] all of them in my talks with the Ministers in charge of Village Industries.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: B. G. Kher Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

147. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Well, you have ceased to be Lila and become Lilavati. If you don't follow what this means, ask Mahadev. It will do you no good if you go away without my permission. By all means leave if you wish to. But not in anger like this. I am hoping that you will return here before the evening. Bring with you half a maund or a maund of dates. Have a frank talk with me and then do what you like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9367. Also C.W. 6642. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Business Manager, U.P. Government Arts and Crafts Emporium, Lucknow

[2] The addressee who felt that Indian handicrafts had great potential value in foreign markets had suggested a co-ordinated effort on the following lines: "To organize the supply centres by keeping ready the raw materials to be provided to artisans; to supply the designs in demand in various foreign markets; to distribute the goods through the canvassing agents in India and abroad; to find finances from the State for supporting these industries; all the provinces to join in the effort; to exchange the goods of different provinces and States and thus find new markets; to produce the goods on mass scale and to get the same facilities from the foreign countries for Indian handicrafts which they enjoy in India for their goods".

148. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

Don't even dream of going away. You must not leave. Your cave is here and so is your cremation-ground. Most probably Lilavati will return today. If not today, certainly within a few days. Please write a note to her and give it to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8357. Also C.W. 7021. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

149. NOTE TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 8, 1937

Only time for love today.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3802. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6958

150. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 8, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is being written after the evening walk. No cause for any worry about me. You must not be shocked to learn that I am

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee which *inter alia* read: "Bapu sent you a reassuring wire this morning, and this is just to add a few words. He really is much better today. The tiredness to which Jamnalalji refers in his Press message is the end of the tiredness of which you saw the beginning. It was these interviews and Chhotelal's death all one on top of another. Now rest and *plenty* of sleep have made a wonderful difference."

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taking that specialist's ampules. He has given me full details. It is a simple herb treated with the sun's rays. He says it has never failed to give lasting relief. It can do no harm. Of course it deprives me of one food substance.[1] But that does not matter. It would be wrong not to try this drug.

Khan Saheb's letter is worthy of him.

I am glad you are taking ice and steam. You must add the earth bandage. What had Shummy[2] to say to your health? I would like his opinion. Tell him this with my love.

I understand what S. and J. have to say about Charlie.[3] You should not only regulate his food whilst he is with you but you should also draw his attention to his weakness.

I was looking at that note on education. Do you still want me to study it and give you my opinion on it?

Mira is getting on. She is doing some writing work. A[mtul] Salaam is fairly happy just now. Sharda[4] is flourishing. Lilavati has left in a huff because I lost my temper with her. I can become an ass. Sometimes I doubt the reality of my ahimsa. Why can I not curb my temper for ever? If my ahimsa is worth anything, surely it ought to resist all temptation and provocation. Please don't defend me but go for me. If Lilavati is lost to me, I shall be largely to blame. She is too good not to return to me. If she does, the credit will be hers.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

J. is due tomorrow.

From the original: C.W. 3805. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6961

[1] Since 1915 Gandhiji had been observing a vow of restricting his meals to five substances of food; *vide* Vol. XXXIX, p. 310.

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

[3] C. F. Andrews was convalescing in Simla after a serious illness.

[4] Daughter of Chimanlal N. Shah

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151. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*September 8, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Send half a maund, or even one maund, of dates with anybody who is available. We should get three dozen *mosambis* and two dozen bananas daily.

I send with this a wire for Rajkumari. The one to Andrews must have been dispatched.

The wire received from the seven prisoners does not seem to have been given to the Press. If possible give it now together with my reply to it. I am afraid we have delayed it rather too long. I have kept copies of the wires. Have the wire of these seven prisoners and my reply been released?

A painful incident took place this morning. Lilavati has always been a lazy girl. She is careless, suffers from no end of pride and can bear nothing. The incident was trivial. Nanavati drew her attention to her carelessness, which she couldn't bear. Nanavati reported the incident to me. I was busy with my own work and was trying to avoid having to take notice of it. I had said a few words half-jokingly, when the lady sailed in. She emphasized each sentence as she spoke, and that at the top of her voice. I asked her to speak calmly. But she wouldn't listen. She then started saying silly things. And so I said, raising my voice, "There is no door here—the only one there is open. If you can't stand it, you may leave." I had lost my senses while I said this and so barked even louder than she. She has now left. Where else would she go, except to the temple of Mahadev? She must have, therefore, come to you. If she realizes that she has been cruel to me, shame her into returning here. If she doesn't realize the gravity of her misbehaviour, she may do as she pleases. She has no place in the Harijan Ashram. She shouldn't be sent there. You may, if you wish, take her under your charge. . . .[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11567

[1] From the reference to "a wire for Rajkumari", *vide* p. 110, and Lilavati's departure "in a huff", *vide* the preceding item. *Vide* also "Letter to Lilavati Asar", p. 113.

[2] The letter is incomplete.

152. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *September 8, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Do send back Lilavati. She must have gone to the doctor, since a visit was due today.

I had nothing private to speak to you. But it was good that you saved your time. It was not Lilavati's fault, but mine, that you had to give some of your time for her. Had I remained silent she wouldn't have had to leave this place. It was your fault that you lost your sleep, for in such cases you should remain undisturbed.

Kanu junior[2] has fallen ill today after a long interval.

I am sending the signatures.

Let Ishwardas come. But he should not stay on here at present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11565

153. DISCUSSION WITH EDUCATIONISTS[3]

[Before *September 11, 1937*]

[GANDHIJI:] It is by making the children return to the State a part of what they receive from it that I propose to make education self-supporting. I should combine into one what you call now the primary education and [the] secondary or high-school education. It is my conviction that our children get nothing more in the high schools than a half-baked knowledge of English, besides a superficial knowledge of mathematics and history and geography some of which they had learnt in their own language in the primary classes. If you cut out English from the curriculum

[1] It is evident from the text that the letter was written after the preceding item.

[2] Kanam, son of Ramdas Gandhi

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's article "The Meaning of Manual Work". Ravishanker Shukla, Education Minister, C. P., met Gandhiji with his educational experts including the Director of Education, Owen, and De Silva. They wanted to understand from Gandhiji his idea of the revolution he intended to bring about in the system of education.

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altogether, without cutting out the subjects you teach, you can make the children go through the whole course in seven years, instead of eleven, besides giving them manual work whereby they can make a fair return to the State. Manual work will have to be the very centre of the whole thing. I am told that Messrs Abbot[1] and Wood recognize the value of manual work as an important part of rural education. I am glad to be supported by reputed educationists. But I do not suppose they place on manual work the kind of emphasis I place. For I say that the development of the mind should come through manual training. The manual training will not consist in producing articles for a school museum, or toys which have no value. It should produce marketable articles. The children will not do this as children used to do under the whip in the early days of the factories. They will do it because it entertains them and stimulates their intellect.

[DE SILVA :] But whilst I accept the proposition that we must teach through creative work, how can we expect an immature child to compete with a mature individual?

The child will not compete with the mature individual. The State will take over the articles and find a market for them. Teach them to make things suitable for the requirements. Take mats for instance. What they do at home as tedious labour they will do here intelligently. The tremendous problem will become easy when the education you give will become both self-supporting and self-acting.

But before we can give them this kind of education, we shall have to wipe out the present generation of teachers.

No. There is no intermediate stage. You must make a start and prepare the teachers whilst you go through the process.[2]

Harijan, 11-9-1937

154. ARE CHRISTIANS AGAINST PROHIBITION?

Having received protests from Christian correspondents against prohibition, I asked Mahadev Desai to write to a few representative Christian friends to ascertain their views on the

[1] Claude Colleer Abbot, an English educationist

[2] Later, Gandhiji requested the visitors to discuss the subject at length with Aryanayakam, Bharatan Kumarappa and D. B. Kalelkar.

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question. Here are two answers. Shri P. O. Phillip, Indian Secretary of the National Christian Council of India, writes:[1]

> I am not surprised to hear that a number of Christian friends are writing to you to say that 'the policy of prohibition trenches upon their privilege to drink'. I may not be far wrong in thinking that most of the correspondents who write to you in that strain are Roman Catholics or those brought up in Anglo-Catholic traditions. . . . There is . . . no social or religious disapproval among Roman Catholics in India in regard to drinking in moderation as there is among Muslims and higher caste Hindus. Among Protestant Christians the attitude toward drink is different.
>
> . . . The use of alcoholic drink even in moderation is looked upon with social and religious disapprobation among Protestant Christian communities.
>
> Among Roman Catholics also there is awakening to the evils of drink. While the authorities of the Catholic Church may officially maintain that there is nothing wrong in drinking in moderation, they cannot shut their eyes to the moral and economic ruin that drink is causing among their people. . . .
>
> As a Christian Indian I rejoice that the Congress Ministries have placed prohibition in the very forefront of their programme. In the past, few British and American missionaries lent support to the anti-drink campaign of the Congress, under the mistaken notion that it was adopted only to harass the British Government and not from a genuine desire for reform. Unfortunately Indian Christians also took their cue from the missionaries and generally kept aloof from the movement. But the sincerity of the leaders of the Congress in advocating prohibition is beyond question. . . .
>
> . . . The poorer classes in the villages, including Christians, need protection more than any other group of people from the temptations of drink now placed before them. Indian villages will have new life and prosperity when drink is abolished. The Christian Indian community along with other communities stands to gain immensely by this measure.
>
> . . . Christian Indians who love India and care for the real welfare of the rural masses cannot but rejoice at the prospect of prohibition in the six Provinces[2]. They should not have any difficulty in wholeheartedly co-operating with their fellow-countrymen in making prohibition a complete success.

And Rev. A. Ralla Ram, General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of India, Burma and Ceylon, writes:

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

[2] Congress Ministries were formed in Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Orissa.

> I give my full support to the objective of the Congress to bring about complete prohibition in the country and that those who are asking that we should be satisfied with temperance should not be listened to. In my opinion the Europeans who come to this country should fall in with our aspirations, and I am afraid that if we should respect their feelings in this matter, we shall leave a loophole for many others.

As I have said before[1] it is for Europeans to make the choice. I know how difficult it is for them to give up a habit of a lifetime, considered respectable. But if they will fall in with the great national reform, the incentive should prove strong enough to wean them from the habit. Anyway, even if in the end exemption within well-defined limits has to be given, let us hope that they will be graceful enough to taboo alcohol from their parties and banquets. Exemption will be, if there is to be, a concession to a lifelong habit and not to a weakness or to an extravagance.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

155. NOTES

A Welcome Move

The joint statement issued by Moulvi Abdul Haq Saheb and Shri Rajendra Prasad over the Hindi-Urdu controversy leads one to hope that the controversy will now end and those who are interested in the evolution of an inter-provincial speech will be able to discuss the question on its merits and discover a plan of joint action. Here is the statement:

> We had an opportunity, on the occasion of the meeting of the Bihar Urdu Committee at Patna on 28-8-37, to discuss the problem of the Hindustani language with each other and with some other friends. We were anxious to remove the misunderstandings which have been unfortunately created in connection with the Urdu-Hindi-Hindustani controversy. We are glad to be able to say that as a result of our discussions ranging over various aspects of this problem, we found ourselves in substantial agreement about various points raised. We are agreed that Hindustani should be the common language of India and should be written in both the Urdu and [the] Nagari characters which should be recognized for all official and educational purposes. By 'Hindustani' we mean the largest common factor of the languages spoken in Northern

[1] *Vide* "Against Ahimsa and Truth?", pp. 46-8. Also Vol. LXV, p. 448.

India, and we believe that common usage should be the criterion for the selection and inclusion of words in its vocabulary. We are further of opinion that the fullest opportunities for development should be vouchsafed both to Urdu and Hindi and [the] literary languages. We suggest that an attempt should be made to compile, through the co-operation of Urdu and Hindi scholars, a basic vocabulary of Hindustani words.

In order to devise practical measures for the compilation of such a vocabulary as well as for settling various outstanding problems like the selection of technical terms, we suggest that a small representative committee, consisting of influential advocates of Urdu and Hindi who believe in the desirability of bringing the two languages nearer and of promoting the development of the Hindustani language and thereby creating goodwill amongst the speakers of the two languages, should be convened at an early date.

Let us hope that the authors of the statement will take prompt steps to have the basic vocabulary of Hindustani words acceptable to all parties, and that the small committee they have in view will be set up forthwith for this work and for "settling various outstanding problems". I would put emphasis on the smallness of the committee if promptness is to be ensured.

Music in Schools

Pandit Khare[1] of Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, who has dedicated his life to the spread of pure music among boys and girls, reports the great progress being made in Ahmedabad in particular and Gujarat in general, and he deplores the fact that the education authorities do not seem to countenance the introduction of music in the curricula of education. In the Pandit's opinion, based upon wide experience, it should form part of the syllabus of primary education. I heartily endorse the proposition. The modulation of the voice is as necessary as the training of the hand. Physical drill, handicrafts, drawing and music should go hand in hand in order to draw the best out of the boys and girls and create in them a real interest in their tuition.

That this means a revolution in the system of training is admitted. If the future citizens of the State are to build a sure foundation for life's work, these four things are necessary. One has only to visit any primary school to have a striking demonstration of slovenliness, disorderliness and discordant speech. I have no doubt, therefore, that when the Education Ministers in the several provinces recast the system of education and make it

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

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answer the requirements of the country, they will not omit the essentials to which I have drawn attention. My plan of primary education certainly comprises these things which easily become possible the moment you remove from the children's shoulders the burden of having to master a difficult foreign language.

Of course, we have not the staff of teachers who can cope with the new method. But that difficulty applies to every new venture. The existing staff of teachers, if they are willing to learn, should be given the opportunity of doing so, and should also have the immediate prospect of a substantial increase in their salaries if they will learn the necessary subjects. It is unthinkable that for all the new subjects that are to become part of primary education separate teachers should be provided. That would be a most expensive method and so wholly unnecessary. It may be that some of the primary school teachers are so ill-equipped that they cannot learn the new subjects within a short time. But a boy who has studied up to the matriculation standard should not take more than three months to learn the elements of music, drawing, physical drill and a handicraft. If he acquires a working knowledge of these, he will be able always to add to it while he is teaching. This presupposes, no doubt, eagerness and zeal on the part of the teachers to make themselves progressively fit for the task of national regeneration.

A Monstrous Imposition

In a note[1] in *Harijanbandhu*, recently, I reproduced a note from a correspondent saying that there were money-lenders in and around Sidhpur in the Gaekwar territories who lent money at exorbitant rates of interest and exacted security for due payment of capital and interest. The money-lenders, among other things, had a lien on the young girls of the borrowers. The result of this shameful imposition has been that sometimes parents have been obliged to part with their girls when they have not been able to pay interest ranging from 100 per cent upwards. I understand that some workers have brought this thing to the notice of the district officers of Sidhpur, but nothing seems to have been visibly done in the matter. If the facts are as stated by my correspondent—and there seems to be no cause to disbelieve him—the matter demands immediate redress.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

[1] *Vide* p. 50.

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156. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Dr. A. Lakshmipathi writes:

I have seen some institutions conducted by missionaries, where the schools are worked only in the mornings, the evenings being spent either in agricultural operations or in some handicraft work for which the students are paid some wages according to the quality and quantity of work done by them. In this way, the institution is made more or less self-supporting, and the students do not feel like fish out of water when they leave the school, as they have learnt to do some work enabling them to earn at least their livelihood. I have noticed that the atmosphere in which such schools are conducted is quite different from the dull routine of the stereotyped schools of the Education Department. The boys look more healthy and happy in the idea that they have turned out some useful work, and are physically of a better build. These schools are closed for a short period in the agricultural seasons when all their energy is required for field work. Even in cities, such of the boys as have an aptitude may be employed in trades and professions, thereby enabling them to find a diversion. One meal may also be provided at school for those boys who are in need, or for all who wish to partake of the same in an interval of half an hour during the morning classes. Poor boys may thus be persuaded to run to the school with pleasure and their parents may also encourage them to go to school regularly.

If this scheme of half-day school be adopted, the services of some of these teachers may be utilized for promoting adult education in the villages without any extra payment for such services. The building and other apparatus may also be useful in the same way.

I have seen the Minister for Education, Madras, and presented a letter stating that the deterioration of health of the present generation is mainly due to unsuitable hours of education at schools. I am of opinion that all schools and colleges should work only in the morning, i. e., between 6 and 11 a. m. A study of four hours at school must be quite enough. The afternoon should be spent at home, and the evening should be devoted to games and physical development. Some of the boys may employ themselves in earning their livelihood, and some may help their parents in their business. The students will be more in touch with their parents, which is essential for development of any vocational calling and hereditary aptitudes.

> If we realize that body-building is nation-building, the proposed change, though apparently revolutionary, is according to Indian customs and climate, and it would be welcome to most people.

Of Dr. Lakshmipathi's suggestion for restricting school hours to mornings, I do not wish to say much save to commend it to the educational authorities. As to the more or less self-supporting institutions, they could not do anything else if they were to pay their way partly or wholly and make something of their pupils. Yet my suggestion has shocked some educationists because they have known no other method. The very idea of education being self-supporting seems to them to rob education of all value. They see in the suggestion a mercenary motive. I have, however, just been reading a monograph on a Jewish effort in matters educational. In it the writer speaks thus of the vocational training imparted in the Jewish schools:

> So they find the labour of their hands to be worthy in itself. It is made lighter by intellectual activity, it is ennobled by the patriotic ideal which it serves.

Given the right kind of teachers, our children will be taught the dignity of labour and learn to regard it as an integral part and a means of their intellectual growth, and to realize that it is patriotic to pay for their training through their labour. The core of my suggestion is that handicrafts are to be taught, not merely for productive work, but for developing the intellect of the pupils. Surely, if the State takes charge of the children between seven and fourteen, and trains their bodies and minds through productive labour, the public schools must be frauds and teachers idiots if they cannot become self-supporting.

Supposing that every boy and girl works, not as a machine but as an intelligent unit, taking interest in the corporate work done under expert guidance, the corporate labour should be, say, after the first year of the course, worth one anna per hour. Thus for twenty-six working days of four hours per day, each child will have earned Rs. 6-8-0 per month. The only question is whether millions of children can be so profitably employed. We should be intellectual bankrupts if we cannot direct the energy of our children so as to get from them, after a year's training, one anna worth of marketable labour per hour. I know that nowhere in India do villagers earn so much as one anna per hour in the villages. That is because we have reconciled ourselves to the intense disparity between the haves and the have-nots, and

because the city people have, perhaps unwittingly, joined in the British exploitation of the village.

Harijan, 11-9-1937

157. A TELEGRAM[1]

September 11, 1937

THANKS WIRE[2]. PLEASE TELL STRIKERS DEEPLY HURT AT YOUR REFUSAL TO SUSPEND STRIKE. YOUR TELEGRAM[3] SEEMED TO ASSURE ME OF SUSPENSION IF I ACCEPTED YOUR INTERPRETATION OF TERM 'RELIEF'. PLEASE END NATIONAL ANXIETY BY SUSPENDING STRIKE AND GIVE WORKERS LIKE ME THE OPPORTUNITY OF SECURING RELIEF.[4]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

158. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRABARTY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 11, 1937

MY DEAR ATULANAND,

I am glad you realize, at least partly, the soundness of my suggestion[5]. If the League has to come into being it will do so in the natural course.

Even if you sent me some time ago a copy of your pamphlet on women, please send me another, so that I may look at it. Tell me, also, what your monthly minimum expenses are. If you are to fulfil your self-imposed mission, I know that you will have to learn the art of making the two ends meet. And there are two royal roads to this consummation. One is to reduce one's wants to a minimum, and the second is so to arrange one's affairs as never to run into debt. There is no third way which is at once straight and dignified. And nothing can be royal that is undignified.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI[6]

From a photostat: C.W. 1478. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

[1] This was sent to the Andamans authorities at Port Blair.
[2] *Vide* footnote 6, p. 110.
[3] *Vide* footnote 4, p. 99.
[4] The hunger-strikers, however, declined to suspend their strike.
[5] *Vide* "Letter to Atulanand Chakrabarty", p. 86.
[6] Here follows a postscript in Mahadev Desai's hand which reads: "Please send a copy of your book also. The copy you gave to Gandhiji has been evidently given to the Vidyapith Library."

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159. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 12, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Just now I am not able to write to you myself. What is this you are doing? You are making yourself needlessly unhappy. I can't understand anything. Amtul Salaam would never have gone to Trivandrum if you had forbidden her. No sooner did you ask me to call her back than I acted. But I was not ready to call her back at the risk of displeasing everybody, Ramachandran[1], Saraswati and Paparamma, and interrupting the improvement in her health. Had I known—which I now do—how sensitive you are even now, I would have incurred all these risks and called her back. But how was I to know that you, who show yourself off as a very brave person, are in fact so weak-hearted that you would fall ill to the point of being bed-ridden merely by imagining things? When I talked to her under some pretext, she immediately agreed that not only would she never write to you but she would not write to Saraswati or anybody else and would never in future even so much as talk of going to Trivandrum. What more can she do? Why so much hatred? I see no blemish in her. She doesn't ask for anybody's service but goes on silently serving others. Why then do you hate her so much? Wake up, pull yourself together, leave this profound darkness and come out into the light. How can one cure suffering that has no basis at all? I have already sent you a wire and am awaiting a reply.

I am improving. I need rest.

I am returning herewith the account-sheet.

I got Ramachandran's wire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7330. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] G. Ramachandran

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160. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 12, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter. Your address keeps changing, like a big man's. One day you are at Sitab Diara, another day at Siwan, then at Patna and then God knows where. You don't stick to one place for any length of time. Where should I then address my letters? I write to the address given by you last, but by that time you have already left the place and the letter doesn't reach you. What is the way out?

My health is all right. I am weak, of course. I must have plenty of mental rest, as also physical. The latter I always have, but mental rest is sometimes disturbed. I find it a problem to manage people. But I do it somehow.

One can't say that Ba's leg is completely all right.

Everything else is normal. Should I conclude from your letter that you don't intend to come here in the near future?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3505

161. INTERVIEW TO WILLIAM B. BENTON[1]

[Before *September 13, 1937*]

Motioning to a varnished box about half the size of an orange crate six feet in front of him, Gandhiji said:

You'd better sit over there.

I ask him some questions about Indian politics, about the victorious Congress party's policies.

This isn't the time for such questions. I have work to do here, I can't take myself from it to answer them. You should ask these questions of the political leaders. Of course, I wouldn't say that I don't know anything about politics. But I have no time for such questions now.

[1] An American journalist

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Many feel that any form of co-operation is a mistake. Others disagree, feeling that perhaps our objectives can best be achieved by giving ground now and then. Both groups are sincere.

We have just won a great victory and this brings us a big responsibility. We had literally no opposition. This is what counts. This result didn't surprise me, but it is a fine thing for others to see. It shows the world our strength.

We talk then about American public opinion, its attitude toward India.

American opinion is of great importance to us and by our deeds we hope to win it.

Gandhiji agreed that British foreign policy is often influenced by American opinion. He is aware that England tries in many devious ways to mould it.

We cannot compete for American attention on the same terms with the English. We do not try, our methods must be different methods. We make no conscious effort to influence American opinion. I believe that the American is emotionally sympathetic to our cause, but he is profoundly ignorant of the real facts and of our real problem. When the time is right the American will learn the truth by what we do.

It's a prevalent idea in America, that India requires England for defence. Without the English, would there be civil and religious disturbances? As the Congress party is successful in driving the English out of power in India, will India fall a prey to someone else? Or, for that matter, how will Congress deal with the native Princes right here at home?

These are gross superstitions. They have been propagated for years. Stories and statements of such dangers are hopelessly exaggerated. I know that many English people sincerely believe them; there you have the power of such ideas oft repeated.

As to the native States, they'll fall in line when India comes into her own.

A subject close to Gandhi's heart, one of which he will talk freely, is his great movement to improve the lot of the Indian villager or farmer. . . . Experiments are constantly being made, designed to develop new ways to improve the villager's lot. The Mahatma told me:

Progress is slow, but you must remember that our work is new. We started with nothing but faith. Only faith. Today knowledge is added.

He breaks into his well-known toothless smile.

You might add a third ingredient—give us part of the money you make when you sell your story.

You think if faith plus knowledge are potent, faith plus knowledge plus capital are more so.

Yes. Yes.

He cackles and rocks in a full laugh.

Have you ever seen an American movie or heard American jazz? These are our two most famous exports.

No, no, I haven't.

He laughs again.

There's a good story for you. Do what you can with it. I've never been to a moving picture.

Hasn't one ever been brought to you, I query. He laughs again.

No, I have never seen one.

As I leave Gandhi . . . I produce a sheet of paper made in Wardha which I had purchased for one anna. I ask the Mahatma if he will sign it.

No. He smiles shyly and turns his head. Then he sees my paper and giggles cheerfully.

No, even that does not tempt me.[1]

The Hindustan Times, 13-9-1937

162. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEGAON,
September 13, 1937

Can't give anything more today than my love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3806. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6962

[1] The report first appeared in *The New York Times*.
[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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163. TELEGRAM TO SURENDRANATH MOITRA[1]

[Before *September 14, 1937*][2]

I AM IN CONSTANT TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES AND THE PRISONERS.

The Hindu, 15-9-1937

164. TELEGRAM TO NILRATAN SARKAR

WARDHA,
September 14, 1937

DR. NILRATAN SARKAR
SANTINIKETAN

THANK GOD. MANY HEARTS SILENTLY PRAYING GURUDEV'S SPEEDY RECOVERY. EXPECT DAILY WIRES.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9877

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 14, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I send with this a letter written by Manu[3] on behalf of Gokibehn[4]. I have understood it to mean that it is proposed to raise the rent by one rupee as electricity charge. I understand that whatever is received is paid by Behcharlal on behalf of Doctor or in memory of him. I have not interfered with this arrangement. Please make inquiries, if I am right. If the increase of Re. 1 is justified, tell Behcharlal accordingly. If my impression is not

[1] In reply to the addressee's telegram requesting Gandhiji to intervene again to end the hunger-strike of the remaining seven Andamans prisoners.
[2] The report appeared under the date-line "Calcutta, September 14".
[3] Daughter of Harilal Gandhi
[4] Raliatbehn, Gandhiji's sister

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correct, let me know how Gokibehn's monthly expenses are met. Tell her that I acted as soon as I got the letter. Inform her about my health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8538. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

166. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

September 15, 1937

I held back these telegrams[1] in the hope of being able to announce the cheerful news that seven prisoners had broken the fast on my acceptance of their meaning of the word 'relief'. I am sorry that I have failed in my attempt. I can only hope that those who may be special friends of these prisoners will persuade them to break the fast which alone can give the public time to consolidate its effort to secure the very relief for which they are giving up their precious lives.

I would also appeal to the authorities, whoever they may be, to relent and discharge the prisoners, if they will not give up their fast, even as I was discharged and left to my own resources when I would not give up my fast in 1933.[2]

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-9-1937

167. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1937

MY DEAR AMRIT,

Bapu has given me many messages for you today.

1. He wants you to move amongst the high-class Sikhs and awaken their interest in the Prohibition campaign. Those who drink should be weaned of it, and especially the women should be roused to draw up a resolution.

I would like a declaration from notable Sikhs.[3]

[1] *Vide* pp. 99, 110 and 125.
[2] In May 1933; *vide* Vol. LV.
[3] This and the subscription have been added by Gandhiji.

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2. C. F. A. should eat exactly what the doctor says. Probably his condition is one which can actually be harmed by fruit, etc. But now, of course, he may [have][1] passed that stage. It should depend on what the doctor says. That C. F. A. eats meat is open knowledge to Bapu.

3. Bapu entirely agrees with you that C. F. A. should not think about answering Miss Mayo's book. It is not needed either in India or the West. An entirely independent book would be the only way of touching the matter.[2]

4. There is no likelihood of Bapu going to the Frontier before October. It depends on when and what Khan Saheb[3] writes.

5. It is very good news that the Simla Khadi Bhandar has become self-supporting.

6. Bapu will look at your brass bucket, and if it is suitable, he will use it himself.

7. Your fan is put away. There are plenty more here. Yours will be kept for you to use when you return.

8. Bapu's right hand is quite usable, but he feels the more rest he can give it the better. And this, he points out, has the advantage of giving him enforced rest from too much writing.

9. Bapu thinks your Hindi letters have much improved, and they are not too big now.

10. Balkoba[4] is slowly improving. He is able to take his full diet, and he has put on 1 lb. weight.

Bapu's health is certainly improving. He is taking more of the medicine, as it suits him and helps to reduce the b. p. The weather is excellent.

Much love.

MIRA

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3807. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6963

168. LETTER TO MANHARRAM MEHTA

September 15, 1937

BHAI MANHARRAM,

I have been familiar with folk-theatre troupes and minstrels and bards right from my childhood days and I have been fascinated by them ever since. But we have dubbed the poor fellows

[1] The source has "be".

[2] In the summer of 1938 C. F. Andrews completed *The True India*, his reply to Catherine Mayo's *Mother India*.

[3] Abdul Ghaffar Khan

[4] Balkrishna, younger brother of Vinoba Bhave

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as lowly and discredited them. In course of time even they have come to regard [themselves as such][1]. I like the idea very much but how it can be implemented is a matter to be decided by a person like you.

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

169. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR

September 15, 1937

BHAI CHANDRASHANKAR,

Certainly I too lay stress on spinning and especially on the *takli*. My experience confirms my belief that in India there is nothing so small, so cheap, so artistic, so useful and so beautiful [as the *takli*][2].

It is also my claim that except for the English language, all other subjects being taught in India today can be taught through craft within the same amount of time. In spite of all the assurances you may be able to give, if the parents start at the very mention of the word 'craft', if they [shudder][3] to hear the word *takli* and will not send their children if you pay them a stipend of eight annas or four annas instead of a rupee and a half, I should, if I were you, close down the school and follow some other vocation. A true teacher would teach on his own terms, not on the terms laid down by parents [who][4] understand nothing in the matter of education.

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

170. LETTER TO NARASINHBHAI

September 15, 1937

BHAI NARASINHBHAI,

Very little money has been received for the Kamala Memorial Fund. The largest amount was collected in the course of Jawaharlal's tour. But that did not come in the name of poor Kamala. We might as well say that it came in the name of her husband. What has happened to Kamala is something that happens to saintly women who pass into the last sleep without

[1&2] A few words are illegible.
[3&4] Illegible in the source

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being a burden to others. This is how the idea of the Kamala Memorial originated. She had taken over the case of the Prayag Congress Hospital. She collected funds for the hospital till her death. The hospital could be maintained only because of her efforts. After her death it was about to be closed down. And so, a few persons like me who knew her well decided that the hospital should be kept going. The easiest way to do it was to make it the Kamala Memorial. Jawaharlal donated half of his small estate for the purpose. Now how can this amount of some $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs be spent without a violation of morality? Moreover, those who have given the money have done it knowing this. Hence we should regard it as our duty to use the money only for the hospital at Prayag. And, if we cannot see that what the women of Prayag gain is gained by all of us, does it not mean that we do not belong to India but only to our own province? Let us follow the words of the *Gita* that whatever is dedicated to God in a spirit of service reaches God. And this dedication is for the sake of India, through the Kamala Memorial. Hence, remove every other thought from your mind.

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

171. LETTER TO DR. DHANJI SHAW

September 15, 1937

BHAI DHANJI SHAW,

I thank you for your letter. Your letter indicates that there is a dearth of khadi workers. There are plenty like you who wear khadi. Real khadi workers are those who make and wear khadi and persuade others to wear it. The khadi programme would never work if everyone only wore khadi and no one produced it, just as Zoroaster's commands would not be effective if there were many to recite the Avesta but none to follow it in practice. Hence I suggest that wherever you find people not wearing khadi, make an effort to have them wear it.

DR. M. DHANJI SHAW, OCULIST
EDYOUR
P. O. MANDYA (Mysore)

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

172. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am obliged to speak to you just now through Mira.[1]

I have gone through your reply. It is quite good and quite firm, just like you. Your weakness is only for friends. I shall be interested to know the reply. What is the reason for changing the name? Is it because the money is to come from the memorial fund? I hope you made sure that your objection had valid ground for it.

Nabibuksh[2] is almost due now. Give my love to him.

It is strange you do not get good earth there.

Do you take enough sleep? It is nearing the curfew, therefore good night and love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3808. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6964

173. TELEGRAM TO NILRATAN SARKAR

[On or before *September 17, 1937*][3]

GOD IS GREAT AND MERCIFUL. GREAT COMFORT TO FIND YOU BY GURUDEV'S BEDSIDE. PLEASE CONTINUE DAILY WIRES TILL COMPLETE DISCHARGE.

The Hindu, 17-9-1937

[1] *Vide* pp. 131-2.
[2] Addressee's servant
[3] The report is date-lined "Santiniketan, September 17".

174. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
September 17, 1937

No more today.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3809. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6965

175. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 17, 1937

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Seeing how many members of the [Village] Industries Association had come here yesterday, I felt ashamed and even distressed. For such work I should myself go there. That would save expense and other things, too. My health wouldn't suffer in any way by my travelling this far. On the other hand, I feel much hurt by not going there and dragging everybody here. Please, therefore, send me a car or cart, whichever is available, in time so that I may reach there at 1.45 at the latest. Get everybody to meet at your bungalow. But if the meeting is not possible in the bungalow, by all means arrange it in Maganwadi. Dispose of the simple, straightforward business relating to the Charkha Sangh yourself, and as much as possible even of the complicated work, so that we may be able to discuss only the most important matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2988

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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176. DISCUSSION WITH AN EDUCATIONIST[1]

[Before *September 18, 1937*]

[GANDHIJI] sounded a warning against the assumption that the idea of self-supporting education sprang from the necessity of achieving total prohibition as soon as possible.

Both are independent necessities. You have to start with the conviction that total prohibition has to be achieved, revenue or no revenue, education or no education. Similarly, you have to start with the conviction that looking to the needs of the villages of India our rural education ought to be made self-supporting if it is to be compulsory.

[THE EDUCATIONIST:] I have the first conviction deep down in me. Prohibition to me is an end in itself, and I regard it as a great education in itself. I should, therefore, sacrifice education altogether to make prohibition a success. But the other conviction is lacking. I cannot yet believe that education can be made self-supporting.

There, too, I want you to start with the conviction. The ways and means will come as you begin to work it out. I regret that I woke up to the necessity of this at this very late age. Otherwise I should have made the experiment myself. Even now, God willing, I shall do what I can to show that it can be self-supporting. But my time has been taken up by other things all these years, equally important perhaps, but it is this stay in Segaon that brought the conviction home to me. We have up to now concentrated on stuffing children's minds with all kinds of information, without ever thinking of stimulating and developing them. Let us now cry a halt and concentrate on educating the child properly through manual work, not as a side activity, but as the prime means of intellectual training.

I see that too. But why should it also support the school?

That will be the test of its value. The child at the age of 14, that is after finishing a seven years' course, should be discharged as an earning unit. Even now the poor people's children automatically lend a helping hand to their parents—the feeling at the

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Talks on Self-supporting Education"

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back of their minds being, what shall my parents eat and what should they give me to eat if I do not also work with them? That is an education in itself. Even so the State takes charge of the child at seven and returns it to the family as an earning unit. You impart education and simultaneously cut at the root of unemployment. You have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this special occupation you will train up his mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense, and so on. He will be master of the craft he learns.

But supposing a boy takes up the art and science of making khadi. Do you think it must occupy him all the seven years to master the craft?

Yes. It must, if he will not learn it mechanically. Why do we give years to the study of history or to the study of languages? Is a craft any the less important than these subjects which have been up to now given an artificial importance?

But as you have been mainly thinking of spinning and weaving, evidently you are thinking of making of these schools so many weaving schools. A child may have no aptitude for weaving and may have it for something else.

Quite so. Then we will teach him some other craft. But you must know that one school will not teach many crafts. The idea is that we should have one teacher for twenty-five boys, and you may have as many classes or schools of twenty-five boys as you have teachers available, and have each of these schools specializing in a separate craft—carpentry, smithy, tanning or shoe-making. Only you must bear in mind the fact that you develop the child's mind through each of these crafts. And I would emphasize one more thing. You must forget the cities and concentrate on the villages. They are an ocean. The cities are a mere drop in the ocean. That is why you cannot think of subjects like brick-making. If they must be civil and mechanical engineers, they will after the seven years' course go to the special colleges meant for these higher and specialized courses.

And let me emphasize one more fact. We are apt to think lightly of the village crafts because we have divorced educational from manual training. Manual work has been regarded as something inferior, and owing to the wretched distortion of the varna we came to regard spinners and weavers and carpenters and shoe-makers as belonging to the inferior castes and the proletariat. We have had no Cromptons[1] and Hargreaves[2] because

[1] Samuel Crompton, inventor of the spinning mule, and William Crompton and his son George Crompton, inventors of improved weaving loom

[2] James Hargreaves, inventor of the spinning-jenny

of this vicious system of considering the crafts as something inferior divorced from the skilled. If they had been regarded as callings having an independent status of their own equal to the status that learning enjoyed, we should have had great inventors from among our craftsmen. Of course the 'spinning-jenny' led on to the discovery of water-power and other things which made the mill displace the labour of thousands of people. That was, in my view, a monstrosity. We will by concentrating on the villages see that the inventive skill that an intensive learning of the craft will stimulate will subserve the needs of the villager as a whole.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

177. FOR MONKEYS

I have before me nearly fifty letters from America asking me to do what I can to prevent the export of Macacus Rhesus monkeys from India to America for purposes of vivisection. Some of these letters are from humanitarian and anti-vivisection societies. They send interesting literature containing harrowing details and pictures of vivisection and opinions of eminent medical men against the utility of the cruel practice. A typical letter enclosed a picture of St. Francis of Assisi for whom birds and beasts were as brothers and sisters. The reader will appreciate the following prayer of the saint:

> Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.
>
> O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

My sympathies are wholly with my correspondents. If I had the power I would not send a single monkey abroad for vivisection or slaughter. My advice to my correspondents is that they should promote representations to the Government of India which, if they are well supported are, bound to be listened to by them. The other way obviously is a strong public agitation in India against the practice of sending monkeys abroad. Of this, so far as I can see, there is not much prospect. The

public hardly know that there is any export of monkeys. And I do not know how to prevent private persons from carrying on what must be to them a lucrative trade. All, therefore, that I can do is to express the pious wish that India will be no party to what is undoubtedly an inhuman practice. It would be wrong to subject the lower creation to living death even if it could be proved that it contributed something to the alleviation of human suffering. Surely, it can never be an end in itself justifying adoption of inhumanities involved in vivisection. Rather, the end is for the human family not to sacrifice tenderness, even though the practice of that virtue should involve continuation of human suffering or even an increase in it. I suggest that tenderness for others and other life itself promotes alleviation in that it makes pain bearable.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

178. THE SOCIAL SIDE OF PROHIBITION

This excellent article[1] should be studied by every Excise Minister who would make his prohibition policy a success. Every liquor-shop should be turned into a refreshment club. The money is there: the excise revenue during the transition period.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

179. FOR MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

A schoolmaster in a southern high school sends me the following extracts[2] showing some of the disabilities of students:

> M. E. R. 99. No pupil convicted in a court of law for disloyal activities should be admitted into a school without the previous sanction of Government. No manager or member of the staff or of the establishment shall be permitted to take part in political agitation directed against the authority of Government or to inculcate opinions tending

[1] In the article, not reproduced here, John Barnabas had discussed how various circumstances—social and financial—drive an average man to drink and suggested that prohibition could be launched in an intelligent manner by providing to the labourer some substitutes such as entertainment and refreshment.

[2] Only excerpts from which are reproduced here

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to excite feelings of political disloyalty or disaffection; and the pupil should not be permitted to attend political meetings or to engage in any form of political agitation.

100. In the event of such misconduct being persisted in and encouraged or permitted by the masters or the managing authorities, the Director may, after due warning, withdraw recognition from the offending school or withdraw the grant-in-aid or withhold the privilege of competing for Government scholarships and receiving Government scholarships.

101. If the public utterances of a schoolmaster are of such a character as to endanger the orderly development of the boys under his charge by introducing into their immature minds doctrines subversive of their respect for authority and calculated to impair their usefulness as citizens and to hinder their advancement in after-life, or if he is found to have personally conducted his pupils to a political meeting or to have deliberately encouraged their attendance at such a meeting, his proceedings may be held to constitute a dereliction of duty and may be visited with disciplinary action.

79. No books (other than books for religious instruction) not authorized by Government shall be used in any case. Government reserve to themselves the right to forbid or to prescribe the use of any book or books in schools.

80. (Insists on all children being vaccinated. Though a dead letter in practice, it should surely be cancelled.)

Other circulars still in force forbid the hoisting of the National Flag on recognized schools and discourage the exhibition of photographs of national leaders in classrooms, and penalize schools where students express national views in answering papers at public examinations. . . .

Most of these should be removed without a moment's delay. The students' minds must not be caged nor for that matter those of the teachers. The teachers can only point to their pupils what they or the State considers is the best way. Having done so they have no right to curb their pupils' thoughts and feelings. This does not mean that they are not to be subject to any discipline. No school can be run without it. But discipline has nothing to do with artificial restraint upon the students' all-round growth. This is impossible where they are subjected to espionage. The fact is that hitherto they have been in an atmosphere subtly anti-national where it has not been openly that. This should now be dispelled. The students should know that the cultivation of nationalism is not a crime but a virtue.

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180. SELF-SUPPORTING SCHOOLS

The main cause of India's economic decay is that her workers begin life too early. . . . The immature mind put to industrial apprenticeship gets dwarfed and fossilized; and there is no grasp of the economic significance of work. Anybody can exploit such a worker. . . . When I visited the Ceylon plantations what harrowed me most was the existence of child-labour. . . . Even in a country like Ceylon where the population is inadequate to exploit natural resources, child-labour is indefensible; much more so is it in India where the employment of children may mean the unemployment of adults.

Let us not delude ourselves into believing that self-supporting workshop schools manufacturing and marketing goods will impart education. In actual practice it will be nothing but legalized child-labour. . . . I cannot agree with the editor of the *Harijan* that mathematics can be studied by calculating how much yarn would be needed for a piece, and science and geography by observing the growth and improvement of strains of cotton. . . . The training of the eye, ear and hand is absolutely necessary, and manual labour must be made compulsory in all schools; but we must not forget that what is called the training of the hand is really a training of the brain. If a school aims at education, it must give up all ideas of producing standardized goods for sale. It must give a variety of raw materials and machines for children to experiment with and spoil. Waste is inevitable. A careful study of Sjt. Parikh's figures in the current issue of the *Harijan* shows that even when a school has specialized in one occupation and has trained grown-up children, waste is considerable. A vocational school, like a college of science, is a place for experimenting and wasting resources. A country like India with limited resources must start as few as necessary. . . .

That we can force the pace and make the boy learn in two years what he now learns in seven is a curious illusion. . . . A child cannot, and should not, try to learn at eight what he can learn only at 16. The foreign language is not the cause of delay, nor are we giving as much extra time to it as people imagine. . . .

. . . Let us not demand that schools should produce not only men but also goods.

To sum up, it is bad economy to adopt a short-sighted policy which will make the schools solvent and the nation bankrupt.

'A PROFESSOR'

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This[1] is from a Professor in a well-known University. There is a signed covering letter to it but the article is unsigned. I therefore refrain from giving the writer's name. After all the reader is concerned with the matter, not its author. This article is a striking case of preconceived notions blurring one's vision. The writer has not taken the trouble to understand my plan. He condemns himself when he likens the boys in the schools of my imagination to the boys on the semi-slave plantations of Ceylon. He forgets that the boys on the plantations are not treated as students. Their labour is no part of their training. In the schools I advocate boys have all that boys learn in high schools less English but plus drill, music, drawing and, of course, a vocation. To call these schools factories amounts to an obstinate refusal to appreciate a series of facts. It is very like a man refusing to read the description of a human being and calling him a monkey because he has seen no other animal but a monkey, and because the description in some particulars, but only in some, answers that of monkeys. The Professor would have been on safe ground if he had cautioned the public against expecting all that I have claimed for the proposal. The caution would however be unnecessary because I have uttered it myself.

I admit that my proposal is novel. But novelty is no crime. I admit that it has not much experience behind it. But what experience my associates and I have encourages me to think that the plan, if worked faithfully, will succeed. The nation can lose nothing by trying the experiment even if it fails. And the gain will be immense if the experiment succeeds even partially. In no other way can primary education be made free, compulsory and effective. The present primary education is admittedly a snare and delusion.

Shri Narahari Parikh's figures have been written in order to support the plan to the extent they can. They are not conclusive. They are encouraging. They supply good data to an enthusiast. Seven years are not an integral part of my plan. It may be that more time will be required to reach the intellectual level aimed at by me. The nation won't lose anything whatsoever by a prolongation of the period of instruction. The integral parts of the scheme are:

(1) Taken as a whole a vocation or vocations are the best medium for the all-round development of a boy or a girl, and therefore all syllabus should be woven round vocational training.

[1] Only extracts from which are reproduced here

(2) Primary education thus conceived as a whole is bound to be self-supporting even though for the first or even the second year's course it may not be wholly so. Primary education here means as described above.

The Professor questions the possibility of giving arithmetical and other training through vocations. Here he speaks without experience. I can speak from experience. I had no difficulty in giving at the Tolstoy Farm (Transvaal) all-round development to the boys and girls for whose training I was directly responsible.[1] The central fact there was vocational training for nearly eight hours. They had one or, at the most, two hours of book learning. The vocations were digging, cooking, scavenging, sandal-making, simple carpentry, and messenger work. The ages of the children ranged from six to sixteen. That experiment has been since much enriched.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

181. INHUMANITY IN DELHI

Things seem to move slowly in Delhi, where the poor are concerned. The sweepers' quarters in Delhi were the worst of any I had seen. I do not know that they are much better today. Thakkar Bapa now draws attention to the serious grievances of stone-breakers.[2] The poor men are cheated of the price of their labour, and mean advantage is taken of their ignorance and poverty by the heartless contractors. It is high time for the public of Delhi to wake up and remedy the evil. If the contractors will not behave themselves, the public should support a general strike by the stone-breakers and find for them some suitable occupation whilst the strike lasts. No doubt before this last step is taken there would be parleys with the contractors.

Harijan, 18-9-1937

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 266-70.
[2] The article is not reproduced here.

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182. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Received your second letter. What does Punditji teach you when he comes? Does he give you reading and writing work? How do you find the climate there? How much money is left with you now? Ask for some whenever you need it. Perhaps it will be better if I send you the money direct. If you can find any work there, do take it up. Be of as much use as you can. You must have made friends with everyone there as you are a sociable type. I hope Sumitra[1] does not make a nuisance of herself. It is a very good sign that the Principal himself teaches you English. Tell Vidyavati about your constipation also.

Kanam is enjoying himself. Gosibehn[2] and Perinbehn[3] are at present here. He gets on well with them. Gosibehn tells him stories. And if he is told stories he needs nothing else. His real education consists of stories, football and kite-flying. The regular lessons of course go on. But if he does not find these as interesting as stories, I consider it a shortcoming on the part of the teacher. But it is true, is it not, that the teacher can only impart what he himself possesses?

How old are the seniormost girls there? Is it that they have admitted you as an exception?

Are there any women teachers or only men teachers?

The place is famous for its guavas and berries. Try them both by turns as medicine. Perhaps they might cure your constipation. As far as possible, listen to Saraswatibehn's advice.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Addressee's eldest daughter

[2] & [3] Gosibehn Captain and Perinbehn Captain, granddaughters of Dadabhai Naoroji

183. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 18, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Lilavati's illness seems to be getting somewhat prolonged. Low fever persists. Having an iron constitution, she continues to move about. I have, therefore, put restrictions on her. Even in food she is made to observe fairly severe restrictions. Let the doctor bring his apparatus to examine her when he comes. A patch is visible not only on the tonsils but also on the right side. I suppose it will remain even after the tonsils are removed. So there must be some treatment for the patch adjacent to the tonsils. Please write to Chhotalal about this complaint. He should write if he can think of something. And also write to him about Amtul Salaam and tell him that she has asthma and cough. And she has constipation too. He should suggest something for her also, if he can. As for treatment, she has been treated by a homoeopath and a vaid's treatment is still going on. But there has been no definite improvement. One can only say that she is pulling on.

Write [to Chhotalal] about me and tell him that as advised I am taking two doses of the powder daily for four days. Today is the fourth day. From tomorrow I shall take one dose daily for five days. Find out if he has any suggestion to make regarding food after that. You may also tell him that my diet has decreased after his treatment was started. The quantity of milk has decreased to practically a half of what it was. I cannot eat bread either. Before the treatment was started I used to eat wheat in a fairly good quantity in the form of bread and *golpapdi*[1]. I have lost the ability to digest that. I don't mind this, but Chhotalal should know about it.

I got the mail sent by you. I am surrounded at the moment by four or five persons. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11566

[1] A sweetmeat

184. THE USE AND ABUSE OF TODDY[1]

A Parsi correspondent from Ahmedabad has addressed me a long letter of which the following is the gist:

I am not a liquor dealer myself, nor do I drink, though I have found half an ounce of toddy, taken judiciously in illness, to have wonderfully curative properties. But then, it befuddles me and I have to discontinue its use. Since 1896 when I became a vegetarian I have not taken meat. I am sixty-five and therefore can claim to speak with some experience. I have not a shadow of doubt that prohibition will add to the health and longevity of the working people as a whole. But I am afraid that what will be saved from liquor will be swallowed up by cinemas, theatres and vice, besides encouraging idleness and surreptitious illicit distillation. Toddy, on the other hand, has a number of valuable uses which I note below:

(1) Fresh toddy is a healthy, non-intoxicating beverage, though under the heat of the sun it quickly ferments and develops alcoholic properties.

(2) Taken medicinally it acts as a refrigerant and cures the system of excess of heat.

(3) Toddy is used as leaven to raise the flour for making bread, biscuits and pastries.

(4) It cures constipation and promotes bowel action.

(5) From toddy we get vinegar which is used in pickles and as a condiment.

Unfortunately it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain pure, unadulterated toddy. What is generally sold is a thin, poisonous mixture adulterated with water, saccharine, opium and other narcotics, which act as a slow poison on the system. The toddy-dealer, who is generally impecunious and harassed by the exactions of the Excise Department, is driven to make both ends meet by defrauding the consumer. In my opinion, what is really needed is to exempt toddy from the licensing system, and make it possible to provide pure stuff to the consumer in sealed bottles at the rate of two pice per bottle.

To enforce prohibition in respect of toddy, while leaving tobacco, *ganja*, opium and other narcotics free, would be tantamount to favouring Hindu licensees of these narcotics at the expense of Parsi vendors of

[1] The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 19-9-1937.

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toddy, and is bound to make a bad impression. The evil of juvenile smoking is daily becoming worse in our country. The result is a devitalized manhood and a fearful increase in the cases of tuberculosis, etc. The economic bill that the nation has to pay annually for this vice of tobacco-smoking works out at a staggering figure. If we take the cases of tobacco-smoking in our country to be one in three, and two pice worth of cigarettes as the average daily consumption of smoke for each smoker, then twelve crore smokers would, in a year, blow away 138 crores of rupees among them in this pleasant vice! By enforcing prohibition against tobacco-smoking the whole of this amount could be saved and the problem of financing primary education for the nation be automatically solved; the national health would distinctly gain; and the daily desecration of the *Atash deva*[1] at the hands of millions of smokers be stopped. At the same time the abolition of licensed toddy shops in the cities would cause the townspeople to go to the villages for fresh-drawn toddy and help to put some money into the pockets of the needy village-folk. Perhaps you know that in certain parts of the Surat District the date-palm is the only stay of the poor as the sub-soil water is too brackish to support any other cultivation. The necessity of journeying to the villages to obtain toddy will also serve as an automatic check on the consumption of toddy and effectively reduce the evil of drunkenness that is becoming more and more rampant in all the big cities.

Other Parsi correspondents too have written to me in the same strain. I must confess that it did surprise me somewhat at first that all such arguments against prohibition should emanate invariably from Parsi brains. But it may be that this is due to the fact that, owing to the special relations which the Parsis have with me, they freely speak out their mind, while others, who think similarly about prohibition, feel constrained and hold back their feelings. Let me assure my Parsi friends that I value this mark of confidence on their part as a rare privilege, which I hope I have tried to deserve.

Coming now to the arguments advanced by my correspondent, it will be seen that such of them as are valid do not apply to the plan of prohibition that I have adumbrated. Prohibition will certainly not affect the sale of toddy for *bona fide* medicinal purposes. Only, as in the case of other drugs so in the case of toddy, the intending purchaser will be required to produce a certificate issued not by the patient concerned to himself, but by a duly qualified doctor. My correspondent may feel competent to act as his own physician, but an average patient cannot safely be left to

[1] Fire-god of the Zoroastrians

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prescribe for himself. The proposed restriction in respect of medicinal toddy is thus conceived in the patient's own interest.

It is hardly necessary for me here to examine all the claims on behalf of toddy advanced by my correspondent. Suffice it to say that I have already admitted the immense economic value of the toddy-palm. I have nothing whatever against the use of toddy juice as such. My sole objection is to fermented toddy which has alcoholic properties like any other spirituous liquor whether made from sugarcane, grape or apples. I have myself freely partaken, and made others partake, of sweet toddy *gur*[1] and its sherbet. Nor is there any duty on the tapping of sweet toddy for *gur*-making. I am planning to tap 250 palms here at Segaon in the coming season for sweet toddy and, God willing, I hope to get some of the finest *gur* and sugar from it. The deeper I dive into this question of sweet toddy, the more I find that, owing to the disrepute into which it has fallen by its evil association with liquor manufacture, its proper use has never been inculcated upon our people.[2] The grapes of the Madeira island in the Atlantic Ocean, which is under Portuguese rule, meet with the same fate. There are vines in every courtyard and wine is distilled in every home. Hence in this place 'grape' means 'wine'. The term has acquired such a noxious connotation that in our language it has become a common expression and we employ the word '*madira*'[3] to denote liquor. Toddy has similarly become accursed. I also played no small part in condemning it in the last Satyagraha[4]. The above-mentioned gentleman can rest assured that now I am atoning for it by helping people to a true knowledge of toddy and by keeping the intoxicating principle away from it.

May I in all sincerity suggest that the Parsi community can render a great service to itself and the Province of Bombay by renouncing the liquor trade and doing its bit for the redemption of the much-wronged toddy-palm. Is it not also a happy augury that the cause of prohibition in the Bombay Presidency has for its helmsman and guide a celebrated Parsi doctor?

I hope it will now be sufficiently clear to my esteemed correspondent, and others who might be inclined to think like him, that the prohibition move which I am sponsoring is not calcula-

[1] Jaggery

[2] The rest of the paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.

[3] Here Gandhiji is giving a fanciful etymology of the word which, in fact, is derived from the base *mada* meaning 'intoxication'.

[4] Salt Satyagraha of 1930; *vide* Vol. XLIII, pp. 182 and 368-9.

ted to injure Parsi interests or for the matter of that any legitimate interests. It is directed as much against opium, *ganja*, *charas* and every narcotic as it is against liquor-drinking and, what is more, as I have already shown, it does not affect the legitimate use of the toddy-palm in which the Parsis as a community are especially interested. It does certainly aim at a crusade against the perversion of its legitimate use, in the form of manufacture and consumption of a fiery liquor. And, in this holy crusade, my venerable Parsi correspondent seems to be at one with me.

Harijan, 9-10-1937, and *Harijanbandhu*, 19-9-1937

185. TO NATIONAL TEACHERS

To the teachers who are conducting national schools I would suggest that if they are convinced by my recent writings[1] on primary education, they should try to put my ideas into practice. They should maintain a proper record and keep me informed about their experiences. Those who are willing to conduct a school on the lines suggested by me, those who are not engaged for the time being or those who are willing to give up their present vocation and run a school, should write to me.

It is my belief that a craft which immediately suggests itself for making primary schools self-sufficient is spinning and allied processes. This includes all the processes from picking cotton to weaving intricate designs into khadi. The wages should be calculated at a minimum of half an anna per hour. Of the five working hours in the school day four hours should be devoted to manual work and one hour to instruction in the science of the craft taught in the school and the teaching of other subjects that cannot be taken up as part of the craft taught. While teaching the crafts, subjects like history, geography and arithmetic would be partially or wholly covered. Language and grammar as part of it, and also correct pronunciation would be naturally included. For the teacher will treat the craft as a vehicle of all such knowledge and will teach the children correct speech and in so doing would incidentally impart knowledge of grammar. Children must learn the process of counting right from the beginning. Hence, the first beginning will have to be made with arithmetic. Neatness would of course not be a separate subject. Children ought to be

[1] *Vide* pp. 123-5, also Vol. LXV, pp. 406-7.

neat in everything they do. They will begin it by coming to school neat and tidy. Hence, for the present I cannot think of any subject which the children cannot be taught side by side with their vocational training.

It is of course my idea that just as the subjects to be taught have not been considered separately but as interconnected and originating from a single source, I also think that there would be a single teacher. There should be no separate teachers for different subjects but only one teacher. There could be separate teachers for the different forms. That is to say, there would be seven teachers if there are seven forms and one teacher would not have more than 25 children. If education is compulsory, I would consider it necessary to have separate classes for boys and girls from the very beginning. For ultimately they will not have to be trained in the same vocations. Hence, I believe that it would be more convenient to have separate classes from the very start.

It may be possible to make some modifications in this method and in the working hours, number of teachers and distribution of subjects; but the school of my conception can be conducted only by regarding as inviolable the principles which each school must follow. Right now, the pursuit of these principles may not have shown any results; but any minister who wishes to start on such a system of education must have faith in these principles. And this faith, based as it is on reason, should not be blind but rational. The two principles are: (1) The vehicle of education should be some vocation or craft which would be useful in the village. (2) Education, on the whole, should be self-supporting. It may be not completely self-supporting for a year or two in the beginning; but income and expenditure should be balanced at the end of seven years. There is scope for increasing or decreasing these seven years that I have posited for this kind of education.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 19-9-1937

186. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
September 19, 1937

I had hoped to write to you myself today but sleep made it impossible. Her Ex.'s letter is diplomatic, plausible, yours straight.

What about the ice?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3810. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6966

187. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 19, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

Your letter about Usha[2] alarms me. We call illness corporal punishment. How appropriate is this expression! Because such a body deserves the punishment. Don't be impatient now. Do not worry. Busy yourself with your work. Really speaking you have never lived the life of a student. You had your lessons in your childhood but that was not real student life. When one willingly devotes oneself to something, one is said to be living for it. As for instance life for the sake of service, life for the sake of learning, life for the sake of enjoyment, life for the sake of [amassing] wealth. In these cases service, learning, enjoyment and wealth become the only purpose of life. And other things are sacrificed for their sake. From this point of view, since you have taken up student life you ought to forget about Usha for the time being, as also Sarita[3], Ramdas and me. Only studies should not be forgotten. This is called the yoga of non-attachment. You have accepted student's life for one year. So forget all other things.

I shall find out about Usha and also write to Sarita. I am not sending a wire today because it is a Sunday. I shall send

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] Addressee's youngest daughter
[3] Addressee's mother

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a wire tomorrow. I shall also write to Navanit. Like Ramdas who cannot rush to Usha's side from South Africa, you also cannot run from where you are. Life and death are in the hands of God. If Usha is destined to live long she will recover soon. If you wish and if Sarita agrees, I am prepared to take charge of Usha. Ba of course is here. Amtul Salaam is also here. If she gets such an opportunity to serve, she will consider it a god-send. I am writing this after getting her consent. About the treatments also I am writing to Sarita as much as I know. Even if you yourself were there, what more could you have done in addition to the treatment she is receiving today? If I ask her to come to me it does not mean that she will be served better here. But certainly there is the thought that better medical consultation can be available here than at Lakhtar. Any other advice can also be more readily available here and I also know fairly well about a number of such diseases. . . .[1]

From a copy of the Gujarati: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

188. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 20, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have written with the right hand with a vengeance. In ten minutes more the prayer commences and the silence breaks. Then no more of right hand writing till next Monday.

Nothing more about me than what M.[2] has told you.

I hope you had a good meeting with the women. You can't desert the rich. You have to do the best you can with them. You must have inexhaustible patience.

Tell Charlie, he must keep to regular hours and simplicity for food. It won't do to have another attack, if he is to shoulder the burden of Palestine. It is wrong for him to write for money. It is one thing to accept small gifts for work done without the monetary motive behind it. But to write for gain seems to me to be quite wrong. It would be a different thing if he as a school-master was writing school books. That labour merits its hire.

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Mirabehn

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But not an original work say like the *Indian Fight for Freedom* or the *Life of Jesus*[1].

You are silent about your eczema.

Poor Sharda may have duodenal ulcer. But she is all right and quite brave. Her father, who has come here, is on his back with fever. Lilavati is on the mend. Ba is better though still limping. Balkrishna is the same as before. Batra is in the Punjab.

The medicine I am taking is no patent. It is a well-known bazaar root irradiated. If I may take the *neem* leaf or bark, what is wrong with another bitter root? There is as much harm in this root as there is in the castor seed. Therefore don't take fright over my drug. I am careful.

My love to Nabi Bux. He should return by this time.

The weather has suddenly become warm. We might have a downpour.

We had a good meeting of A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A.

The Urdu numerals are handy. Thoughtful Rebel as ever! I shall ask for more when I have mastered this much. It will be treasured as I have treasured your list of equivalent Hindi names for tools.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3612. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6421

189. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

On the envelope you have written "Please send to Dahyabhai Sumitra". I was puzzled. Then I thought that you must have forgotten to cross out one. I am sending the envelope back. Please look at it. This is just by way of fun.

Your notes should be brief. For instance, you could have shortened the one about Gulzarilal as also the others. Today I have done nothing but this. You will be able to see it. If we don't follow this method, then no matter how many pages we fill we shall not be able to include all the topics. As the

[1] Which C. F. Andrews was engaged in writing towards the end of his life, but did not complete

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topics increase in number our ability to condense them should also increase a great deal.

Chan.'s extracts cannot be published. I am sending them back. The first part is all right. But it is of no use to us. We have to prepare literature pertaining to our country. The items in the second part have been collected without understanding. Our problem is definitely not how to bring about prohibition by raising the tax. We simply don't want any revenue from that source. I had to accept Shah's matter because he did agree partly at least.

I think that there is a Hindi translation of *Anandamath*[1]. It is possible that there is a good Gujarati translation also. If there is one, please procure a copy.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please return Chandy's article. Have you omitted from it M. [C.] Rajah's name? I wish to make some other changes, too.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11570

190. LETTER TO E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1937

MY DEAR NAMBOODIRIPAD,

I have your letter. It is right that you have written to the Premier, but before doing so you should have written to the police authorities and gone step by step. Don't expect that from top to bottom the Permanent Service has become angelic. And why do you say you cannot condemn even bad actions of Congress Ministries? I think it is not only a right, but a duty for any Congressman to openly criticize acts of Congress officials, no matter

[1] A Bengali novel by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya which contains the poem *Vandemataram*

[2] The addressee, Joint-Secretary of the All-India Congress Socialist Party and Organizing Secretary of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the search carried on by the police for a proscribed book.

however highly placed they may be. The criticism has got to be courteous and well-informed.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. E. M. S. NAMBOODIRIPAD
POST CHERUKARA, *via* SHORANUR
S. MALABAR

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

191. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Please have a talk with R.[1] But [before that][2] ask Appa. If R. is impotent, G.[3] cannot but know about it. Then she should not live with him, nor should she be harassed. R. must have taken treatment. However, if medicines always worked, why do we have so many advertisements about them? But ascertain all the facts. Go and find out what G. has done and what the atmosphere there is like.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11571

192. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your precious letter is before me. You have anticipated me. I wanted to write as soon as Sir Nilratan sent me his last reassuring wire. But my right hand needs rest. I did not want to dictate. The left hand works slow. This is merely to show you what love some of us bear towards you. I verily believe that the silent prayers from the hearts of your admirers have been heard and you are still with us. You are not a mere singer of the

[1] The name has been omitted.
[2] Not clear in the source
[3] The name has been omitted.

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world. Your living word is a guide and an inspiration to thousands. May you be spared for many a long year yet to come.

With deep love,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4649

193. MESSAGE TO KARNATAKA UNIFICATION LEAGUE, BELGAUM

[Before *September 24, 1937*]

The creation of Karnataka as a separate province cannot be resisted on merits. Therefore, whoever brings a resolution to that effect should be welcomed by the Congress Ministry and the difficulties of its immediate execution should be frankly pointed out. The Congress Ministry can take the wind out of the Opposition's sails by announcing its policy, means and ways.[1]

The Hindu, 24-9-1937

194. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

Here is a letter from one who calls himself the maternal uncle of Kamalabai. I have told the writer that Kamalabai's process of purification should not on any account be interrupted, and that this is necessary in the interest of herself as well as the family.

The patient is there; you will see her and guide me. No money is to be paid till I write to you.

I am making steady progress.

Love.

BAPU

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

[1] At Gandhiji's instance a copy of this message was sent to the Bombay Ministry. It had been proposed to introduce in the Bombay Assembly a resolution for a separate Karnataka province.

[2] The superscription is in Devanagari.

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195. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 24, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

This is merely for the pleasure of writing to you. Shummy is hopelessly wrong. You *must* write daily if you can but never at the sacrifice of your rest or work.

Verrier[1] is here today. I shall speak to him and do the needful.

The seven prisoners have suspended their fast.

Why won't you say in writing what you want to say so badly when we meet? But you will please yourself. I am not curious like some I know.

You should get the commitment[2] of noted Sikhs even though their word carries no weight with the Sikhs.

Sufficient for the day.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3811. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6967

196. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

Your letter to Dudabhai[3] seemed all right and I have, therefore, sent it on. And I have advised that he should send Jivantika to her husband's place. Nothing more need be done in this matter.

I understand about the anonymous note of threat. We should know what Raojibhai says. I have talked over everything with Dinkar. He himself offered to have a talk with you and report to you the substance of our talk. I, therefore, did not write to you anything. The long and short of it is that he

[1] Verrier Elwin
[2] *Vide* p. 131.
[3] Dudabhai Dafda

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would give his services as long as the Congress work goes on. He will accept whatever we give him to meet his expenses. His needs are fairly numerous. I, therefore, would advise that he should be paid Rs. 100. Sometimes he may save a little from it and sometimes he will spend the whole amount. I have told him that he could be given the facilities to set up an establishment there. He will have to pay the rent.

Dahyalal has arrived. For the present he has been given sanitation work and spinning.

I was very happy to learn that ghee is being made from cow's milk. Test every instalment. There is every chance of the ghee going rancid if the butter is underboiled. In making ghee out of cow's milk more care has to be taken than in making it out of buffalo's milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9110

197. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have a faint impression that I wrote to you about prohibition in Bhavnagar. But I don't find a note about it anywhere. However, as often happens these days, I might have only thought of writing and then imagined that I had actually written. I write very little with my own hand, and that too with the left. It is possible, therefore, that if there was nobody with me when I wished to write, the intention was not carried out. This is just by way of preface.

What are the implications of the prohibition which is in force in Bhavnagar? For how long has it been in force? What is the result? Is the loss in revenue through prohibition made good through the improved condition of the people? I won't be perturbed if the result has been contrary to my expectations. Nor would I be surprised if the result has been according to my expectations, for any other result is impossible where the constructive work which should accompany prohibition is carried out. It will be enough if you entrust this job to any officer of your Excise

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Department and he writes to me. I certainly don't want this matter to weigh on your mind.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5954. Also C.W. 3271. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

198. HAVOC IN ORISSA

Floods, famines and pestilences have become part of the natural life of India. Famines and floods take place almost all the world over, but their effects are largely overcome in countries which have financial and other resources. But in India, where poverty reaches the point of starvation, the effects of floods and famines are not only not overcome but are felt with double force, and pestilences are ever with us through the same cause. But the gravest defect of India's pauperism is that we have come to regard these visitations with resignation which is none the less brutal because it is unconscious. To illustrate my point I single out the case of Orissa because of the appeal issued by the Minister of Revenue and Public Works in his capacity as Chairman of the Orissa Flood Relief Committee. In him, a member of the Congress Ministry, Government and the Congress combine. But in a covering letter he tells me that the response to the appeal has been nothing worth mentioning. The Orissa Governor, in his address at the inaugural meeting of the Flood Relief Fund, says: "As it was graphically put to me, on the night of the 6th August 30,000 people in this town, Cuttack, were sleeping or trying to sleep ten feet below the river level." Cuttack is an insignificant place compared to Bombay. It is not one-tenth the size of that city. Imagine what would happen to Bombay if there was a river passing by it, and floods put three lakhs of people in the predicament in which the people of Cuttack found themselves on the night of the sixth of August! Fifteen hundred square miles in the districts of Cuttack and Puri have been affected by floods. But the recurrence of such floods annually in many parts of India has made popular conscience blunt even in a place so cosmopolitan as Bombay which has never failed to respond to the cry of distress no matter from what corner of India it has come. If my pen moves any person to respond to the appeal, let him or her send whatever he or she can. There are various charities in Bombay. I venture to suggest that they can take consolidated

action by making a joint inquiry into all such cases that may come under their notice and can then make proportionate contributions in accordance with the funds at their disposal. If this suggestion is adopted, no distress need go unheard because of want of proper championship. At present, it will be admitted there is no method in the distribution of these great charities. This suggestion is, however, for the future. For the time being, following the proverb 'he gives twice who quickly gives', let those who feel impelled give without waiting for any joint action.

A word, however, to the Ministers. Whatever donations they may receive will give only partial relief. They ought, therefore, to do two things: first, adopt means and measures to make people, who may be affected, learn the art of helping themselves by engaging in any productive occupation. Bihar took up spinning and the like. Orissa may take up other occupations if people will not look at the spinning-wheel. The chief thing is to learn the dignity of labour. Let the Ministers put off their *kurtas* for a little time daily, and work as common labourers, so as to give an impetus to others who may be in need of labour and what labour brings. Secondly, they should make a proper effort to harness engineering skill so as to guide into healthy channels the course of the rushing waters during the monsoons.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

199. NOT IMPRACTICABLE

Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh is a great social reformer, a man of letters and a politician. Whatever, therefore, he writes commands attention. He has contributed an article on total prohibition to *The Times of India*. Having read it with the care his writings demand from me, I must confess that I left the article with a sigh. How could such a reformer accept defeat on grounds that do not bear examination? His only argument seems to be: 'There is bound to be illicit distillation and secret drinking, therefore do not attempt prohibition.' In the Punjab there was local option but nobody applied it. "Therefore," he says, "my conclusion is that prohibition by compulsion will fail, and provinces will lose revenue which they need for rural reconstruction." By linking prohibition to revenue the Sardar has precipitately given up his case and contradicted himself. For in the fourth paragraph of his article he says: "I expressly declared that considerations of revenue would not weigh with me in carrying out a policy of

controlling drink.'' Thank God Congress Ministries have cut their way through the revenue snare by debarring themselves from the use of liquor revenue. Once the loop-hole is left, the temptation to make use of this immoral gain will be too irresistible, for nobody denies the difficulty of making the drunkard sober in a moment. Old Ministers, with whom I used to plead for prohibition, did not put forth the plea of impracticability. But they pleaded inability to forgo the rich revenue received from the traffic. They wanted it for education. Is education paid for by a questionable source of revenue worth having? Has it intrinsic merit? Has India got her money's worth from those who have received the education of the type that the schools and colleges of India provide?

Thieving will abide till doomsday. Must it therefore be licensed ? Is thieving of the mind less criminal than thieving of matter ? Illicit distillation to an extent will no doubt go on. Its quantity will be the measure of the Government's effort assisted by a vigilant public in the shape of continuous and sympathetic treatment of the drinker and the opium-eater. Moral elevation demands a price no less than material or physical elevation. But my submission is that this constructive effort is doomed to failure if it is not preceded by total prohibition. So long as the State not only permits but provides facilities for the addict to satisfy his craving, the reformer has little chance of success. Gipsy Smith was a powerful temperance preacher. It was a feature of his huge gatherings that several people took the vow of total abstinence under the spell of his song and precept. But I say from my experience of South Africa that the majority of the poor addicts could not resist the temptation to enter the palatial bars that faced them, no matter where they wandered, in the principal thoroughfares of cities or the wayside inns when they strayed away from cities. State prohibition is not the end of this great temperance reform but it is the indispensable beginning of it.

Of local option the less said the better. Was there ever opposition to the closing of these dens of vice? Option has a place where a whole population wants to drink.

God willing, prohibition has come to stay. Whatever other contribution may or may not be made by the Congress, it will go down to history in letters of gold that the Congress pledged itself to prohibition in 1920, and redeemed the pledge at the very first opportunity without counting the cost. I doubt not that the other provinces will follow. I invite Sardar Jogendra Singh not to caution the Congress against the much-needed reform, but to throw

in his full weight in favour of it in his own province and among the stalwart Sikhs.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

200. FOUR QUESTIONS

A correspondent asks the following four questions:

1. Hindus who once renounced their faith for some reason or other and joined Islam or Christianity sincerely repent and want to come back. Should we re-convert them or not? You may take the instance of your own son Harilal.[1]

2. Lakhs of the Depressed Class people in South India, as you know, have joined Christianity wholesale. Some of them, since the Travancore Durbar Declaration[2] and the popularity of the Harijan movement, feel it worth while to re-adopt their ancestral faith. What would you advise about them?

3. A Hindu was made to join another faith for certain material considerations. After some time he feels disillusioned and comes and knocks at our door. Shall we welcome him or not?

4. Young Hindu boys and girls are often taken hold of by Christian missionaries and converted. At some places Muslims are also making use of their orphanages for this purpose. What should we do, when these boys and girls, either alone or with their guardians, approach us for *shuddhi*?

These, or such questions, have been asked and answered before now in these columns in some shape or other. I do not need to answer each separately. In my opinion they are not examples of real heart conversion. If a person, through fear, compulsion, starvation or for material gain or consideration, goes over to another faith, it is a misnomer to call it conversion. Most cases of mass conversion, of which we have heard so much during the past two years, have been to my mind false coin. Real conversion springs from the heart and at the prompting of God, not of a stranger. The voice of God can always be distinguished from the voice of man. The hypothetical cases coined by my correspondent are, so far as I can see, not cases of conversion. I would, therefore, unhesitatingly re-admit to the Hindu fold all such repentants without ado, certainly without any *shuddhi*. *Shuddhi* is

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 221 and 461-2; also Vol. LXIII, pp 5-7.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXIV, pp. 45-6.

not applicable to such cases. And, as I believe in the equality of all the great religions of the earth, I regard no man as polluted because he has forsaken the branch on which he was sitting and gone over to another of the same tree. If he comes back to the original branch, he deserves to be welcomed and not told that he had committed a sin by reason of his having forsaken the family to which he belonged. In so far as he may be deemed to have erred, he has sufficiently purged himself of it when he repents of the error and retraces his step.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

201. NOTES

An Appeal

I know that there are many teachers who more or less believe in the method of primary education I have been advocating. I know, too, that some are carrying on experiments in giving such training through some vocation. There are again those who are inclined in that direction but circumstances beyond their control have taken them away from the teaching profession. Now that Congress Ministries seem to favour the plan I have outlined, it is necessary to have the names of those who would give their services to the experiment. Will such friends send me their names, qualifications, salaries they would want, and their conditions if any?

Legalized Prostitution

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi[1] furnishes one more proof of the very high expectations formed of Congress Ministries. People have a right to form such expectations. Even opponents of the Congress have admitted that they are standing the test well. The Congress Ministries seem to be vying with one another in adopting ameliorative measures so as to make their administrations respond to the real Indian environment. Dr. Muthulakshmi has issued a public appeal to the Madras Ministry to pass her bill which puts a stop to the immoral custom of dedicating *devadasis*[2] to a life of shame. I have not examined the bill. But the idea behind is so sound that it is a wonder that it has not yet found a place in the Statute-book of the Southern Presidency. I wholly agree

[1] A social worker of Madras

[2] Literally, servants of God; women dedicated to temples

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with Dr. Muthulakshmi that the reform is as urgent as prohibition. She recalls the fact that the present Premier[1] spoke out many years ago in strong terms against the evil practice. I know that he is no less eager now that he has some power to deal with it legally. And I hope with her that before many months have passed the *devadasi* system will cease to have legal sanction.

USES OF "MAHURA"

A correspondent writes a long letter about *mahura* flowers, and desires that all restrictions on the use of *mahura* flowers, other than that for distillation, should be removed. As an out and out prohibitionist I have no hesitation in endorsing the proposal. The whole conception of prohibition is not penal but educative. As soon as State recognition of intoxicating drinks and drugs, and licensed shops for the sale thereof, is withdrawn, the way of education becomes clear. Penal enactments under the prohibition law will have to be of a character wholly different from those that have hitherto been in vogue. People will be trusted, therefore, if my scheme is accepted, to make the right use of *mahura*, and not prevented from using it altogether from fear of wrong use. Therefore, under the prohibition law, there will be no check on the right use of *mahura*, as there will be none on the right use of toddy. The following are some of the uses of *mahura* flowers, *mahura* oil and *mahura* wood, which I copy from the letter:

1. Fresh *mahura* flowers are sweet to eat.
2. A variety of tasty[2] preparations are made out of dried *mahura* flowers. These preparations serve as sweets to the poor people.
3. Decoction of *mahura* flowers is very effective in removing chronic constipation.
4. The oil from the seed called *dolia* is used as food. It is the poor man's ghee.
5. *Mahura* flowers are regarded as tonic for both men and cattle.
6. In times of scarcity and famine, which are very frequent in Kheda, *mahura* flowers go a long way in saving the poor from complete starvation.
7. *Dolia* oil is specially favoured in the preparation of washing-soap.
8. *Mahura* wood is used as fuel and timber.

Harijan, 25-9-1937

[1] C. Rajagopalachari
[2] The source has "tasteful".

202. LETTER TO SARASWATI

SEGAON,
September 25, 1937

CHI. SARASWATI,

Your letter. You are not to worry at all. Do exactly what Kanti suggests. There is no need to write to Amtul Salaam; she is here with me. She will be happy if only she knows that all is well with you two.

Come here only when you have Mamaji's[1] and Kanti's consent. Till then you should devote yourself solely to your studies. Keep your mind steady.

Kanti's letters must have now started coming in.

Your observations on the hospitals are true enough. No one is bothered about anyone else. True ahimsa is to regard those who are not related to us as our kinsmen and to serve them; this alone is [true] compassion.

I am keeping well and so is Ba.

Nimu has gone to Dehra Dun to study Hindi and English.

Lakshmi is still in Madras.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6165. Also C.W. 3438. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

203. PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BOMBAY[2]

In discussing the question of primary education I have hitherto deliberately confined myself to the villages, as it is in the villages that the bulk of India's population resides. To tackle successfully the question of the villages is to solve the problem for the cities also. But a friend interested in the question of primary education in the city of Bombay puts the following poser:

> The Congress Ministry is just now preoccupied with the question of financing primary education. The cry to make primary education

[1] G. Ramachandran

[2] The Gujarati original appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 26-9-1937.

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self-supporting is in the air. It would, therefore, be worth while to examine as to how and to what extent this can be done in the case of a city like Bombay. The annual budget of the Bombay Corporation for education is said to be somewhere between 35 and 36 lakhs of rupees. But this amount would have to be augmented by several lakhs of rupees before the scheme of introducing compulsory primary education in Bombay can be realized. At present over twenty lakhs of rupees are annually spent on teachers' salaries, while another four lakhs go as rent. This gives an average of Rs. 40 to 42 for each student. Can a student earn this amount in the course of his vocational training? And if not, then, how can primary education be made self-supporting?

I have no doubt in my mind that the city of Bombay and its children would only stand to gain by adopting a vocational basis for primary education.[1] Children brought up in cities can learn poems by heart and recite them like parrots. They can dance, mimic and make gestures, beat the drum, march in a line, answer questions about History and Geography and will know a little Arithmetic; but they will not be able to go beyond this. I forget one thing. They will surely be acquainted with a little English too? But if they are asked to repair a chair or mend a torn dress they will not be able to do it. Such helpless children as our city-bred ones I have seen nowhere in my wanderings in South Africa and England. At present all that these children can show at the end of their primary education course is not worth much and certainly not calculated to fit them for citizenship.

I have no hesitation in recommending the adoption of a vocational basis for primary education for cities. It would enable the better part, if not the whole, of the 35 lakhs of the present expenditure on primary education in Bombay to be saved. Taking, for the sake of convenience, Rs. 40 to be the annual expense of giving primary education to a child in Bombay, it would mean that 87,500 children in all are at present receiving education out of the educational grant of the Bombay Corporation. Now, taking the population of Bombay to be ten lakhs, the total number of children of the school-going age ought to be at least one lakh and a half. This means that no less than 62,000 children of school-going age in the city of Bombay are at present going without primary education. If we take away 6,000 out of this figure as the number of children who are possibly receiving

[1] The paragraph, except for the last sentence, which is from *Harijan*, is translated from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu*.

their education privately in their homes, it would still leave 56,000 children for whom primary education has still got to be provided. At the present scale of expenditure this would require a sum of Rs. 22,40,000 which, so far as I can see, is hardly likely to be forthcoming on this side of doomsday.

I am a firm believer in the principle of free and compulsory primary education for India. I also hold that we shall realize this only by teaching the children a useful vocation and utilizing it as a means for cultivating their mental, physical and spiritual faculties. Let no one consider these economic calculations in connection with education as sordid, or out of place. There is nothing essentially sordid about economic calculations. True economics never militates against the highest ethical standard just as all true ethics to be worth its name must at the same time be also good economics. An economics that inculcates mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally, including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life. I therefore make bold to suggest that Bombay would be setting a noble example for the whole country to follow if, by teaching its children a useful industry, it can make primary education pay its way. Supposing a student works at a vocation for four hours a day, then taking the number of working days in a month to be 25 and the rate of remuneration two pice per hour, he or she would be earning Rs. 3-2-0 per month for the school. The vocational exercise will keep the mind of the student fresh and alert while providing at the same time a means for drawing out his or her intellect. This does not mean that the child would begin to pay 2 pice per hour from the commencement. But he will pay during the whole period of seven years at the rate of 2 pice per hour.

It is a gross superstition to think that this sort of vocational exercise will make education dull, or cramp the child's mind. Some of my happiest recollections are of the bright and joyful faces of children while they were receiving vocational instruction under competent teachers. As against this, I have also known the most fascinating of subjects boring children, when taught in the wrong way by an incompetent instructor. But it may be asked wherefrom are we going to get capable instructors of the kind that we require? My reply is that necessity is the mother of invention. Once we realize the necessity for reorientation of our educational policy, the means for giving effect to it will be found

without much difficulty. I am sure that, for a fraction of the time and expense incurred on the present educational system and the staff to man it, we could easily train all the manual instructors that we should require for our work. It ought to be possible for a committee of educational experts of Bombay, if they are in earnest, to draw up a scheme of primary education on the lines suggested by me and to put it into operation without loss of time. Only they must have a living faith in it as I have. Such faith can only grow from within; it cannot be acquired vicariously. Nothing great in this world was ever accomplished without a living faith.

What kinds of vocations are the fittest for being taught to children in urban schools? There is no hard and fast rule about it. But my reply is clear. I want to resuscitate the villages of India. Today our villages have become a mere appendage to the cities. They exist, as it were, to be exploited by the latter and depend on the latter's sufferance. This is unnatural. It is only when the cities realize the duty of making an adequate return to the villages for the strength and sustenance which they derive from them, instead of selfishly exploiting them, that a healthy and moral relationship between the two will spring up, and if the city children are to play their part in this great and noble work of social reconstruction, the vocations through which they are to receive their education ought to be directly related to the requirements of the villages. So far as I can see, the various processes of cotton manufacture from ginning and cleaning of cotton to the spinning of yarn answer this test as nothing else does. Even today cotton is grown in the villages and is ginned and spun and converted into cloth in the cities. But the chain of processes which cotton undergoes in the mills from the beginning to the end constitutes a huge tragedy of waste in men, materials and mechanical power.

My plan to impart primary education through the medium of village handicrafts like spinning and carding, etc., is thus conceived as the spearhead of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequence. It will provide a healthy and moral basis of relationship between the city and the village and thus go a long way towards eradicating some of the worst evils of the present social insecurity and poisoned relationship between the classes. It will check the progressive decay of our villages and lay the foundation of a juster social order in which there is no unnatural division between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' and everybody is assured of a living wage and the right to freedom. And all

this would be accomplished without the horrors of a bloody class war or a colossal capital expenditure such as would be involved in the mechanization of a vast continent like India. Nor would it entail a helpless dependence on foreign imported machinery or technical skill. Lastly, by obviating the necessity for highly specialized talent, it would place the destiny of the masses, as it were, in their own hands. But who will bell the cat? Will the city folk listen to me at all? Or, will mine remain a mere cry in the wilderness? Replies to these and similar questions will depend more on lovers of education like my correspondent living in cities than on me.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

204. MY NOTES

Need for Social Effort

A gentleman writes:[1]

It may be said that such a belief[2] is prevalent among almost all Hindus. One need not find out the source of it. I do not know it. In this age when men and women are supposed to have and should have equal rights they should be rated equally. Why should there be such jubilation at the birth of a son? And why should there be sorrow when a daughter is born? Both of them have an equal right to live. The world can go on only with the existence of both. But a belief which has taken deep roots from ancient times cannot be suddenly wiped out by one or more individuals writing against it. Only when knowledge that enables us to distinguish between good and bad spreads in Hindu society and when women are truly respected will the incidents mentioned by this gentleman from Kutch be averted. Today both husband and wife agree to a second marriage when the first has produced only daughters. It would not be proper to say in this case that sexual desire alone prevails; only a certain kind of sentiment holds sway. And the sentiment cannot be suddenly wished away. Considerable social effort is needed to bring about the change.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 26-9-1937

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the marriage of a 55-year-old khadi worker, who had once been praised in *Harijanbandhu*, with a 20-year-old widow, ostensibly for the sake of a son.

[2] In the superiority of the male over the female issue

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205. LETTER TO V. V. ATITKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 26, 1937

DEAR ATITKAR,

Morally and legally, in the Congress sense, there is nothing wrong in your asking for and receiving Government grants now, but I quite agree with you that it would be better if you did not.

From the views I have been recently propounding about education you will deduce that I would not multiply Universities if they are to be a burden on the Government. But I would grant a charter for the asking if the Government is called upon to create a separate examining University, for such a body is more than self-supporting from the examination fees it charges. In any event, those who seek a charter for a new University have to calculate upon the University being self-supporting. Colleges and even schools, if the latter are also taken under University wings, would naturally have to conform to the syllabus and other regulations framed by the University. Thus you will be entitled to have a charter for the Lokamanya University if you can see your way to making the University self-supporting—in other words, that is, if you think you can find sufficient students to appear for your examinations.

Under my conception there will be colleges for every conceivable art and craft, and, therefore, I would not mind any number of Universities on these terms.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. ATITKAR
TILAK MEMORIAL VIDYAPITH
POONA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

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206. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
September 26, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I do get your letters and read them. It is a great surprise to me how you could stand the strain of five days of touring. When two devoted workers come together,[1] it becomes hard for both. Sometimes two weak persons can easily work together. And even a strong man will have some pity for his weak companion, and the two, therefore, can work together. But you two were like two tigers neither of whom would yield to the other. Your joint tour, therefore, must have been interesting to watch. Very well. Since you have contributed your share towards the Kamala Memorial, what does it matter? The amount collected also was quite satisfactory, considering the times. Did the (Ahmedabad) mill-owners pay handsomely?

I understand what you say about the Kathiawar Parishad.

Forget the Nariman episode[2]. You have entrusted your problem to me and I have passed it on to Bahadurji[3]. He is a hard worker. He spares time regularly every day and reads every paper and makes notes. He will take two weeks for just reading all the papers. He spares time from the pile of cases with him and reads the papers as if this also was one of his cases. Don't mind the delay, therefore, and let things take their own course.

Don't read the attacks in the newspapers at all. Read the accompanying letter[4] and return it. Where did you deliver such a speech ?

If the Congress session becomes expensive, according to me it will only signify our [moral] bankruptcy. I see our doom in the abundance of our resources. Such glory will be borrowed glory. It will not bring out of the volunteers' hard labour. Please don't read in this any reflection on you. I am only foreseeing our

[1] The addressee and Jawaharlal Nehru had toured Gujarat together in connection with the Kamala Nehru Memorial Fund.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", 16-10-1937.

[3] D. N. Bahadurji

[4] Complaining that the addressee during a speech at Mandvi had alleged that the citizens of Bombay were supplied sewage water

future. It is a pathetic picture of our condition. I have already written, five or six days ago, a letter to Ramdas expressing these views but in a different manner. Whatever happens, please don't interpret this letter to mean that you should take no interest in that work and let it suffer. Go on with it according to your lights and as best as you can. All this I have dictated because I have sat down to dictate this letter specially to you.

Mahadev has been sent to Dhulia. . . . [1]

I started dictating this letter in connection with the Durbar case. What I have dictated above was only by way of preface. Don't put up a Congress town. Make it a village so that the village arts can be poured into it. But art requires talent and heart, never money. Don't, therefore, permit anybody to spend even a pie on decoration. I think that in the confectionery shops and tea-stalls, we can permit the use of only cow's ghee and cow's milk. In other words, the owners should buy their stores from us or under our supervision, and to help us meet the expenditure on such supervision we should issue licences against payment of a fee. But I do believe that we should provide facilities for such shops and stalls. Only, they should abide by our rules.

And now about Durbar. We must get his village restored not for his sake but for the sake of our honour. In exchange for Dhasa he has acquired Kaira as his capital. Nobody knew the Durbar of Dhasa, but everybody knows the Durbar of Kaira. Raojibhai's[2] letter, therefore, has had no effect on me. On the contrary, it makes me angry. But in my old age now I must not yield to anger. And moreover he is far away. I, therefore, restrain my anger. We are likely to worry, and do worry, about Dhasa more than he is likely to do. Besides, he worries because of his friendship with Durbar. We should have had to worry about Durbar even if he had not been a friend and was only a national worker. If we did not, nobody would have cared for us in the Congress. All this, however, is mere prattle. From the information that Raojibhai has given, it seems we should start taking steps immediately. I had thought that we would start after the new Ministry has had some breathing time. I feel now that you as President of the Gujarat Congress Committee or the Secretary of the Committee should write to the Premier[3] suggesting that for the sake of the prestige of the Congress he should

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Raojibhai Manibhai Patel
[3] B. G. Kher

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take up Durbar's case and advise the Governor to recommend the return of Dhasa to him. I think the request will be granted and that I shall not have to do anything in the matter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 210-4

207. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 27, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

O, Thou of little faith! Thine letters are all destroyed without being read by anybody except when there is something which I want to share with someone. This has happened but once since your deserting your corner near the tool-box.

Never mind what people say about J.[1] or your partiality for him. We must tolerate our neighbours' mannerisms, if we would love them as we would have them to love us. Who is there without his or her mannerisms, then let him or her throw the first stone. Are you? Do you know any? I know none including my poor or big self.

It would be a red-letter day when, though late in life, you marry khadi. When you do, you will find that all your other loves will be satisfied through khadi. Undivided love is[2] the meaning and secret of marriage. All else is prostitution, idolatry. Gods are many but God is one. Enough of sermonizing.

A separate note for Charlie.

I have already told S.[3] he must not go to Calcutta or take up active duty before he is thoroughly fit. Even when he is, he can't replace J. who has his unconsumable energy and single-mindedness.

You will come off all right in Nagpur.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru
[2] The source has "in".
[3] Subhas Chandra Bose

Yes, I do think the medicine has done good and so do the doctors.

Herewith Mira's letter of yesterday. It could not go yesterday through my stupid forgetfulness—measure of little love? Love never forgets.

Enough for the day.

Love.

ROBBER, TYRANT & CO.

From the original: C.W. 3613. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6422

208. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 27, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

Today is the day [of the week][1] for using the right hand. You are bound to miss Narottam there, as I do Chhotelal every minute. If the enthusiasm with which all of you worked on the occasion of the *Rentia Baras* endures, that will be a memorial to Narottam and the day will have been properly celebrated.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8539. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

209. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
September 27, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

All the matter is not ready. I am sending as much as is ready. It has been revised.

I could not send back Janba earlier than now. Mirabehn has done the revision quite carefully. Send over to Chandrashanker [whatever you can] and postpone for tomorrow the matter for [*Harijan*]*Sevak* and [*Harijan*]*bandhu*. In that case you will have a copy for revision and the post will be dispatched in

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", p. 181.

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time. However, do what you think convenient. A letter[1] I have written to Gurudev and two copies of it are enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11572

210. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 28, 1937

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I had better not address you by your titular name. It does not yet come to me naturally. I think that you have made a sweeping statement about tea. Are you able to prove the economic ruin of thousands of families? I know something of the evils of the tea and coffee habit. I have written also against it. But I am not able to endorse your condemnation. There can be no comparison between alcohol and tea and coffee. The latter will damage health when indulged in to excess. But alcohol cannot be taken in measured quantities, except medicinally. And it ruins body, mind and soul. I would advise you, therefore, to throw yourself heart and soul into the weaning of the addict from his drinks and drugs, and not to raise other issues, however important they may be on their own merits.

Do the letter-head and the adoption of the sannyasi name show that you are now at peace with yourself, flourishing and in possession of the Truth to your satisfaction?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA BHIKSHU
GANDHI MISSION SOCIETY
KRIPA ASHRAM, GANDHI KUPPAM
TIRUVENNAINALLUR P. O., S. INDIA[2]

From a photostat: G.N. 1401. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* pp. 156-7.
[2] The address is from the Pyarelal Papers copy.

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211. LETTER TO MANU SUBEDAR

September 28, 1937

BHAI SUBEDAR,

I shall not tire of your letters. But please do not be displeased if I do not publish your notes. I preserve some of the notes for myself, but I can place before the public only what appeals to me. Do you agree?

Koyaji's article[1] is not likely to sway me, for, I take an altogether different stand in these two matters. With regard to prohibition and the creation of alternative sources of revenue to make up for the excise that will be lost, I would recommend that you make a close study of the Bill presented in Madras. If you have any suggestions to make with regard to the Bill, you can write to me. I shall send your suggestions on to Rajaji. I do not think anyone else has given as much thought to the problem of drinking from this point of view as we two have done. If there are any such persons I do not know of them.

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

212. A LETTER

September 28, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

You had a right to offer criticism in the matter of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Moreover, I like criticism. I accept the three points you have made. But I would not agree with you in believing that the Vidyapith has failed. The Gujarat Vidyapith and other national institutions have contributed to the struggle which other universities have not done. That was not merely because these universities belonged to the Government but because the students and teachers of these universities had a different mental attitude. Nevertheless, had the things mentioned

[1] Extracts from J. C. Koyaji's article appeared in *Harijan*, 2-10-1937, along with comments by Mahadev Desai under the title "An Economist and His Figures".

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by you not been present, the national universities would have contributed much more. But we shall think about it when we meet. These things are closely related to the subject under discussion. What I am stating now cannot be stated in the same manner at a meeting of the University.

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

213. LETTER TO LAKSHMIDAS

September 29, 1937

BHAI LAKSHMIDAS,

I have your letter. I like your frankness. It is good that you wrote to Vallabhbhai. You should write to him. Were you present during the speech?

It is very good indeed that you are corresponding with Kishorelalbhai.

The thing compared cannot be identical in every respect with the thing to which it is compared. When the preceptor, etc., are likened to the father it does not mean that they are in every respect similar to the father. Kishorelalbhai could only mean that if the Sardar is like a father to the Gujaratis, they should regard him as such wherever they may be. It is a different question whether he has, in reality, the requisite qualities to be regarded as such.

What I have written implies only this: that we must weigh every word we may utter or write.

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

214. LETTER TO YUSUF MEHERALLY

September 29, 1937

BHAI MEHERALLY,

It is only right that the Shop Assistants' Conference should be founded by Seth Jamnalalji who has turned many a shop-assistant into masters of firms. There is no doubt that they have to work long hours. All they should remember is that they would not attain their objectives by following the war-path but by remaining calm, truthful and firm.

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

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215. LETTER TO SHANKARLAL

September 29, 1937

BHAI SHANKARLALBHAI,

Your letter contains a question to which you expect an answer from me. You ask me how it is possible in practice to be tolerant and continue to bear with faults even when they are quite evident. You have yourself said and written that you are able to see countless faults in yourself every day. And yet, how very tolerant you are to yourself! I see countless faults in me every day and yet there is no limit to my tolerance of myself. If I am not tolerant of myself in spite of seeing my faults, I would have to fast every day and think of all sorts of expiations and finally go the way of Chhotelal[1]! But I do none of these things. I believe that my tolerance is not misplaced. That is why I learnt to be tolerant of others in spite of seeing their faults. But I have not yet attained the ideal state because I must be at least as tolerant of others as I am of myself if not more. I have not been able to be so. However, I find that I want to proceed in that direction and I know I am doing it. But even as I proceed I regard faults as faults indeed. With these two things my own strength grows as it should indeed. I had my first lesson in this training from my parents. They were tolerant of me even when they saw my faults. I used to worship my parents. But it cannot be said that I could not see their faults. I was quite tolerant of them because of my devotion to them. The same attitude then continued towards my brothers and other relatives. My family continued to grow. But the attitude remained unchanged. So there is always a certain measure of tolerance in me.

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

[1] Chhotelal Jain, who had committed suicide; *vide* "A Silent Co-worker Gone", pp. 95-7.

216. LETTER TO BHAGWANDAS

September 29, 1937

BHAI BHAGWANDAS,

. . .[1] I also dislike an unmarried girl marrying a widower. But after a good deal of experience I have come to feel that in the matter of marriage boys and girls will behave in strange ways. Under such circumstances all the zeal of the reformer is rendered futile. A non-violent reformer has no power other than of his own intellect and the strength of his own hands.

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

217. LETTER TO GOPI NATH

September 29, 1937

BHAI GOPI NATH,

What you write about the law-suit is correct. Filing a suit even over a small amount involves considerable expense. But today there is no provision under which one could be governed only by the rule of the *panchayat*. Under such circumstances the golden rule is that we should neither lend nor borrow. If you do lend it must be with the idea that you are not going to get your money back. You just have to do it. And if you have to do such a thing you should be clear in your mind that it is charity. It should be remembered that out of the millions those who are required to go to the court are very few. If we can be out of [debt][2] and mingle with the masses like drops in the ocean, we would not have to bother with law courts.

Now for the profession of vaidyas. In the ancient times vaidyas gave the benefit of their knowledge without charging fees. They did not charge even for the medicines. And generally the medicines too used to be quite inexpensive. The Rajavaidyas and such others used to make their own patent medicines and put up a great show. Today only people of the latter category are left.

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

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Illegible in the source

218. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1937

CHI. KANTI,

Have you boycotted me? I wait for your letter every day, but get none. I have carried out all your wishes. What more do you want now? I don't approve of your silence.

I had meant to write to Nanjappa at the same time that I wrote to you. But I couldn't do so owing to pressure of work. I don't write with my right hand on any day except Mondays, and on Mondays the work of *Harijan* leaves no time for any other work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7331. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

219. LETTER TO SYED BASHIR AHMED[1]

[Before *September 30, 1937*][2]

I cannot subscribe to your sweeping opinion that a Mussalman who joins the Congress betrays Muslim interests. On the contrary, I hold that Mussalmans who desire complete independence for India cannot do better than join the Congress in its uphill fight for independence. It is an organization that is open to all who care to join it. Do you not see that Mussalmans, if they join it in their thousands, can shape the whole policy of the Congress? There is no proportional representation there. It is a wholly democratic organization without any communal barriers.

[1] The addressee, editor of *Isha'at-e-Taleem*, had enquired: "Would you not agree with me that you want to realize truth by following the right path based on honesty, straightforwardness and ethical soundness? The Congress offers Ministries to Muslims who have been elected on the Muslim League ticket, provided they sign the Congress pledge. Do you want the Muslim members who have sworn their loyalty to the League before their election by God and the Holy Koran to break their sacred oaths?"

[2] This and the following item appeared under the date-line "Talegaon, September 30".

Not being in the Congress, I cannot hold myself responsible for everything that the Congress and Congressmen do. But being a firm believer in the Congress objective, I had no hesitation in advising the Congress to adopt the office-acceptance programme. On questions relating to Mussalmans, the Congress is solely guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. I have no notion of the obligation undertaken by the members of the Muslim League, but I doubt not that the Maulana Saheb has taken every care not to allow the Congress to become a party to a violation of any moral principle by any Muslim.

Generally speaking, I see nothing wrong in a member of a political party transferring his allegiance from one party to another. I do not see what objection you can have to the Congress trying to have within its fold all the Muslims it can have by every honourable means. It seems to me that the Congress will forfeit its title to be called an all-India organization if it does not endeavour to represent Mussalmans and other sections as well as Hindus. That has from the very beginning been the traditional policy and strength of the Congress. I, therefore, fail to see where the slightest departure from truth takes place in the Congress accepting those Mussalmans who favour complete independence for India and who appreciate the means adopted by the Congress, as for instance, communal unity, khadi, prohibition, removal of untouchability and other things recited in the Congress election manifesto[1].

The Hindu, 2-10-1937

220. LETTER TO SYED BASHIR AHMED

[Before *September 30, 1937*]

It amazes me that you fail to see the great merit of the Congress having given dictatorial powers to a single Mussalman[2] in the important matter of choosing Muslim Ministers. Of course, the Maulana can err, but it is irrelevant. But what is great and relevant is the fact that a Mussalman divine has been given powers, which the Congress has not given to any single person.

The Hindu, 2-10-1937

[1] The draft of which was approved by the A. I. C. C. at its meeting in Bombay on August 22 and 23, 1936; *vide* Vol. LXV, Appendix. III.

[2] Abul Kalam Azad; *vide* the preceding item.

221. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

So far as I am concerned Pattabhi is a good choice.[1] But I suppose you will have the sense of the members of the Committee.

I don't know whether you will find time to attend the Educational Conference that is being held in Wardha[2], for which the invitation has gone to you. If you can, I would like you to come, but I do not want you to make time for the Conference if more important work requires your presence elsewhere. Undoubtedly it will be a strain for two days, but your presence will be a solace to me if you can come.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will find herewith the result of my correspondence with Syed Habib, in the shape of a cheque and letter. I simply rebuked him for getting money from here, there or anywhere, without mentioning the conversation I had with you.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

222. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[3]

SEGAON,
October 1, 1937

No time to write except to send you love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3616. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6425

[1] Pattabhi Sitaramayya's name was being considered for Congress Presidentship.

[2] On October 22 and 23

[3] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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223. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You shouldn't have stopped taking milk. To observe mourning[1] one may give up eating delicacies, but one must eat whatever is essential. If one who has taken the vow of *aswada*[2] is observing it properly, he would be eating nothing to please the palate and, therefore, would have no need to give up anything. Moreover, if birth and death are the same thing, and indeed they are, why mourn the death of the dear ones? Or why rejoice at their birth? Please, therefore, start taking milk immediately you get this letter. If you wish, you can make use of this letter. Moreover, our duty to the departed consists in taking up and carrying on their work, and that all of you are doing to the best of your abilities. The burden cannot be borne by you alone, even if you wished. And if you give up milk and become weak, your capacity for work will diminish, and one may say that you will to that extent be less able to carry your share of the burden. Reason with yourself thus and resume taking milk and fruit.

Come here when you can stir out. And let it not be so late that I may not be here when you come. Never mind, however, if your coming is delayed by work. We shall meet if and when God wills.

I am not as weak as you suppose. I am able, more or less, to attend to all my usual work. I can eat sufficiently well, too. I do less physical work.

We are having two fairly serious patients here these days. There are other minor illnesses, too, from time to time. Parnerkar and Chimanlal are in bed. Parnerkar is better and will leave bed in a few days. But Chimanlal's ship is in mid-sea. He has typhoid. Today is the fourteenth day. The temperature has still not come to normal. That means it will last for 21 days at least. He is being looked after chiefly by Sharda and Bhansalibhai.

[1] The addressee's father-in-law Harsu Dayal had died in July, 1937.
[2] Control of the palate

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One cannot yet say that Ba's leg is completely healed. Lilavati keeps indifferent health. She will most probably be operated upon tomorrow for tonsils.

Amtul Salaam is, as you know, a permanent patient.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3506

224. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

Chimanlal is critically ill. Today is the fourteenth day after the attack of typhoid. The temperature has still not come to normal. This means that it will take at least another seven days. He has become extremely weak. But as a patient he preserves wonderful calm. Nobody is put to any trouble, nor is there any fuss. He has had inflamed piles for three days and there is much bleeding. But he suffers everything calmly and shows no impatience. Please inform Shakaribehn[1]. I asked him whether he desired her presence. He doesn't want her to be sent for. She is not needed for nursing either. He is being nursed by Bhansalibhai and Sharda.

Is it true that Shakaribehn will have to leave the Ashram after a month or two for want of accommodation? Is she getting any help?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9111

[1] Wife of Chimanlal Shah

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225. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After] *October* [*1*][1] *1937*

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your programme seems to have succeeded well enough. You got more money, too, than expected and got yarn as well.[2]

I suppose the cotton for the slivers consumed in the spinning done in the school must have been supplied by the school itself. If we calculate the value of the yarn after deducting the cost of the cotton, what would be your estimate of the net gain? If you can supply the figures relating to the number of days and hours of work of each of the notable personalities mentioned by you, please let me have them.

What was the approximate attendance at Rameshwaridevi's meeting? What impression did you form of her? Did you come into fairly close contact with her?

Of the sum of Rs. 15,000, did you get anything from outside or did you collect the entire sum in Kathiawar? You may certainly reserve Rs. 10,000 for 'Harijan' and spend the rest in khadi work.

How old is Vithal who was among those who joined in spinning? Who was the youngest amongst them? Did anyone use the *takli* for spinning?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8541. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the reference to the programme for *Rentia Baras* which fell on October 1; *vide* also p. 175.

[2] The National School, Rajkot under the addressee's charge, had a special programme for the *Rentia Baras* celebrations. They devoted a few hours daily, for 68 days, to spinning and produced 28,34,000 yards of yarn, and collected funds for khadi work.

226. A LETTER[1]

[Before *October 2, 1937*]

I shall try to make something out of the many handicrafts you have suggested. You are so resourceful that you can even shoulder the new undertaking. But a few things are essential before you can do so. You will have to forget your tomes, and start making use of your hands and feet. For this you must set apart part of your busy hours. Take up cotton and *takli*-spinning and approach them intellectually. I send you Gregg's[2] and the late Maganlal Gandhi's book[3] on the subject. Sjt. Gulzarilal Nanda would gladly initiate you into it. But more important than this is for you to launch out into one of the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, study how some of the poor handicraftsmen, basket-makers, rope-makers, etc., make their living. Even their crude handiwork will reveal some art; but with your intelligent perception you will be able to find out that there is much scope for improvement in the method of their work, and you will see how these ignorant folks have gone along the beaten track for years without anyone to show them improved ways. You will also realize that their ignorance is the result of our middle-class ancestors and of you and I having neglected these poor folks, and you will perhaps shed a genuine tear. You will then see what I mean by education through handicrafts. It is likely that the whole thing may have a different reaction on you, and you may want to preserve the *status quo*. Or perhaps you would reject both the existing and the proposed scheme of things and discover a third thing altogether. That, you may be sure, will not pain me. For my sole purpose is to seek truth by thought, word and deed. That is the thing I am mad about, the thing for which I am living and for

[1] Translated by Mahadev Desai this appeared under the title "An Open Mind". Prefacing it he wrote: "An economist friend has been, at Gandhiji's request, sending him a number of notes on education and prohibition. He approaches the question from the purely economic point of view which would seem to make the educational point of view secondary and not primary as Gandhiji wants it to be."

[2] Richard B. Gregg's *Economics of Khaddar*

[3] *Charkha Shastra*

which I am hoping to die. That is why I challenge friends like you and invite them to challenge me. If they convince me of the error of my ways, I shall not hesitate to confess my folly.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

227. LEST WE FORGET

A Harijan *sevak* reminds me that nowadays Harijans, for whom this weekly was started, have receded into the background and its columns are devoted to all sorts of subjects. He is half right. I have begun to discuss questions which have been hitherto deliberately excluded. The reason for exclusion no longer exists. The contrary is the case now. In the greater part of India the Congress is both in office and power. It is true that the power is limited. But it is limited in terms of Complete Independence, not otherwise. India is one vast prison with high walls of suppression choking her mind and body. But its Superintendent has seen fit to give a large part of the prisoners the power to appoint from among themselves the governing officials with full powers of administration, at any rate enough for growing strong, so long as they recognize that they are still prisoners. Well, they have chosen to take advantage of this freedom in the hope that by never requiring the assistance of his admitted physical superiority they will convince the Superintendent that he is no longer wanted.

Anyway, that being my interpretation of the Government of India Act and the office-acceptance, I must strive to show to the co-workers, who have become Ministers, how in my opinion they can achieve the end. And if I succeed in so doing, the battle against untouchability is almost won.

But I need hardly say that removal of untouchability from the Hindu heart is, like communal unity, an indispensable condition of success through the non-violent action that is implicit in office-acceptance. Therefore Harijan *sevaks* have to redouble their efforts to touch the caste Hindu heart as well as the Harijan heart. We must constantly remind Hindu orthodoxy of the solemn oath taken at the all-India meeting held in Bombay on the 25th September, 1932, under the presidentship of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.[1] Here is the oath:

> This Conference resolves that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as untouchable by reason of his birth, and that

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

those who have been so regarded hitherto shall have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads and all other public institutions. This right shall have statutory recognition at the first opportunity, and shall be one of the earliest acts of the Swaraj Parliament, if it shall not have received such recognition before that time.

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

Harijan, 2-10-1937

228. STUDENTS AND STRIKES

A college student of Bangalore writes:

I have read your article[1] in *Harijan* and I request you to let me know your opinion on students taking part in strikes like Andamans Day, Abattoir Day[2], etc.

Whilst I have pleaded for the removal of restrictions on the speech and movements of students, I am not able to support political strikes or demonstrations. Students should have the greatest freedom of expression and of opinion. They may openly sympathize with any political party they like. But in my opinion they may not have freedom of action whilst they are studying. A student cannot be an active politician and pursue his studies at the same time. It is difficult to draw hard and fast lines at the time of big national upheavals. Then they do not strike or, if the word 'strike' can be used in such circumstances, it is a wholesale strike; it is a suspension of studies. Thus what may appear to be an exception is not one in reality.

As a matter of fact the question such as the correspondent has raised should not arise in the Congress Provinces. For there can be no curb which the best mind of the students will not willingly accept. The majority of them are, must be, Congress-minded. They may not do anything that would embarrass the Ministries. If they struck, they would do so because the Ministers wanted them to. But I cannot conceive of Congress Ministers wanting them to strike except when the Congress is no

[1] *Vide* "For Ministers of Education", pp. 140-1.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Deshbandhu Gupta", p. 110.

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longer in office, and when the Congress declares, maybe, a non-violent active war against the Government of the day. And even then, I should think that to invite students in the first instance to suspend their studies for strikes would be tantamount to a declaration of bankruptcy. If the people in general are with the Congress for any demonstration in the nature of strikes, students will be left alone except as a last resort. During the last war the students were not the first to be called out but they were the last, so far as I recollect, and then only college students.

I would like the correspondent to read or re-read my note on a schoolmaster's letter in the *Harijan* of 18th September. He will find therein my position regarding the political liberty of students and schoolmasters.

But another correspondent writes in connection with it:

> If we allow paid State officials, teachers and others to participate in politics, it would become a hell. No Government could be carried on if their policies are subjected to debates among Government or other State officials who have to carry them out. Your desire that national hopes, desires and ideas of patriotism should have free play is of course proper. But I fear your article is likely to be misunderstood unless you make your position quite clear.

I had thought that my position was quite clear. Where there is a national Government there is rarely any friction between it and its officials or the students. My note guards itself against all indiscipline. What the schoolmaster resents, and rightly, is espionage and suppression of free thought which has been the rule of the day hitherto. Congress Ministers themselves are of the people and from the people. They have no secrets. They are expected to be in personal touch with every public activity including the student mind. They have at their disposal the whole of the Congress machinery which, as the interpreter of the popular will, is surely more than the law, the police and the military. Those who have not that machinery to back them are spent bullets. For those Ministers who have the Congress at their back, the law, the police and the military may be said to be a useless appendage. And the Congress is nothing if it is not an embodiment of discipline. Therefore with the Congress in power there should be voluntary, not forced, discipline everywhere.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

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229. *DOING, NOT IDLE THINKING*

Dr. G. S. Arundale sends me an advance copy of an article he has written for the *Orient Illustrated Weekly* with the following covering letter:

> You have expressed a wish that education should now begin to be real in this country and not artificial as it has been for so many years. As one who has been active in education in India for more than thirty years, I send you an article which is appearing in the *Orient Illustrated Weekly*. Maybe it represents in some degree your own views. I do feel that there should be a national scheme of education which every National Minister will do his best to express in his particular Province. There has been a good deal of independent tinkering. I feel it is urgent that the note of the great principles should be sounded without delay so that there may be a common bond and a common effort in which public and Government alike shall join.

I take from the article the most important and relevant extracts. After dealing with the question of how to proceed, he says:

> I have no space here to suggest the nature of the principles which should underlie national education. But at least so far as both boys and girls are concerned in the school sphere—I hope we shall gradually eliminate the absurd distinctions of 'school' and 'college'—the note throughout must be that of *Doing*.
>
> However much thought may be stimulated, it is valueless save as it mellows into *Doing*. The same may be said as regards the emotions and feelings, so dangerously neglected in most modern systems of education. India needs her youth to be workers—workers whose character is such—developed through education—that it naturally becomes translated into work, into practical capacity, into service. India needs young citizens who can *do* well in whatever department of life to which they may be called by environment and by heredity. Every subject of the curriculum is to the end of right living. Every subject discloses the Law, the Order and the Purpose of Life. Teachers must never forget this as they tend to grow submerged in the hardness of so-called facts. They should remember that in the world of our intelligence there are no facts, but only conventions. It was well said by Sir Arthur Eddington[1] that science has taken the great step forward of moving from

[1] Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, a British astronomer

certainty to doubt. Our education must, therefore, cause all its 'facts' to rest lightly in the minds of its pupils, and use them beyond all else for the development of that character which is the only safe foundation both for individuals and for nations.

And once character stirs, the desire to *do* will intensify, in the directions both of self-support and of self-sacrifice. There will arise the desire to draw as close as possible to the Earth our Mother, to worship her in the ritual of agriculture, and to become as little as may be of a burden to her by simplicity of need and purity of desire. Indeed, I hold that no child of Mother Earth should be unable to draw from her some direct sustenance, and I would have as part of all education some measure of direct contact with her, even in town educational institutions.

We must tear ourselves radically away from those educational conventions which have made education so largely futile today. We must begin, under the existing favourable auspices of the national ministries, a system of real education which is not instruction. We have become imprisoned in the ruts and grooves of out-of-date educational forms and fetishes, and I heartily welcome Gandhiji's adumbration of an education which is self-supporting. I am not quite sure if we shall be able to go quite as far as he suggests. I entirely agree that a young citizen after finishing a seven years' course "should be discharged as an earning unit". I myself feel that everyone should, partly through education, become conscious of his creative capacity, for he is a god in the becoming and therefore possesses the supreme attribute of God—the power to create, to *do*. If this power be not awakened, of what use education? Then indeed is it instruction and not education.

There is as much brain in the hand as there is in the head. For long the intellect in the head has been our God. Intellect has been our tyrant, our dictator. Under the new dispensation it must be one among our many servants, and we must learn to exalt all that makes for simple living, that draws us near to the beautiful simplicities of nature, all that helps me to live with my hands—manual work of all kinds, of the artist, of the artisan, of the agriculturist.

I know I should have lived a happier and more effective life had I so been educated.

What I have been saying as a layman, for the lay reader, Dr. Arundale has said as an educationist, for the educationist, and those who have in their charge the moulding of the youth of the country. I am not surprised at the caution with which he approaches the idea of self-supporting education. For me it is the crux. My one regret is that what I have seen through the glass darkly for the past 40 years I have begun to see now quite clearly under the stress of circumstances.

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Having spoken strongly in 1920 against the present system of education, and having now got the opportunity of influencing, however little it may be, Ministers in seven Provinces, who have been fellow-workers and fellow-sufferers in the glorious struggle for freedom of the country, I have felt an irresistible call to make good the charge that the present mode of education is radically wrong from bottom to top. And what I have been struggling to express in these columns very inadequately has come upon me like a flash, and the truth of it is daily growing upon me. I do, therefore, venture to ask the educationists of the country, who have no axes to grind, and who have an open mind, to study the two propositions that I have laid down, without allowing their preconceived and settled notions about the existing mode of education to interfere with the free flow of their reason. I would urge them not to allow my utter ignorance of education, in its technical and orthodox sense, to prejudice them against what I have been saying and writing. Wisdom, it is said, often comes from the mouths of babes and sucklings. It may be a poetic exaggeration, but there is no doubt that sometimes it does come through babes. Experts polish it and give it a scientific shape. I therefore ask for an examination of my propositions purely on merits. Let me restate them here, not as I have previously laid them down in these columns, but in the language that occurs to me as I am dictating these lines:

1. Primary education, extending over a period of 7 years or longer, and covering all the subjects up to the matriculation standard, except English, plus a vocation used as the vehicle for drawing out the minds of boys and girls in all departments of knowledge, should take the place of what passes today under the name of Primary, Middle and High School Education.

2. Such education, taken as a whole, can, and must be, self-supporting; in fact self-support is the acid test of its reality.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

230. QUESTIONS BEFORE EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Marwari High School, recently renamed Navabharat Vidyalaya, is celebrating its Silver Jubilee. The management conceived the idea of calling on the occasion a small conference of nationally-minded educationists to discuss the plan of education I have been endeavouring to propound in these columns. The Secretary, Shri Shrimannarayan Agrawal, consulted me

as to the desirability of convening such a conference, and asked me to preside if I approved of the idea. I liked both the suggestions. So the conference will be held at Wardha on October 22nd and 23rd. Only those will attend who are invited thereto. If there are any educationists who would like to attend and who have not received invitations, they may apply to the Secretary, giving their names and addresses, and such particulars as would enable the management to decide whether they can afford to issue the invitation. Provision is being made only for a limited number who are deeply interested in the problem and can make a useful contribution to the discussion. The conference is not intended to be at all spectacular. There will be no visitors. It will be a purely business meeting. A limited number of Press tickets will be issued. I advise Pressmen to elect one or two representatives and share the reporting.

I approach the task in confidence but in all humility, with an open mind, and with the will to learn and to revise and correct my views, whenever necessary.

The propositions I shall submit to the conference for consideration will be, so far as they occur to me at present, as follows:

1. The present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English, having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. This excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated class a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated class almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of expenditure inasmuch as what little is taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of the villages or cities. Such advantage as is gained by the existing system of education is not gained by the chief taxpayer, his children getting the least.

2. The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial vocation.

3. For the all-round development of boys and girls all training should so far as possible be given through a profit-yielding vocation. In other words vocations should serve a double purpose—to enable the pupil to pay for his tuition through the

products of his labour and at the same time to develop the whole man or woman in him or her through the vocation learnt at school.

Land, buildings and equipment are not intended to be covered by the proceeds of the pupil's labour.

All the processes of cotton, wool and silk, commencing from gathering, cleaning, ginning (in the case of cotton), carding, spinning, dyeing, sizing, warp-making, double-twisting, designing and weaving, embroidery, tailoring, paper-making, cutting, bookbinding, cabinet-making, toy-making, *gur*-making are undoubtedly occupations that can easily be learnt and handled without much capital outlay.

This primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread, by the State guaranteeing employment in the vocations learnt or by buying their manufactures at prices fixed by the State.

4. Higher education should be left to private enterprise and for meeting national requirements whether in the various industries, technical arts, belles-lettres or fine arts.

The State Universities should be purely examining bodies, self-supporting through the fees charged for examinations.

Universities will look after the whole of the field of education and will prepare and approve courses of studies in the various departments of education. No private school should be run without the previous sanction of the respective Universities. University charters should be given liberally to any body of persons of proved worth and integrity, it being always understood that the Universities will not cost the State anything except that it will bear the cost of running a Central Education Department.

The foregoing scheme does not absolve the State from running such seminaries as may be required for supplying State needs.

It is claimed that if the whole scheme is accepted, it will solve the question of the greatest concern to the State—training of its youth, its future makers.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

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231. NOTES

Praise from the Highest

Thus runs an A. P. message[1] from Calicut:

> In a statement issued today His Holiness Azhvancheri Thampurakkal, who is considered as the highest of the Brahmins in Kerala, says: "The Temple-entry Proclamation[2] issued by His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore has resuscitated Hinduism, without in the least deviating from its essential ideals." His Holiness considers that the Proclamation will shine resplendent through the ages as the most perfect doctrine of varnashrama dharma.
>
> His Holiness also points out that the Proclamation has rooted out the evils of untouchability, disharmony and inequality among the Hindus, and as such His Holiness welcomes all the principles laid down in the Proclamation. His Holiness is of opinion that it in no way contravenes the Vedic injunctions or Shastric ordinances.
>
> His Holiness Azhvancheri Thampurakkal is the last resort of appeal in caste matters, according to the history of Kerala written by the historian Padmanabha Menon. . . .

I tender my congratulations to His Holiness on his courageously ranging himself on the side of truth and progress. It is to be hoped that if he is "the last resort of appeal in caste matters" his opinion will be respected and adopted by orthodoxy at least in Kerala if not elsewhere.

Harijan Service in Simla

There has been in Simla for the past five years the Valmiki (Harijan) Young Men's Association. Its Honorary Director is Pt. C. V. Viswanathan. Its Honorary Secretary is Lala B. Lachman Singh Sabhotra, himself a Valmiki Harijan. It runs during summer a free night-school open to all communities. Of its twenty-one students, eight are caste Hindus. The school has three Harijan teachers teaching all castes. It has also two caste Hindu and Sikh teachers. The Headmaster is a Harijan. The Association gives free medical relief through honorary physicians. There is also a mutual aid fund. Loans are granted at one pice

[1] Only excerpts from which are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXIV, pp. 45-6 and Appendix.

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per rupee interest. This means 18 per cent. I regard this as exorbitant. It should be no more than 6 per cent or at the most 8 per cent. That would no doubt mean stricter scrutiny in the giving of loans. This would be all to the good. The course of every rupee given should be traced. The Association also supports a reading-room and sometimes poor stranded Harijans are permitted a shakedown of nights on its premises. I wish the Association every success.

FOR ORISSA FLOOD RELIEF

I am glad to be able to say that Sjts. A. B. Pandit and Co.'s cheque for Rs. 500 and Sjt. Manilal Bulakhidas's cheque for Rs. 100 constitute the first and prompt response to my appeal[1] for Orissa Flood Relief. The cheques have been forwarded directly to the Minister Shri Kanungo, at Cuttack.

Harijan, 2-10-1937

232. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE AND GAURIBAI KHADILKAR[2]

[About *October 2, 1937*][3]

Your deep affection is a familiar phenomenon. But the affection of countless others whom I have never known keeps me from swerving from the path of duty.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

233. ILLITERATES v. *LITERATES*

A gentleman writes from Bombay:

The present Government has urged the Corporation to widen its franchise. Today it is limited to the adults who pay not less than Rs. 5 rent. It has been recommended that it should be extended to all literates. The question now is what effect this will have on the proposal to have adult franchise for election to the Constituent Assembly. If the Congress members now rest content with literacy franchise, would it not be a violation of the Congress principle? There are some like me who think it expedient for the present to accept the literacy franchise. What is our duty in the circumstances?

[1] *Vide* pp. 160-1.

[2] & [3] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". The addressees used to send Gandhiji dhotis of self-spun yarn on his birthday every year.

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In so far as this question is directly related to Congress discipline, I have no right to express an opinion on the subject. My interpretation as a journalist I would not consider more authoritative than the interpretation of the questioner. The opinion of the Congress President would be sufficient and should be binding in this matter. But, let me, as one with long experience, give my opinion too for the sake of the questioner and others like him. Anyone who thinks that he lacks the capacity or the time to take all the steps suggested by the Congress, should, I hold, take without hesitation whatever steps he can in the direction laid down by the Congress. It is his duty to do this and there is no question of any breach of discipline.

Considering the merits of the proposal, I feel that while extending the franchise, it is not at all proper to confine it to literates. It is possible that an educated young man of 21 may not at all be fit to exercise his franchise, whereas, an illiterate man of 50, experienced and sensible, may realize the value of his vote and his vote will have its own significance. It has been daily happening that way. There are many things taken for granted even in the Congress advocacy of adult franchise. I am firmly convinced that the deaf and dumb, known idiots, lunatics, persons indulging in secret crimes and those suffering from incurable diseases cannot enjoy the right to vote even if they have attained the prescribed age.

Moreover, there is no reason to believe that those who have learnt to read and write have achieved something great. I am not prepared to say that those who have not been able so far to get educated are themselves responsible for their ignorance. It is indeed the indifference of the middle-class people that is responsible for the ignorance of the masses. The number of illiterate people in India has remained so large because these people have not discharged their duty. Hence, in my view it is a double crime to give franchise to those who, by the favour of the Government, have become educated and to deny it to those who, because of the Government's indifference, received no education. It becomes the duty of those in power to arrange for early education of those illiterates who are entitled to exercise their votes. Thus, on the one hand, it would mean atonement for not giving franchise to those who should have had it from the beginning, and, on the other, it would encourage efforts to educate the electorate so that voters can exercise their franchise intelligently.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 3-10-1937

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234. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
October 3, 1937

No time.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3617. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6426

235. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 3, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Chimanlal's ship may still be said to be in mid-sea. He didn't sleep the whole night. He kept shivering. His behaviour also has changed considerably. The temperature is all right. It is 98°. I hope the doctor is coming today. If you are not sending him for me, send him for Chimanlal at any rate. The earlier he comes the better. What about Lila?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11574

236. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 3, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

We want to do so many things but God alone knows what is best for us. Now that you have stayed over, it is all right. Come over tomorrow with Lilavati and take the evening train with Jamnalalji or by yourself. You need not leave tonight.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 392

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] The subscription is in Urdu.

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237. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
October 4, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It has been impossible for me to write personally during the week. The left hand works slowly, the right must not be used on week days.

Lilavati took one whole day and she deserved it. Poor girl suffered much during and after the operation. Chimanlal's life is hanging by a thread. He causes the greatest anxiety. Temperature became normal for a few hours for the first time yesterday. But he is very weak. His brain does not work. Parnerkar's fever is gone. He is gaining strength.

Sir Jogendra Singh has sent me, after reading my article[1], a sweet letter which I enclose herewith. You may destroy it after reading it.

J.[2] insists on my going to Calcutta[3] and I fear I shall have to go. It might also be well as I should come in touch with the detenus[4].

Your cheque for Orissa has been sent to Cuttack. Your precious parcel containing blanket, seeds and sandals has come in, also your wire. The first blanket has not worn out yet.

Since you want all your letters destroyed immediately on my reading them and they are destroyed I can't remember the contents that called for answers. So you have to be satisfied with incomplete Monday letters.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Of course I know what love is woven into the shawl and sewn into the sandals and impressed upon the seeds. I ate your apple today with my made teeth.

From the original: C.W. 3813. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6969

[1] *Vide* "Not Impracticable", pp. 161-3.

[2] Jawaharlal Nehru

[3] For the Working Committee meeting which was to be held from October 26

[4] Andamans prisoners; Gandhiji met them on October 30; *vide* "Talk with Andamans prisoners", 30-10-1937, and "Statement to the Press" 1-11-1937.

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238. LETTER TO PYARELAL

October 4, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

Herewith the denture. Let him do what he likes with it. I had kept it on during the whole of the day and the night. I shall expect you tomorrow. But you may stay on if necessary. Return only after settling everything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 802

239. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

WARDHA,
October 5, 1937

RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQATASHRAM
PATNA

HOPE YOU ARE WELL AND WILL ATTEND EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE 22ND 23RD HERE. SAME TIME LABOUR COMMITTEE MEETING CAWNPORE. HOPE CAN POSTPONE SAME.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 9878. Courtesy: Rajendra Prasad

240. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SEGAON,
October 5, 1937

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have been meaning all these days to send for you and have a talk with you, but I could get no time. I shall, therefore, feel easy in my mind only if I write down what I wanted to say. I am eaten up by discontent at not being able to cope

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with the work here and yet, if I strain myself to do it all, my health which has already been weakened will deteriorate further.

What is the cause of your antipathy to Mirabehn? Why are you not on talking terms with her? I had asked her to examine the children and also to inspect carding, etc. Accordingly she gave me the accompanying note. That must have been six or seven days ago. If there is any exaggeration in it, we may ignore it, but it is bound to contain something useful also. She is always exact and methodical in her work. I should like you to submit to her supervision. If you can't bear her oral criticism, I would ask her to write it down from time to time and I would pass it on to you. But if you cannot tolerate even her silent supervision, I will stop her doing that also. Are you fully satisfied with your present performance?

Have you anything to say about the school? Are you ready to take charge of it? The residents of the village also are ready to co-operate and to let you work. Do you wish to take any part in this work? Do you have the time for it? Do you have the capacity?

I will be satisfied even if you carry to perfection the work you are doing now. Anyone who attains perfection even in the smallest job can get satisfaction from it.

You may reply to this either orally when you find me free or in writing. From today I have decided to dispose of the work also by writing as I am doing now. I am, therefore, writing to Nanavati and Dahyalal also.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8577. Also C.W. 7022. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

241. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
October 5, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I get no time to discuss things. I am, therefore, having recourse to writing. For a long time, I have been wanting to have a discussion with you. But today this and no more. I want to take from you some original work. If it is necessary for you to give up all other activities for that, I would ask you to do so.

CWMG - DVD

The experiment being conducted on Kanam[1] is sure to benefit him. And if it is carried on with proper understanding, it will not only benefit him but benefit you also a good deal and make my task very much easier.

I want you to master the science of weaving from the first to the last step. Now please let me know your own sincere desire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10737

242. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

October 6, 1937

Love. Your draft manifesto tomorrow.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3815. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6971

243. LETTER TO VIDYA A. HINGORANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 6, 1937

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Got one after a long time. Extend your stay at Nainital and be fully restored. Your first duty is to make your body strong.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Son of Ramdas Gandhi
[2] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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244. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

October 6, 1937

CHI. ANAND,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is better than Vidya's. The Hindi is also good. If you try a little more, you will have a fairly good knowledge of Hindi. In Nainital you should also have enough practice in speaking Hindi. Have some practice also in reading Hindi. Read a Hindi newspaper and the *Ramayana*. You will be doubly benefited by reading *Harijan Sevak*.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

245. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 6, 1937

It is impossible for me to send individual thanks to the numerous friends who have sent me telegrams and cables and also letters, from almost all parts of India and the world. I see that the volume is increasing from year to year. I can only hope that it may be possible for my innumerable friends throughout the world to be able to say at the end of the last line of the last chapter of my life that I have never ceased to strive to deserve their affection.

The Hindu, 7-10-1937

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246. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS AND KRISHNA KAPADIA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 7, 1937

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1] AND KRISHNA[2],

I got your letters and the garlands. Whether or not I convey my blessings through a letter, you always have them.

Everything here is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

247. LETTER TO CHANDAN PAREKH

October 7, 1937

CHI. CHANDU,

I am writing this letter though I have had none from you. You are alone there and in a foreign land where everything is strange. And moreover you have the burden of the . . .[3] affair weighing on you. Shankar, therefore, thinks that if I write to you occasionally it may cheer you up. I agree. That he worries so much about you is a good sign for you. But when one has gone so far away from home, why should one need cheering up from anybody? Anybody who goes to a foreign country, thousands of miles away, should have the strength to find peace in his or her own mind. I presume you have that strength. And if you don't have it, cultivate such peace. God is never away from one who believes in Him. He is nearer to one than even one's finger-nail, for He dwells in each and every fibre of our being. He is witness to the most secret outpourings of our heart. He does not care whether we believe in Him or not, nor does He care even if we keep away from Him, since He has full control over us.

You need not at all worry about the . . . affair, for you have left that worry to me. I hope that now I shall have no

[1] & [2] Kasturba Gandhi's brother and his wife
[3] The name has been omitted.

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question to ask you. But if there is anything, I will frankly ask you and you also may reply equally frankly.

I hope you are keeping good health. You must be absorbed in your study.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 944. Courtesy: Satish D. Kalelkar

248. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

October 7, 1937

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter.

If we allow confectioners, etc., from outside without making it a condition that they will use only cow's milk or ghee made out of such milk, it will certainly be wrong. We should collect ghee from outside also if possible. If we allow confectioners, etc., we should control their prices. If they have to pay more for milk, etc., we may permit them to charge proportionately higher prices. There cannot be any competition within the camp, of course. People, therefore, are sure to pay whatever reasonable prices we fix. Our major difficulty will perhaps be about non-vegetarian food. I don't know what was the arrangement in Faizpur[1]. Even if supply of meat was not arranged in the camp, it must have been available in Faizpur proper. We have selected a place where what we do not provide will not be available. Please think over this. Discuss this with Sardar also.

If, at the time of the Education Conference, you cannot stay on after the session is over, we shall not be able to have any discussion. And on the 25th morning I will have to leave for Calcutta. We shall not, therefore, get any time. Perhaps if you could arrive a day or two earlier, we can have some discussion. I assume that you will be making a fairly substantial contribution to the Conference.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. NARAHARI D. PARIKH
HARIJAN ASHRAM
SABARMATI, B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9114

[1] At the Congress Session in December 1936

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249. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 7, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

That owner of the liquor-booth continues to extract toddy on the strength of his right. Babasaheb's clerk doesn't stop him. Do, therefore, write a letter to Nagpur as soon as you get a reply. But in addition you yourself should go and see the District Commissioner or Excise Commissioner and tell him that this manufacture of liquor must stop.

The bulb of the torch has fused. Please get another and send it tomorrow. I assume that the torch itself is all right.

I understand about Lilavati. I will not be anxious till she herself becomes impatient. I shall be content if her health is completely restored.

I hear that Gomati[1] is having high fever. Kishorelal[2] has cough. Please go and see them if you can. Somebody could be sent from here for help, if need be. You may take Ishvardas's help. Kishorelal himself will never ask for anything. If you think it necessary, please take the Civil Surgeon with you. I don't like his having such frequent attacks.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

It would be advisable to tell Vinoba about the hundred rupees.[3]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11575

[1] & [2] Gomati and Kishorelal Mashruwala
[3] This was added by Kanu Gandhi "on behalf of Bapu".

250. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

I am glad you wrote to me in Hindi. The writing is good —perfectly legible, and the language quite good. As I narrowly look at the writing at the time of dictating this, I see that though it is good, and legible, it admits of correction and improvement.

When you can at all get away for a few days, with parents' full consent and blessings, do not hesitate to come for fear of getting ill here. I have no such fear. You will eat exactly as you like—you will bring your cooker and prepare the food for yourself. I fear you cannot come here before the end of November, for I am likely to be away during November in the Frontier. I need prolonged mental rest much more than physical. I am taking as much as is possible, but I can afford to take more.

I am taxing my mind as to Raghavan's substitute. I had myself thought of you. You have always been diffident—have always underestimated your ability—but, if you will take courage in both your hands, you will make quite a good Director[2]. Try —if you feel unequal to it you will resign. After all, in difficulties, you will fall back upon me—not merely as your guide but as the official head of the organization. You have sufficient knowledge of Hindi, you like the work, you know most of the work, you are scrupulously conscientious, you have powers of application and are quite capable of exercising independent judgement when you want to. There is, therefore, no cause for diffidence. You must shed false modesty. Therefore, if there is room for you to reconsider, you should do so, and straightaway go and see Rajagopalachari and seek his advice. I do not want you to accept the post, if, for any reason, he does not like my idea.

I had your special basket of fruit. But what I can manage is not the especially expensive fruit that you sent me but

[1] The superscription is in Hindi.
[2] Of the Hindi Prachar Sabha

oranges and limes. There are never extra good oranges in Wardha, and never the rich limes you get there. And just now I am using here nearly 3 doz. oranges a day and at least 1 doz. limes. So whenever these are cheap you may send them. I dread the railage. For the satisfaction of my curiosity let me know what it comes to when you send your next basket.

Mahadev has not told you but the Rs. 50 must have been received.

Love.

BAPU

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

251. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 8, 1937

Don't expect love letters from me just now except on Mondays. I thoroughly agree with you about your remarks on culture leagues, etc. Atul knows this.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3816. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6972

252. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI[2]

October 8, 1937

You do not want a reply from me but I cannot restrain myself. You may run away even from those who love you. But what about them? And are you sure that you can create a bar between yourself and your species? You can no more run away from men than you can from your own body. Wherever you go, embodied life will haunt you. Embodied being can only see the Being through embodied life. He is not outside it.

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee which *inter alia* conveyed the following from Gandhiji:

i. Nariman's case is still going on.
ii. Very good that Nabi Baksh is well—Bapu sends him his love.
iii. Bapu wrote to Govinddas and wired to him also that he might come here on 11th or 12th.

[2] Dadabhoy Naoroji's granddaughter

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Upanishads are fragments of true human experiences. Will you contemplate the *Ishopanishad*? And what did Jesus mean when He said: "You cannot see my Father except through me (embodied life)." Oh, do please wake up from your sleep. You may forget me, disown me, I simply cannot forget you, what shall I do?

Love.

BAPU

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

253. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

I shall have to leave this place on the 25th. I shall perhaps have to be in Calcutta from 26th to 30th. I will return here, of course, but soon after I shall be leaving for the Frontier Province. If, therefore, you can come, do so just now. I don't know where we shall meet afterwards. Even if you come to Calcutta, what will be the use? I won't have time there even to look at you.

Chimanlal is better now. He is still in bed, but the temperature has come down to almost normal.

I am better. The pressure of work is fairly heavy.

Amtul Salaam is in Bombay at present. Perhaps she will still be there when you get this. But I can't say.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3528

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254. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
October 8, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I forgot to show you the accompanying letters. Shankar's letter is very sweet. He remembers the past with gratitude. That is sweet of him. Please do remember to give the letter to Bal. He should now arrive there in a day or two.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7705

255. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

SEGAON,
October 8, 1937

CHI. NANAVATI,

I told Mirabehn to note down the many things which she felt called for criticism. The note is enclosed. As a matter of fact, some of them fall within Dahyabhai's sphere of work and some within Vijaya's. Perhaps there is nothing at all in this for which you are directly responsible. But because you are the manager, all this should come to you for implementation at any rate. Mirabehn, of course, had suggested that she herself should give it to you. But I disapproved of it. If she were to be dissatisfied with any explanation given by you, I would have to listen to that again. If some of her words hurt you, you might not let them reach my ears but even so the pain would be there. I have adopted this course in order to avoid that dilemma. Many of Mirabehn's suggestions are useful and worth considering. All of them are indeed good, but there may be an element of exaggeration in some of them for which I would excuse her. I intend to encourage Mirabehn to bring such things to my notice. But she will talk only to me and, therefore, there will be no possibility of any tension arising. I will make whatever suggestion or take whatever steps I wish to on the basis of what she

tells me. Please discuss this with Dahyabhai. Show Vijaya whatever concerns her.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10738

256. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1937

CHI. SHARMA,

I am watching your experiments with interest and I wish you success. It seems almost impossible that I may be able to witness them personally but God makes even the impossible possible.

You have given me no facts regarding the Khurja Congress; what can I do in these circumstances? If you send me the facts with the name and address I shall certainly forward the letter to the right quarters.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 268

257. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[Before *October 9, 1937*][1]

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I don't see any chance of my meeting Jinnah at present. Jawaharlal doesn't desire it.

It seems I shall have to go to Calcutta. Jawaharlal is very keen that I should go, and so are the Bengal leaders. I have had a letter from Subhas, too. And if I go, I can see the detenus also. We are, therefore, sure to meet during the journey or, if not during the journey, at any rate in Calcutta.

It will be better if you yourself write to Bahadurji regarding the Nariman case and request him to expedite it.

[1] According to the source, the letter was written during the first fortnight of October. *Vide* also "Letter to Vallabhbhai Patel", p. 216.

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If we cannot gain control over the turbulent wind that is blowing, I am afraid the game will be lost completely. We should try our best to gain that control. If people don't listen to us, we shall have no option but to leave. A few persons having control at a few points in the present set-up will not serve our purpose. We shall be able to continue to work only if we have control over the whole organization. We will try our best to preserve such control.

I altogether forgot to write to you about Sadananda[1]. He had come to see me. He wanted to resume publication of the paper and organize a news agency. I refused to give him any encouragement in that. I tried to persuade him not to embark on such a futile venture and, whatever he decided, I asked him to leave me out of it. He has agreed to do the latter. He didn't seem to have repented anything. My view is that it is not worth embarking on the venture of another English newspaper in Bombay.

We must certainly reply to Nimbkar[2]. I had only meant that I could do nothing on the basis of the newspaper report.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 215-6

258. GIVE MINISTERS A CHANCE

This is the gist of the conversation of a visitor:

> You may not know what Ministers have to go through just now. Congressmen, having abjured office for seventeen years, suddenly find that their own chosen representatives are in possession of powers which they had voluntarily surrendered before. They do not know what to do with these representatives. They smother them with addresses and entertainments and, as often as not, they demand interviews with them as a matter of right and present them with all kinds of suggestions and sometimes even ask for petty favours.

This is the best way to disable the Ministers from doing real service to the country. They are new to their work. A conscientious Minister has no time for receiving addresses and

[1] S. Sadananda, Editor, *Free Press Journal*
[2] A communist worker

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honours, or for making speeches in return for fulsome or deserved praise. Nor have they time for interviewers whom they do not invite, or who they think are not going to help them in their work. In theory, a leader of democracy holds himself at the beck and call of the public. It is but right that he should do so. But he dare not do so at the sacrifice of the duty imposed upon him by the public. Ministers will cut a sorry figure if they do not master, or are not allowed by the public to master, the work entrusted to them. An Education Minister has to have all his wits about him if he is to evolve a policy in keeping with the requirements of the country. An Excise Minister will prove a disastrous failure if he does not attend to the constructive side of prohibition. And so will a Finance Minister who, in spite of the handicap created for him by the [Government of] India Act and in spite of the voluntary surrender of the Excise Revenue, will not balance his budget. It requires a juggler in figures to be able to do so. These are but illustrations. Every ministerial office requires almost the same vigilance, care and study as the three I have mentioned.

It would have been easy for them, if they had simply to read and sign papers put before them by the permanent Service. But it is not easy to study every document and think out and originate new policies. Their gesture of simplicity, necessary as it was as a preliminary, will avail them nothing if they will not show the requisite industry, ability, integrity, impartiality, and an infinite capacity for mastering details. It would be well, therefore, if the public will exercise self-restraint in the matter of giving addresses, seeking interviews or writing to them long epistles.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

259. CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

Bhausaheb Lavate[1] has been honouring me with a visit in the interest of prohibition which is as dear to him as to me. We came to the following conclusions:

1. Strict non-use from now of all Excise Revenue for any but prohibition purposes.

2. Non-renewal of all licences on their expiry and immediate closing of all liquor shops, where there is a clear demand for closing on the part of at least 75% of those who have been visiting these shops.

[1] Of Poona

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3. Liquor, whenever it is necessary to sell it, should be sold only through direct Government agency.

4. All existing liquor shops should be, wherever possible, converted into refreshment and recreation rooms.

5. Causes of the habit in typical areas should be carefully investigated and dealt with.

6. Absolutely peaceful, silent and educative picketing by recognized individuals or groups should be undertaken, the object being to establish intimate personal contact with the addicts so as to help them to give up the habit. Personal visits to the addicts in their own homes would be a feature of scientific picketing. Voluntary agency for this work should be invited by the Government and encouraged to do this philanthropic work.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

260. TO APPLICANTS FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION TEACHERSHIPS

It is gratifying that I am daily receiving letters in reply to my appeal[1] for teachers who approve of the plan I have been developing from week to week in these columns of Primary Education and who are prepared to work it. I observe from the correspondence that the writers have not grasped the meaning of my appeal. No one will be wanted who does not thoroughly believe in primary education through a profitable handicraft and who will not or cannot work it for the love of it and for mere maintenance. To all such I suggest that they thoroughly master the art of spinning and of performing all the anterior processes. Meanwhile I am registering all the names. The writers will hear from me in due course of the progress that may be made with the execution of the plan. My appeal is an effort to anticipate the requirements of the seven Provincial Governments, should they feel inclined to endorse and experiment with the plan.

Harijan, 9-10-1937

[1] *Vide* p. 164.

261. LETTER TO G. V. GURJALE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 9, 1937

MY DEAR GURJALE,

I appreciate the frankness of the last part of your letter. I am glad you are concentrating the minds of friends on prohibition.

I can do nothing about tea and coffee, bad as I know they are, until you give me facts and figures to support your contentions.[1]

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1402

262. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 9, 1937

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have just read your reply to Nimbkar. I didn't like it at all. It displays great intolerance. I think it will be very difficult to prove your accusation against him. And where was the need to say it all? And the attack on the [*Bombay*] *Chronicle* doesn't become you at all. "Obvious reasons" are reasons which everybody knows. In the first instance I don't know that the *Chronicle* always opposes you. And even if it is true that it does, what can be the obvious reason? What was the point in saying it? I am afraid you have needlessly provoked opposition.

About Vaikunth (Mehta), Munshi will let you know. Morarji should relieve him from moratorium and co-operative work for three months, and if the Committee's work is to stop after that he may certainly be included.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 214-5

[1] *Vide* p. 176.

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263. NOTE TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[Before *October 10, 1937*][1]

You certainly did well in coming away earlier. I have been able to keep myself going with the greatest effort. My brain needs plenty of rest. I observe silence and sleep as long as I can and remain calm so that I may not have a breakdown on the 22nd. But please see everything here. Observe the experiment in Nalwadi through my eyes. Have a discussion with Kaka. [Arya]nayakam also has grasped [the idea] well enough. But Vinoba has done it better than anybody else. He writes and says that he finds nothing to object to in my articles. I have sent an extract from his letter for *Harijanbandhu*.[2] I don't know whether or not it is printed.

* * *

Vanamala and others were well saved.

* * *

What is the age of the student?

* * *

There would hardly be any children of very tender age in any village school. There are such children in the village, of course, but they do not attend school. Here the parents don't send such very young children to school. The teachers take no interest in them. It is not my wish that they should not attend school. I am only describing what I have observed.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9112

264. TWO ENDORSEMENTS OF EDUCATION THROUGH WORK

Even though Vinoba and I are separated by a distance of only five miles, we hardly meet each other as we are both deep in our own work and as neither is in the best of health. Hence, we decide many matters by correspondence.

[1] From the reference to Vinoba's letter which appeared in *Harijanbandhu*, 10-10-1937

[2] *Vide* the following item.

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I have quoted these ideas[1] from one such letter. I consider these ideas very significant, because I am not aware of anyone else from among my colleagues who has carried out so many experiments in that direction as Vinoba has. The revolutionary increase in the speed of the *takli* has at its root Vinoba's inspiration and his untiring labour. He has worked on his charkha and *takli* for eight to ten hours a day even though he has been managing a big organization. And, right from the beginning he has given this craft an important place in education. Thus, Vinoba is naturally in full agreement with me in making education self-supporting through a craft which I consider to be my original discovery. This, indeed, is a matter of great encouragement for me. I have quoted his opinion here in the hope that it would strengthen the faith of those who know Vinoba and would inspire faith in those who have none now.

Support from Shri Vinoba is not a matter of surprise for me. Nor would it be for readers of *Harijanbandhu*. On the contrary, if I do not get his support, it should set me thinking. It would be foolish and certainly impudent to venture to convince the nation about a point if I am not able to convince my oldest colleagues about it. I was no doubt pleasantly surprised on receiving Shri Manu Subedar's letter. I have been corresponding with him on issues like education, prohibition, etc. As a result I have the following letter[2]. The reader will be happy to see it. He had sent some suggestions in English along with the letter which I have already published in *Harijan*[3].

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-10-1937

265. MY NOTES

Prohibition in Ahmedabad

The Government of the Bombay Presidency has taken the welcome decision of introducing total prohibition from the 1st of

[1] Not translated here. Vinoba Bhave had conveyed his appreciation of Gandhiji's latest thoughts on education and had further stated that he would not have even the dualistic conception of work and education and he had therefore already started experimenting on the lines of work-education.

[2] Not translated here. The correspondent had supported basic education on financial grounds and suggested that a district-wise survey should be made of locally available raw materials which, along with the necessary implements, should be supplied at the school door.

[3] Dated October 2, 1937, under the title "Useful Hints on Education"

April. This is no doubt a correct step. As Ahmedabad is one of those fields where this thing has been well tried, this experiment should meet with easy success there. The aim of prohibition is that people may stop taking alcohol. If people do not give up the habit, illicit distillation will go on and the addicts will persist in drinking, and the prohibition law will have failed. Thus, although people cannot be made to give up drinking unless the drinking booths are closed down, the mere closing down of the booths will bring no result unless people are convinced through education of the evils of alcoholism. The largest number of alcoholics in Ahmedabad comes from the working class. The Majoor Mahajan deserves to be congratulated on having undertaken the responsibility of educating the public and on having passed the necessary resolution. If men and women take upon themselves the individual responsibility and carry on this work, it is sure to meet with success. If success is achieved in a centre like Ahmedabad, other parts of India will also be encouraged and they will also learn how success can be achieved.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 10-10-1937

266. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

SEGAON,
October 10, 1937

CHI. SHRIMAN,

Only yesterday I heard that you had been suffering from unabating fever for four days. How come? Is it because you got married? I believed you could never fall ill. What has happened then? I hope to get some good news even today. This is being dictated at 5 a.m. after the morning prayers. Remember, it was at your instance, and with confidence in you that I allowed the Conference[1] to meet and accepted its presidentship.

I had not the strength to shoulder such a great burden but your enthusiasm persuaded me to agree. I hope you will not let me down now. Relax and get well soon. Could it be that the strain of the Conference has told on your health? If it is so, take refuge in Mother *Gita* and free yourself from attachment

[1] All-India Educational Conference

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and anxiety. After all He alone brings about whatever comes to be.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 299-300

267. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1937

You have to wait for my letter till tomorrow.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3817. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6973

268. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1937

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your two letters. I am quite clear that Horace[2] ought not to be asked to tear himself away from Olive[3] and come here in the anti-opium cause. Of course prohibition applies to both drinks and drugs. There is no question in the seven Provinces of carrying conviction. The Ministers would know how to deal with the matter. Horace is of much greater use in England than he can be here at the present moment. What is needed is the moral support of the best mind of the world in this campaign.

I do hope you are taking good care of yourself.
Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Your article[4] is going in.

From a photostat: G.N. 1426

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] & [3] Horace Alexander and his wife who was an invalid
[4] Which appeared in *Harijan*, 23-10-1937, under the title "Opium Too".

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269. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 10, 1937

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter. All are well. Stay on there till the matter is resolved.[1] Today Vijaya is leaving for home. What can be done? Lilavati has arrived and badly needs rest. Dahyalal has been given charge of the kitchen. Start taking the medicine.

Thousands of blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 393

270. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

October 10, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I could not bear to see your tears. Please return early after obtaining your parents' blessings. Be careful during the journey. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7073. Also C.W. 4565. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

[1] The addressee was in Bombay helping her brothers to settle their differences.

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271. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
October 11, 1937

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE EUROTRADE
BOMBAY

YOU NEED NOT STAY FOR OPERATION BUT MAY FOR BROTHERS IF NECESSARY. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 406

272. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

Unrevised

SEGAON,
October 11, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

It has been impossible to write to you during the week days in spite of your gentle complaint. I must not use the right hand and the left works laboriously. And I have no time for practice. Every minute must be used to best advantage. If you insist on my tearing your letters as soon as I have read them, you must not expect me to remember your questions for whole seven days and then answer them on Sundays.

Of course I took note of what you wrote about Bhulabhai[1] and[2], what is more, I wrote to him about the matter, though of course without naming the source of information. I have not heard from him as yet. The reply is overdue. I had heard of the thing before but I could not act upon rumours. Your information was definite.

I am glad Nabibux has returned. My love to him. You must bring him when you come.

Your cheque has gone to Delhi. You may expect a formal receipt from them. Not to make mistakes in simple account-

[1] Bhulabhai J. Desai
[2] The source has "I" after this.

keeping does not make one an accountant. Even illiterate Nabibux gives an accurate account of everything he spends. You may take unction to your soul in that you are as good as he is in taking down contemporaneous expenses and receipts. Faithful clerk ! ! !

It is a mystery how Sir J's letter[1] was not in your cover. Mira is making a search. Remember she is not a clerk, nor an idiot. Idiots are good at remembering things. Mira can draw mountains and cloud effects. So she disdains to remember trifles like putting things in their places where they should be. But this is poor consolation for you and me. I was most anxious for you to see that very good letter. He is following it up faithfully. I hope it will be traced.

I return you the enclosed duly signed "Bapu" in Hindi. Is that right?

Vijaya was wanted by her parents and I had to send her away. She was most disconsolate and could not restrain her tears.[2] I miss her because she was a most handy girl, always willing, always ready. She wants to return.

A. S. is still in Bombay helping her brothers to settle their differences. She may return any day. Lilavati is almost in harness. Sushila, P[yarelal]'s sister, came in on Saturday bringing fever with her. So she is in Maganwadi. Pyarelal is nursing her. Shriman is down with typhus. I do not know what will happen to the Conference now. It may have to be dropped. He is a rare gem.

On 25th I leave for Calcutta; address care Congress. I expect to be back on 2nd November at the latest and shall await Khan Saheb's summons. He expects to have me with him during 1st week of November.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3818. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6974

[1] *Vide* pp. 200 and 228.
[2] *Vide* "Letter to Vijaya N. Patel", p. 221.

273. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 11, 1937

CHI. SITA[1],

Your handwriting is very beautiful indeed.

Write Gujarati also in an equally beautiful hand. Write in both the languages. I hope you will show us your face some day. If you were here Kanam would get company and I would teach you according to the new method. Do you know what this method is? Ask Sushila.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4868

274. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

Your letters are regular and quite informative. I have no grounds for complaint; you have some. My hands are so full that I missed the last mail. Only today I am snatching the time. I am writing to Ramdas separately at Johannesburg. It is certainly unfortunate that he could not stay with you. But Kallenbach[2] thought of Ramdas only. His has been military [discipline] always. We should not grieve over it. I understand what you say about the Agent. We have to suffer many such things. If we can remain unaffected by these experiences, we have learnt our dharma and the art of living in this world. The sweet and bitter experiences that you are having there are also common here. They make up the variety of this world. If one gets a bed of roses every day, would one attach any value to it? Hence the great need for religious meditation, reading, and

[1] Daughter of Manilal Gandhi

[2] Hermann Kallenbach, a German architect who became Gandhiji's associate in South Africa

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conduct. You may come if you can—both or either of you. It does not matter if you cannot come. Don't come at the cost of the work there. A letter for Sita is enclosed.[1] There is no time to give other news. If I had the time, I would fill a volume.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4809

275. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

The matter for *Harijan* is getting ready. I hope you have been visiting Shriman. I am worried about Sushila. I hear that her fever has still not come down. This means more work for you. And the 22nd and 25th are approaching. Please see that you don't overexert yourself. Keep Shanta under control. It will be a blow if she spoils her health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11577

276. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 11, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have not been able to read again the reply to the criticism.[2] Mira also has not been able to read it. Please go through it carefully. I don't wish to detain Janba here.

I had enclosed Sir Jogendra's letter with the letter to Rajkumari. She did not receive it. Did Mira forget it or was it left out there? Please inquire.

Do take me to Shriman.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11576

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] *Vide* pp. 238-41.

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277. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 11, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter. You can come and stay. The post is going in a moment. Why worry? I shall leave for Calcutta on the 25th and hope to return on the 1st.

Come soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3507

278. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 12, 1937

CHI. JAMNALALJI,

I have your letter.

Bahadurji is welcome.

I have learnt about Shriman's fever. It is a bad one. It seems obstinate. I am hoping to go and see him today. I am dictating this letter after the morning prayer. Because of Shriman's illness, Mahadev and Kishorelal suggested to me that the Education Conference be postponed. The suggestion appealed to me. The responsibility of accommodating a hundred persons ought not to be on you. I assume that you will foot the bill. I don't mind that. But if the other people cannot shoulder the burdens of managing such gatherings without your help, I think we ought not to have them at all. Our work in these gatherings will shine only if the others have acquired the ability to manage them. I have, therefore, sent a message to Aryanayakam that he should let the plan for the Conference stand only if he has the necessary self-confidence and ability. Otherwise it had better be postponed. The Conference was Shriman's idea and I had depended on him alone. As long as he was in normal health I didn't worry. I had assumed that he would never fall ill. When, therefore, I heard about

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his illness, I was upset. I have regarded your discovery of Shriman as a wonderful one. He has an unusual mixture of learning, maturity of judgement and humility. Without him the Conference would give me no pleasure. But in accordance with the principle that one should not abandon a task already begun, I have insisted that the Conference be held unless [Arya]nayakam's self-confidence gives way or you oppose its holding. I would regard your opposition to be well-grounded, for I have faith in your practical sense. You alone can judge best whether, without you and the use of your bungalow, the programme of the Conference can go through successfully. If, therefore, you wish that the Conference should be postponed, please tell me so immediately by wire. I will then postpone it.

I hope you are keeping fit. Savitri must be doing quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 190-1

279. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

October 12, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I am trying to come to Calcutta, leaving here on the 25th. You will then tell me all about the ministerial deeds in the Congress Provinces. I do hope that the sore throat and cold were only temporary things, and that you were able to stand the strain in the Punjab. The climate in the Frontier must be very delightful. How I wish you would take things easy for a time at least!

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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280. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 12, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

Though there is nothing wrong in Hindus putting emphasis on Devanagari script and a knowledge of Hindi (if it is to be distinguished from highly Persianized Urdu), if you can postpone active work till after the Sammelan it would be wise. This is all a matter of experience, and it is so difficult to advise without sensing the surrounding atmosphere and the local circumstances. Both these I like to see for myself whenever I have to decide a delicate question which depends for its solution on a knowledge of the atmosphere and circumstances. I hope this will be some sort of guide for you. Whatever happens, this is quite clear to me, that every Punjabi should realize that Punjabi and Urdu are his languages; but a Hindu, wherever he is, should know Hindi through the Devanagari script, for the sake of being able to read first-class devotional literature, the like of which is not to be found in any other Provincial speech.

I do not know what the approach of the Hindi Pracharini Sabha is. It may be wholly different from mine. If that is so the decision as to the propriety of carrying on propaganda will be different from what I have given.

How is it that you have found Sardar Jogendra Singh's letter? For in your letter of yesterday you tell me you had missed it.

This is being dictated after breaking silence. Although I work top-speed, I do not feel any fatigue. It comes from talk. I have just enough strength in the right hand yet to carry on Monday's work. I wish I could find the time for practising writing with the left hand daily, but I don't, beyond having the time for tracing my signature to the daily letters.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3618. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6427

281. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 13, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I dictated last night a long letter to you. Now at 4.15 a.m. I begin this about Khurshed. Her letter and yours were destroyed as soon as I read them. Hers is a sad case. She writes differently to me as if she was retiring from the haunts of men. I have written a gentle reply.[1] Though she writes to me as if I was a stranger, I continue to sign myself Bapu and tell her that though she may desert me, I will not desert her.

I gave one hour to Govinddas.[2] His admissions were compromising. I have told him [to] investigate the truth of what has been stated to me against him. You should not allow your favourable opinion to be affected by my unfavourable impressions. More when we meet, if you would remind me.

I hope you threw off your cold long ago. Why should [you] sit with a chill on? You should not be ashamed to sit cross-legged and wrap yourself as we poor villagers do. And then breathe deep when you are cold.

I knew about Palestine schools. K. left a lot of literature about them.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3820. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6976

[1] *Vide* pp. 209-10.
[2] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 209.

282. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 13, 1937

Your remarks on education are quite sound. But you have not fully understood my scheme. I started a letter yesterday[2] at 4 a.m. It is unfinished.

BAPU'S LOVE

From the original: C.W. 3819. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6975

283. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

October 13, 1937

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

I have a letter from Acharya Ramdev saying that you must accept the invitation to go to Dehra Dun. I don't have the date with me. Shriman will get all right, you may rest assured. If you cannot go, send him a wire. It will be better of course if you can go. Is it necessary to consult your lord and master?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2989

284. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

October 13, 1937

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

It seems that in the State dispensary at Botad the doctors, compounders, etc., practise untouchability while examining Harijans or dispensing medicines to them and treat them with contempt. And if any treatment is required which involves touching them, either it is not given or is given with great reluctance. For instance, if any of them is having discharge from

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

[2] This is evidently a slip. The reference here, it appears, is to the preceding item.

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his ear and a syringe has to be used, some wads of cotton are thrown at the man and he is sent away and asked to clean his ear with them. I have received a good many letters in this connection. And it seems to me that there is substance in the complaint. I too believe that, when most of its servants also are tainted with the evil of untouchability, the Government cannot do much. However, some improvement in this regard is bound to take place if untouchability is openly and repeatedly discountenanced by the State authorities in its policies and declarations and through administrative action, and if action is taken against [even] a few persons guilty of practising untouchability. Discrimination in hospitals should be impossible. Just now, I don't wish to take note of this matter in either *Harijanbandhu* or *Harijan.*

I take it that you will attend the forthcoming Education Conference or will send somebody who is interested in the subject.[1]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5955. Also C.W. 3272. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

285. LETTER TO DR. M. JAISOORYA NAIDU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 14, 1937

DEAR OLD RENEGADE—BUT HONEST PUPIL,

I knew that you delighted in calling yourself Jaisoorya, but Mahadev was trying to pull my leg by asking me to judge who could the writer be. He knew that with the advance of years my memory was decaying rapidly, and, trading upon that knowledge he challenged me to guess the writer's identity. I could not till I saw the last sentence, and I asked since when you had become Jaisoorya. Then I thought that my memory was gradually coming back, and I said to myself that when you had come to me at Knightsbridge in that Deputation of self-styled firebrands, you had sent in your name as Jaisoorya. But at that time Mother[2] had prepared me to identify you with the bearded young man with amazing self-assurance.

[1] Here follows a postscript by Mahadev Desai acknowledging with thanks the addressee's letter regarding prohibition.

[2] Sarojini Naidu

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Your letter shows that you remain the same on the surface, but in spite of your looking down upon old fogies, you have inward regard for them, and know that you can as little do without them as without the very stupid days of your childhood. Therefore, in spite of your profound differences with me, in which you glory, I am not going to disregard your outline. But I am going to study it carefully, and then give you my opinion. But you will be patient with me.

Meanwhile this comes to you with all the good wishes that you and yours may care to have, or be in need of. Cartloads of love to the whole family, including the grey-haired Singer.

Pyarelal is with me, as unchangeable as when you saw him in the Ashram.

OLD MASTER

DR. M. JAISOORYA, M.D.
GOPAL CLINIC
STATION ROAD
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

286. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 14, 1937

Do not worry about me. God is the greatest physician. He guides me. It is well even if He gives me a fatal dose. You did well at your sales.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3821. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6977

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.

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287. NOTE ON NARIMAN-SARDAR CASE

[*October 14, 1937*][1]

Mr. Bahadurji has brought me his judgment[2] on the Nariman-Sardar case which is attached hereto. When I asked, not without much hesitation, to associate himself with me in the task I had taken up in the public interest, he readily agreed to do so.

He had, perhaps, not realized what anxious labour it would cost him to do justice to the task. I do not know what I would have done without his valuable assistance. We read his judgment together and with very slight changes I suggested, and which he readily accepted. The judgment is absolutely his own and arrived at without any previous consultation with me. I concur with his reasoning and finding.

The public will see that the finding is purely judicial. Parties were given every facility to see the evidence, to take copies and were free to have witnesses orally examined and cross-examined. But they did not want any examination or cross-examination nor was it necessary. Though there were over eighty witnesses and the evidence was voluminous, a mass of it was wholly irrelevant to the two issues before us. The greatest latitude was given to Mr. Nariman to bring before me any evidence he had. I sent personal letters to witnesses, whose names he had sent me. Most of the Congress legislators have sent in their statements in answer to my public appeal for evidence.[3]

If I had no further duty to discharge, there would be nothing more for me to say. But I must not avoid reference to the things that have been brought to light in the course of the evidence sent to me. Mr. Nariman has sent to me newspaper cuttings. They have made painful reading. There is no evidence whatsoever to show that the Sardar was actuated by any communal bias. The newspapers, which have made suggestions that there was communal bias behind the rejection of Mr. Nariman,

[1] This note was written while D. N. Bahadurji was at Segaon on the Thursday prior to October 16 which fell on October 14; *vide* pp. 247-8.

[2] In which Bahadurji had arrived at the conclusion that the "charge against K. F. Nariman in respect of the elections in 1934 was proved and the charge made by K. F. Nariman against Vallabhbhai was not proved."

[3] *Vide* pp. 56-7.

have rendered a great disservice to the Bombay public life and Mr. Nariman, who has himself, I am glad, rejected any such suggestion.

Indeed, Mr. Nariman's grievances against the Sardar seem to resolve themselves into this: As the Sardar told him on the 3rd of March, he would not and did not exert himself on his behalf. It is plain that when a person of the Sardar's influence remains passive, his attitude was bound to go against Mr. Nariman, but for that the Sardar could not be held blameworthy. It seems to me Mr. Nariman forgot that the City of Bombay is not the Bombay Presidency. And if he had really the confidence of Maharashtra and Karnataka, the Sardar's passivity would have availed nothing. Indeed, there is nothing to prevent the legislators even now from inviting Mr. Kher[1] to resign and electing Mr. Nariman in his place. The suggestion that the Sardar's overpowering influence would prevent such a change is thoughtless. Ninety men cannot be overawed for a long time by one man, however powerful he may be.

My analysis of the situation is that Mr. Nariman overestimated his hold on the legislators and felt the keenest disappointment over the defeat. His judgment became warped. This is evidenced by his own statements before me. His advisers and the newspaper propaganda kept up the illusion. It is no pleasure to me to have to pen these lines. But I pen them in the hope that his eyes may be opened by the opening out of the agonized heart of one who has been his friend and well-wisher and who was somewhat responsible for his inclusion in the Congress Cabinet.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-11-1937

288. LETTER TO M. VISVESVARAYYA[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 15, 1937

DEAR SIR M. VISVESVARAYYA,

I thank you for your book. I am keeping it in front of me and I shall read it at the first opportunity. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to be able to agree with you.

[1] B. G. Kher

[2] This was displayed at the Mysore Pavilion of the Gandhi-Darshan Exhibition, held in Delhi in 1969-70.

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I thank you for tackling the Orissa flood problem. Of course, you will take your time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9837. Courtesy: Government of Mysore

289. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

October 15, 1937

DEAR DR. KHARE[1],

I think that General Awari should be warned by the P. C. C. and if he does not listen I have no doubt that there should be a legal prosecution. But if you have any doubt yourself I am no authoritative guide. The only authority is the President or the Working Committee.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hitavada, 2-4-1939

290. LETTER TO JAGANNATH DAS

October 15, 1937

MY DEAR JAGANNATH DAS,

Kakasaheb has passed on to me your letter of 15th September. I got it only on 12th October. It makes very sad reading. There never was any guarantee that more money would be found from the North[2]. Nevertheless Rs. 5,000 (five thousand) have been transferred to you. Raghavan however was never expected to find the money; he was merely to look after the administration. But I do not at all agree with him that, on that account, he can desert the ship. He can complain, grumble, put the responsibility on you, his colleagues, and expect you to find the sinews of war. You can certainly pester me, pester Jamnalalji and Rajaji also. Because he has taken up a tremendous responsibility, he cannot divest himself of the duty of discharging old obligations. Only a gambler can take up new

[1] Premier of the Central Provinces
[2] For the work of Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha; *vide* p. 72.

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obligations before he has discharged existing ones, and without thinking how he will discharge old ones. Sri R. C. is not of this type. We would be doing him an injustice if we think that he will plead the new work to evade the old one. Instead of seeing him, write to him. I am writing to him myself. You may show this to him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7708

291. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 15, 1937

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have made use of your figures. You are doing admirable service to the cause. But remember you have to advance a great deal further. Think over the question whether real intellectual development can be brought about through crafts.

Enclosed is a letter from Kumi[1]. What do you think about it? If you cannot afford to keep her, certainly don't. She must not be an obstacle in your efforts for progress. But it seems that I shall have to meet her expenses in any case.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8540. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

292. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 15, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Do talk to Jamnalalji. It will certainly be good if he goes. Will he go? Can he go? When can he go?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7706

[1] Kumibehn T. Maniar, Harilal Gandhi's wife's sister

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293. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

[Before *October 16, 1937*][1]

I have your affectionate letter. Of course, God willing, I am coming to Calcutta. I am not yet fit for meetings or discussions. I have a limited amount of energy which I would love to use whilst there for the detenus' cause, as also for questions that may crop up at the Working Committee meetings. For myself, I shall gladly be under your roof and have you as my guard against too many visitors and unnecessary interviews. You will also please save me from public demonstrations and meetings.

The Hindu, 18-10-1937

294. NOTES

A Donation to Khadi

Dr. Pattabhi writes to me as follows:

> Mula Lakshmi Narayanaswamigaru of Tadpatri, Anantapur District (Madras Presidency—Andhra), has donated Rs. 5,000 for khadi and also promised to pay up to another Rs. 45,000 as a loan at 3 per cent for work in his district.

I congratulate the donor on his donation and loan. I have no doubt that he could not have better employed his money. Let me hope that the district will receive the full benefit of the donation and the loan, and this will depend upon local workers and local patronage of khadi.

Roman Catholics and Prohibition

Mr. F. A. Plair writing from Lahore resents Shri Phillip's remarks[2] which appeared in these columns recently about Roman Catholics, and contends that prohibition has been preached from time immemorial by the Roman Catholic priests. He concludes his letter by saying, "We all Roman Catholics concur in your prohibition movement and join it heartily."

Harijan, 16-10-1937

[1] The report is date-lined "Kurseong, October 16".
[2] *Vide* pp. 118-20.

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295. *SOME CRITICISM ANSWERED*

A high educational officer who wishes to remain unknown has sent me, through a common friend, an elaborate and considered criticism of my plan of primary education. For want of space I may not reproduce the whole argument here. Nor is there anything new in it. And yet it deserves a reply, if only for the pains the writer has bestowed on his paper.

This is how my suggestions have been paraphrased by the writer:

> (i) Primary education should start and end with training in crafts and industries, and that whatever may be necessary by way of general information should come in as auxiliaries in the initial stage, and that formal training through the medium of reading and writing in subjects like History, Geography and Arithmetic [should] come right at the end.
>
> (ii) Primary education should be self-supporting from the first, and that this should and could be achieved by the State taking over the finished articles coming from the schools and selling them to the public.
>
> (iii) Primary education should be fully up to the Matriculation standard—less of course English.
>
> (iv) Prof. K. T. Shah's idea of conscripting young men and women to teach in the primary schools should be fully examined and, if possible, acted upon.[1]

The writer at once proceeds to say:

> If we analyse the above programme it seems to us that the underlying ideas are in some cases mediaeval, and in some cases based upon assumptions which would not bear examination. Probably No. iii is a very high standard.

It would have been better if, instead of paraphrasing, the writer had quoted my own words. For all the statements in the first paraphrase are wide of the truth. My point is not that the start should be made with crafts and the rest should come in as auxiliaries. On the contrary I have said that the whole of the general education should come through the crafts and simulta-

[1] K. T. Shah's article appeared in *Harijan*, 31-7-1937.

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neously with their progress. This is wholly different from what the writer imputes to me. I do not know what happened in the Middle Ages. But I do know that the aim in the Middle Ages or any age was never to develop the whole man through crafts. The idea is original. That it may prove to be wrong does not affect the originality. And an original idea does not admit of a frontal attack unless it is tried on a sufficiently large scale. To say *a priori* that it is impossible is no argument.

Nor have I said that the formal training through the medium of reading and writing should come right at the end. On the contrary the formal training comes in at the very beginning. Indeed it is an integral part of the general equipment. I have indeed said, and I repeat here, that reading may come a little later, and writing may come last. But the whole process has to be finished within the first year, so that at the end of the first year in the school of my imagination a seven-year-old child, boy or girl, will have much more than the general information that any boy or girl has in the present primary school during the first year. He will read correctly and draw correct letters instead of making the daubs that the children generally do at present. The child will also know elementary additions and subtractions and the simple multiplication table. He will have learned all this through and while he has learned a productive craft, say spinning, by choice.

The second paraphrase is just as unhappy as the first. For what I have claimed is that education through handicrafts should be self-supporting during the sum total of seven years I have assigned for it. I have specifically said that during the first two years it may mean a partial loss.

Mediaeval times may have been bad, but I am not prepared to condemn things simply because they are mediaeval. The spinning-wheel is undoubtedly mediaeval, but seems to have come to stay. Though the article is the same it has become a symbol of freedom and unity as at one time, after the advent of the East India Company, it had become the symbol of slavery. Modern India has found in it a deeper and truer meaning than our forefathers had dreamt of. Even so, if the handicrafts were once symbols of factory labour, may they now be symbols and vehicles of education in the fullest and truest sense of the term. If the Ministers have enough imagination and courage, they will give the idea a trial in spite of the criticism, undoubtedly well-meant, of high educational officers and others especially when the criticism is based on imaginary premises.

Though the writer has been good enough to assume the possibility of Prof. K. T. Shah's scheme of conscription being sound, he later on evidently repents of it. For he says:

> The idea of conscripting teachers is to our mind an outrage. We should have in schools, where young children assemble, men and women who have voluntarily dedicated their lives to this profession so far as such a dedication is possible in this world, and who will bring sunshine and zeal. We have made far too many experiments with our young men and women, but this one bids fair in its results to land us in a ruin from which there will be no escape for at least half a century. The whole thing is based on the notion that teaching is one of those arts for which no adequate training is necessary and that everyone is a born teacher. How a man of K. T. Shah's eminence comes to hold it is inexplicable. The idea is a freak idea bound to be tragic in results if applied. Again, how can each and everyone train children in handicrafts, etc.?

Prof. Shah is well able to defend his proposition. But I would like to remind the writer that the existing teachers are not volunteers. They are hirelings (the word is used in its natural sense) working for their bread and butter. Prof. Shah's scheme does contemplate possession of patriotism, spirit of sacrifice, a certain amount of culture, and training in a handicraft, before they are taken up. His idea is substantial, quite feasible, and deserves the greatest consideration. If we have to wait till we have born teachers, we shall have to wait till the Judgment Day for them. I submit that teachers will have to be trained on a wholesale scale during the shortest term possible. This cannot be done unless the services of the existing educated young men and women are gently impressed. It will not be unless there is a general willing response from that body. They responded, however feebly, during the civil disobedience campaign. Will they fail to respond to the call for constructive service against maintenance money?

Then the writer asks:

> (1) Are we not to allow for a great deal of wastage in raw materials when handled by little boys?
>
> (2) Are the sales to be effected by a central organization? What about the cost of this?
>
> (3) Are the people to be compelled to buy at these stores?
>
> (4) What about the cases of those communities which are at present manufacturing these? What will be the reaction on these?

My answers are:

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1. Of course there will be wastage, but there will be even at the end of the first year some gain by each pupil.

2. The State will absorb much of the material for its own requirements.

3. Nobody will be compelled to buy the nation's children's manufactures, but the nation is expected to buy with pardonable pride and patriotic pleasure what its children make for its needs.

4. There is hardly any competition in the products of village handicrafts. And care will be taken to manufacture things which do not come into unfair competition with any indigenous manufacturers. Thus khadi, village paper, palm *gur* and the like have no competitors.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

296. PROHIBITION AND EDUCATION

Mr. J. G. Gilson is the Secretary of the Christian High and Technical School, Balasore, and Director of Industrial Arts and Vocational Education for A. B. B. O. Mission. In sending some valuable literature on 'Rural Sewage Disposal and the Natural Sewage Treatment Process', he writes:[1]

> . . . In general I find myself very much in agreement with your conclusions. I was especially pleased with your clear exposition of the fact that manual work, properly conducted, is the best means to intellectual development. I have found it hard to make teachers believe that anything else than textbooks and lectures and cramming for examination can contribute to this end. Your explanation of the point should help to make it clear to everyone. I was also pleased to note that you have appreciated the work done by a number of Mission schools in introducing the handwork curriculum in India.
>
> On the other hand I cannot agree with you that education can, or should, be made self-supporting by the work of the students. . . . If children are kept at such work for 4 hours per day under competent supervision, they can no doubt pay for their keep and perhaps for the supervision as well. But such work has no educational value. It may even become as dulling to the intellect as poring over textbooks and listening to lectures.

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here.

In order for the children's work to have educational value they must be given a variety of work to do, and as soon as they have learned one operation well they must be allowed to go on to something new. . . . But the product of their work will not likely be sufficient to support the school. It may contribute something toward the costs of the school.

But I see no reason why schools should be expected to be self-supporting. The education of the children, and continued education of adults, is a responsibility of the community, and it seems to me that in the present condition of India it should be the first and largest claim upon the public funds.

It is very unfortunate that prohibition and education should have been linked together in the discussions, and that the American experience with prohibition should have been brought into it in a way which shows a lack of understanding of American conditions. . . . If the American example is to be quoted let it be said that in America during the prohibition period there was no shortage of funds for education; indeed the schools were very rapidly improved during the period.

Prohibition in America was not a failure in accomplishing an improvement in the condition of the common people, with the possible exception of the big cities where the majority of the people are European-born and where public opinion would not allow the enforcement of the law. The great mass of the American people outside the cities are total abstainers and drinking is looked upon as a social and moral disgrace just as it is in India; or at least it was so until 1933. Already a strong reaction has set in against the excesses of these past four years.

Prohibition failed politically in America because of the political power of the big cities, and because the brewers and others who stood to gain by the sale of liquor were willing to spend millions of dollars in newspaper propaganda, while the mass of the people were quite indifferent to what had ceased to be, for them, a pressing problem. It is the case of the exploitation of the country by the wealthy of the cities. The same problem you have to face in making prohibition a success in India. . . .

I do not wonder at Mr. Gilson's scepticism about education through an industry being made wholly self-supporting, if it is at the same time to develop the mind of the pupil. This point is dealt with by me in another column[1]. His testimony about American prohibition will be read with interest.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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297. *IN SUPPORT*

I completely agree with, nay, even humbly plead for your suggestion of teaching a child a useful handicraft scientifically and culturally and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. No doubt it is a revolutionary proposal, but I agree with it completely. Its moral, cultural and economic value will be immense to the individual and to the nation. Not only will it promote dignity of labour, but self-reliance and proper creative values of life. Our aim should be to promote a child's intellectual, physical, moral and vocational needs. The last will teach the general principles of all the processes of production and at the same time give the child or youth practical training in the use of the simplest tools of all industries. Our ideal should be a combination of instruction with productive work on the part of the young generation. This means a linking up of manual work with general instruction, and aims at giving a broad idea of the chief branches of industry with which manual work can be co-ordinated. Physical labour combined with an intellectual and moral effort should be our educational outlook. There should be no cleavage between brain work and manual work.

We should include in our system of primary or elementary education:

1. Mother tongue
2. Arithmetic
3. Natural science
4. Social science
5. Geography and history
6. Manual or polytechnical work
7. Physical culture
8. Art and music
9. Hindustani

The only question which, however, arises here is at what age a child's education should begin. If it be at 5 or 6, can it be possible to start a useful handicraft at that age? What about the expenses in teaching it? It will not be easier and less expensive than spreading literacy. I would start a handicraft at the age of 8 or 10, because the use of implements requires a grasp and a steadiness in handling and applying them to the object in view. But primary education must at least begin at the age of five or six. A child cannot be made to wait longer. We must have a ten years' curricula to take the child to the matriculation standard in addition to the polytechnical training we intend to give

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it. I am, however, doubtful about the economic value of the products of these children especially in their early stages. They will not be saleable in a country where free trade and advanced fashions prevail and when the products themselves will not be durable or finished ones. If the State were to purchase them or take them in return for the service or aid rendered, what will it do with them? It would be better for the State to spend money directly on the education of children than to adopt this process. Of course the products of advanced boys, say, between 12 and 16 may be made marketable and therefore become an important item of income.

I would rather treat the problem of literacy on a different footing and face boldly the taxation and expenditure necessary for it.

The idea of a useful handicraft can be well developed in the advanced stages of primary (or secondary) education. It should be attempted to be made at least partly self-supporting, and after experience gained, fully self-supporting, if possible, on the basis of the value of its products. Only one danger will have to be guarded against, that cultural education of the body, mind and spirit does not become subordinated completely to the economic motive and economics of the school.

I also agree with your further suggestion of primary education being made equal to the present matriculation standard less English, but plus Hindustani (I would add). It means you include also secondary education in the system of primary education. Your idea is a complete scheme of school education of, say, ten years. I would add in this that it must be imparted through the mother tongue and through no other language. This will liberate the mind of the child and create in it a living interest in the problems of knowledge and life and give it a creative turn and outlook.

I admit here that education was largely self-supporting in mediaeval times, and could be made so in a general way if our social, economic and political organization and outlook were to remain mediaeval, that is, addicted to the old and narrow values of class and caste economy, society and polity. But today in a democratic, national and socialistic conception of life which has pervaded us, it cannot become so. The only organized power of the community with sanctions and resources behind it is the State. Hence it has to undertake this work. The old power groups—caste, class, guild, college, Church—have lost their power, sanction and resources, and do not exist in that larger sense of the old times. People also have no faith in them. All social power has shifted to the political group which is also the economic and social force even in India. Therefore two ideologies, one mediaeval and one modern, one pluralistic and functional, and the other unitary and territorial, cannot work together.

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There was no universal education in the past, no democratic unitary State, no national equalitarian outlook.

The idea of conscription for educational service is not now a novel one but is worth following. Let the Congress and its Provincial Ministers in their official capacity appeal to the intelligentsia of the country and call upon all who have the education of the people at heart to rally to the assistance of new Governments for the spread of literacy, culture and education. It will establish a mass contact on a new basis, and not merely on an economic and political basis. It will also serve the higher purposes of awakening, consolidation and organization of mass power and intelligence.

When I first wrote on self-supporting primary education through an industry I had invited educationist fellow-workers to favour me with their opinions. Professor S. V. Puntambekar was among the first to send me his. He sent me a long reasoned reply. But for want of space I was unable to deal with it earlier. The foregoing is the most relevant portion of his opinion. For the sake of abridgement I have cut out portions dealing with literacy and college education. For at the forthcoming Conference on the 22nd and 23rd instant the main discussion will centre round self-supporting primary education through an industry.

Harijan, 16-10-1937

298. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 16, 1937

CHI. AMLA,

Khurshedbehn tells me you were complaining of absence of letters from me. You have never been out of my mind. I have not written because I thought you did not need to hear from me. I knew that you were getting on quite well. But do tell me all about you. Here things are much the same as you left them. Do drop in some time, if you can. Remember me to your mother.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU[1]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] The subscription is in Gujarati.

299. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

October 16, 1937

No invitation from Nagpur[2] as yet. You may not prompt it. You will see before this the result of the Nariman case.[3] Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3822. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6978

300. A LETTER

October 16, 1937

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks. I am well. Only fatigue overtakes me if I speak. I fancy that God does not want me to leave the work to which I feel He has called me. If it is my egoism that won't let me rest, I shall pay the deserved penalty.

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

301. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 16, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

It will be a reflection on my art if you do not succeed. Vinoba, Maganlal, Chhotelal, Panditji, Kaka and Devdas have surpassed me each in his own field. You are still on the first step. Many other names occur to me. My task is to teach the *mantra* of truth and non-violence. He who assimilates it may soar in his own sphere and I stand apart. You need not write the weekly notes. You must train yourself in the use of your

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] For the All-India Women's Conference
[3] *Vide* pp. 247-8.

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left hand. You will be able to train it more easily than I did. I am returning Prema's postcard. A cart or car will be required for Perinbehn tomorrow at 1 o'clock.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11578

302. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 16, 1937

I am glad to be able to place before the public the statement[1] made by Mr. K. F. Nariman instead of the considered judgment at which D. N. Bahadurji and I had independently arrived in the Nariman-Sardar case. It was a painful duty that I had undertaken and then at my instance and request, D. N. Bahadurji. But for his most valuable assistance and extraordinary labour he put into the work, I might have with the present state of my health broken down under the burden. The evidence that was produced before me was voluminous. I have read every line of it but Bahadurji to whom I transferred all the papers not only read every line of the bulky papers but took elaborate notes, read the law about the intricate case of the election of 1934 and prepared the said judgment wholly independently of me. It occupies 14 foolscap sheets of close and condensed marshalling of facts and reasoning. He was good enough to come down to Segaon with that judgment and pass the whole of Thursday with me. I then wrote a concurring note.[2] I had hoped that Mr. K. F. Nariman would be with us on that day but he was unable to come. I then suggested that on his return to Bombay, Bahadurji should send for Mr. Nariman to show him his judgment and my concurring note and that if on reading them Mr. K. F. Nariman could out of conviction accept both the judgment and my note and himself make a public statement, we should simply be satisfied with giving copies of our judgment to the parties but withhold it from the public and let Mr. Nariman's statement take its place. My suggestion commended itself to Bahadurji. On Thursday night, I sent Mr. Mahadev Desai to Bombay with my notes to meet Bahadurji and Mr.

[1] *Vide* Appendix VI.
[2] *Vide* pp. 233-4.

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Nariman. Mr. Nariman with his counsel went to Bahadurji's office and read our judgment and I am exceedingly happy to be able to place his statement before the public in the full hope that they and the Press will forget the past bitter and unseemly controversy that had robbed the public activity in Bombay of its usual zest and joy. I congratulate Mr. Nariman upon his thoughtful and wholehearted confession. I owe a debt of deep gratitude to Bahadurji for his having shared labours with me from a high sense of public duty and his unvaried affection for me.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1937

303. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

Government means the Congress Governments in the seven Provinces. But just because the Congress has formed Governments, there is no reason to believe that the attitude of the Congress-minded people would suddenly change. Even though the constructive programme of the Congress has gone on since the great change in 1920, it cannot be said that a lively interest has been created among Congressmen in this matter. What then can we say about those who are outside the Congress? Even though the constructive programme has not been as popular as the destructive (if one may without impropriety use the adjective "destructive" for a non-violent programme) or negative programme, the Congress has kept it up since 1920. The Congress never dropped that programme and quite a few Congressmen have adopted it. Hence, whatever could be achieved in this field has been achieved only by Congressmen, and progress too can be expected only where Congress Governments have been formed. But just because the Congress has taken up office, those who have faith in the constructive programme should not slacken their efforts. Nor should they become complacent. Now that the Congress has formed Governments, their duty is to be more alert, more industrious, more studious. Only if this happens can the hopes entertained of the Congress Governments be fulfilled. Congress Government means a democratic government responsible to the people. If the people want, they can throw out such a government. It is based on the will and authority of the people. Hence, if Congressmen are keen, they can, and unless they are keen they cannot, get the constructive programme accepted and implemented. The Government has

no independent power, i. e., no physical force. The Congress has voluntarily given up that power. The British Government wields that power. When the Congress Government has to resort to the use of the British power, that is, physical force, it should be regarded as the lowering of the tricolour. It should be regarded that, from that day the Congress Government has ceased to be. But if the people do not follow the Congress, that is, the Congress Governments, or if non-violence has not entered their hearts, the Government which today appears glorious will lose its glory tomorrow.

And so, Congressmen who have faith in the constructive programme should wake up. The scheme of education that I have presented is also a substantial part of the constructive programme. It is not my intention to suggest that the Congress has adopted the form I am giving it now. But I am firmly convinced that what I am writing now was implicit in everything I have said or written since 1920 about national schools, and now that the occasion has arisen, it has found prompt expression.

Now, if primary education is to be imparted through a craft, that task can be carried out for the present only by the people who have faith in the spinning-wheel and other village industries. For, on the subject of the charkha, which occupies a central position in cottage industries, the Spinners' Association has collected considerable information and on other industries the Village Industries Association has been collecting it. Hence, in my view, whatever immediate provisions we can make can only be through the charkha and allied crafts. But all those who have faith in the charkha are not teachers. Every carpenter is no authority on carpentry. One who has no knowledge of the science of the craft cannot impart general education through the craft. And so, only those who are interested in the science of education and have faith in the charkha, etc., can introduce the scheme of primary education which I have suggested. I am reproducing the letter[1] from Shri Dilkhush Diwanji with the idea that it would be useful to such persons.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-10-1937

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent had been running a small craft-based school for the last two years. He whole-heartedly supported Gandhiji's ideas on education on the basis of his own experience.

304. PASSING AWAY OF A WONDERFUL HARIJAN WORKER[1]

I had known Manilal Kothari even before the Harijan campaign gathered momentum. And from the day I came to know him I had never once noticed in him the faintest trace of a feeling of untouchability. He was always prepared to face the risks that are inevitable while trying to help Harijans. He had a flair almost unique for collecting funds for noble causes. This is no exaggeration. He had many capacities; but he will always be remembered for his ability to collect money for benevolent causes. He had collected large funds for Harijan work, and had offered to collect as much money as I wanted if he recovered. He used to receive requests from all quarters for collecting money. Manilal was a very sensitive man. Any altruistic work would interest him. His eagerness to serve made him plunge into any kind of danger. His death will no doubt be a great loss to his family, and also to Harijans. In many other spheres of service as well his absence will be felt for a long time.

May God grant peace to his soul.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 17-10-1937

305. LETTER TO KIRBY PAGE

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.,
October 17, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you are liberally taking passages from C. F. Andrews's pen in your anthology of devotional literature. For Charlie Andrews is a man of prayer and deep faith. He is a Christian to the marrow, but his Christ is not the Jesus Christ of a narrow sect. His Christ is the Anointed of humanity. He sees Him in Ramakrishna, Chaitanya and many other teachers whom I can name, and who are of other faiths. We in India, who know him, call him Deenabandhu, friend of the afflicted.

[1] This appeared under "My Notes".

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Our friendship is of long standing; we are like blood-brothers. There are no secrets between us. Charlie is as simple as a child, forgiving and generous to a fault. He is loving and lovable like a woman who is purity personified. In jest I call him half woman and half man—but I mean it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

KIRBY PAGE, ESQ.
LA HABRA
CALIFORNIA

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

306. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 17, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

They will expect you here at Segaon on the 31st—even if I have not returned. I am sure to return on the 1st or 2nd. I shall not be going to the Frontier without returning to Segaon first.

You have to regain here the weight you have lost. Obtain Jayaprakash's permission—for staying here. The cold has started here. Bring enough covering for the night, otherwise your blanket which is with me will go back to you. But it is a good deal worn out now.

Chimanlal is all right now, though he is still in bed. Pyarelal's sister, Sushila, is here. Surendra also arrived yesterday. Prema[1] is coming today. They will all have left when you come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3508

[1] Premabehn Kantak

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307. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
October 17, 1937

Andamans prisoners may not be forgotten. To remind me that I have made promise to them that I would strain every nerve to secure their release, I have received three letters from three provinces telling me that treatment of prisoners who have been brought from the Andamans is worse than there, that there seems to be no prospect of their early release and that if no release was forthcoming they might have to fall back upon the only weapon open to them, that is, hunger-strike. I hope that they will not resort to hunger-strike so long as they know that the public is not supine about their welfare. For myself I may assure them that I am not sleeping over the matter. And I urge the public and the Press to keep a vigilant eye on this urgent matter. I would appeal to Provincial Governments which have received these prisoners to accord to them the treatment which the country expects them to give. Provincial Governments which are in such matters now responsible to the people may not disregard the popular wish. I expect that in this there is no difference between the Congress and other organizations.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-10-1937

308. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 18, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

Some people have the patience to wait for titles till they come to them. You have no patience and therefore your titles are generally well-chosen. Only the first was ill-chosen. Who will call you a rebel? Not I. Idiot, of course. But I forget. That was a title given to you. You willingly accepted it. Untouchable you are, as all of the princely blood are. I wonder what will be the next choice.

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Today I am taking it easy. Instead of writing much, I am sleeping. The article I wrote last night.

I do not remember any question remaining unanswered. I am too lazy to pull out a part of a letter I have kept.

Rameshwari had a wonderful tour in Kathiawar. Her descriptive letters are all very good. And they are in very readable Hindi. Correspondents speak of her in glowing terms. The tour has almost ended.

The Nariman confession you must have seen.

The patients are well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3823. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6979

309. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
4.30 p.m., October 18, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is the second letter I am writing to you today. This is to congratulate you on your progress in Hindi of which your Hindi letter is ample evidence. You will presently have a chaste style too. You must read *Ramayana* regularly and perhaps a Hindi newspaper. Never mind the newspaper however. What Shakespeare is to English, Tulsidas is to Hindi. Therefore I should be satisfied if you read Tulsidas only. Of course a good grammar is a necessity.

Yes, do not resist Shummy and stay there as long as he wants you to and keeps happy himself.

You would have more quiet too for your address[1] which should be original, terse and to the point. You must not be discursive. Do not take much time over the past work. But devote yourself to the future programme—bold, universal and constructive. Above all it must be practical and in terms of the villages and yet such as *your* members can reach. They won't work in the villages, they can for the villages. Is not this a good letter?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3619. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6428

[1] As President at the All-India Women's Conference, Nagpur

CWMG - DIGITAL

310. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

SEGAON,
October 18, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

After your last postcard, there has been nothing from you. Why so? Mridulabehn[1] has requisitioned you. I have replied that if you are willing to join I will not dissuade you, but that I won't force you. Perhaps she has already met you. Premabehn arrived yesterday. The patients have all recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. VIJAYABEHN
C/O NARANBHAI PATEL
VAROD, BARDOLI TALUKA
TAPTI VALLEY RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7074. Also C.W. 4566. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

311. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 18, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I will see about Balwantsinha.

Today I am simply resting. I wish to write more, but it may not be possible. But you won't be short of matter. Sharda will go there in the conveyance which we have here. Please send her back in the same tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11579

[1] Mridula Sarabhai

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312. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

October 18, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Do send for all the three.[1] We shall admit them. I also like the suggestion regarding Gopalrao. But what you have written is all right. I am writing to Nayakam.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Accept Vora's suggestion. I have read about Armstrong[2] earlier. I shall make use of it.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7707

313. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[After] *October* [*18,*][3] *1937*

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

What will you do about the khadi that has been produced ?

Probably you don't get Nalwadi's *Sevavritta*[4]. I am sending a copy today. You will find in it surprising figures about the *takli*.

I had a letter from Rameshwaribehn. She can write in Hindi. I got the fourth letter yesterday describing her tour [of Saurashtra]. She has described the whole tour, and the entire description is interesting.

[1] A marginal note runs as follows: "Who are these three? Gopalrao is one; who are the other two? Please send the names of all the three to Nayakamji."

[2] General Armstrong, founder of Hampton Institute; *vide* "Speech at Educational Conference–I", pp. 263-6.

[3] From the reference to Rameshwari Nehru's tour; *vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 252-3.

[4] *Gramsevavritta*

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Nanalal was here. He also praised your work very much. Introduce whatever changes are feasible in accordance with the articles I am currently writing on the subject of education. Do you think there is anything worth taking from them for the Bal Mandir? What is the age-group of the children in the Bal Mandir?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent you a wire asking you to come here.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8542. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

314. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 19, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I observe silence for the most part in order to feel fresh for 22nd and 23rd. And I am using the right hand. So I had better give you a few lines.

Sir J[ogendra Singh] is coming nearer as you will see from the enclosed. You may destroy it. I am not writing the foreword. I must not.

The news you give me about Charlie is bad. You will realize still greater limitations in me, if you will make me responsible for all the blemishes in all who come in contact with me, not excluding Idiots, Rebels, Untouchables and what not.

I suppose it is no use your writing to Mahmudabad[1]. Heaven knows what the upshot is going to be of all this mud-slinging.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3824. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6980

[1] Ruler of Mahmudabad

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315. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

I carefully went through your speech at Lucknow[1], and I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding of my attitude. My letter[2] was in answer to a specially private message you had sent to me. It represented my deepest feeling. The letter was purely personal. Were you right in using it as you did?

Of course, as I read it, the whole of your speech is a declaration of war. Only I had hoped you would reserve poor me as bridge between the two. I see that you want no bridge. I am sorry. Only it takes two to make a quarrel. You won't find me one, even if I cannot become a peace-maker.

This is not for publication, unless you desire it.[3] It is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938

316. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1937

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

The money collected for the Gidwani Memorial was of course well spent. And I consider it a good omen for the students' hostel that the inauguration ceremony of the Bhangi Students' Hostel will be performed by Principal Anandshankar-

[1] As President at the 25th session of the All-India Muslim League held from October 15 to 18; *vide* Appendix VII(a).

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXV, "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", p. 231.

[3] Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence was released to the Press on June 15, 1938.

[4] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix VII (b).

bhai[1] on the *Dhanteras*[2] day. I hope that the citizens of Kheda will make this hostel their own and will go on helping it in every way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3965

317. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 19, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have read Anandshankarbhai's manuscript again. Please glance through the changes I have made. If you have nothing to suggest regarding them, then wrap the thing in strong paper and despatch it by registered book post. The letter[3] is also enclosed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11581

318. LETTER TO THAKOREDAS NANAVATI

October 19, 1937

BHAI THAKOREDAS,

Chi. Amritlal has no visible symptoms of any disease. He works and gets no fever at all. But he does not put on weight. He takes enough of ghee and milk. He has lost a little weight since coming here, but has more energy. There is of course no reason for worry. I have often suggested to him that he should go there but he does not feel inclined at all. I, therefore, do not force him. Thus what Amritlal wrote to you was not incorrect in any way. I do feel, however, that he did not give you all the facts. He should have informed you about his weight, etc. There is no point in concealing such things. Of course, if one has a slight headache one needn't write about it. And you don't expect it, either. Having said all this, I advise

[1] Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruv
[2] *Aso Vad* 13 of the Vikram era
[3] This is not available.

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you not to worry. There is absolutely no need. Let him follow his own inclination.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10739

319. LETTER TO DR. WILLIAM H. TANDY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 20, 1937

DEAR DOCTOR TANDY,

With reference to your hospital scheme, which you were good enough to explain to me today, you tell me that you propose to add family quarters for your patients' families who would desire to supply the patients with food prepared by them.

My experience, in what little hospital work I have done, has shown me that it is a harmful concession to prejudice. For the food cooked by private parties is rarely cooked according to directions. Doting relatives disregard restrictions, pamper patients, and retard recovery where their false affection does not prove fatal to the patients.

I would, therefore, strongly advise you, for the sake of the patients themselves, not to encourage private cooking for patients under your care, even as you would not allow relatives to administer to them drugs of their own choice.

If the patients bring families, they can see the former only at stated times and under proper restrictions.

I know that there are, unfortunately, so-called higher castes, who observe untouchability as to food. In my opinion you cannot afford to pander to such prejudice, especially at a time when untouchability is fast dying.

What I hope you will do is to run a strictly vegetarian kitchen for those who would not on any account take flesh, meat or fish.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4444. Courtesy: Dr. William H. Tandy

[1] A Hindi translation of this, signed by Gandhiji, was also enclosed as he thought it would be more useful to the addressee for showing it to the patients and their relatives.

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320. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 20, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Pattani[1] has been most wonderful. I am not sending anything today. Tandy was here. We finished [the job] in half an hour. He seemed to be a very good man. No, I am not sending anything today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11582

321. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
October 20/21, 1937

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have your note.

You can help wanting to be near by being near me during the arranged times and being elsewhere outside those times. What cannot be cured must be endured cheerfully.

In cold weather, you must be sufficiently wrapped no matter how unfashionable you look. How about hot water with salt and soda, linseed and the steam?

If you continue to insist on Khurshed being with you she will listen.

I do understand what you say about maidens. I have my own ideas too on the matter. Of that when we meet.

I hope you have got rid completely of your cold.

Anasuya[2] and Indumati[3] came in today from Ahmedabad and several others.

Love.

ROBBER

[1] Prabhashankar Pattani
[2] Anasuya Sarabhai, a labour leader of Ahmedabad
[3] Indumati Chimanlal Sheth

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[PS.]

Yours of today. You won't want me in Nagpur for your own sake, if I have no invitation from there. But wait. It will come in its own time. Don't force matters. Yes, Grace Lancaster will come when you are here. But why say "if"? Can there be an "if" if you go to Nagpur?

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3825. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6981

322. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Work only as much as you can. See that you don't fall ill. Give enough time to the Muslim friends who are coming. I have told Shankerlal also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11583

323. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[On or before *October 22, 1937*][1]

I am trying to keep myself fit for Calcutta. I am praying to God to keep me fit. After I am there, you will have to see that I have no appointments or visits save about the Andamans prisoners and the Working Committee business.

The Hindu, 22-10-1937

[1] The report is date-lined "Wardha, October 22".

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324. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 22, 1937

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

How I wish you were here today for the Educational Conference. But this is written for Kamala's sake. She has no desire to go to Madras for her mother's sake, but does want me to see to it that her mother does not suffer for want of medical assistance because of her poverty. I would like you to see to this by finding out really whether she wants or not. And if she does, you help her to the extent of her want. All this commission I entrust to you in the belief that you will collect from me what you spend.

What about the Director of Hindi Prachar ?

I hope you are all getting on well.

I leave for Calcutta on 25th. Returning about 1st November.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

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

325. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 22, 1937

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I have torn it up. There is no possibility at all of my going to the Frontier before the 7th. I hope to return to Wardha on the 1st or the 2nd.

You may, therefore, certainly come over as planned.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3504

[1] & [2] The superscription and subscription are in Hindi.

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326. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE–I[1]

October 22, 1937

Gandhiji, after thanking all those who had come in response to the invitations, said whether he was there as Chairman or member, he had invited them in order to listen to their opinion and advice on the propositions[2] he had formulated, especially of those who were opposed to them. He asked for a free, frank and full discussion, as he regretted his inability to meet the friends outside of the pandal for reasons of health.

The propositions, he said, referred both to primary education and college education, but they would largely have to address themselves to a consideration of primary education. He had included secondary in primary education because primary education was the only education so called that was available to a very small fraction of the people in our villages, many of which he had seen during his peregrinations since 1915. He was speaking exclusively about the needs of these rural boys and girls, the bulk of whom were illiterate. He had no experience of college education, though he had come in contact with hundreds of college boys, had heart-to-heart chats and correspondence with them, knew their needs, failings and the disease they suffered from. But they might restrict themselves to a consideration of primary education. For, the moment that primary question was solved the secondary one of college education would also be solved.

He was deliberately of opinion that the present system of primary education was not only wasteful but harmful. Most of the boys were lost to the parents and to the occupation to which they were born. They picked up evil habits, affected urban ways, and got a smattering of something which may be anything else but not education. The remedy, he thought, lay in educating them by means of vocational or manual training. He had some experience of it having trained his own sons and the children on the Tolstoy Farm in South Africa[3], belonging to all castes and creeds, who were good, bad and indifferent, through some manual training, e. g., carpentry or shoemaking which he had learnt from Kallenbach who had training in a Trappist monastery. His sons and all these children, he was confident, had lost nothing, though he could not give them an education that either

[1] This and the following item are reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "The Primary Question". The Conference was held on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Marwari Shiksha Mandal under the presidentship of Gandhiji. The morning session was held from 8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

[2] *Vide* pp. 194-5.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 266-72.

satisfied himself or them, as the time at his disposal was limited and his preoccupations numerous.

The core of his emphasis was not the occupations but education through manual training—all education, of letters, history, geography, mathematics, science, etc., through manual training. It might be objected that in the Middle Ages nothing else was taught. But the occupational training then was far from serving an educational purpose. In this age those born to certain professions had forgotten them, taken to clerical careers, and were lost to the countryside. As a result, go wherever we might, it was impossible to find an efficient carpenter or a smith in an average village. The handicrafts were nearly lost, and the spinning-wheel being neglected was taken to Lancashire where it was developed, thanks to the English genius for developing crafts, to an extent that was to be seen today. This he said irrespective of his views on industrialism.

The remedy lay in imparting the whole art and science of a craft through practical training and therethrough imparting education. Teaching of *takli*-spinning, for instance, presupposed imparting of knowledge of various varieties of cotton, different soils in different provinces of India, the history of the ruin of the handicraft, its political reasons which would include the history of the British rule in India, knowledge of arithmetic, and so on. He was trying the experiment on his little grandson[1] who scarcely felt that he was being taught, for he all the while played and laughed and sang.

He was specially mentioning the *takli* in order that they might put to him questions about it, and as he had much to do with it, and seen its power and its romance; also because the handicraft of making cloth was the only one which could be universally taught and because the *takli* required no expense. It had more than proved its worth. The constructive programme, to the extent it had been carried out, had led to the formation of the Congress Ministries in seven provinces, and their success also would depend on the extent to which we carried it out.

He had contemplated a seven years' course which so far as the *takli* was concerned would culminate in practical knowledge of weaving (including dyeing, designing, etc.). The custom for all the cloth we could produce was there ready.

He was very keen on finding the expenses of the teacher through the product of the manual work of his pupils, as he was convinced that there was no other way to carry education to crores of our children. We could not wait until we had the necessary revenue, until the Viceroy reduced the military expenditure, and so on. He asked them to remember that this primary education would include the elementary principles of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, of doing their own work, helping parents at home, etc. The present generation of boys knew no cleanliness, no self-help, and physically

[1] Presumably, Kanam; *vide* p. 203.

were C 3. He would therefore give compulsory physical training through musical drill, etc.

The speaker had been accused of being opposed to literary training. Far from it. He simply wanted to show the *way* in which it should be given. The self-supporting aspect had also been attacked. Whereas, it was said, we should be expending millions on primary education, we were going to exploit the children. It was also feared that there would be enormous waste. This fear was falsified by experience. As for exploiting or burdening the children, he would ask whether it was burdening the child to save him from a disaster. *Takli* was a good enough toy to play with. It was no less a toy because it was a productive toy. Even today children helped their parents to a certain extent. The Segaon children knew the details of agriculture better than he, having worked with their parents on the fields. Whilst the child would be encouraged to spin and help his parents with agricultural jobs, he would also be made to feel that he did not belong only to his parents, but to the village and to the country and that he must make some return to them. That was the only way. He would tell the Ministers that they would make children helpless by doling out education to them. They would make them self-confident and brave by their paying for their own education by their own labour.

This system was to be common to all—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians. Why did he not lay any stress on religious instruction, he was asked. Because he was teaching them practical religion, the religion of self-help.

The State, continued Gandhiji, was bound to find employment, if they needed it, for all the pupils thus trained. As for teachers, Prof. Shah had suggested the method of conscription.[1] He had demonstrated its value by citing instances from Italy and other lands. If Mussolini could impress the youth of Italy for the service of his country, why should not we? Was it fair to label as slavery the compulsory enlistment of service of our youth for a year or longer before they began their career? The youths had contributed a lot to the success of the movement for freedom during the past 17 years, and the speaker would call upon them to freely give a year of their lives to the service of the nation. Legislation, if it was necessary in this respect, would not be compulsion, as it could not be passed without the consent of the majority of our representatives.

Gandhiji would therefore ask them to say whether this imparting of education through manual training appealed to them. For him to make it self-supporting would be a test of its efficiency. The children ought at the end of seven years be able to pay for their instruction and be earning units.

College education was largely an urban proposition. He would not say that it was an unmitigated failure, as primary education was, but the results

[1] K. T. Shah's article appeared in *Harijan*, 31-7-1937.

were fairly disappointing. Why should anyone of the graduates have to be unemployed?

Takli he had proposed as a concrete instance because Vinoba had the largest amount of practical experience in it, and he was there to answer their objections, if any. Kakasaheb would also be able to tell them something, though his experience was more theoretical than practical. He had especially drawn Gandhiji's attention to Armstrong's *Education for Life*, especially the chapter on "Education of the Hand". The late Madhusudan Das was a lawyer, but he was convinced that without the use of our hands and feet our brain would be atrophied, and even if it worked it would be the home of Satan. Tolstoy had taught the same lesson through many of his tales.

Gandhiji concluded by inviting the attention of the audience to the very fundamentals of his plan of self-supporting primary education:

We have communal quarrels—not that they are peculiar to us. England had also its Wars of the Roses, and today British Imperialism is the enemy of the world. If we want to eliminate communal strife and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence. I suggested it in connection with the nation's resolve to effect complete prohibition, but I may tell you that even if there was to be no loss of revenue, and our exchequer was full, this education would be a *sine qua non* if we did not want to urbanize our boys. We have to make them true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation. We cannot do so otherwise than by giving them a course of self-supporting primary education. Europe is no example for us. It plans its programmes in terms of violence because it believes in violence. I would be the last to minimize the achievement of Russia, but the whole structure is based on force and violence. If India has resolved to eschew violence, this system of education becomes an integral part of the discipline she has to go through. We are told that England expends millions on education, America also does so, but we forget that all that wealth is obtained through exploitation. They have reduced the art of exploitation to a science and might well give their boys the costly education they do. We cannot, will not, think in terms of exploitation, and we have no alternative but this plan of education which is based on non-violence.[1]

Harijan, 30-10-1937

[1] This was followed by a discussion in which Zakir Husain, Abdul Huq, Saudamini Mehta, K. T. Shah, Tijare, Principal of Khamgaon National School, Bhagwat, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Balubhai Thakore participated.

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327. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE–II

October 22, 1937

In the afternoon Gandhiji opened the session[1] with answering some of the criticisms. *Takli* was not the only thing, but that was the only thing which could be universalized. There was paper-making, *gur*-making from palms, and so on. It would be the function of the Ministers to find out what handicraft would suit what school best. He would warn those who were enamoured of the machine that there was every danger of men being turned into machines with the emphasis on the machine. For those who wanted to live under the machine-age his scheme would be useless, but he would also tell them that it would be impossible to keep villagers alive by means of machines. Where there were 300 million living machines, it was idle to think of bringing in new dead machinery. Dr. Zakir Husain was not right when he said that the scheme was educationally sound, irrespective of the ideological background.[2] A lady who knew the project method was visiting Gandhiji the other day, and she said that there was a vast difference between the project method and Gandhiji's scheme. But he would not ask them to accept the scheme without conviction. If our own people acted on the square, there would be no slaves but perfect artisans produced from these schools. Any labour taken from the children should certainly be worth two pice an hour.

But he warned them against accepting anything out of their regard for him. He was near death's door and would not dream of thrusting anything down people's throats. The scheme must be accepted after full and mature consideration so that it may not have to be given up in a little while. He agreed with Prof. Shah that a State was not worth anything which could not provide for its unemployed. But providing doles was not the solution of unemployment. He would provide every one of them with work and give them food if not money. God did not create us to eat, drink and be merry but to earn our bread in the sweat of our brow.[3]

Harijan, 30-10-1937

[1] Held from 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

[2] Zakir Husain had opened the discussion in the morning with the remarks that he welcomed the proposals as a sound educational proposition no matter whether one believed in urban civilization or rural, violence or non-violence.

[3] Among those who spoke after Gandhiji were: Vinoba Bhave, Dr. P. C. Ray, D. B. Kalelkar, K. T. Shah, Deva Sharma, M. S. Hussain, Nana Athavale, N. R. Malkani, Nanabhai Bhatt, B. G. Kher, Subbarayan and Biswanath Das. After the first day's proceedings the Conference converted itself into a committee to consider the propositions formulated by Gandhiji.

328. CIVIL LIBERTY

Gurudev has given the poetry of Civil Liberty.[1] It bears reproduction in a weekly journal like *Harijan*, although the statement has gone round the world. The reader will find it in another column. It is a paraphrase of "Work out thine own salvation",[2] or "Man is his own enemy and his own friend."[3]

Civil liberty is not criminal liberty. When law and order are under popular control, the Ministers in charge of the Department cannot hold the portfolio for a day if they act against the popular will. It is true that the Assemblies are not sufficiently representative of the whole people. Nevertheless the suffrage is wide enough to make it representative of the nation in matters of law and order. In seven provinces the Congress rules. It seems to be assumed by some persons that, in these provinces at least, individuals can say and do what they like. But so far as I know the Congress mind, it will not tolerate any such licence. Civil liberty means the fullest liberty to say and do what one likes within the ordinary law of the land. The word 'ordinary' has been purposely used here. The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, not to speak of the Special Powers Legislation, contain provisions which the foreign rulers have enacted for their own safety. These provisions can be easily identified, and must be ruled out of operation. The real test, however, is the interpretation by the Working Committee of the power of the Ministers of Law and Order. Subject, therefore, to the general instructions laid down by the Working Committee for the guidance of Congress Ministers, the Statutory Powers, limited in the manner indicated by me, must be exercised by the Ministers against those who, in the name of civil liberty, preach lawlessness in the popular sense of the term.

It has been suggested that Congress Ministers who are pledged to non-violence cannot resort to legal processes involving punishments. Such is not my view of the non-violence accepted by the Congress. I have, personally, not found a way out of punishments and punitive restrictions in all conceivable

[1] A message was sent by Rabindranath Tagore to the Conference on Civil Liberty in India held in London on October 17.

[2] & [3] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 5

cases. No doubt punishments have to be non-violent, if such an expression is permissible in this connection. Just as violence has its own technique, known by the military science, which has invented means of destruction unheard of before, non-violence has its own science and technique. Non-violence in politics is a new weapon in the process of evolution. Its vast possibilities are yet unexplored. The exploration can take place only if it is practised on a big scale and in various fields. Congress Ministers, if they have faith in non-violence, will undertake the explorations. But whilst they are doing this, or whether they do so or not, there is no doubt that they cannot ignore incitements to violence and manifestly violent speech, even though they may themselves run the risk of being styled violent. When they are not wanted, the public will only have to signify its disapproval through its representatives. In the absence of definite instructions from the Congress, it would be proper for the Ministers to report, what they consider is violent behaviour of any member of the public, to their own Provincial Congress Committee, or the Working Committee, and seek instructions. If the superior authority does not approve of their recommendations, they may offer to resign. They may not allow things to drift so far as to have to summon the aid of the Military. In my opinion, it would amount to political bankruptcy when any Minister is obliged to fall back on the Military, which does not belong to the people, and which, in any scheme of non-violence, must be ruled out of count for the observance of internal peace.

One interpretation I put upon the India Act is that it is an unconscious challenge to Congressmen to demonstrate the virtue of non-violence and the sincerity of their conviction about it. If the Congress can give such a demonstration, most of the safeguards fall into desuetude, and the Congress can achieve its goal without a violent struggle, and also without civil disobedience. If the Congress has not impregnated the people with the non-violent spirit, it has to become a minority, and remain in opposition, unless it will alter its creed.

Harijan, 23-10-1937

329. *INDIAN INDUSTRY*

The question is often asked: What is an Indian industry? It is asked generally regarding Indian exhibitions. Formerly it used to be claimed that any industry that was conducted in India was an Indian industry. Thus a mill manned by non-domiciled Europeans bringing capital, skilled man-power and machinery from abroad was considered to be an Indian industry even though it could be proved to be harmful to the masses. From that we have travelled a long distance. An industry to be Indian must be demonstrably in the interest of the masses; it must be manned by Indians both skilled and unskilled. Its capital and machinery should be Indian and the labour employed should have a living wage and be comfortably housed, while the welfare of the children of the labourers should be guaranteed by the employers. This is an ideal definition. Only the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A. can perhaps barely satisfy that definition. For even these Associations have much leeway to make up. Nevertheless complete conformation to the definition is their immediate goal.

But between that definition and the one that was the vogue even with the Congress before 1920 there are many shades of definitions. The Congress definition has generally been all goods other than mill-cloth manufactured in India. The great mill industry may generally be claimed to be an Indian industry. But, in spite of its ability to compete with Japan and Lancashire, it is an industry that exploits the masses and deepens their poverty in exact proportion to its success over khadi. In the modern craze for wholesale industrialization, my presentation has been questioned, if not brushed aside. It has been contended that the growing poverty of the masses, due to the progress of industrialization, is inevitable, and should therefore be suffered. I do not consider the evil to be inevitable, let alone to be suffered. The A. I. S. A. has successfully demonstrated the possibility of the villages manufacturing the whole of the cloth requirement of India simply by employing the leisure hours of the nation in spinning and the anterior processes. The difficulty lies in weaning the nation from the use of mill-cloth. This is not the place to discuss how it can be done. My purpose in this note was to give my definition of Indian industry in terms of the millions

of villagers, and my reasons for that definition. And it should be plain to everyone that national exhibitions should only be for those industries which need public support in every way, not those which are flourishing without the aid of exhibitions and the like, and which organize their own exhibitions.

Harijan, 23-10-1937

330. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN

October 23, 1937

BHAI PRANJIVAN,

If every school which has functioned for many years looked at its own history, it would find someone or the other [from among its students] who has ultimately risen to fame. So, as far as I am concerned, I would consider such a thing a mere accident. For an old school like yours the real occasion to feel elated would be when it takes measures leading to improvement and makes progress in such a way that it has no parallel in the field. What is there to be proud about accidental achievement?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[NATIONAL] SCHOOL
RAJKOT

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

331. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

SEGAON,
October 23, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

I am returning herewith the letters that Kabit should read. He should give in writing whatever reply he wishes to give. You can see that he has attacked Ananda Babu very strongly. If he admits that there has been exaggeration in his attack, he should withdraw the charge and give the same publicity to his withdrawal as he gave to the charge. And if he does not withdraw it, he should be prepared to prove it. Why did he not make these complaints to me? This also should be found out.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7709

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332. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 23, 1937

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter. Keep on writing in this way.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6553

333. LETTER TO BHAGWAN DEVI[1]

October 23, 1937

DEAR SISTER[2],

The sum of Rs. 1,000 sent by you has been received. It will be utilized for Harijan work. It is the dharma of those whom God has blessed with wealth to give it away regularly keeping back only a minimum amount for the maintenance of their health. A regular payment however little is many times more fruitful than large, sporadic gifts. God's whole creation would have come to a standstill had it not been regulated by its laws.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

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

[1] G. D. Birla's sister
[2] The superscription is from the copy in Pyarelal Papers.

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334. SPEECH AT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE[1]

October 23, 1937

Gandhiji in winding up the proceedings said he was grateful to all for having come and co-operated with him. He would look forward to further co-operation as the Conference was but the first of the many they would have to have. Malaviyaji had sent to him a warning telegram, but he could put him at ease by saying that there was nothing final about the Conference as it was a Conference of seekers, and everyone was invited to offer suggestions and criticisms. He had never the idea of carrying through anything by storm. The ideas of national education and prohibition were as old as non-co-operation. But the thing in its present shape came to him under the changed circumstances of the country.

Harijan, 30-10-1937

335. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *October 25, 1937*][2]

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

If you too return to India, who will look after the work there? Is there anyone who will be able to take up the responsibilities of the Editor? Who has been assisting you on the Gujarati side? What religion does Christopher follow?

[1] Gandhiji placed before the Conference the resolutions prepared by the Committee for discussion. The following resolutions were passed:

(1) That in the opinion of this Conference free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.

(2) That the medium of instruction be the mother tongue.

(3) That the Conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre around some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

(4) That the Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers.

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Calcutta to attend the Working Committee meeting

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Who was the priest officiating at the marriage ceremony? Have the two remained loyal to their respective religions or do they profess them merely as a form? I ask questions of this kind because a similar case has arisen here.

It would be very good if Ramdas can settle down there permanently.

Devdas is here for two or three days. I shall have to go to Calcutta for four or five days to attend the Working Committee meeting. Devdas will accompany me there and then proceed to Madras to fetch Lakshmi, and from there he will go to Delhi *via* Wardha.

How many subscribers do you have? How many of them are Muslims, how many Hindus and how many Christians? Are there any Englishmen among them?

Slossburg came and saw me. I found him a good man.

What about Ritch? Does he keep in touch with you? Andrews is in India at present. He lives in Simla and is very ill.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4763

336. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
October 29, 1937

MY DEAR NARIMAN,

I read your extraordinary statement made in Mysore with a great degree of pain. I did not write to you till now as I had asked Mahadev to find out from you whether the statement reported in the Press was a correct version of what you had said. He told me yesterday that you had confirmed the Press statement. Do you not realize that it is a gross distortion of facts? Surely, my health had nothing to do with your confession[1], for my work was finished, and my telegram to which evidently you have made reference made mention of my health in connection with your request to postpone decision. In suggesting a confession in place of the judgments, if you felt the truth of them,

[1] *Vide* Appendix VI.

both Syt. Bahadurji and I had nothing but your own good in view. You were accompanied by your counsel. You even pleaded for some alterations in the draft submitted to you. Your alterations were accepted. Do you remember that you accompanied your confession with the following covering letter?

BOMBAY,
October 15, 1937

PUJYA GANDHIJI,

I have read the draft sent with Mahadevbhai and with some alterations in the handwriting of Syt. Bahadurji. I have signed it and hence I hope the findings will not be published. I am really sorry and apologize to you for having been the cause of so much worry and trouble to you. I hope you will excuse me.

Yours,
K. F. NARIMAN

By your Mysore recantation you have proved yourself utterly unreliable. I need hardly tell you that you were and still are at perfect liberty to publish the judgment of which copies were posted to you on 16th October, 1937. I have placed the Working Committee in possession of all the facts, and I am presently handing to the Committee copies of the judgments.

Yours sincerely,

A. I. C. C. File No. 747-a, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

337. LETTER TO TANDON

[*October*][1] *29, 1937*

BHAI TANDONJI,

I have received your telegram concerning me too. I had not seen anything else apart from that. It is good that you sent a report about it. I deliberately refrained from replying to your telegram. This year there were so many telegrams from all over the world that I was staggered. And I took it to be God's grace. I had published a brief message of thanks in the newspapers. I decided not to reply individually to anyone. Anyway what reply can I give through words? So much love

[1] The source has "September", evidently a slip; *vide* "Statement to the Press", p. 204.

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can be reciprocated only through action. Let us see for what purpose God uses me as His instrument.

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

338. INTERVIEW TO POLITICAL SUFFERERS[1]

CALCUTTA,
October 29, 1937

Gandhiji is understood to have told the deputation that he had taken up the matter very seriously and was determined to do whatever lay in his power. He added that he had come to Bengal mainly, if not wholly, for this purpose and was even prepared to see the Viceroy on this question. He appealed to the deputation not to do anything which might render a solution of the matter difficult.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-10-1937

339. NOT TODDY BUT NIRO

Some persons are consciously or unconsciously imputing to me an approval of fermented toddy. I have made it perfectly plain that prohibition affects all intoxicating drinks and drugs without exception. Fermented toddy, therefore, can never be tolerated under any scheme of total prohibition. But what I have said and what I repeat is that sweet unfermented toddy, which is called *niro*[2], should not be prohibited, and that the drinking of it in the place of fermented toddy should be encouraged. How it can be done is for the Prohibition Ministers to determine.

Harijan, 30-10-1937

[1] A deputation of political sufferers from Bengal and the Punjab waited on Gandhiji in the evening. The deputation is understood to have urged Gandhiji to make the question of release of political prisoners a major issue before the country and further urged that the Congress Ministries should go to the length of resigning if necessary over the issue in order to bring pressure on Government.

[2] Also called *neera*

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340. SOCIAL SERVICE CONSCRIPTION

This valuable thesis[1] does not mean that it contains the only scheme of conscription for social service. It shows the feasibility of conscription. It points the way to it.

> . . . Usually, conscription has hitherto been used in modern individualist communities for purposes of national defence or imperialist aggression. In this country, we would adopt conscription universally, for men as well as women, not for destructive, but for productive purposes of national service and social reconstruction.
>
> In some countries they allow certain exemptions from such compulsory gratuitous public service, and offer certain compensatory advantages to those who have rendered such service. In this country, too, we may have to use a similar device. To make this new factor in our national economy function effectively and smoothly, we may have to introduce it by stages. But the foundation must be laid immediately.
>
> This Social Service Conscription should commence with educated males of 18-25 years of age. Ancillary organizations of boy or girl volunteers comparable to the British Boy Scouts, or the Italian Ballila, might be set up to support the main force of conscript workers. The proportion of educated males in India is about 1 in every 5, and that of educated women 1 in 50. At the age, however, at which conscription should commence the proportion may be appreciably higher, say, 1 in every 3 males, and 1 in every 10 women. The term 'educated' is used in a very liberal, or even charitable sense, since it includes all those who fulfil the merest test of literacy in their own language. . . . It may be expedient to limit the number of conscripts to those of secondary school-leaving stage. Of the 15 lakhs of such young men available in a province like Bombay, barely 250,000 may be found to satisfy the minimum educational qualification, while less than 100,000 may be found to satisfy the higher qualification suggested above.
>
> We may well begin the experiment with this latter number. These educated young men of 18 and over must regard the service rendered by them as a sort of personal ten per cent tax, paid in kind, those paying only who have the means to do so, and their superior education being treated as evidence of their ability. . . .
>
> The 100,000 educated young men, with whom the experiment may be commenced in Bombay, for example, would be more than

[1] By K. T. Shah, of which only extracts are reproduced here

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ample for our immediate objective, in the 21,484 villages of that province. Nearly 5 educated conscripts would be available for each village. There may be in addition about 25,000 young women who may supplement the effort later on.

The most urgent and immediate task of social service consists in: (1) liquidation of illiteracy and ignorance; (b) spread of elementary knowledge of health and hygiene; (c) aiding and improving village productive organization and occupation.

One of the most important sections in the Legislation for Conscription would have to define carefully the tasks to be allotted to the workers. . . . No scheme of conscription should be put into effect, until a comprehensive plan of the work to be done has been prepared and approved for each Province. . . . The social service conscripts, mobilized in India on the plan here advocated, would have to be given special training even more than the military conscripts of Europe, since the latter, in their ordinary elementary schooling, generally receive some element of practical training, too, before they join the colours. In India our educational system provides no such advantage for the average youth.

This training organization must be developed in each province out of the existing schools and colleges. The instructors in these institutions, particularly of the higher grade, are by no means overworked, or underpaid. From the highest to the lowest, in every faculty and branch of knowledge, this profession should be indented upon at least to the extent of one hour per day. Such training should be given intensively for 6 months in the one year of the service. Work should be assigned, or distributed, among the conscripts in accordance with the aptitude and previous training of each individual. . . .

Those conscripted in this manner both during training and during the period actually at work will not be paid anything by way of salary. But they must be maintained at public expense, and must be taken from their place of work to their homes, and *vice versa*, at public expense. This ought not, however, to cost the State such an amount as to be an insupportable burden, nor be out of proportion to the value of the service rendered.

. . . All those who willingly, and without any exemption, render such service, as and when it falls due, must at the time of seeking employment for life, be preferred by all public bodies, and even by private employers on pain of losing such patronage or countenance from the State as is now becoming increasingly common between the State and Industry. The basic legislation for such conscription must clearly provide for such compensation.

. . . The advantages of conscription need not be detailed at any great length. In the first place, it would solve, in a great measure, the

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question of the cost of the indispensable and urgent social service we need in this country. At the same time, it would help to inculcate those habits of disciplined work and of concerted action—the so-called team-work—which are indispensable in a community intent upon making up the leeway that India is suffering from. Finally, thanks to such regimentation—the phrase may be used without any fear of misinterpretation—an increasing section of the community will automatically acquire those habits of personal cleanliness and healthful living which most people when left to themselves ignore, and consequently suffer in health, temper and efficiency.

Harijan, 30-10-1937

341. A STEP FORWARD

A record of the work of the Educational Conference will be found elsewhere.[1] It marks an important stage in the presentation of my plan to the public and the Congress Ministers. It was a happy augury that so many Ministers attended. The objection and criticism centred round the idea of self-support even in the narrow sense I have mentioned. Therefore the Conference has made the very cautious declaration it has. There is no doubt the Conference had to sail on an unchartered sea. There was no complete precedent before it. If the idea is sound, it will work itself out in practice. After all it is for those who have faith in the self-support part to demonstrate it by working schools in accordance with the idea.

There was a remarkable unanimity so far as the question went of imparting full primary education including the secondary course less English through a vocation. The fact that the whole person in the boys and girls has to be developed through a vocation automatically saves the schools from degenerating into factories. For over and above the required degree of proficiency in the vocation in which they are trained, the boys and girls will have to show equal proficiency in the other subjects they will be expected to learn.

Dr. Zakir Husain's Committee's[2] labours will show how the scheme can be worked in practice and what exactly the boys and girls will be expected to know from year to year.

[1] *Vide* pp. 263-6 and 267.

[2] The Committee, appointed under the Chairmanship of Zakir Husain, was to prepare a planned syllabus on the lines of the resolutions passed at the Conference and submit its report to Gandhiji within a month. Other

Objection has been raised that the Conference's resolutions[1] were a foregone conclusion. It has no validity. In the nature of things it was impossible to invite educationists at random to pronounce their views all of a sudden on what to them is undoubtedly a revolutionary plan. The invitations had therefore to be restricted to those who as teachers had had at least something to do with vocational training. I had myself no idea that the co-workers in the cause of national education would receive the new idea with sympathy. The wider circle of educationists will undoubtedly be invited to consider the scheme when it comes before the public in a concrete and fuller form through the Zakir Husain Committee. I would request those educationists who may have helpful suggestions to make to send them at once to Shri Aryanayakam, the Convener and Secretary of the Committee at Wardha.

One of the speakers at the Conference emphasized the fact that education of little boys and girls could be more effectively handled by women than men and by mothers rather than maidens. From another standpoint, too, they are in a better position than men to answer Prof. Shah's conscription scheme. Here is undoubtedly an opportunity for patriotic women with leisure to offer their services to a cause which ranks amongst the noblest of all causes. But if they come forward, they will have to go through a sound preliminary training. Needy women in search of a living will serve no useful purpose by thinking of joining the movement as a career. If they approach the scheme, they should do so in a spirit of pure service and make it a life mission. They will fail and be severely disappointed if they approach it in a selfish spirit. If the cultured women of India will make common cause with the villagers, and that too through their children, they will produce a silent and grand revolution in the village life of India. Will they respond?

Harijan, 30-10-1937

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members of the Committee were: E. W. Aryanayakam, Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain, Vinoba Bhave, D. B. Kalelkar, Shrikrishnadas Jaju, J. C. Kumarappa, Ashadevi, Kishorelal Mashruwala and K. T. Shah.

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 273.

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342. TALK WITH ANDAMANS PRISONERS[1]

[CALCUTTA,
October 30, 1937][2]

When Gandhiji visited the political prisoners in Alipur Jail[3] they were fresh from the Andamans, and were anxious to go back to hunger-strike if they were not released, or rather if Gandhiji declared that he had failed in his mission. But they promised to do nothing until Gandhiji definitely told them that he had failed. What was to be the position now? How long were they to wait? Gandhiji said to them:

There should be no hunger-strike on any account. Though there are circumstances conceivable in which a hunger-strike may be justified, hunger-strike in order to secure release or redress of grievances is wrong. And if you resort to it whilst I am carrying on negotiations, you will clip my wings. But why think of a hunger-strike when you have got me as a good substitute for a hunger-strike? My days are numbered. I am not likely to live long, maybe I may live a year or little more and let me tell you that much of that time is going to be given in order to secure your release. I want to see you discharged before I die. That is the word I am giving to you, and I want you to give me your word that so long as I live to work for you, you will not go on hunger-strike. I cannot have peace or comfort so long as I have not secured your discharge. You have to believe what I say. Man believes and lives. My function is not that of a lawyer but of a humanitarian and a votary of non-violence. Non-violence will not spread so long as you prisoners are kept in prison, and that is why I have staked my life for the mission. No thought, therefore, of hunger-strike please.

Harijan, 23-4-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 1-11-1937
[3] At 5 p. m.

343. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 31, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

Today I took silence at 12.10 to be ready for the W. C. tomorrow. As I write this I have your letter of 29th. I have not a moment's rest to even write a word under Mahadev's letter. I have been generally at the W. C. meetings then[*sic*].

I have kept as well as possible under the peculiar circumstances. Yes, I have seen the prisoners. I had two hours with them. The release is not going to be a simple or easy affair. I shall leave no stone unturned to secure it. But 'God disposes'.

I leave for Segaon tomorrow[1] and return here on 11th November to see the Governor[2] and all whom it may be necessary to see.

No more for the day.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3826. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6982

344. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

WOODBURN ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
October 31, 1937

DEAR NAND BABU,

Will you please examine the enclosed[3] article and the illustrations which are to accompany the article to be published by the writer in book form? I have been asked to write the foreword. I have no qualifications for it. I am therefore passing on the article to you for your opinion. If in your opinion the article has intrinsic merit, you will please give me your

[1] However, on account of high blood-pressure Gandhiji had to postpone his journey; *vide* "Telegram to Abdul Ghaffar Khan", p. 287.

[2] Sir John Anderson

[3] Gandhiji here indicates with an asterisk "Separately, not by book post".

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opinion which may be published as the Foreword if the authoress desires it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]
Please address Segaon.

From a copy: C.W. 9838

345. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 1, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

I penned a few lines yesterday. This is to supplement yesterday's lines. Yes, the drink manifesto may be published without waiting for more names. I presume however that there will be work at [the] back of it—you won't do it singlehanded! ! !

Your speech[1] was sent two days ago. As you must have seen. I made some vital amendments. You need not accept them, unless they appeal to you as sound. Your suggestions are all good. But will they be accepted and, if accepted, will they be acted up to? You will know your audience and deal with the programme as you think best.

Anasuya Kale and then Sarojini asked me what day I would attend. S. suggested the last day. I did not object. But you shall decide. All will be weather permitting. My programme is all upset. I have to be back here on 11th to see the Governor. He is not here. I can't go to Darjeeling in the present state of my health. I have to reach the Frontier Province on 17th and not later than 20th. Khan Saheb wants me there for 20 days. That means that I may not be back in Segaon before 10th December. I am sorry. What will you do? Could you not be in Simla till then, if Simla agrees with you? I have heard that Simla is at its best in the winter months. But you know what your body can stand.

Here I was interrupted and it has continued.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3827. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6983

[1] The Presidential address at the All-India Women's Conference. It appeared in *Harijan*, 8-1-1938, under "Notes", sub-title, "A Remarkable Address".

346. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 1, 1937

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Enclosed herewith is the judgement of the inquiry committee about the two issues raised by Shri Nariman in his correspondence with you and me.[1] I had thought that Shri Nariman's acceptance of my recommendation to make a confession[2] which was to take the place of the judgement was a fair ending to an inquiry which gave me many an anxious moment. But Shri Nariman's recantation of the confession which I first saw only in the Press alters the position and reveals the painful state of Shri Nariman's mind. The recantation contains a patent untruth as pointed out by me in my letter[3] to Shri Nariman which you will find in the enclosure.

I recall the fact that Shri Nariman himself courted the inquiry and deliberately wanted an investigation into the charge made on him by Sardar Vallabhbhai of a grave breach of trust in the matter of the Bombay election in 1934. In his letter addressed to you occurs the following sentence:

> If the verdict of such an independent tribunal and enquiry tends to blame me in the slightest degree, then I will willingly submit to any penalty which you or any other authority chooses to impose, but at the same time hoping and expecting that, if the blame is found elsewhere, similar indiscriminating judgment should follow regardless of personalities or personal considerations.

In his letters to me (I have not the copies with me), he went further and said that, if he was found guilty of the Sardar's charge, he would consider himself to be unworthy of holding any office of trust.

I am of opinion that by his conduct Shri Nariman has proved himself unworthy of holding any position of trust, not

[1] *Vide* "Note on Nariman-Sardar Case", pp. 233-4.
[2] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", pp. 247-8, and Appendix VI.
[3] Dated October 29, 1937; *vide* pp. 274-6.

only because he has been found guilty of grave breach of trust in 1934 election and has failed to prove the charge brought by him against Sardar Vallabhbhai, but by his subsequent conduct as betrayed in the correspondence, and especially by his unfortunate recantation of the confession freely given by him in the presence of his counsel.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
PRESIDENT, A. I. C. C.

A. I. C. C. File No. 747-a, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

347. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

November 1, 1937

I have come to the conclusion that it would be best if all [of you] resigned. Even if the others don't resign, you should. Jamnalal is sure to resign. Who will be left then? Rajendra Babu? And won't [it] be bankruptcy? Bhulabhai also will leave. But it will not matter even if he does not. I don't think that Maulana's support is necessary. If he does not resign, a time will come when he will be forced to resign. I have observed that Subhas is not at all dependable. However, there is nobody but he who can be the President[1]. I thought hard last night and again now. Let others do what they like, I am convinced that you should resign. If each does not take care of his own interest nothing will be done and the whole game will be lost.

I will certainly bring up the Nariman issue. But he may not wish to do anything. All the same, let us know what the other members say. What do Deo[2] and Patwardhan believe? What is Bhulabhai's view? What weight can be attached to the opinion of one person alone?

The reasons for resigning are obvious. The Mysore chapter[3] and increasing differences of opinion . . .[4] You should make

[1] Of the forthcoming Congress session at Haripura
[2] Shankarrao Deo
[3] *Vide* "The A. I. C. C.", pp. 292-3.
[4] Omission as in the source

it clear that you cannot continue in the face of such strong differences in the Committee. Think over the whole thing carefully yourself. Nobody else's advice will help you in this matter. I see nothing but ignominy in your continuing. It will be well if you can retain control of Gujarat, but don't mind if you lose even that. To let yourself be dragged by the current will be ruinous.

I have suggested that all of you should resign. You should all meet today and decide. The proceedings today were no good. Many other things also have happened which were not proper. He should be completely free to have his own cabinet. It wouldn't be proper for him to resign himself [instead of you all]. This also should be made clear to him. Rajendra Babu is arriving today. After listening to all this, I feel that all of you should resign. I have no time and no energy. I can barely keep myself alive. You yourself should talk over the matter tonight and decide.

With so much untruth having infiltrated, what will you gain by continuing?[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 217-8

348. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

November 1, 1937

Before leaving Calcutta I should like to tell the public what actually is the position regarding my efforts to secure the relief which I promised the Andamans prisoners I should make with all my heart.

In pursuance of these efforts and by the kind permission of the Bengal Government, I saw the repatriates from the Andamans on October 30.[2] I had spent nearly two hours with them.

I am in correspondence with the Government in the matter and I expect to return to Calcutta on the 11th instant, when I hope to see His Excellency the Governor and, if necessary, subject to the Government's permission, see both the prisoners and the detenus.

[1] The text has been collated with the copy from the Manuscript Diary of Mahadev Desai.

[2] *Vide* "Talk with Andamans Prisoners", p. 281.

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Meanwhile, I trust that the prisoners, wherever they may be, will not make the position difficult by resuming their hunger-strike. I have information that many prisoners are getting restive over the delay. I can only give them the assurance that, so far as I am concerned, there shall be no remissness on my part in the effort. So far as the public are concerned, they should know that the public agitation for securing relief continues unabated.

The Statesman, 2-11-1937

349. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

[On or after *November 1, 1937*][1]

UNUSUALLY HIGH BLOOD-PRESSURE AND FATIGUE PREVENTED MY GOING TO WARDHA. DOCTORS FORBID THE FRONTIER JOURNEY AND I HAVE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED IT. IT CAUSES ME GREAT SORROW BUT IT IS INEVITABLE AND I MUST FIX SOME OTHER TIME.

The Statesman, 4-11-1937

350. LETTER TO AMINA TYABJI[2]

1 Woodburn Park,
Calcutta,
November 4, 1937

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have purposely refrained from writing to you up till now because I wanted to have a chat with Maulana Saheb before writing to you. Merely sending you an acknowledgement I held to be unnecessary. I had a long chat with the Maulana. So far as I could see, he agrees with my reading of the Koran apart from traditional and sectarian interpretations. But as he may be the only divine in India to give the liberal and universal interpretation to the Koran, he does not want to come out as a radical reformer and thus impair his influence among the Indian Muslim world. He has therefore himself written to

[1] Gandhiji's departure for Wardha was postponed on Monday November 1.
[2] Widow of Abbas Tyabji

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Habib[1] to come to Calcutta with Sohaila[2] whilst I am here. I have therefore telegraphed to Habib to come here. Please believe me when I tell you that I have been always thinking of you, your difficulties and your sorrows ever since the Hamida[3] affair has cropped up. I have acted, will act and am still acting as if the living image of Abbas Saheb was in front of me, as witness of all I am doing. More than that I could not do.

I will write to you again as soon as anything further has happened. I am here till at least the ninth. There is nothing to alarm anybody about my health. The crisis is over. I am taking full rest. I hope you and Raihana[4] are keeping well.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9690

351. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 5, 1937

CHI. KAKA,

Please read the enclosed letter and give me your guidance. On Monday when half an hour was left for departure the doctor frightened everybody and got frightened himself. At last I had to submit to him and had to stay on. Now till the 8th I shall have to stick to this one floor. Let us see what happens after that. I hope to start from here on the 9th or the 10th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7689

[1] & [2] Addressee's son-in-law and daughter
[3] Addressee's granddaughter
[4] Addressee's daughter

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352. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

November 6, 1937

The (Birla) Brothers will, whether with or without the help of friends, provide Rs. 1,000 per month, Rs. 800 being for the school of Indology and Rs. 200 per month for Nandababu's art school, as long as these departments continue satisfactorily.

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

353. LETTER TO RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CALCUTTA,
November 8, 1937

DEAR GURUDEV,

Your messenger has brought your precious note with receipts.[2] I have done nothing. It is God's prompting; your labours and prayers have borne fruit. May you have complete rest from worry and toil over the financial difficulties.

I am well, thanks.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4648

354. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[3]

November 9, 1937

I had nearly two hours' talk with His Excellency at Barrackpore. Owing to my illness the interview was considerately arranged on the grounds. Naturally the talk was confined to relief to political prisoners and detenus.

[1] According to Mahadev Desai, the letter said that Gandhiji was sending Rs. 13,000—Rs. 10,000 for the Kala Bhavan and Rs. 3,000 for three months at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per month.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

[3] Gandhiji issued this on his return from Barrackpore after meeting the Governor of Bengal.

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The public will not expect me to describe the conversations in detail for the sake of the common cause. I would ask the Press and public to be satisfied with my statement that I have placed my point of view to the best of my abilities and that it was fully discussed between His Excellency and myself. I would like the Press not to indulge in conjectures about the conversations which have to be in the nature of things private.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-11-1937

355. TELEGRAM TO J. S. PILLAI[1]

[On or before *November 10, 1937*][2]

MY WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ELECTION TO MAYORALTY WHICH I HAVE NO DOUBT YOU WILL ADORN WITH DISTINCTION.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 11-11-1937

356. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
November 10, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

STOOD STRAIN WELL. DATE DEPARTURE UNCERTAIN. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4198. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7834

[1] The addressee was the first Harijan to be elected Mayor of the Madras Corporation.

[2] The addressee received the telegram on November 10.

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357. LETTER TO DILKHUSH B. DIWANJI

SEGAON,
November 11, 1937

BHAI DILKHUSH,

I have your letter. I shall go through what you have sent me and I shall write to you if I have anything to say about it. I appreciate your keenness to complete the work. However, it should not be allowed to delay what you can give [now]. Not that I fear any unnecessary delay on your part. But some of my statements can easily be misconstrued, and so I think I should caution you. It sometimes becomes one's duty to offer a thing which, although incomplete, is a hundred per cent true and proved by experience. No single individual has a complete knowledge of all that I include in the science of khadi. But I don't despair on that account. However, I would certainly be sorry if someone who lacked a systematic knowledge of every branch of this science did not make an effort to acquire such knowledge. Despair I would still not know. Because so long as I have faith in myself, faith in khadi —and am trying, as best I can, to acquire knowledge of this science—why should I despair? This should be the attitude of those who have faith in khadi. Maybe there is not the slightest need to write to you all this. Even so, perhaps my doing so will prove helpful to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Motanan Man, p. 70

358. A NOTE ON PROHIBITION

This[1] is a valuable contribution to the discussion on prohibition. Whilst there are things which cannot be accepted, there are suggestions which are worthy of consideration. The writer adopts the slippery road of gradualness for the sake of revenue.

[1] An article by a "medical friend" which is not reproduced here

That way lies utter failure. But the suggestion about State monopoly of manufacture and sale of intoxicants and about unfermented toddy is perfectly sound.

Harijan, 13-11-1937

359. THE A. I. C. C.

Congress Ministers have a fourfold responsibility. As an individual a Minister is primarily responsible to his constituents. If he is satisfied that he no longer enjoys their confidence or that he has changed the views for which he was elected, he resigns. Collectively the Ministers are responsible to the majority of the legislators who, by a no-confidence vote or similar means, may any moment drive them out of office. But a Congress Minister owes his position and responsibility to his Provincial Congress Committee and the A. I. C. C. also. So long as all these four bodies act in co-ordination, Ministers have smooth sailing in the discharge of their duty.

The recent meeting of the A. I. C. C.[1] showed, however, that some of its members were not at all in accord with the Congress Ministries, specially that of C. Rajagopalachari, the Prime Minister of Madras. Healthy, well-informed, balanced criticism is the ozone of public life. A most democratic Minister is likely to go wrong without ceaseless watch from the public. But the resolution moved in the A. I. C. C. criticizing the Congress Ministries, and still more the speeches, were wide of the mark. The critics had not cared to study the facts. They had not before them C. Rajagopalachari's reply. They knew that he was most eager to come and answer his critics. But severe illness prevented him from coming. The critics owed it to their representative that they should postpone the consideration of the resolution. Let them study and take to heart what Jawaharlal Nehru has said in his elaborate statement on the matter. I am convinced that in their action the critics departed from truth and non-violence. If they had carried the A. I. C. C. with them, the Madras Ministers at least would have resigned, although they seemingly enjoy the full confidence of the majority of the legislators. Surely, that would not have been a desirable result.

[1] At Calcutta

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Much more offensive, in my opinion, was the Mysore resolution[1]; and the pity of it is that it was carried with practically nobody to speak out for truth. I hold no brief for Mysore. There are many things I would like the Maharaja to reform. But the Congress policy is to give even an opponent his due. In my opinion the Mysore resolution was *ultra vires* of the resolution of non-interference[2]. This, so far as I am aware, has never been repealed. On merits the A. I. C. C. was not out to deal with the State as a whole. It was dealing only with the policy of repression. The resolution did not set forth the correct state of affairs, and the speeches were full of passion and without regard to the facts of the case. The A. I. C. C. should have appointed, if it was so minded, a committee even of one person to ascertain the facts before proceeding to pronounce judgment. The least it can do in such matters, if it has any regard for truth and non-violence, is first to let the Working Committee pronounce its judgment on them and then, if necessary, review them in a judicial manner. I have purposely refrained in the case of either resolution from going into details to prove my submission. I am saving my limited energy and am leaving the matter also to the good sense of the members of the A. I. C. C., which has since 1920 assumed a unique importance and doubly so after the office-acceptance resolution[3].

Harijan, 13-11-1937

[1] Which read: "This meeting of the A. I. C. C. expresses its emphatic protest against the ruthless policy of repression as indicated by the inauguration of various restrictive and prohibitory orders and political prosecutions launched in the Mysore State and also against the suppression of civil rights and liberties by denying the elementary rights of speech, assemblage and association. This meeting sends its fraternal greetings to the people of Mysore and wishes them all success in their legitimate non-violent struggle and appeals to the people of Indian States and British India to give all support and encouragement to the people of Mysore in their struggle against the State for right of self-determination."

[2] Passed at Lucknow in April 1936

[3] Passed on March 16, 1937; *vide* Volume LXV, pp. 3-4. For Jawaharlal Nehru's reactions to this article, *vide* Appendix VIII.

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360. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 14, 1937

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I wanted to dictate this days ago but could not manage it. The work[1] you did during the two days in Wardha was very good. When you next meet I would like you to give a course of studies for seven years. Without that your report would be incomplete. You should also say how much space would be required and the nature of buildings or building needed for the school, its cost and the material of which the construction is to be made. This need not be elaborate, but should be the groundwork of elaboration. I was sorry not to be with you when you were in Wardha. I specially wanted to meet Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain[2]. How I wish I would be with you when you come again when you finish your report. I expect to leave here on Wednesday if my work is for the moment finished.

I am sending a copy of this to Aryanayakam.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

361. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

November 15, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

After a lapse of three days I have two notes from you today. I still do not do any correspondence. Both the hands are weak. I work the right for *Harijan* articles on Mondays. But I must give you a few lines today.

[1] Zakir Husain Committee's Report on Basic Education

[2] Principal, Teachers' Training College, Aligarh; later Adviser and Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Government of India.

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G. W.[1] we leave here for Wardha on Wednesday returning here, if need be, after the new G's[2] taking office.

Nothing is wanted but complete rest to set me up. I hope to get it in Segaon. I do not and cannot get it here. The detenu work occupies my thoughts and taxes my mental energy as it must while I am on the scene. That by itself sufficiently disturbs the mental relaxation I want so badly.

I say nothing about the result of my labours. For I do not know. I am not without hope.

Do you remember you wanted me not on the opening day but the 2nd or the closing day? It makes no difference to me. Do not translate your address literally. Give a free rendering. You can omit parts and add where necessary. How about the ears and the forehead? How is Nabibux? Has Shummy benefited by the change of Simla?

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3828. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6984

362. LETTER TO NARESH NATH MOOKERJEE

1 WOODBURN PARK,
CALCUTTA,
November 17, 1937

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 16th instant, I am quite clear that no Congressman can attend farewell parties to the Governor and officials, no matter where and by whom given, that is, so long as the Congress ban lasts. My interview[3] with His Excellency as also with the Ministers whether at my host's place[4] or at their place[5], was not a social or official function. And what I, having ceased to be even a four-anna member, may do with impunity, Congressmen may not. The instance you have quoted bears no analogy to mine.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-11-1937

[1] God willing
[2] Governor
[3] On November 9
[4] On November 17
[5] On November 16

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363. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS[1]

KHARAGPUR,
November 17, 1937

For the present I have no intention of issuing any Press statement about my discussions with Bengal Ministers.

On being told that the Bengal Government proposed to issue a Press communique on their negotiations with Gandhiji tomorrow, Mahatmaji said:

If on seeing their communique, I feel that any statement is necessary from me, then I may issue one, but that can only be from Wardha.[2]

Gandhiji then informed the United Press that he was coming to Calcutta very soon.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-11-1937

364. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON WAY TO WARDHA,
November 18, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I fancy I could read the personal letter in your eyes as you were hovering round me that awful Sunday night and silent Monday. The weakness has not yet left me. I need prolonged rest from all mental toil, but that perhaps cannot be had.

This I write to report to you what I have done about the prisoners in Bengal, and to ascertain whether it meets with your approval. The negotiations have been a taxing affair. Before entering upon them I had consulted the two Brothers[3] as to the desirability of securing relief through negotiations. It was possible to be indifferent as to the result and rely upon the growth of public opinion forcing release whenever it was to come. The Brothers were emphatically for negotiations, whilst public agitation continued. I unfolded my plan also and it was after

[1] Gandhiji reached Kharagpur Station at 4 p. m. A representative of the United Press approached him in the waiting room.

[2] *Vide* "Statement on Bengal Government's Communique", pp. 303-5.

[3] Subhas Chandra Bose and Sarat Chandra Bose

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the style of my telegram[1] to the Andamans prisoners. And so I saw the repatriates[2], detenus brought back from Deoli and last night the Hijli prisoners. The Ministers have agreed to release what they call 'village and home domiciled' detenus almost forthwith, and inside of four months to release those in the detenu camps whom they may consider to be safe. For the rest they will accept my recommendation, if they are not earlier released. My recommendation will depend upon my ascertaining the present belief of the detenus. If I am able to say to the Government that they do not believe in methods of violence for the attainment of independence and that they will pursue such Congress activities as are approved of by the Congress from time to time, they will release them. A declaration of policy might be made any time. I need not go into the details of the conversations with the prisoners in the several prisons and in Hijli camp. I wonder if all this commends itself to you. If you strongly disapprove of it, I would like you to telegraph. Otherwise I shall await your letter.

The strikes in Ahmedabad of which I have no knowledge, except from what I gather from the papers, as also what the papers say about Sholapur,[3] disturbed me. If we cannot control the situation either because a section of the Congressmen would not submit to Congress discipline or because the Congress cannot control the activities of those who are outside the Congress influence, our holding of offices is bound to prove detrimental to the Congress cause.

The 'Bande Mataram' controversy has not yet died out. Many Bengalis are sore at heart over the W. C. decision.[4] Subhas told me he was trying to calm the atmosphere.

I expect to have to go back to Bengal soon after the assumption of office by the incoming Governor.

I hope you are keeping well. The paragraph in the newspaper about Sarup[5] was disturbing. Is her health unequal to the strain she is undergoing?

[1] *Vide* pp. 74-5 and 99.

[2] On October 30

[3] *Vide* "Storm Signals", pp. 300-2.

[4] Some Muslims having objected to the practice of singing *Vandemataram* in certain legislatures, the Working Committee recommended that "whenever and wherever *Vandemataram* is sung the first two stanzas should be sung, with perfect freedom to the organizers to sing any other song of unobjectionable character, in addition to, or in place of *Vandemataram*".

[5] Vijayalakshmi Pandit, addressee's sister

This is being written as we are nearing Nagpur. We arrive Wardha this evening.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1937. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 247-8

365. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO WARDHA,
November 18, 1937

CHI. NIMU,

I cannot write myself, and hence I am dictating this letter. I read your letter just now in the train. A student's dharma is difficult to perform. Even if it seemed selfish at first sight, if the aim was altruistic it could be shown to be not selfish. The student's case is like that of a brave warrior who may not turn back from the battle field in the face of any obstacle, or a businessman who having gone to a distant land for earning wealth cannot return even though his family might be facing ruin. Here, circumstances are favourable for you to suspend your study. But credit lies in not being tempted by them. This is dharma. Whether or not you should follow it will depend on your strength. If you have understood this dharma and if you have the strength to follow it, forget the outside world and remain where you are. God is the Protector of us all. He takes care of everybody. I, therefore, see no reason for you to yield to *moha*[1]. Even if Sarita[2] invites you, I would advise you to decline to go. But please do not treat my advice as an order. I am only explaining to you what I consider to be dharma in such circumstances. But I don't insist that you too should regard that as the only true dharma.

I don't know where my ship is drifting. It is sailing on. The Captain is God. Why, then, should I worry where it is going? And I am not worrying. It is bound to disappear some day. If so, why keep count of the days?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] Infatuation
[2] Addressee's mother

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366. TEMPLE-ENTRY

The Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh has passed the following resolution:

> The Executive Committee of the All-India Harijan Sevak Sangh notes with satisfaction the progress of the temple-entry campaign in Malabar district and Cochin State and the growing volume of public support in these places for temple-entry for Harijans, and gives full support to this work. This Committee further requests the Government of Madras and the Government of Cochin to help the rapid emancipation of Harijans by facilitating the declaration of all Hindu temples within their jurisdiction open to the Harijans.

It is hardly right to bracket the two Governments together. The Government of Cochin is a personal Government under a Hindu Prince who owns the temples of Cochin or who is the spiritual head of most of them. It is, therefore, within his right and, in my opinion, it is his duty to open the temples within his jurisdiction to the Harijans precisely as they are open to the so-called *savarna* Hindus. The appeal addressed to the Cochin Maharaja is, therefore, quite the proper thing.

But the Madras Government is a government responsible to the people of Madras which include all classes and creeds. It cannot, therefore, with any propriety pass legislation like the Cochin Durbar opening to Harijans all the temples within its jurisdiction. The temples can only be opened to Harijans either by the trustees of their own motion or at the instance of the *savarna* visitors who are in the habit of visiting particular temples. But the Madras Government can and ought to bring in enabling legislation. It has been contended that some judgment of a court of law prevents temples from being opened to Harijans even if all the *savarna* trustees desire it. At the time of the Guruvayur Temple agitation[1] I had discussed this judgment and expressed my doubt as to its validity and meaning. But it will be remembered that in order to remove any doubts an attempt was made in the Central Legislative Assembly to bring in an enabling bill. The attempt was unsuccessful.[2] But I

[1] In 1932-33

[2] *Vide* Vol. LIII, p. 14, footnote 3; also pp. 128-32.

apprehend that under the new Constitution the Provincial Legislatures have the power to bring in and pass enabling legislation. The Congress Ministries are pledged to remove untouchability in every shape and form. *Savarna* Hindus were pledged at the time of the Yeravda Pact among many other things to fling open temples to Harijans.[1] At the very first opportunity, therefore, Congress Ministries have to bring in legislation, if it is legally within their power, to abolish untouchability in law and to enable trustees or temple-goers to open the temples to Harijans and thus put an end to the age-long curse of untouchability. The Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh can certainly mobilize *savarna* Hindu opinion in favour of the step. I observe that Harijans are already moving in the matter and rightly pressing for the opening of temples. I see too that Rao Bahadur M. C. Rajah has a Bill to his credit. I hope that he will keep himself in touch with the Ministers and act in accordance with their advice. For he and they have a common cause to pursue.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

367. STORM SIGNALS

The Sholapur affair and the labour unrest in Cawnpore and Ahmedabad show how uncertain is the Congress control over forces of disorder. Tribes called criminal cannot be dealt with radically differently from the past practice without ascertaining how they will behave. One difference can certainly be made at once. They may not be treated as criminals to be dreaded and shunned, but efforts should be made to brother them and bring them under the national influence. It is said that the red-flag men (Communists) have been at work among the men in the Sholapur settlement. Are they Congressmen? If they are, why are they not found by the side of the Congressmen who are Ministers at the wish of the Congress? If they are not Congressmen, do they seek to destroy the Congress influence and prestige? If they are not Congressmen and do seek to destroy the Congress prestige, why have Congressmen been unable to reach these tribes and make them proof against the blandishments of those who would exploit their traditional violent tendencies, so-called or real?

[1] *Vide* pp. 188-9; also Vol. LI, p. 139.

Why are we living in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore in perpetual dread of lightning or unauthorized strikes? Is the Congress unable to influence organized labour in the right direction? We may not distrust Government notices issued in the provinces administered by Congress Ministers. It will not do to belittle their notices as we used to treat the irresponsible Government's notices. If we distrust Congress Ministers or are dissatisfied with them, they can be dismissed without ceremony. But while they are permitted to remain in office, their notices and appeals should receive the full-hearted support of all Congressmen.

On no other condition can the holding of offices by Congressmen be justified. If in spite of honest effort by Congressmen, forces of disorder cannot be brought under control without the assistance of the police and the military, in my opinion acceptance by the Congress of the burden of office loses all force and meaning, and the sooner the Ministers are withdrawn the better it would be for the Congress and its struggle to achieve complete independence.

My hope is that the outbreak in the Sholapur settlement and the labour unrest in Ahmedabad and Cawnpore are symptoms of the exaggerated expectations of radical betterment of the condition of labour and even of the so-called criminal tribes. Then the Congress should have no difficulty in checking disorders. If, on the contrary, they are signs of weakness of Congress control, the whole situation arising out of acceptance of office by Congressmen requires reviewing.

One thing is certain. The Congress organization needs strengthening and purging. On the Congress register there should be, not merely a few lacs of men and women, but every adult male or female above the age of 18, no matter to what faith they belong. And these should be on the register in order to receive a proper training or education in the practice of truth and non-violence in terms of the national struggle. I have always conceived the Congress to be the greatest school of political education for the whole nation. But the Congress is far off from the realization of the ideal. One hears of manipulations of Congress registers, and of bogus names being put in for the purpose of showing numbers. When the registers have been honestly prepared there is no attempt to keep in close touch with the voters.

The question naturally arises: Do we really believe in truth and non-violence, in sustained work and discipline, in the efficacy of the fourfold constructive programme? If we do, sufficient has been achieved to show, during the working of the

Congress Ministries for the past few months, that complete independence is much nearer than when offices were accepted. If, however, we are not sure of our own chosen aims, we need not wonder if one fine morning we discover that we had committed a grave blunder in embarking upon office-acceptance. My conscience as *a* or *the* prime mover in the direction of office-acceptance is quite clear. I advised it on the supposition that the Congressmen as a whole were sound not only on the goal but also on the truthful and non-violent means. If we lack that political faith in the means, office-acceptance may prove to be a trap.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

368. NOTES

Provincial Governments and Harijans

Thakkar Bapa sends the following for publication:

(a) The Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh urges upon the Congress Provincial Governments to issue declarations of their policies regarding the removal of untouchability of Harijans at an early date.

(b) This Committee further requests Provincial Governments to create special departments and appoint special officers, where they do not already exist, to look after the uplift work of the Harijans in general and particularly to the removal of disabilities with regard to the use of common schools, public wells, tanks and water taps, and help the Harijans in the enjoyment of their civic rights.

(c) Further, this Committee requests the Provincial Governments to draw the attention of Municipal and other local bodies towards the deplorable living and service conditions of sweepers and scavengers employed by them and asks them to give the latter better amenities of life by providing them with better housing, water and lighting facilities and a decent and adequate pay and making their service permanent.

(d) This Committee further draws the attention of the Provincial Governments to clause 9 of the Yeravda Pact of September 1932 which is as follows, and requests them to give effect to the same:

"9. In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to members of the Depressed Classes."

Why should the Committee only urge in (a) the Congress Provincial Governments to do their duty? I think the

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resolution of the Executive Committee of the Harijan Sevak Sangh applies to all the Governments. And where the Governments are supine or indifferent the Opposition should wake them to a sense of their duty.

Harijan, 20-11-1937

369. TELEGRAM TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

WARDHAGANJ,
November 20, 1937

SIR PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI
NEW DELHI

BLOOD-PRESSURE ERRATIC. EXTREME EXHAUSTION BUT NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5956. Also C.W. 3273. Courtesy: Mahesh Pattani

370. STATEMENT ON BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNIQUE

WARDHA,
November 21, 1937

The Government of Bengal deserve congratulations for the decision they have arrived at on the question of detenus. Congressmen will be wrong if they judge the communique[1] by Congress measures. The Bengal Ministry are not bound by the Congress election manifesto, nor do they share Congress ideology. Nevertheless, they have travelled along Congress lines to a considerable extent. It would be wrong not to make this admission. Even a political opponent is entitled to credit when this is due. In my opinion the Bengal Cabinet have responded to public opinion in a measure, though not to the extent I had expected.

I would be unfair if I did not mention the fact that H. E. the Governor was helpful in the matter. The Ministers could hardly have carried out their wishes but for the Governor's co-operation.

I regard the communique as an earnest of much more to come. I share the opinion, expressed in the communique, that

[1] *Vide* Appendix IX.

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much will depend upon reaction to the Government's decision by the public and the 1,100 detenus who have been, or will be, released from all restraint. The requirement of supplying change of addresses to the police robs the release order of some of its grace. It betokens a timidity I wish the Government of Bengal had not betrayed.

But much need not be made of what, I hope, is mere formality.

I am sure that a full measure of relief will be forthcoming, if the atmosphere of non-violence is not disturbed, by the step taken by the Government. Even Congress insists on observance of non-violence; indeed, it is its political creed. Congress Ministers know that their existence, as such, depends solely on the observance of non-violence. I hope that the released detenus will so act as to materially help the creation and consolidation of a non-violent atmosphere, on which Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose has justly laid stress in his message on the eve of his departure for Europe for his health.

I hope that the released detenus will be no party to any public demonstration on their behalf and that the public, too, will exercise necessary restraint. I would urge the released men to quietly undertake some public service. The great business houses will, I doubt not, help those who may be in need of employment. Most of the men I met in the jails of Calcutta told me that their sole object in desiring release was to serve the public cause in the manner indicated by the Congress. They, one and all, warned me against entering into any bargain with the Government for securing their discharge. They would not give any undertaking to the Government. The assurance given by them to me should, they said, be regarded as sufficient test of their *bona fides*.

I told them that I would not be guilty of selling their honour or self-respect for the purchase of their liberty.

The public will recall that, at the very outset of my negotiations, I ascertained from the Andamans prisoners whether I could work on the assumption of their renunciation of violent methods for the attainment of independence.[1] I could not see my way to asking for relief without the ability to give such an assurance,[2] provided of course, that it represented the correct mentality of the prisoners.

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Viceroy", pp. 74-5.

[2] The rest of the sentence is from *Harijan*, 27-11-1937.

I was not able to finish my work in Bengal. It was not possible for me to do more during my time there. I am grateful to the Government of Bengal for the facilities they gave me to see the prisoners and detenus as often as I liked without the presence there of officials. My talks are not yet finished. My Hijli (jail) friends wanted to have two or three days' talk with me instead of the two hours only which I was able to give them; but then, they saw from my face that I was ill able to bear the strain of animated discussions. They were most considerate to me. I knew that I took them at a disadvantage for they could not talk to me with the freedom they would have, had I been well. I hope, as soon as my health permits me, to go back to Bengal to see each one of the unreleased detenus and prisoners.

The communique is silent on the question of the Andamans prisoners. I know that the Government draw a broad distinction between convicted prisoners and persons detained without trial.

The distinction is right. There are undoubtedly difficulties in the way. But at this stage I can only say that I have every hope, if all goes well and the public—especially the Bengal public—continues to help me as it has done hitherto, to secure these men's discharge also.

One statement in the communique is disturbing. It says that the success of the Government's policy "must, however, depend on the co-operation of the public and the leaders of public opinion in maintaining an atmosphere in which subversive movements will find no encouragement."

If by "subversive movements" they mean only violent activities, no difficulty arises and no difference of opinion exists. But, if in the phrase they include non-violent activities such as the Congress stands for, including even civil disobedience, the releases already made are a mistake and further releases will become an impossibility. Throughout my conversations with the Ministers I made it quite plain that I could only help in maintaining non-violence.

Non-violence is the only proper and honourable common ground between the Government and the people. Democracy must remain a dream in India without that bed-rock. I hope and believe that by "subversive movements" the Government mean no more than activities which are either themselves violent or which are intended to further violence.

The Statesman, 22-11-1937

371. LETTER TO JEHANGIR VAKIL

November 22, 1937

MY DEAR VAKIL,

I was able to read your letter only this morning. I cannot overtake my correspondence in time.

Your love I treasure, of your hate, I know nothing. But even if I had known it, I would not have minded it. How could one help acting according to one's nature? 'In Christ' and 'in God' have for years been convertible terms for me. I may not, probably will not, take the word in the same sense as most Christians do. But that matters little.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

372. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [*November 22, 1937*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I want to see the resolution[2] about Mysore passed at Calcutta. This means a little more work for you. I should also like to see a copy of the letter you have written to Jawaharlal.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11580

[1] From the reference to the addressee's letter to Jawaharlal Nehru dated November 19; *vide* Appendix X(a). Silence Day after it fell on November 22.

[2] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 293.

[3] For a subsequent letter from the addressee to Jawaharlal Nehru, *vide* Appendix X(b).

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373. LETTER TO PYARELAL

November 22, 1937

CHI. PYARELAL,

What have you done? Leaving me ill and Sushila weeping, you went away! But, then, didn't I let you? Yes, I did, but I made a condition, too. I shall know in time whether I did well or ill in giving even such conditional permission. At present my worries have increased and Sushila is completely upset.

You have shouted down your mother and your brother, crushed your sister, shouted down Ba yesterday and didn't spare me, either, when leaving. Do you realize all this?

Do you remember what you said? If I let you go, you said, you would probably not be able to bear the separation and would return and lay your head in my lap. Hasn't that time come? Don't you feel these two days of separation as if they were two years? If you feel so, come back in response to this letter and send a wire. Only then can Sushila serve me and I can accept her services.

Do you know that I would consent even to your dreadful step if I could understand your arguments? Won't you wait till I have recovered or till I am dead? I will seize the first opportunity to discuss the matter with you if I recover from this illness. If you say that now there is nothing to be discussed, it will be like branding a man who has already sustained burns.

Your letter to Ramdas after the death of Chhotelal was not proper. It was unjust. You did not have the patience to read Kishorelal's letter. You have done him a terrible injustice. You failed in your duty by only reading the introductory part and leaving the rest of the material. Even if the whole world fails to understand you and does you injustice, your dharma is to bear it. "My honour is in your hands, O Lord, protect it." If you take the unworthy step, you will darken my life for ever. Don't let this happen to me. Return soon, or if you decide not to return send a wire reassuring me and Sushila. Write a letter, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

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

374. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
November 24, 1937

Don't expect letters from me for the time being.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3830. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6986

375. A FOREWORD[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
November 27, 1937

One can at once perceive in Acharya Kripalani's way of thinking and writing a quality of uniqueness. Anyone who has known him will recognize at once any piece of writing as his and his alone. This is the impression I had while reading this collection.

At a time when all kinds of new ideas are spreading in the country, this collection is likely to be of considerable help to those who want to study them. Acharya Kripalani has shown very convincingly that the programme the Congress adopted in 1920 is as useful now for attaining freedom as it was in 1920.

Acharya Kripalani is quite correct in saying that there is no such thing as Gandhism. Insistence on truth is an eternal principle. While contemplating on it the jewel of non-violence was discovered and as a result of the experiments in non-violence emerged the programme of 1920. Trying to attain independence without it is as good as pounding chaff.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Acharya Kripalanina Lekho

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] To *Acharya Kripalanina Lekho*

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376. LETTER TO K. NAZIMUDDIN

MAGANWADI, WARDHA, (C. P.),
November 28, 1937

DEAR SIR NAZIMUDDIN,

I must thank you for your exhaustive and kind letter[1] of the 24th instant.

I am still bed-ridden. But I must scribble down in pencil a reply which Mahadev Desai will copy for me.

Your confidence in me flatters me, but if it is not extended to those through whom alone I can hope to work with success, the work for which you and I are striving comes to a standstill. I have no power over the detenus or the Bengal public save through the accredited leaders. I can impose nothing on them. I have no other method but that of persuasion. I am in constant correspondence with Shri Sarat Bose in this matter. Without the assistance of the two brothers, I could have done nothing in Bengal. Of course you were right in permitting Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy and Sarojini Devi to visit the Hijli friends. Their visit will help.

I may make one thing clear. Any recommendation I may make will be, in so far as the Bengal Government are concerned, on my sole responsibility. I hope therefore that you will please reconsider your decision and allow Shri Sarat Bose on my behalf to visit the Hijli prisoners for the time being.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR K. NAZIMUDDIN
HOME MINISTER
WRITERS' BUILDING
CALCUTTA

From a copy: C.W. 7783. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1] *Vide* Appendix XI.

377. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
November 28, 1937

There is a conspiracy ripening to remove me to a seaside place.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3833. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6989

378. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[2]

SEGAON,
November 29, 1937

You must not get ill. How I wish you had full nature cure. Hope the niece is better. I had a personal letter today from the Viceroy of good wishes. You must write daily. Please thank the Maharaja for the fruit. But tell him why foreign fruits when this land of ours has plenty of both fresh and dried fruit.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3834. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6990

[1] &[2] These are postscripts to Mirabehn's letters to the addressee.

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379. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL[1]

SEGAON, *via* WARDHA,
November 29, 1937

Hope Mother is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

380. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 1937

I would use even foreign stuff. Powdered or condensed milk must be available in India. One would only have to spend some money. It is to be seen whether the Reception Committee[2] will be prepared to go that far. I would not at all like anything to be done merely in deference to my wishes. I am alive today but may not be tomorrow. Any suggestion should be acted upon only if it is good and convincing. Try your best. Is it not possible to dry the milk into powder? If we think it our duty to insist on cow's milk, the milk-powder available outside at a cheaper rate can also be used. These are, of course, only my suggestions. If they readily appeal to you all, you will certainly be able to procure cow's milk in some form from all parts of the country. I too may try, if you decide I should.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9113

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] For the Congress session at Haripura

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381. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

December 5, 1937

CHI. MAHADEV,

Here are two items. Shah's later.

Don't remove Durga straightaway. My fate is uncertain. To avoid any appearance of obstinacy, I am shifting to the sea-coast[1] and taking you also. But who knows whether we shall reach there safe? I advise you to let Durga stay where she is at present. Lilavati is happy there. But in the end we should trust in God. Let His will prevail. And, moreover, what value is to be put upon my judgment in the present circumstances?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11584

382. NOTE TO DAMODARDAS MUNDHRA

[On or before *December 6, 1937*][2]

Please show this slip to Jamnalalji. There is no need to bring the engine. I am prepared to let myself be carried in a chair if I am not permitted to walk across the railway track.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3074-a

383. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day [*December 6, 1937*][3]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I believe that we have somewhere the resolution regarding the Indian States.[4] What you have written about Ratne is correct.

[1] At Juhu in Bombay

[2] The date of receipt as recorded on the document is December 6, 1937.

[3] From the reference to "the two items"; *vide* letter to the addressee dated December 5, 1937.

[4] *Vide* Appendix X(b).

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Please ask Jamnalalji. Perhaps he will remember. Girdhari must have given you the two items which I sent last night.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11585

384. TALK WITH MAHADEV DESAI[1]

December 6, 1937

Gandhiji was averse to leaving Segaon, and as he told me the day we left Wardha [2] he would not have left Segaon except to escape the charge of obstinacy.

I am accustomed to cold, and to sleeping under the sky in the severest weather. But if the doctor[3] insists that the cold is having a detrimental effect on the heart and hence on the blood-pressure, I should listen to what he says, if only to avoid the charge of obstinacy.

Harijan, 18-12-1937

385. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

BOMBAY,
December 7, 1937

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
JULLUNDUR CITY

ARRIVED. WELL NOW.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3839. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6995

386. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

December 8, 1937

CHI. LILAVATI,

Are you still your old self—agitated, restless, overstrung, emotional, sentimental, unsteady, unmethodical? What will

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"
[2] On December 6
[3] Dr. Jivraj Mehta

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you do after I die? I would have brought you with me had it been in my hands. I couldn't easily leave any of you behind. But my sense of duty made me feel helpless. Write to me. I will get your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9588. Also C.W. 6560. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

387. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

December 8, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I understand your suffering. Have patience. Write to me. I will get your letter. Give me all the details. Don't worry. Learn everything carefully. Take full advantage of Vinoba's *satsang*[1].

The rest[2] on the back.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7075. Also C.W. 4567. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

388. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

December 8, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

Spare some time for Sharda for teaching her English. She is such a girl that anything you give her will bear fruit. Though a child, she is mature and wise.

You have realized that all that I told you about spinning is essential for a votary of Truth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8366. Also C.W. 7023. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Company of or association with the good

[2] This is a report by Kanu Gandhi on Gandhiji's health, especially the blood-pressure.

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389. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 8, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I should like you to tell me why you have no peace of mind. What could be the cause? Whatever it may be, you must change. If you wish to go out for some time, when is it to be and for how long? Let me know your weight. Write about whatever other things you have omitted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10742

390. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 8, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

You dare not accept defeat. Remain calm. Keep on writing to me in detail. I could not [write] regularly. Only today I have taken up some letters. It would not be so always. Do all your work with scrupulous care.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9977. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

391. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

December 13, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

It is Monday, 7.55. I can't help giving you a few lines. You are packing for Nagpur[1]. You can't pack me. This pains me. I had hoped against hope that I would be with you to

[1] To preside over the All-India Women's Conference

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support you. But God had willed it otherwise. You will excuse me. I shall be with you in spirit. I may not send you a message to read or publish. But you don't want that. It is enough for you to know that during that difficult time I shall be praying for your success. You are not to worry about me. Really I am doing well and obeying the doctors and Jamnalalji. I see the niece's illness too worries you. Leave everything in His all-powerful hands. How I wish you were with me to watch Dinshaw Mehta's[1] massage, etc., and to have his treatment for yourself.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3844. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7000

392. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

December 13, 1937

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. I understand. As suggested by you, we shall arrange about your going after I get back there. You will find much worth observing and worth learning at Saoli. But what I want from you is something different and original. Saoli and Nalwadi offer expert knowledge about the crafts. You probably have that in full. What you have to acquire is the art of weaving all other knowledge into the knowledge of the crafts. It can't be gathered from books. It will have to come out of your heart and your brain. When Vijaya goes to Saoli, you may accompany her.

Your weight must increase. You must not make the least reduction in your milk and ghee so long as you can digest them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10743

[1] Of Poona Healthatorium

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393. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

JUHU,
December 13, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

You must have received my letter and Pyarelal's. I hope you have understood the point clearly and started the treatment. Why is there no letter from you? I hope you are not in trouble and that everything is going on well. Blessings to all. If Balwantsinha and Parnerkar have come there, ask them to write to me. Rohit must now be playing a lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9978. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

394. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

December 15, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

How can we speak of killing two birds with one stone? We may say that we bring down two fruits with one stone. You may bring down with one stone as many fruits as you like, but don't keep awake for long hours at the cost of sleep. True yoga is that which strengthens body, mind and soul, all the three. What you say about Sharda is correct. She is a wise girl. Give her as much as you can.

I am improving.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8297. Also C.W. 7024. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

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395. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 15, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,

Got your letter. I do not wish to play a trick on you by arranging classes for you. And is that possible in any case? Are you such a simple soul that you can be so easily caught? You have to do one thing. You must make your body strong as steel. Looking after the rest is my responsibility. If you have followed everything about Dinshawji's [treatment], start it. It would not take as much time as you fear. But spare whatever time may be necessary for it. Write to me regularly about the result.

Why do you find the atmosphere dull? Why should your mind be sad? It is your own fault. So many people, the cows and calves, the birds and bees, the shrubs and trees—one would be in blithe spirits with so much of company. They are all your kith and kin—even the trees. Why should you not play with the local children?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9979. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

396. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

JUHU,
December 16, 1937

BAPA,

How can you afford to give way to despair like this? I had told you that even after we got complete independence, we should expect little help from the Government. Should we expect the Government or God to do what ought to be done by every caste Hindu, or, rather, should not every individual do his own duty? All the same, we shall see about the U. P. and Bihar.[1] But we shall deserve no credit if we get help from

[1] The addressee had complained that the Ministers in U. P. and Bihar were not helping Harijans' education.

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there. We can earn merit only by getting whatever every caste Hindu can give. I hope, therefore, that you will not slacken your labours in future. You have selected your sphere of service for your whole life. Poona is definitely not for you. You may certainly pay a visit to it every June. Let Ghanshyamdas say what he likes, but the Sangh cannot be wound up.[1] I am writing this from my sick-bed.

[From Gujarati]

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

397. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

JUHU,
December 17, 1937

CHI. LILA,

Do stay with Durga till I come. This is your duty for the present. Even if, therefore, you must go somewhere, you should postpone doing so. But in future also do only what is within your capacity. We may wish to do a good many things, but if we don't have that much strength we should give in.

I am doing fairly well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9368. Also C.W. 6643. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

398. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. KHARE

JUHU,
December 17, 1937

CHI. PANDITJI,

My blessings to Yoga[2] and Soman[3]. May they be happy, live long and by their life add lustre to the Ashram. Tell Yoga

[1] G. D. Birla had suggested that since the Ministers were there to take up the responsibility of Harijan uplift work, the Harijan Sevak Sangh could be wound up.

[2] Addressee's brother's daughter

[3] Ramachandra J. Soman

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that she has dried up after writing to me only one letter. Ask her to shake off her lethargy.

Lakshmibehn[1] must be quite all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4047

399. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 20, 1937

CHI. MANILAL–SUSHILA,

Don't worry about me at all. Don't believe the newspapers. If there is anything serious, you will no doubt get a cable from here.

What Sushila says is correct. You needn't thank her for any help she may give. It would be strange if she did not help. We used to sing a *bhajan* in Phœnix, one line in which ran: "A true lover's love is that which expects no thanks or return for courtesy shown". "*Vinayni purni*" means "thanks or return". Either of you will be starting soon now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4869

400. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

December 20, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

You did well in coming back to Segaon on falling ill. But why did you at all fall ill after leaving Segaon? You must find this out. If you can't find the cause, you will be unfit to stay outside Segaon. What will you learn from Vinoba's words? What you learned from his work is what matters. If one could learn from words, wouldn't I have sent you to some great scholar? After you have recovered, go to Nalwadi, finish the work there soon and come back. Master the art of spinning on the *takli* and the spinning-wheel with good speed. Master

[1] Addressee's wife

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carding, too. Why should you get tired out in eight hours? Have you grown old? Why should you get tired if you sit upright when spinning? The *Gita* verses are recited there with the purest pronunciation of the words. Probably you don't hear them recited. I suppose they recite the Marathi *Geetai*[1] there.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7076. Also C.W. 4568. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M Pancholi

401. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

December 20, 1937

CHI. BHANSALI,

There is no doubt at all that in turning to the path of karma you have done the best thing possible. There is no other path at all while we live in the body. We shall be free only if we surrender everything to Lord Krishna. He who clings to Karma is attached to pleasure. He is the true yogi who goes on doing his work as a duty laid on him and as sacrifice, i. e., for the good of others, and remains unconcerned with the fruits of his work.

You may by all means go to Nalwadi for a few days . . .[3] after asking . . .[4] whether you can.

Take more of milk if necessary. I am very glad indeed that you are teaching Sharda.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8295. Also C.W. 7025. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Metrical Marathi rendering of the *Bhagavad Gita* by Vinoba Bhave
[2] This is followed by a note which reads: "This should be sent to Segaon."
[3] & [4] The source is illegible here.

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402. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1937

I have your letter. Don't believe newspaper reports unless you get a cable from me. If there is anything serious a cable will of course be sent.

What you think about me is not correct. I believe that I am more vigilant than any other leader. This is, as I understand, the straight and simple cause of my blood-pressure. My non-attachment is less than what is meant by the *Gita*; I am full of feeling. I am always pained by anybody's suffering. This is as it ought to be. And still I must remain non-attached. I have not yet mastered that art. It will not be non-attachment if I am not affected by others' sufferings. The *Gita* asks us to endure cold and heat, joy and sorrow. It doesn't say [in so many words] that a non-attached person never feels them. If, therefore, you said to me, 'Bapu, you are not obeying the teaching of Mother *Gita*', your charge would be tenable. But, as for physical rest, such as the pampering of the body, etc., I have been taking more than enough. Know that my coming to Juhu is nothing but pampering. There are so many things to be done but I have forsaken them. My reasoning is clear, but I am not exercising it. You should, therefore, stop worrying about me. . . .[1]

If this is done, you two will be able to pay frequent visits here by turns. But the condition is that your health must become fine. You can collect the bills, can do composing and can even write something. One learns to do a thing by doing it. Nimu also will get useful experience there and can help in the work a great deal. Kanam is happy. You will read about all that in Ba's letter.

[From Gujarati]

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

[1] The source is illegible here.

403. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
December 24, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I think of you as you are about to enter upon your task. May the Inner Light guide you and make your path smooth through all difficulties. I hope you are keeping well. Who is with you? Most probably Jamnalalji will be in Nagpur on 26th. I have no doubt you will invite him. Anyway ask him whether you could come for a few days to Juhu and if he says yes, and if you have not tied yourself down otherwise, do come.

I am expecting a full letter from you in reply to mine.

If you want season's greetings, you have them by the cart-loads. You were to be with me during the whole of the month! ! ![1] But—

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3620. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6429

404. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
December 27, 1937

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I must send you a line come what may. Of course nothing can come. I hope the weather is cool there and your task made light by your co-workers on the spot. I am with you in spirit all these days. I hope you had my letter[2] awaiting you on your reaching Nagpur. I am having ups and downs. But they don't worry me. And how is your eczema? The rest from Mira.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3621. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6430

[1] The addressee was to stay at Wardha before leaving for Simla.
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

405. LETTER TO YOGA R. SOMAN

JUHU,
December 29, 1937

CHI. YOGA,

You will learn what is what, now that you are living with your husband. Tea for such a young girl like you! Why do you spoil milk in that manner? If you cannot digest milk, you can add some water to it, or palm-jaggery. And be sure you become proficient in music.

You will be able to learn much from Somanji if you mean to. You are not yet too old to learn. Build up a strong physique. Serve your mother-in-law as well as you can. I shall not be able to write a separate letter to Soman. I am not writing to Panditji either. You will show this to them, won't you? Has Rambhau[1] reformed himself completely?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4048

406. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 29, 1937

CHI. PRABHA,

You seem to be quite a cunning woman. What excuses you offer for not writing! You are like a thief turning round and accusing the police. You went on your own, and now say that you had to leave and, therefore, feel no inclination to write. You had definitely promised me that you would write. You went alone. And even then no letter saying that you had arrived safe! And even if you don't care about me, what about poor Amtul Salaam ? She inquires every day whether there has been a letter from you. She writes to you almost daily and you don't write even a few lines on a slip of paper in reply! What discourtesy ? And what hard-heartedness! Tell me now what punishment

[1] Narayan M. Khare's son Ramchandra

you deserve, and in what measure. What do you do about milk there? You did well in going away, of course. About myself Amtul Salaam will write. You are often in the thoughts of us all. Do some reading and writing while you are there and serve Father in every possible way.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
Don't be remiss now in writing to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3509

407. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

JUHU,
December 30, 1937

MY DEAR UNTOUCHABLE,

I have just been given your notelet. Can you give me a better diminutive? I did not know till after I had written to you that you had already been shut out. So you are now taking your revenge at my expense. But I understand. You shall certainly come later. I expect you fully at Haripura as I expect myself to be able to go there.

You wouldn't be an idiot, if you had answered my questions about your health. Now you *must* when you write again.

You will be interested to read the two cuttings herewith. Perhaps you had not seen them before.

About myself I say nothing because Mira keeps you fully informed.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3848. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7004

408. LETTER TO MADELEINE ROLLAND

December 30, 1937

MY DEAR MADELEINE[1],

I was glad to have your letter. I am getting on as well as may be. And whatever I do and do not do, I suppose I shall

[1] Sister of Romain Rolland

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live on for a while, if God wants more work from me. His work goes on, we come in only when and to the extent He wants us. Yes, I remember those happy hours with you and the Sage. I wish they could be repeated.

I hope all of you are keeping well in spite of the awful political atmosphere surrounding you. These rapid communications have so reduced this tiny globe that what happens in one part of it reverberates throughout the length and breadth of it.

My love to you both.

BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 10589. Courtesy: Madeleine Rolland

409. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

JUHU,
December 30, 1937

CHI. VIJAYA,

I have your letter. It is surprising that spinning on the *takli* tires you out. Build up your strength so much and so well that you will not get fatigued no matter how long you spin. Find out the reason why you get fatigued. See that you don't fall ill again. Kanu and others will write about me. Ask Vinoba about yourself. If he and Vallabh leave perhaps you need not stay on at Nalwadi. Write to me from time to time.

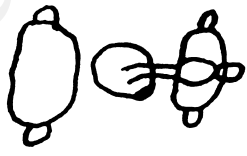
Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7077. Also C.W. 4569. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

410. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

December 30, 1937

CHI. SHARDA,



This is how one should sit. This bath consists of just lying in hot and cold water. The effect of hot and cold [water] alone is important. For this bath even small round tubs would do. But these we do not have. Have you understood it now? It is proper to begin Dinshawji's treatment only after fully understanding everything.

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Do you find time to read? Do you keep any accounts? Look after your health. How is the cold there?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Balwantsinha that it does not matter if he has suffered an injury. But let him not ignore it now. Let him go to the hospital if necessary. I have no energy to write to Nanavati today.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9980. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

411. CABLE TO EFY ARISTARCHI

[*1937*][1]

PRINCESS ARISTARCHI
HOTEL SKOTZKY
FRIEBURG, I.B. (GERMANY)

MATERIAL DISCOMFORT MUST NOT OVERWHELM YOU. YOU MUST REJOICE IN THIS SUFFERING. LOVE.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

412. CABLE TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*1937*]

CHARLIE ANDREWS
PEMBROKE COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE (ENGLAND)

YOUR SUGGESTION IMPROPER.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source places this and the following cable along with the letters of 1937.

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413. DISCUSSION WITH AN ITALIAN PROFESSOR[1]

[*1937*]

PROFESSOR: If we had in the world a people who practised ahimsa, could they keep themselves free from being slaves of others?

GANDHIJI: If one person can, surely a nation can. No man or group of men can hold any other man or group of other men slaves against their will. The slave-driver will say 'Do this' and they will refuse. It is possible to imagine that some day all nations will become sufficiently intelligent to act, even in the mass, as individuals do today.

Gandhiji then drew a vivid picture of the violent road for India, how she might murder and fight, and suffer reprisals, till out of 30 crores only one crore would be left.

But I decided that that was not the road for me. I rehearsed all these things in my mind, but I said to myself, 'This is the way of the Devil, not the way of God.' The thought of those twenty-nine crores of lives sacrificed would ever haunt me. The fact of the one crore of giants, trained in violence, who would have the whole of India to spread themselves in, would give me no satisfaction. I said to myself, 'I must take the way of non-violence, and take with me even the lepers and the lunatics.'

For, after all, are we not all more or less lepers and more or less mad? If we were all sane, we should be like gods. It is because we have a screw loose that we cannot succeed in being one with God.

Harijan, 9-9-1939

[1] This report by Mirabehn appeared under the title "The way of God or the Way of the Devil" with the following introductory note: "Readers of *Harijan* will like to share with me the following dialogue between Gandhiji and an Italian Professor which took place in Segaon in 1937. I found it in my notebook as I was turning over old papers. It gives a fuller meaning to his Press message on the world situation." *Vide* Vol. LXX, "Statement to the Press", On or before 27-8-1939.

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414. TALK WITH DOCTORS[1]

[On or before *January 7, 1938*][2]

The doctors wanted Gandhiji to continue the stay until the end of January, but a month out of Segaon was the most Gandhiji could give himself. Not that he has regained a condition of health enabling him to resume his normal activities. But as he put it to the doctors in his own unanswerable way:

If I cannot get well out of Segaon, I should prefer to face death in Segaon in the process of giving there to the country the work I think I am specially gifted to give.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

415. TALK WITH C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

January 7, 1938

"But why should you put so much passion in all your talk?" said C. R. to Gandhiji on the last day of our stay at Juhu. Laughing, Gandhiji said:

Because I have yet to learn the lesson of the *Gita* to be passionless. There is the desire to see that in whatever I am speaking about, to whomsoever I am speaking, truth—cent per cent truth—is speaking out.

[C. R.] But why can't you forget all work until you are fully well?

[GANDHIJI]: There are things that cannot be given up even at the risk of life. One of them has become the question of the Andamans prisoners and the Bengal detenus.

[C. R.] Then why do you ask me to let others do their work and not to try to mind others' portfolios? All I say is that I have not acquired the art of controlling my *swabhava*[3].

[GANDHIJI:] Even so must I obey the law of my *swabhava*.

[1] & [2] This and the following item are reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". The conversation took place before Gandhiji left Juhu for Segaon on January 7, 1938.

[3] One's nature

"But why must you devote precious hours to what seems to us to be unimportant people and things?" said another friend.

[GANDHIJI:] They seem to you to be unimportant, not to me. For fifty years I have acted in the same way and I cannot change my spots now.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

416. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

BOMBAY,
January 7, 1938

When asked whether he could stand the Segaon cold in his present delicate state of health, Gandhiji said in his clear silver voice that he was hopeful that Segaon would suit him. Gandhiji admitted that his 32 days' stay in Juhu had contributed much to his improvement.

Let me get back to Segaon and try that village. If I go down again, I will return to Juhu.

Asked why he could not continue the stay in Juhu for a few more weeks, instead of running a risk in Segaon, the Mahatma nodded his head, raised his hands and said:

Let me see what God has in store for me.

Mahatma Gandhi had a word of appreciation for the Press who had co-operated with him in carrying out the doctors' instruction regarding complete rest.

Asked to give a message about the Bengal detenus, Mahatma Gandhi said:

No messages, please.

The Hindu, 8-1-1938

[1] At the Victoria Terminus station

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417. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
January 9, 1938

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your all letters have been duly received. Only I rarely write nowadays. Yours is the first letter I am writing after five or six days' abstention from writing. I am well and not well. The B. P. goes down to the ideal figure but jumps up on the slightest pretext. I dare not talk or even listen to any serious conversation.

You shall come on 1st February or 2nd as suits you best and stay as long as you can. I am expected to leave on 7th reaching Haripura on 9th instant. You will go with me. The W. C. meets here on 3rd February.

About 15th Lord Lothian comes to meet me[1] and then perhaps Ghanshyamdas to talk about the Bengal prisoners. This gives you all the information you may need. The weather is quite mild. The temperature is 60-64 during night, 72-76 during day.

You ought to keep well by treating yourself along the lines of naturopathy. I do wish you could have come earlier. However, one has to be thankful for small mercies. But do try to come earlier, if it is at all possible.

Did I tell you that last year's shawl you gave me has gone to Ba at her own instance. I know you don't mind that.

Love to you and Shummy.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3622. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6431

[1] *Vide* "Discussion with Lord Lothian", p. 343.

418. TALK WITH JAMNALAL BAJAJ[1]

January 9, 1938

"But you now know that you cannot put up with more than a certain amount of strain. Why should you invite that strain and let all the people feel that Segaon does not suit you?" said Jamnalalji, on Sunday, the day after our return to Segaon.

[GANDHIJI:] It would be wrong to say so. All I want you to do is to co-operate with me when I say to everyone that I must mend or end in Segaon and not go out anywhere else, that no outside doctors should be troubled to come here.

But you have often assured us that you are making a conscious effort to live.

I have. But if someone were to tell me, in order to avoid death, to retire to the Himalayas until the end of this year, I should not do so. For I know that death is inevitable, no matter what precautions man deludes himself with. I would like you to appreciate that I am one of the very few among the public men in India who know how to preserve their health. God knows what work to take out of me. He will not permit me to live a moment longer than He needs me for His work.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

419. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 10, 1938

MOTHER LIVED NOBLY HAS DIED NOBLY. SHE WAS A MODEL WIFE WIDOW AND MOTHER. NO SORROW. LET OUR WOMEN COPY HER EXAMPLE. LOVE.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 11-1-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

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420. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON,
January 10, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

Your letters are lying with me. I have read all of them carefully and with interest, for I was waiting for them practically every day. I wanted to write to you even before I received your first letter, but I was held back because I was afraid of you. The fear was that you, who were already angry with me, might get more so if I [inadvertently] wrote something which you didn't like. Despite this fear, however, I would have decided and summoned up courage to write were it not for my illness. I was happy to see no sign of anger in your letters. But I do believe that it was because of anger that you had abruptly discontinued writing to me. However, as is your wont, after some reflection you overcame your anger and started writing to me as before. Your letters are to me, what the rain is to the *chataka*[1]. In fact, I have never given up hope of you. I am sure that, before I die, you will again become one with me as you were before. This certainly doesn't mean that I want you to give up your study and run up to me. Do complete your study.

You did well in visiting Trivandrum. Saraswati was longing for you. You may come here only when you conveniently can.

The discussion with the teacher was very fine. You certainly have the power of reasoning. What about Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada ? It will be quite easy for you to learn these languages. Amala knows thirteen languages and can even teach some of them. Max Muller knew fourteen languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Sanskrit. He could even correspond in Sanskrit. We, on the other hand, try to learn everything through English in order to master that language and as a result get exhausted and become incapable of doing anything else. In itself, knowledge of several languages is as useful as it is interesting and easy to acquire.

I hope you are taking care of your health. I am still not permitted to write letters. I think this is the first long letter I

[1] A legendary bird supposed to drink only rain-drops

have written after I fell ill. Mahadev will correct me if I am making a mistake in this.

I am gradually improving. I do hope to recover completely. The only medicine is rest, and I am taking as much of it as I can.

Write to Devdas, as also to Manilal and Ramdas. Manilal or Sushila may be coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7332. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

421. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 10, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The accompanying article won't do. Your reply is no reply. Is not the article in Hindi? Your reply also should be in Hindi. The manner of replying should be different, too. There is no hurry about it. We will think it over when we meet. We should also know who has sent you the article. Show it to Kaka. I think the writer is a friend of his.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

An article is enclosed. Send it on if you like it. Otherwise bring it back and discuss it with me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11586

422. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 10, 1938

Don't worry for me. There is One who worries for you, me, and everybody. Why, then, should we worry at all? And now I am improving, even though slowly. Do not trust the newspapers—except *Harijan.*

If you can live there peacefully, your health will improve even there. In any case, however, you will be able to earn a

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plain loaf of bread anywhere. If you become calm you will improve your health even there. Here you would feel embarrassed to eat as much as you wish while there everybody does and can do so. Such is the power of psychological atmosphere. How can one eat one's fill without a sense of guilt in this poverty-stricken country? There you are far away. In a distant land one should forget things back home and adjust oneself to the surrounding atmosphere. I have not come across any human being who remains unaffected by his surroundings. I for one think there can be no such person. If there is any such person in a million, he must be a *vatapi*, that is, one who lives only on air. How can such a one permit himself to eat anything else? Does God eat? With what mouth and with what body can He eat? I will write no more, otherwise the doctors will complain. Do not be anxious about Nimu and Kanam. Please have faith that everything possible is being done for everyone. If more is possible, I would certainly do it. But if we attempt anything beyond our capacity, we might violate our dharma and break under the strain.

[From Gujarati]

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

423. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, PRISONERS' RELIEF SOCIETY, LAHORE[1]

January 11, 1938

HOPE AGAINST HOPE PRISONERS WILL GIVE UP HUNGER-STRIKE WHILST I AM AILING. THEY DON'T GIVE ME A CHANCE.

The Hindu, 15-1-1938

424. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 11, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did not like even the second article about relief and hence I am sending a fresh one altogether. If you do not need any such article, you may omit it.

[1] The addressee had informed Gandhiji of the hunger-strike by political prisoners in the Punjab jail.

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I have revised the article[1] about non-violence. It is all right. Discuss the complexities of the subject some time. It is good that you get an opportunity to write on such subjects.

Send a telegram to Jawaharlal. The note about the Bill is all right.[2] The other thing also is all right. I should have a copy of the Bill.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11587

425. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SEGAON,
January 13, 1938

1. Even if Nanabhai himself wishes to leave, I should like to know why. I would never agree to his leaving. What he has is something permanent. Why should he run after what is impermanent?

2. I have no doubts even about you.[3] You also cannot leave. I would study even that point[4] from every possible angle. Even if you were to devote all the 24 hours to the Harijan Ashram, there is so much work that every day there would be something left to be done. However, if you can do other work while looking after the Harijan Ashram, well and good. But as the author of this scheme of education I feel that you can experiment with it and develop it among the boys you have in the Harijan Ashram. I would prefer that.

3. What about your remark that we should regard this work as our own?

I have not been able to think about it even after perusing the papers you sent to me. We do not have sufficient equipment for that purpose. But I think that Maganbhai[5] should throw some light on the subject if he can. I do not think that we should do something anyhow even if we do not find the equipment we want. Let us avail ourselves of whatever our stray attempts may yield. We would be deceiving ourselves by attempting anything else.

[1] Presumably "Training for Non-violence", published in *Harijan*, 15-1-1938

[2] The note on the Bombay Harijan Temple Worship Bill was published in *Harijan*, 15-1-1938, under the title "A Necessary Measure".

[3] This was addressed to Narahari D. Parikh.

[4] About running the school while remaining in the Ashram

[5] Maganbhai P. Desai

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Had it not been for Zakir Husain and [Arya]nayakam, I would have abandoned the implementation of my idea of education. That is in my very nature.

4. Atitkar has volunteered to start the work in Maharashtra. I cannot say how much he would be able to do. But he has shown the courage and offered to do something. Would it look proper if we were not able to do anything in Gujarat? The Government wants us to manage even the Basic Training College.

I have realized that. I would certainly feel ashamed if we did not show the courage and take up the challenge. But it would be disgraceful if we were able to do nothing after taking up the challenge. Hence, it seems to me that if, after careful consideration we cannot find someone who has self-confidence and who would also inspire confidence in us, we should keep quiet. Can we not take somebody from Balubhai's circle? What does Maganbhai say?

5. Maganbhai says that we should train some of the Visharad candidates in the Vidyapith as teachers.

Then let us do that. Let the Premchand Shala[1] continue to function as it is functioning now. Let the Government recognize and also finance the experiment in the Vidyapith.

6. When the matter of expenditure was first mentioned to the Sardar he had said that he would manage about the expenses. He was not in favour of asking financial help from the Government.

That would be my view too. But the position is this. The Government is keen to do something and wants to involve the officials in it. Since the Congress has recommended this experiment, every Congress Government must do something about it. Considering the matter from this point of view, how can we go to the Sardar for help ? The answer was provided by Maganbhai. If Maganbhai and others feel more confident, let them proceed. Otherwise let us not utilize Government funds. Since it would run as a Government institution, we would have Government teachers. And though we should enjoy many facilities, we would not be tied by the Government's red-tape, because the Government would put no restrictions on us.

7. What should we do about the principle of non-co-operation ? Would it be proper to pass a resolution that it should be suspended so long as the Congress Governments are in power?

[1] Premchand Raichand Training College for primary teachers

I think it would be wrong to pass such a resolution. So we shall not suspend it. But if we still regard it as British rule, then it is the Government that is co-operating with us and not we who are co-operating with the Government. In other words, we can co-operate with the Government without modifying the resolution in any way. I had myself drafted that resolution[1] without any hesitation. Even then I had said that if the Government offered its co-operation to us, we should accept it. Maybe that might prove a test for us. It remains to be seen whether thereby we gain or lose strength. At the height of the non-co-operation movement I had told Lord Reading that if he was agreeable to certain conditions I would myself enter the Legislature and yet consider myself a non-co-operator. I had said the same thing in my letter[2] to Lord Irwin. But this time such a question does not arise. To look at the matter that way is looseness of thinking or wrong use of a term. It is a result of our mental lethargy. Has not the Congress Minister issued an order that the Collectors have to work in co-operation with the Congressmen?

8. What do you think of the suggestions of Maganbhai and Vithaldas?

I have not read the suggestions so carefully. From a cursory glance I did not find them disconnected. You have called them stray thoughts. I too read them from that point of view. I have no time at all to subject them to a deep critical study.

9. Maganbhai suggests our joining the movement for Gujarat University and giving it greater impetus.

Wait a bit. We have not started discussing that point. I have not been able to understand Maganbhai's views about the University. In expressing his view about the matter Naraharibhai would seem to have usurped my own ideas and words. And, if he likes praise, I should say that he has expressed my ideas in better language than I could have done myself. The university of my conception has to evolve itself from this type of education. I went to the extent of telling Vallabhbhai that we must wind up whatever is being done in the Vidyapith today and engage all our teachers for this task. Then alone would we do credit to ourselves and to the Vidyapith. I think he was shocked at the moment. But I could not persuade him to think further about it. There were other things to be done. But if I could convince the teachers, I would at once put my idea into practice.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 182-5.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XLIII, pp. 2-8.

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10. What should we do if we have to do something without winding up the present set-up?

It would mean doing something under compulsion. If Maganbhai has suggested any scheme I would think over it and make suggestions if necessary. You, Kishorelalbhai, had pointed out that we were neglecting primary education. Then we also passed a resolution. We have never been able to implement that resolution fully. We have an opportunity now, because it is our own Government and, moreover, such a good man as Kher is in charge.

11. (About securing a charter for the Vidyapith.)

I see a great danger in it. For, such a step would invite intense jealousy. It would also mean asking the Government to incur great expenditure. I would not be interested in this, as it would mean diversion of funds to ourselves. Our field is service of *Daridranarayana*. In one way the task is difficult, in another it is easy. However, I shall certainly not stand in the way. Do I take any interest now in its management or do I meet anyone or know what is happening? As for the Wardha Scheme, I may be said to be its author and so I must devote some of my time to it. I do not consider myself of any importance in the matter of deciding the future of the Vidyapith. My heart is at present wholly in the villages. It is better to let it remain there. If you seek my help in thinking about the Vidyapith, you will be inviting unnecessary knocks because I would only be throwing stones from a distance.

12. Maganbhai says that at present the Gandhian view is accepted by the majority in the Congress but the general public opinion—particularly in the field of education—is against us. Is it proper, under these circumstances, to take advantage of our majority?

This seems to me fundamental from the point of view of satyagraha. The function of satyagraha is to educate public opinion. It is difficult to say at any time whether public opinion is in favour of a satyagrahi. So we give due importance to the question. It seems perfectly all right to me [to take such advantage][1]. For in so doing, we serve the people. There is no coercion in it.

And if Maganbhai runs only a training college, then there is no difference of opinion left at all. But in that case, should not other things be wound up? It is my impression that Maganbhai does see the problem.

[1] A few words here have faded out.

There would be very few—maybe only two or four—students in Maganbhai's Training College.

Maganbhai does not seem to have a proper idea of a training college. If he has the training college, he would require to do nothing else. I wish all of you to thoroughly study what is happening here. It is not perfect but it is worth studying.

13. Gandhiji indicated by a sign his approval of the Harijan Ashram and the Vadaj School being merged into one and Naraharibhai conducting it on the lines of the Wardha Scheme.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10738. Courtesy: Gomatibehn K. Mashruwala

426. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 14, 1938

I have read the telegraphic summary of the prisoners' message[1] to me. I have no difficulty in appreciating their reasoning, but my plea for patience is based on a personal but peremptory cause. If, going out of my way, I begin to move actively and undertake even long journeys, the common end may be defeated by my collapse which medical friends regard as a certainty. Therefore, I appeal to the hunger-strikers to suspend their strike and to give the country and especially me a chance to make an effort in the common direction. Let it not be said of them that they were foolhardy or obstinate.

The Hindu, 15-1-1938

427. DISCUSSION WITH EDUCATIONISTS[2]

[Before *January 15, 1938*]

[DR. ZILLIACUS:] I had been wishing all these years that leaders of opinion ought to turn their attention to education which alone can reconstruct society, and I cannot tell you how grateful I was when I found that you had turned your attention to education. We have studied your scheme and we must assure you of our heartfelt sympathy for its success.

[1] Which was in reply to the telegram dated January 11; *vide* p. 335.
[2] Dr. Zilliacus, Prof. Bovet and Prof. Davies, members of the New Education Fellowship Delegation, had called on Gandhiji.

[GANDHIJI:] I am grateful that so many educationists have blessed the scheme. There have been critics also, but when I launched the scheme I did not know that it would appeal to anyone beyond the circle of my co-workers. When I consider the masses of India and the masses situated as they are, I could not think of any other type of education. With them work must precede anything else, and the concern of the educationist is to make that work educative. Let every child feel that he creates something for use and also expands his mind and heart therethrough.

I agree. The great psychologist Dr. Adler, who could not express himself well in English, said: "All that education should do is to put the child on the useful side."

Harijan, 15-1-1938

428. TALK WITH A FRIEND

[Before *January 15, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] My idea is not merely to teach a particular profession or occupation to the children, but to develop the full man through teaching that occupation. He will not only learn weaving, for instance, but learn why he should weave in a particular fashion and not any other, why he should handle yarn in a particular fashion and no other, why he should himself know spinning and insist on a particular count for a particular kind of weaving. All these things the weaver-boy does not learn at home. The spinning-wheel is to him just what it was a thousand years ago. We make him learn the art of making a most efficient wheel and a loom, not so as to displace other labour but so as to make them more efficient than the existing models. Your suggestion for different schools for different classes—weavers, spinners, carpenters and so on—would not answer my purpose. For I want to bring about an equalization of status. The working classes have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They have been Shudras, and the word has been interpreted to mean an inferior status. I want to allow no differentiation between the sons of a weaver, of an agriculturist and of a schoolmaster.

[THE FRIEND :] But should we not have different time-tables for different boys—I mean seasonal time-tables?

No, we need not have even different hours. The village is a composite whole. The vast majority of the rural population is agricultural. I need not conduct a separate type of school for

the ten per cent of the non-agricultural population in India. I do not want to make every one of the boys and girls in the villages of India spinners or weavers, but I want to make of them whole men through whatever occupation they will learn. The village school will be turned into an educative workshop in as economical and efficient a manner as possible.

Therefore the school will not be a glorified workshop producing more or less the conditions of the present-day workshops. The workshop will not teach the children to produce anything and everything of conceivable use. Tobacco, for instance, is a commodity very largely in use throughout the world, it is cultivated in India as a money crop. But its harm to man's physical and moral fibre is patent. I should not teach in our school workshop *bidi*-making. It is in this respect that our schools will, I hope, differ radically from schools abroad which claim to give a sort of practical education. I read the other day about a school in England which trains boys to be efficient shop-keepers. England accepts no prohibition and does not look forward to its introduction in the near or distant future. English boys, therefore, have to be trained as workers in liquor-shops too. The English school in question has, therefore, applied for a liquor licence in order to be able to teach its pupils how to handle liquor for its consumers. In the event of a war England may turn its schools into ammunition factories. In a nation with ahimsa for its national policy such a thing should be inconceivable. Our schools will be turned into workshops, but workshops where they will learn things that are necessary for healthy living in accordance with the national ideal.

Harijan, 15-1-1938

429. LETTER TO MULK RAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 15, 1938

BHAI MULK RAJ,

Please read the enclosed letter[1] and return it. Do you know anything about Lala Girdharilal? If what the enclosed letter says is true, a circular should be sent to the members and Lalaji's name removed from our rolls. If you agree please circulate this letter among the members for their opinion.

[1] Not available

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Kindly send me the names and addresses of the members as also the minutes of the next meeting.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

430. DISCUSSION WITH LORD LOTHIAN[1]

[*January 20, 1938*][2]

During his talk on the last day Lord Lothian mentioned Christian Science and asked for Gandhiji's opinion thereon:

Since man is inseparably related to God in proportion as he recognizes the indissoluble relationship to God he is free from sin and from disease. That is how faith heals. God is Truth and Health and Love.

GANDHIJI: And He is Physician too. I have no quarrel with Christian Science. I said many years ago in Johannesburg that I accept the doctrine *in toto*, but I do not believe in many Christian Scientists. It is one thing to have an intellectual belief and another thing to have a heart-grasp of the truth. I can quite endorse the statement that all illness is sin, that when a man has even a cough it is due to sin. My blood-pressure is the result of strain and overwork. But why should I have overworked myself? All overwork and hurry is sin. And I know only too well that it was perfectly possible for me to avoid all doctors. What I do not understand about Christian Scientists is that they make altogether too much of physical health and disease.

So long as one recognizes that disease is sin it is all right. Even the *Gita* says that one has to renounce the fruit of the five senses which is *maya*. God is Life and Love and Health.

I have put it somewhat differently. God is Truth, for as our scriptures say nothing *is* but Truth, which is the same thing as God is Life. And then I have said that Truth and Love are faces of the same coin, and Love is the means to find Truth which is the end.

Harijan, 29-1-1938

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes".
[2] Lord Lothian stayed in Segaon from January 18 to 20.

431. A MESSAGE[1]

SEGAON,
January 20, 1938

My ambition is to see the Congress recognized as the one and only party that can successfully resist the Government and deliver the goods. It is the only party which, from its inception, has represented all minorities.

If the British Government recognize this unique position of the Congress they will not hesitate to postpone inauguration of the Federation[2] till they have satisfied the Congress. It should not be difficult to do so if, before taking in the Princes, elementary rights of the States people are guaranteed and their representation takes place through election. In my opinion a crisis of the first magnitude may be precipitated if Federation is sought to be imposed.

The opposition to the Act will still remain even if the present difficulty is got over in the manner suggested. Peace, humanly speaking, can only be assured when a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly supplants the present Act. Anyway, once the right status of the Congress is fully recognized the rest becomes easy.

This is my personal view which I have not discussed with any of my co-workers.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 7791. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

432. LETTER TO VICEROY

SEGAON, WARDHA,
January 21, 1938

DEAR FRIEND,

I was much touched by your affectionate letter of good wishes about my health. I delayed acknowledging it till I was

[1] This was written "For Lord Lothian and responsible statesmen only"
[2] As proposed in the Government of India Act, 1935

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a little better. Though I have not crossed the danger zone, I am much better than when your kind note was received.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

433. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

January 21, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I began a fruitarian fast yesterday and I am feeling A l. I needed it. I want to do it for eight days. But it would depend upon the progress I may make. Therefore don't you worry.

But this is to inform you that I told Lord Lothian yesterday why you had refused to be on the Lady L.'s Tuberculosis Committee. This became necessary as Lady L. had sent through him a message asking me to lend my name to the project. She had also said that the connection of the King Emperor with the project was only temporary. I felt that she knew that I knew your objection. I therefore brought your name, told him that there were no secrets between you and me (was I not wholly right?), that therefore I hoped Lady L. had not taken it amiss that you had taken me in your confidence. I added that the initiative was wholly yours and I only knew of the deed after it was done but that your objections had made a forcible appeal to me. Now you will tell [me] if I have done the right thing. If you are overbusy, you will answer this question when we meet.

I gave your message to Lord Lothian. He said you were the ablest witness his Committee[1] and the other Committee[2] had to deal with.

More when we meet.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3623. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6432

[1] The Franchise Committee of 1932 before which the addressee had given evidence on behalf of Indian women

[2] The Joint Select Committee of the British Parliament which considered the new Constitution for India

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434. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR[1]

SEGAON,
January 22, 1938

Expecting you on 31st.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3624. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6433

435. TELEGRAM TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

[*January 23, 1938*][2]

WELCOME HOME. GOD GIVE YOU STRENGTH TO BEAR THE WEIGHT OF JAWAHARLAL'S MANTLE. LOVE.[3]

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-1-1938

436. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

January 23, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

I have your letter. I have not seen the resolution. Please send it to me so that I may make up my mind after reading it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7688

[1] This is a postscript to Mirabehn's letter to the addressee.
[2] The addressee had arrived at Karachi from London on this date.
[3] The source further reports: "In a separate telegram Mahatma Gandhi says that he is much better now."

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437. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

January 30, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am returning your note. I have not been able to revise the note on non-violence. I will attend to it by and by. I hope you remember that Rajkumari is arriving there tomorrow evening. Send her here immediately. For her sake I shall start the silence somewhat earlier today. So you went out for a walk only for one day. This is not proper.

Prabhu Dayal wants to join the Congress. What impression did he make on you? Please ask Kumarappa. How is his performance in the paper department?

Post the accompanying letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11589

438. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
January 30, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I passed two days without writing to you. But today I have got to write. There should have been a letter from you today. You must be happy. You must be keeping well. I hope you are not finding it too cold. I must have your letters regularly and in detail. Did Devdas, Brajkisan and Pyarelal's mother meet you? Get well soon and come over. I am fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Saraswatibehn.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9981. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

439. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

January 31, 1938

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I take it that as in Lucknow so in Haripura there will be a guide to the exhibition with map, etc. Only it should be much better this time than the last.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Rajkumari comes tonight.

From a photostat: G.N. 10133

440. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
January 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

The accompanying article of yours is all right. Some addition is still possible. I gave you only the general framework. I could have shortened your other articles but it would have taken a good deal of time. Only if you continue such efforts, can I know whether you are able to digest my ideas. You should, therefore, go on writing even if I reject your articles a hundred times.

If everybody wishes to leave with me, who will be left behind? Whatever the pressure of work, I consider it essential that all three of you should start for a walk at the fixed hour. It is as necessary to spare time for walks as for meals.

Please remember to give Satyamurti's [letter] to Jawaharlal. Let him see the whole letter. Show it to Jamnalal and others too. I am returning Ghanshyamdas's also. I have read all the cuttings and am returning them. None, except one, seems bad to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Lancaster may meet me at night.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11588

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441. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
February 1, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your first letter. You must have showed your swellings to Saraswatibehn. They must have subsided now. Do not be afraid to eat chapatis if you feel hungry. What works wonders is the bath, the earth and the climate of that place. There is a difference between how it works here and how it works there. I have sent you there because I felt it would do you good. I know you will not be tempted by wealth. God is protecting you.

> The Lord pervades all that moves in this world. Enjoy it with a feeling of renunciation. Never covet another's wealth.[1]

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9982. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

442. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 3, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru told me yesterday that you were complaining to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from me to your letter[2] of 5th November in reply to one of 19th October. The letter was received by me when I was pronounced by the doctors to be seriously ill in Calcutta. The letter was shown to me three days after its receipt. Had I thought it necessarily called for a reply, even though I was ill I would have sent one. I have re-read the letter. I still think that there was nothing useful that I could have said in reply. But, in a way, I am glad that you awaited a reply. Here it is.

Mr. Kher told me definitely that he had a private message from you. He delivered it to me when I was alone. I could

[1] *Ishopanishad*, 1
[2] *Vide* Appendix VII(b).

have sent you a verbal message in reply, but in order to give you a true picture of my mental state I sent you the short note. There was nothing to hide in it. But I did feel, as I still do, that the way in which you used it came upon me as a painful surprise.

You complain of my silence. The reason for my silence is literally and truly in my note. Believe me, the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing.

You seem to deny that your speech was a declaration of war, but your latter pronouncements too confirm the first impression. How can I prove what is a matter of feeling? In your speeches I miss the old nationalist. When in 1915 I returned from the self-imposed exile in South Africa, everybody spoke of you as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both Hindus and Mussalmans. Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah? If you say you are, in spite of your speeches I shall accept your word.

Lastly, you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposal to form a basis of unity between the two communities has surely got to come from you.

This is again not for publication but for your eyes. It is the cry of a friend, not of an opponent.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

443. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

February 3, 1938

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

So you have written off 42 years of your life. Why limit your wish to 25 more? Why not His will, not your wish?

I have glanced through your booklet. But Brunton's[2] appreciation is not found in your letter.

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix XII.
[2] Paul Brunton, author of *Search in Secret India*

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I await your full letter about Malaviyaji. I think of him continually.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3205

444. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI AND FAMILY

February 3, 1938

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA, SITA, ARUN,

Welcome to you all. When are you coming here? Akola is just on the way. Nanabhai[1] is not keeping well. Go to him first; it is like a pilgrimage. We leave for Haripura about the 7th or 8th instant. I take it you will accompany us. I am keeping well enough.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4870

445. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

February 5, 1938

CHI. KAKA,

Please don't come today at any rate. Come at 3.00 the day after tomorrow. Do I have to draft the syllabus[3]? Or will it be the one you have brought from Aligarh? If it is the latter, I have already seen it. I find it difficult to write the introduction. I wish to leave on the 8th. I shall see if I can give it before that date. I shall sign and send over the Kamath [papers] after I have gone through them. Be sure that you at any rate come over. Kishorelal also may come if his health permits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7690

[1] Nanabhai I. Mashruwala, Manilal Gandhi's father-in-law
[2] Kasturba also conveyed her blessings along with this.
[3] Of studies, prepared by the Zakir Husain Committee

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446. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
February 5, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. The blood-pressure is somewhat high, but there is no cause for anxiety. There is pressure of work too. We shall leave for Haripura on the 8th. It is well that you have had a waist-coat made for yourself. The body must be kept warm. You must walk a lot. When you write to me at Haripura address the letter to Congress Camp, Haripura.

Do you remain cheerful?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9983. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

447. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA,
February 5, 1938

DEAR MR. HARDIKAR[1],

Gandhiji has your letter of the 26th January.[2] As we are likely to meet at Haripura very soon, Gandhiji says you had better meet him and have a few minutes from him to discuss the future of the Seva Dal.

Yours sincerely,
MAHADEV DESAI

From the original: N. S. Hardikar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Chief of the Congress Seva Dal

[2] The addressee had "taken possession of the Seva Dal Training Academy buildings at Bagalkot" and had sought Gandhiji's guidance for further action.

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448. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 6, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. Now that you have gone there, do not be in a hurry to return unless there is a setback in your health. You must attune your mind to the place where you have to stay. I shall of course continue to write to you from time to time.

What you write about Saraswatibehn is true. But then we should accept whatever good we find wherever we are.

You should not mind or feel shy if you sit long at your meal. You must eat only as much as you can and chew it well. Then there will be no trouble. If the pain does not subside, tell Saraswatidevi about it.

Do visit the sitar class and join it if you like it.

I can say I am keeping quite well—though I have to work hard at the moment. Tell S. D. that I shall answer any questions she asks me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9984. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

449. DISCUSSION WITH JOHN DE BOER[1]

[On or before *February 8, 1938*][2]

Dr. John De Boer said the scheme had appealed to him most strongly, because at the back of it was non-violence. His difficulty was why non-violence figured so little on the syllabus.

[GANDHIJI:] The reason why it has appealed to you is quite all right. But the whole syllabus cannot centre round non-violence. It is enough to remember that it emerges from a non-violent brain. But it does not presuppose the acceptance of non-violence by those who accept it. Thus, for instance, all the

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Dr. John De Boer, in-charge of an educational institution in South India, visited Gandhiji at Segaon before the latter's departure for Haripura on February 8.

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members of the Committee do not accept non-violence as a creed. Just as a vegetarian need not necessarily be a believer in non-violence—he may be a vegetarian for reasons of health—even so those who accept the scheme need not be all believers in non-violence.

I know some educationists who will have nothing to do with the system because it is based on a non-violent philosophy of life.

I know it. But for that matter I know some leading men who would not accept khadi because it is based on my philosophy of life. But how can I help it? Non-violence is certainly in the heart of the scheme, and I can easily demonstrate it, but I know that there will be little enthusiasm for it when I do so. But those who accept the scheme accept the fact that in a land full of millions of hungry people you cannot teach their children by any other method, and that if you can get the thing going the result will be a new economic order. That is quite enough for me, as it is enough for me that Congressmen accept non-violence as a method for obtaining independence, but not as a way of life. If the whole of India accepted non-violence as a creed and a way of life, we should be able to establish a republic immediately.

I see. There is one thing now which I do not understand. I am a socialist, and whilst as a believer in non-violence the scheme appeals to me most, I feel as a socialist that the scheme would cut India adrift from the world, whereas we have to integrate with the whole world, and socialism does it as nothing else does.

I have no difficulty. We do not want to cut adrift from the whole world. We will have a free interchange with all nations, but the present forced interchange has to go. We do not want to be exploited, neither do we want to exploit any other nation. Through the scheme we look forward to making all children producers, and so to change the face of the whole nation, for it will permeate the whole of our social being. But that does not mean that we cut adrift from the whole world. There will be nations that will want to interchange with others because they cannot produce certain things. They will certainly depend on other nations for them, but the nations that will provide for them should not exploit them.

But if you simplify your life to an extent that you need nothing from other countries, you will isolate yourselves from them; whereas I want you to be responsible for America also.

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It is by ceasing to exploit and to be exploited that we can be responsible for America. For America will then follow our example and there will be no difficulty in a free interchange between us.

But you want to simplify life and cut out industrialization.

If I could produce all my country's wants by means of the labour of 30,000 people instead of 30 million I should not mind it, provided that the thirty million are not rendered idle and unemployed. I know that socialists would introduce industrialization to the extent of reducing working hours to one or two in a day, but I do not want it.

They would have leisure.

Leisure to play hockey?

Not only for that but for creative handicrafts for instance.

Creative handicrafts I am asking them to engage in. But they will produce with their hands by working eight hours a day.

You do not of course look forward to a state of society when every house will have a radio and everyone a car. That was President Hoover's formula. He wanted not one but two radios and two cars.

If we had so many cars there would be very little room left for walking.

I agree. We have about 40,000 deaths by accidents every year and thrice as many cases of people being maimed.

At any rate I am not going to live to see the day when all villages in India will have radios.

Pandit Jawaharlal seems to think in terms of the economy of abundance.

I know. But what is abundance? Not the capacity to destroy millions of tons of wheat as you do in America?

Yes, that's the nemesis of Capitalism. They do not destroy now, but they are being paid for *not* producing wheat. People indulged in the pastime of throwing eggs at one another because the prices of eggs had gone down.

That is what we do not want. If by abundance you mean everyone having plenty to eat and drink and to clothe himself with, enough to keep his mind trained and educated, I should be satisfied. But I should not like to pack more stuff in my belly than I can digest and more things than I can ever usefully use. But neither do I want poverty, penury, misery, dirt and dust in India.

But Pandit Jawaharlal says in his autobiography you worship *Daridranarayana* and extol poverty for its own sake.

Gandhiji said with a laugh:

I know.

Harijan, 12-2-1938

450. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 8, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Here is the article. I have had a talk with the Japanese and the Bengali gentlemen. The Japanese will accompany us. The Bengali will follow later. He will stay in the Bengal camp.

Which letters from Krishnachandra? I shall meet you at the station itself. I shall walk up to the level crossing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11590

451. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

SEGAON,
February 8, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

No letters from you for two days. Do not keep me like this without letters from you. We are leaving today. I expect to be back within a fortnight. You must be fit enough to stir about by that time. Remain calm where you are. Do not be dejected. I shall know more about you at Haripura.

You must have received the news of Panditji's demise.[1] He had gone to Haripura in connection with the Music Convention. There he caught pneumonia and it proved fatal. So transient is our mortal frame.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9985. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare died on February 6 at Haripura.

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452. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION

HARIPURA,
February 10, 1938

Bhai Shankerlal referred to the void created by Panditji's passing away. It is not surprising that I am pained because Panditji is no more among us.

When I sent the late Maganlal [Gandhi] to Pandit Vishnu Digambar [Paluskar] for acquiring for the newly established Satyagraha Ahram a good music teacher, the old Pandit knew whom he had to recommend. Pandit Khare justified his choice and filled the position to which he was called as no one else could have done. His death is likely to leave an unfillable gap. Few people who have devoted themselves to art are known to have achieved such a unique combination of devotion to art and a pure and blameless life. We have somehow accustomed ourselves to the belief that art is independent of the purity of private life. I can say with all the experience at my command that nothing could be more untrue. As I am nearing the end of my earthly life I can say that purity of life is the highest and truest art. The art of producing good music from a cultivated voice can be achieved by many, but the art of producing that music from the harmony of a pure life is but achieved very rarely. Pandit Khare was one of those rare people who had achieved it in full measure. There has been no occasion when I had the slightest doubt about his purity.

Let Gujarat continue to take the interest in music awakened by the late Panditji. I am hoping that his two children[1] will be worthy of him and I have no doubt that his brave wife[2] will give an example of what a dedicated life an Indian widow's can be. As for Panditji, though he died in the prime of his life, anyone would envy him his death which came to him whilst he was working in a sacred place like this, fully conscious that his sands were running out and so went with Ramanama on his lips and with the echoes of the sacred name about him. May Gujarat treasure his sweet memory.

[1] Mathuri and Ramachandra
[2] Lakshmibehn

When an exhibition of this kind was first opened at Lucknow[1] I had said that our exhibitions should be schools of instruction. Since then we have been progressing successfully towards the ideal and the exhibition I have just now been through and am declaring open is such an annual training school. It is not, as exhibitions of old used to be, a place of entertainment. It is a place of instruction for the hundreds of thousands of those who will be visiting it during the week or two that it will be on. It provides to the poor man who visits it a kind of victual for the next year's journey. It arms him with knowledge of an occupation which can carry him and his family through for the next year by his working at it for eight hours. It ensures the training in securing an honest livelihood to everyone who will use his or her hands and feet, no matter how ignorant or illiterate he or she may be.

I have spent an hour this morning at the exhibition. Please don't think for a moment that there should be nothing new in it for one who is the President of the All-India Spinners' Association and who is guiding the All-India Village Industries Association. Even if you think so, I am not such a simpleton as to entertain the belief. I would like to spend not one hour, but hours there learning something new every moment. But I confess that I should not be able to earn my livelihood from an occupation that I might pick up there. At the present moment I am begging for my livelihood, which perhaps is inevitable for one like me. But I am sure that it is possible for any able-bodied man or woman to choose one of the many industries exhibited here as a means of honest livelihood.

Shankerlal had suggested to me to point out any defects here. It is of course my duty to do so. One act of omission that I have noticed is that we do not preserve in the form of a book whatever we achieve in a year. I think we should preserve in book form pictures and detailed descriptions of new inventions and experiments so that a dynamic and experienced teacher may be able to teach a lot with its help. We should have the ability to do it. We should co-ordinate the crafts and put them before the public. We should learn this art of compiling a yearly textbook. We have not yet learnt it. Here perhaps we have not been able to fully demonstrate how every single exhibit is made. I have often said that if seven lakhs of the villages of India were to be kept alive, and if peace that is at the root of

[1] On March 28, 1936; *vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 297-300.

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all civilization is to be achieved, we have to make the spinning-wheel the centre of all handicrafts. Thus my faith in the spinning-wheel is growing everyday and I see more and more clearly that the sun of the wheel will alone illumine the planets of other handicrafts. Now I go a step further and say that just as we go on discovering new stars and planets in the vast solar system, even so we should go on discovering fresh handicrafts everyday. But, for the sake of this thing we have to make the spinning-wheel the really life-giving sun.[1] I made the spinning-wheel in every home a necessary condition for the inauguration of the satyagraha in Bardoli in 1921, and though I knew that the condition was far from being satisfied, I yielded to the importunities of the late Vithalbhai and inaugurated the satyagraha. What followed, you know very well. Well, I would even today ask the people of Bardoli to fulfil that condition of one wheel in every home. That will help you supplement your small income and make you self-sufficient.

At many places in this exhibition you will see [the presence of] art. I cannot describe it to you. It will strike your eye. We shall get to see here how a particular thing could be displayed to the best advantage by exhibiting it in a certain way. Art is a means of bringing out the inner as well as the outer beauty of a thing. We have now amongst us our own Indian artist Nanda Babu[2] from the time of the Lucknow exhibition. He showed his artistic skill then and is ever progressing. But here we have artists from Gujarat also. Just as Panditji introduced music in Gujarat, Bhai Ravishankar[3] introduced art. Here you will see his art along with that of Kanu Desai. There are different departments of art and in each you will find it thoroughly applied. You will see the artistic skill of Vakilbehn in the khadi department.

Now do think many times over what I have said. Do see the exhibition as often as you can and gain all the knowledge it offers and delight yourselves. The big ones of the Congress will come here and run the show; but the true Congress is in the exhibition. We all cannot become delegates but we can certainly do much of its work by studying and utilizing the exhibition.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 13-2-1938

[1] This sentence is from *Harijan*, 19-2-1938.

[2] Nandalal Bose

[3] Ravishankar Raval

453. TALK WITH WORKERS[1]

[*February 10, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji was taken to where some of the children in some of the national schools and ashrams in Gujarat were shown to be earning from spinning three to four annas a day.

That is nothing. So far as the schools are concerned, you have to concentrate on showing that we can teach everything through the handicrafts, e. g., that of spinning. Literary education plus training in a handicraft is no novel conception. The novel conception is that of making the handicraft the principal means of imparting literary training.

Then as regards the wage, he said:

You are sadly mistaken if you think that you have achieved the ideal. The ideal is one anna per hour, and when poor Maharashtra has been able to achieve the average wage of three to four annas per day, rich Gujarat cannot rest satisfied with giving its spinners that wage. You have to think in terms of the wages obtainable in your province and should not be satisfied unless you have reached eight annas as the minimum wage.

"But then the price of khadi will be prohibitive," said a worker.

That is no answer. You must make up your mind that eight annas has to be made the minimum wage, and leave no stone unturned until you have achieved it. Cut out the overhead charges, make the count finer and finer, but see that you reach the goal. That khadi will not be sold is a superstition. The same fear was expressed when we introduced the new spinning wage[3] and we know how that fear has been falsified.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". The conversation took place when Gandhiji was being taken round the Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition after the opening ceremony; *vide* the preceding item.

[3] *Vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 31-2 and 66-7.

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454. TALK WITH VALLABHBHAI PATEL[1]

[*February 10, 1938*]

As we were returning from the exhibition, Gandhiji said with a sigh to Sardar Vallabhbhai:

What a tragedy it is that we are far behind other provinces in the matter of khadi, and yet we have no excuse. We produce the best cotton in India, and there is no reason why we should not be able to pay the highest minimum wage and cover Gujarat with khadi.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

455. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

CONGRESS CAMP, HARIPURA,
February 11, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your beautiful letter. This is the third day since I came here. I have been keeping quite well. Vasumati[2] and Prabhavati are here. Lilavati and A. S. have stayed back. Balwantsinha has come [with us].

Tell Saraswatidevi that I am rather afraid of allowing you to eat the pips and skin of oranges. Once the pain in the stomach disappears, I would give you even orange pips and skin to eat if that is necessary for further improvement. Right now I have sent you there to cure you if possible by earth and water treatment and a diet of chapatis, etc. If you do not find appreciable improvement by the 22nd, come back with Saraswatidevi's permission.

Shakaribehn is here. I certainly propose to talk to her. From her face her health seemed to be good.

Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9986. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes".
[2] Vasumati Pandit

456. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 11, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

I have been writing regularly to you. I hope you are keeping well. For news of me, see the letter to Lila.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 395

457. SPEECH TO SANITATION VOLUNTEERS[2]

February 11, 1938

Mahatma Gandhi urged the volunteers to do the work of Bhangis earnestly. He added:

Don't think your work is inferior to that of Rashtrapati Bose or Jawaharlal Nehru. No, not an atom. They serve and you also serve and, in fact, I value your work more. I myself am an experienced Bhangi and a competent Bhangi. Do your work sincerely and earnestly. A large number of delegates will be shortly coming and if there are shortcomings in your work they will complain, though I cannot complain, for I am not a delegate, nor do I intend to become one.[3]

You know that you are engaged in a work that I like most. The Bhangi has been the most despised of the Harijans, because his work has been regarded as the most degrading. Many forget the important social service rendered by Bhangis.[4] But we forgot that our mothers did that very work whilst we were babies innocent of all cleanliness. If that work was ignoble the Bhangi's would be ignoble, but if it was noble the Bhangi's work is also

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.

[2] Under the leadership of V. L. Phadke and Jugatram Dave about 1200 volunteers were engaged in sanitation work at the Congress Camp at Haripura.

[3] This and the preceding paragraph are from *The Hindu*.

[4] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

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noble. But our mothers cleaned our filth because we were their babies, because they could not do otherwise, because they were wrapped up in us and adored their own selves in us. Their work was thus selfish. The volunteer Bhangi's work is unselfish and so nobler than that of mothers. And if I revere my mother and therefore the whole of womankind, is it not clear that I should adore the volunteer Bhangi even more?

I am, therefore, happy that you have taken upon yourselves this noble work. But you must know how to do it. The work has to be done lovingly and intelligently. Lovingly because those who are responsible for dirt and filth know not what they do, and intelligently because we have to help them to reform their habits and improve their health. An ideal Bhangi is one who knows the principles of nutrition and can trace the quality of the excreta to the kind of health that is possessed by the owner. Thus only can you ennoble the profession. I say this because I am an expert Bhangi, I have been doing this work for over thirty-five years and I have done it in the proper spirit. I would, therefore, ask you to approach everyone with kindness and respect, especially because you will come across ignorant people, innocent of the principles of sanitation. You will speak to them gently and explain to them that cleanliness demands that they should observe the sanitation rules of the Congress. If you have achieved this art, I shall regard you as better than Congress delegates. This is not to disparage the delegates, but to tell you what exactly is Congress work. It was not for nothing that I retired from the Congress. I am not a delegate nor even an ordinary member but there is some *rahasya*[1] behind this.[2] I saw that I needed not to be a delegate of the Congress so much as I needed to do Congress work. And I hope to continue to do so, so long as my silent service is accepted by the people. For me, to turn the wheel, to be engaged in other handicrafts, to do scavenging and sanitation work in the Congress spirit, is to do Congress work and I should be content to bury myself in a village doing this work as long as God wants me to live on this earth.

Proceeding, the Mahatma observed that it was the primary duty of everyone to be clean and also keep his surroundings clean. Those who did the Bhangi's work should first be their own Bhangis.[3]

[1] Hidden meaning

[2] This sentence is from *The Hindu*.

[3] This and the following paragraph are from *The Hindu*.

You must know the full technique of the work and do it in a civilized manner. I have done the work of the Bhangi and I have good experience of that work.

Your work does not require any degree. Any man with common sense can do it. It requires a pure and tender heart, as it requires clean and stout hands. If you have both, and address yourselves to this task, 1,200 stalwarts like you will be enough to win swaraj. I said this years ago and I do not hesitate to repeat it now. But have you the required pure hearts?[1]

I have got a demand from volunteers for free admission to the exhibition and I have reserved the last day for them when other members of their community come here to witness the session. My advice is this, that you must concentrate on your work and refrain from going there; and if you are overanxious, borrow money from friends and see the exhibition. I don't think we should open this exhibition free to all; for these two annas benefit crores of people. Those who have money and still don't spend it will be considered thieves.

Harijan, 19-2-1938, and *The Hindu*, 12-2-1938

458. NOTE TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *February 13, 1938*][2]

The only course for you is to have patience. You will be able to massage with ghee when God wills it.[3] There is non-violence in living at the mercy of others. Ours is not to claim rights, but only to fulfil our duty.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 733

[1] What follows is from *The Hindu*.

[2] In *Bapuke Patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam*, this is laced before the letter dated February 13, 1938.

[3] The addressee on her return to the Ashram had asked Gandhiji when she could resume massaging his feet.

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459. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

HARIPURA,
February 13, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

There has been no letter from you for two days. You must write at least a postcard. I constantly think of you. Did Mohanlal visit you? There is no letter from him here. There are crowds of people today, and also a lot of dust.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9987. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

460. SPEECH AT EXHIBITION[1]

February 13, 1938

Goraksha —'cow-protection'—is not the proper word, *goseva*—the service of the cow—is our ideal. At the back of the present unfortunate state of things is our ignorance which in its turn is due to our lethargy. If we try to go to the root of the pure science of cloth-making, we will find that the spinning-wheel is the *sine qua non*. In the same way if you study the science of milk, you will find in India at any rate the service of the cow to be the *sine qua non*. My study of the science as well as my consultations with experts have shown to me that it is impossible to save both the cow and the buffalo. It is likely that after the cow has been saved the buffalo may also remain to a certain extent. But if you allow the buffalo to compete with the cow, both the buffalo and the cow will be extinct. What is necessary is to realize that the cow is really the more economic proposition as our own forefathers realized when they styled their kings as the protectors of the cow and the Brahmin. But

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes". Gandhiji visited the Exhibition pertaining to cattle-breeding and dairy-keeping which was declared open by Vallabhbhai Patel.

mark that they mentioned the cow first, because even the existence of the Brahmins, i. e., the spiritual leaders of the community, depends on that of the cow. You in Bardoli have laboured under the superstition that the cow cannot be economic and that the buffalo alone is your mainstay. I tell you that it is a myth and that if you bestow on the cow the care that you do on the buffalo and try to understand the real economics of the cow, you will find in the long run that it is more economic than the buffalo.

We have wasted our energies so far in saving the cow from the butcher's hands. Why should we try to wrest it from the butcher's hands? The butcher has to pursue his profession. To blame the butcher is like blaming the doctor for your fever. We have allowed it to go into the butcher's hands because of our gross neglect, and we are wholly responsible for its slaughter. It is for us to make it economically unnecessary and so impossible to sell the cow to the butcher. This exhibition and the tannery you will see in the bigger exhibition will show you that it is impossible to do so.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

461. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

HARIPURA,
February 13, 1938

CHI. LILA,

The blood-pressure this morning was 172-106 and in the afternoon 170-10[4][1]. I exerted myself a bit too much. I saw the *goshala*.[2] It is all right. The Congress President is coming today. People are flocking in large numbers.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9369. Also C.W. 6644. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] From the C.W. copy
[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

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462. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 13, 1938

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I am happy. My letter[1] to Lila will give you the blood-pressure count. Zakir Saheb arrived today and had his meal with me. Nothing is known about the persons who are coming from the Frontier. It is very dusty here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 401

463. LETTER TO DUDABHAI DAFDA

HARIPURA,
February 15, 1938

BHAI DUDABHAI,

I got your letter just now. It is natural that you should grieve over Dani's[2] death. But let us remember that everybody passes away only at the appointed time and that all of us have to go sooner or later. This should console us. It is indeed nice that Dani passed away with Ramanama on her lips. That you did not observe the superstitious customs does you great honour. If you can remain pure, do not marry again. God has blessed you with enough children.

I hope Lakshmi[3] does not grieve too much.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3248

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Addressee's daughter

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464. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 15, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I write to you every day. But how is it that there is nothing from you? The blood-pressure was 174-106 in the morning and 160-96 in the afternoon. I have started taking garlic from today. How is your health, mental as well as physical?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 396

465. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 15, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

What do you mean by complaining when letters have gone from here regularly to you two? How is your health? You will know about mine from my letter[1] to Lila.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 396

466. INTERVIEW TO AMIN[2]

HARIPURA,
February 15, 1938

Mahatmaji advised Indians in Africa to do everything they could for the advancement of the Africans. Gandhiji maintained that the Indians' fight for equality of status with other emigrant races could not be divorced from our responsibility to assist the progress of the Africans in all manner possible

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] General Secretary of the East African Indian Delegation

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politically and in the matter of higher education of the Africans in arts and science.

The Mahatma also discussed the question of the Highlands and the disabilities of the Indians in East Africa.

The Hindu, 16-2-1938

467. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

HARIPURA,
February 16, 193[8][1]

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I talked with Shakaribehn for one hour. I will tell you more when we meet. At the moment I feel that I have been able to satisfy her. For the present she will stay on in the Harijan Ashram. I have told her that if she wishes to see me she may certainly come once.

I am getting on all right. Sharma, Dahyalal and Parnerkar must be engrossed in their work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10581

468. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 16, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Received your letter. Give the accompanying letter[2] to Saraswatidevi. I am submerged in work. I talked for an hour with Shakaribehn. I feel she is satisfied. She will stay in Gujarat for the present. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9988. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

[1] The source has "1937". This seems to be a slip, since Gandhiji was in Haripura in 1938.

[2] This is not available.

469. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

February 16, 1938

CHI. LILA,

The blood-pressure today has been, morning 194-108, afternoon 160/100 and late afternoon 142-96. I have done a good deal of work too.

Show this to all. I have taken serpina today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 397

470. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

February 16, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope it is all right the way I am writing to you, isn't it? You will have news of me from my letter[1] to Lila. It is not good that I have no letter from either of you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 397

471. SPEECH AT KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION

HARIPURA,
February 16, 1938

At the outset, Gandhiji satisfied himself by taking the vote of the audience that his speech in Hindi would be understood by them.[2]

A friend here has complained that if this speech had been arranged outside the exhibition, people could have attended it more easily and even the poor could have heard it. Here

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] This is from *The Hindu*, 16-2-1938.

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only those who have purchased a two-anna ticket have been admitted. I accept this is a drawback. But you should realize that I am helpless. My voice does not function properly, my body cannot work as hard as I would like it to. Hence, it is better that I work within certain limits. I am no longer fit to address large gatherings. But, after all I am a bania, and an Indian bania at that, hence I feel that I should promptly grab what I can even if it is only two annas. If people like to hear me, they will come and incidentally also visit the exhibition. And if they understand me properly, they will become my messengers and take my message to thousands of people. After all, how far can one man's voice reach? However great a mahatma I may be, I don't presume that I can move the whole of India by my own strength. I have never even dreamt of it. If people intelligently appreciate what I say and let it sink into their hearts and propagate it to others, our task is as good as accomplished. Please, therefore, do not complain that I address myself only to a few but understand that I expect to take work from all. If I can give my message to one person, through him I can reach crores of people. And I do wish to reach the crores.

Ever since I started the khadi movement, I have been saying that I was born to serve *Daridranarayana*; I live for it and wish to die for it. I shall regard myself as having fulfilled the mission of my life if I die while doing this work. I have the satisfaction that, if I have done nothing else, I have on this account collected money for the poor. This is also true of the evening prayers. If the attendance at these prayers is very large, we cannot pray in peace. And yet I would be happy, if I could hold the prayers in a place where hundreds of thousands of people can gather. But we have not yet educated ourselves to sit quietly through such occasions. No single group in India—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians—should entertain the belief that their own faith alone is true and those of others are false. It would be a good thing if everyone prayed sincerely and with equal regard for all faiths. I pray thus for myself and include as many as are present here.

This is by way of introduction. I spoke of one thing in Faizpur[1]. Today, I shall speak about another. There was a devout poet of Gujarat. We call him the first poet of Gujarat. His name was Narasinh Mehta. We know him not as a renowned

[1] At the Congress session in December, 1936

poet but as a saint. He was a Nagar[1] belonging to Junagadh; he lived in poverty and was a great saint. He was a poet no doubt, but he did not write to become [famous as] a poet; he composed poems simply in devotion to God. I have not found in any other language the like of *prabhatiyan*[2] composed by Narasinh Mehta. In one of these he writes:[3]

> So long as we have not recognized the essence of our *atman*, all other striving is in vain.

In the case of khadi I want to apply this to mean that so long as we have not understood the principle underlying khadi, we should regard all our other work as futile. If 30 crores of people want to clothe themselves, why should they use the cloth made in the mills of Paris or Ahmedabad and not one made by the hands of the poor? Khadi may be worn by the devout as well as by the hypocrite or the treacherous; by the chastest of wives as well as by a prostitute. There was a time when only this cloth was made in India and no other, hence everyone used khadi and nothing else. It is not that there were no thieves or robbers then, or that there were no prostitutes, but they did not understand either the significance of or the principle underlying khadi.

Let me explain it to you. Ever since I started speaking of khadi, I have been saying that khadi is pure swadeshi. I have also been claiming that swaraj hangs by the handspun yarn; the latter is also the foundation of our independence. Some say that this is an exaggerated statement and that I speak of khadi in hyperboles like a bard who makes much of some petty thing. But I have never resorted to exaggeration. I claim to be a satyagrahi. Such a one does not tell a lie. Whether one describes a single thing as two or a hundred thousand, both involve falsehood. How then did I, a satyagrahi, make such a statement? After so many years I have again started repeating the same thing. Khadi can bring swaraj only if we are convinced of the principle underlying it. Swaraj cannot be won just by donning khadi without any understanding. What do the wealthy people of Ahmedabad know of business dealings? They just fill their own bellies, bring up their own children, and throw money to a few labourers. I claim to be a [real] businessman. I propose to bring dal, rice, *roti* and ghee to every

[1] A Brahmin sub-caste

[2] Devotional songs sung in the morning

[3] Gandhiji here quotes the Gujarati original.

Indian. I wish no one to remain unclothed. So long as this is not accomplished, my business is not worth its name. I shall be able to carry on true business if you carry out my suggestions.

The U. P. and Bihar Ministers are here having tendered their resignations. There is nothing very extraordinary about it. They accepted their offices in full knowledge of the fact that the Constitution is a bauble. What has happened in Bihar and the U. P. may happen tomorrow in Bombay and the day after in Madras. But I am going to tell you today why exactly the thing has happened. If I am a Minister it is within my power to release prisoners, no matter whether they are three or thirty. What right has the Governor to interfere? I am Minister because I have the majority of votes, and so long as I hold the office, there is no one to question my authority to release the prisoners. But the Governors of two provinces have interfered. Let me tell you why. *Pace* what the socialist friends may say, I hold that the Governors dared to interfere because we have not realized the implications of khadi.

Khadi has been conceived as the foundation and symbol of ahimsa. A real khadi-wearer will not utter an untruth. I am not talking about the hypocrites who don khadi nor about those who do it to fill their bellies. A real khadi-wearer will harbour no violence, no deceit, no impurity. To those who will say, 'If this is khadi, we will not wear it', I will say, 'You are welcome to do what you like, but then you must forget about winning swaraj by means of truth and non-violence. Nor would I compel you to observe truth and non-violence, nor even to win swaraj after my method.'

Seven and a half lakh rupees have gone into the making of Vithalnagar. There are many things here I have liked, but it lacks the spirit of khadi. Sardar and I are close to each other, we are as one, we work alike and we think alike, but it may be that even Sardar has not fully grasped the secret of khadi. Where there is the conscious endeavour to fulfil the spirit of khadi, there is no place for an expenditure of seven and a half lakhs. I had said that we should be able to hold a village session at the outside expense of Rs. 5,000. Before the Faizpur Congress I told Deo[1] that he would be found wanting in my estimate if he failed to manage it with Rs. 5,000. And he did fail. Well, the idea has still not left my mind. If we cannot do this, we are not true soldiers of swaraj, we have not become real villagers. Rural-mindedness and electrical illuminations go ill together.

[1] Shankarrao Deo

Nor have motor-cars and motor-lorries any place there. They took me to Faizpur and they brought me to Haripura in a car. They would not allow me to walk. They would not even take me in a bullock-cart. That was reserved for Subhas Babu. If they had brought me in a bullock-cart, it would have meant some loss of time. But how does that matter? We have all become princes, and I am told some pedestrians waylaid cars and threatened satyagraha if they were not given cars. The seven and a half lakhs would not have been spent here if we were khadi-minded. Here there are petrol and oil engines and water-pipes, stoves and electricity, most of the modern city-dwellers' amenities, including the tooth-paste and the tooth-brush and scented hair oils. The villager is or should be unspoilt by these things. His brush is the fresh *babul* stick and his powder is salt and charcoal. You wear khadi, but what about the other things that surround you and are out of keeping with khadi?

After going round I have discovered five drawbacks, and I have informed Shankerlal [Banker] about these. Because we have not assimilated and lived the *mantra* of khadi, some socialist friends are impatient with us and say that Gandhi's days are gone and a new age is upon us. I do not mind this, in fact I welcome plain speaking. If you think that what I say deserves to be rejected, do by all means reject it. Do what you do for the sake of India, not for my sake. I am but an image of clay, which is sure to be reduced to cinders. If you wear khadi for my sake, you will burn khadi on the day you burn my dead body. But if you have fully understood the message of khadi, if you have thoroughly assimilated it, khadi will long outlive me. Khadi is not a lifeless image to be worshipped externally. True worship is not idol-worship, it is the worship of the God in the idol. If we miss the spirit of khadi and make only a fetish of it, we are no better than gross idolators.

For twenty years I have preached the cult of khadi to my countrymen. And this is the only message I have been carrying to one and all, all these twenty years. I want to preach the same cult today when I am at death's door. Khadi is no longer the old rag it looked like when it was born. It has all the health and beauty and vigour of youth, and I can therefore preach the cult of khadi with redoubled faith and vigour. Something within me tells me that in this I am not wrong. In khadi lies swaraj—Independence.

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 26-2-1938

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472. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

HARIPURA,
February 16, 1938[2]

The Governor-General's interference with the proposal of the Bihar Ministers seems to be most unfortunate and uncalled for. I have read and re-read Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. It authorizes interference when there is a grave menace to peace and tranquillity in any part of India through any action proposed by Ministers. Surely the discharge of a few prisoners, even though they were convicted of crimes involving violence, for what they no doubt erringly believed to be the country's cause, so far as I could see, could not endanger peace and tranquillity. The Governor-General's interference would come properly if there was disorder consequent upon such release.

In the case which has brought about the interference, I understand the Bihar Prime Minister had been assured by the prisoners that they had changed their mentality and that they wanted to live, if they were discharged, as peaceful citizens.

The action of the Governor-General bewilders me and makes me suspect whether the proposal to discharge the prisoners in question was merely the last straw and that the Congress Ministers in general had fatigued the British authority. I hope that my suspicion is groundless, but, if it is so, I fail to understand the interference unless there are good grounds of which the public have no knowledge. How I wish it was possible for the Governor-General to retrace his step and avert a crisis whose consequences nobody can foretell.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] Published under the title "Government Must Undo Mischief"
[2] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 17-2-1938

473. *RESOLUTION ON MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS*

[Before *February 18, 1938*][1]

In accordance with the direction of the Faizpur Congress, the All-India Congress Committee decided in March, 1937, the issue of acceptance of office in Provinces and permitted Congressmen to form Ministries, provided certain assurances were given by or on behalf of the British Government. These assurances not being forthcoming, the leaders of Congress parties in the Provincial Assemblies declined at first to form Ministries. Thereafter there was a considerable argument for some months regarding these assurances and various declarations were made by the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy and the Governors of the Provinces. In these declarations it was definitely stated, among other things, that there would be no interference with the day-to-day administration of provincial affairs by responsible Ministers.

The experience of office by Congress Ministers in the Provinces has shown that at least in two Provinces, the United Provinces and Bihar, there has in fact been interference in the day-to-day administration of provincial affairs as shown hereafter. The Governors, when they invited Congress members to form Ministries, knew that the Congress Manifesto had mentioned the release of political prisoners as one of the major items of the Congress policy. In pursuance thereof the Ministers began the release of political prisoners and they soon experienced delay, which was sometimes vexatious, before the Governors would endorse the orders of release. The way releases have been repeatedly delayed is evidence of the exemplary patience of Ministers. In the opinion of the Congress, release of prisoners is a matter coming essentially within the purview of day-to-day administration, which does not admit of protracted discussion with Governors. The function of the Governor is to guide and advise Ministers and not to interfere with the free exercise of their judgment in the discharge of their day-to-day duty. It was only when the

[1] According to *The Bombay Chronicle*, 19-2-1938, the resolution drafted by Gandhiji was under discussion in the Working Committee meeting on February 18.

time came for the Working Committee to give an annual account to the Congress delegates and to the masses of people backing them, that the Committee had to instruct Ministers, who were themselves sure of their ground, to order release of the political prisoners in their charge and to resign if their orders were countermanded. The Congress approves of and endorses the action taken by the Ministers of the United Provinces and Bihar and congratulates them on it.

In the opinion of the Congress, the interference of the Governor-General with the deliberate action of the respective Prime Ministers is not merely a violation of the assurance above referred to, but it is also a misapplication of Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. There was no question of grave menace to peace and tranquillity involved. The Prime Ministers had, besides, in both cases satisfied themselves from assurances from the prisoners concerned and otherwise of their change of mentality and acceptance of the Congress policy of non-violence. Indeed it is the Governor-General's interference which has undoubtedly created a situation that may easily, in spite of the Congress effort to the contrary, become such a grave menace.

The Congress has, during the short period that Congressmen have held office, given sufficient evidence of their self-sacrifice, administrative capacity and constructive ability in the matter of enacting legislation for the amelioration of economic and social evils. The Congress gladly admits that a measure of co-operation was extended by the Governors to the Ministers. It has been the sincere effort on the part of the Congress to extract what is possible from the Act for the public good and to strengthen the people in the pursuit of their goal of complete independence and the ending of imperialistic exploitation of the masses of India.

The Congress does not desire to precipitate a crisis which may involve non-violent non-co-operation and direct action consistent with the Congress policy of truth and non-violence. The Congress is therefore at present reluctant to instruct Ministers in other Provinces to send in their resignations by way of protest against the Governor-General's action, and invites His Excellency the Governor-General to reconsider his decision so that the Governors may act constitutionally and accept the advice of their Ministers in the matter of the release of the political prisoners.

The Congress regards the formation of irresponsible Ministries as a way of disguising the naked rule of the sword. The

formation of such Ministries is calculated to rouse extreme bitterness, internal quarrels, and further deepen the resentment against the British Government. When the Congress approved of acceptance of office, with great reluctance and considerable hesitation, it had no misgivings about its own estimate of the real nature of the Government of India Act. The latest action of the Governor-General justifies that estimate, and not only exposes the utter inadequacy of the Act to bring real liberty to the people, but also shows the intention of the British Government to use and interpret it not for the expansion of liberty but for its restriction. Whatever, therefore, may be the ultimate result of the present crisis, the people of India should realize that there can be no true freedom for the country so long as this Act is not ended and a new constitution, framed by a Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of adult franchise, takes its place. The aim of all Congressmen, whether in office or out of office, in legislatures or out of legislatures, can only be to reach that goal, even though it may mean, as it often must mean, sacrifice of many a present advantage, however beneficial and worthy it might be for the time being.

On behalf of the U. P. Governor it has been stated that the demonstrations organized to welcome the Kakori prisoners and the speeches delivered by some of them had interfered with the policy of gradual release of political prisoners. The Congress has always discouraged unseemly demonstrations and other objectionable activities. The demonstrations and speeches referred to by the U. P. Governor were strongly disapproved by Mahatma Gandhi.[1] Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Congress, had similarly taken immediate notice of the indiscipline which was thus betrayed. Nor were they ignored by the Ministers. As a result of these corrective steps public opinion rapidly changed and even the persons concerned came to realize their mistake. And when six prisoners, one of whom was a prominent member of the Kakori group, were released subsequently, about two months after the release of the Kakori prisoners, no demonstrations were held in their honour nor any reception was accorded to them. Nearly four more months have since elapsed, and any delay in releasing the remaining fifteen prisoners, only on account of the demonstrations or the speeches connected with the prisoners who were released in August, is now utterly unjustified. The responsibility for the maintenance of law

[1] *Vide* "Notes", sub-title, "Appeal to Discharged Prisoners", pp. 101-2.

and order is that of the Ministers and they are entitled to perform their functions in such manner as they deem proper. It is their business to weigh all relevant factors in the light of prevailing circumstances, but their decisions once taken ought to be accepted and enforced. Any interference with them in the exercise of their powers in the normal day-to-day administration is bound to undermine and weaken their position. The Congress Ministers have more than once declared their determination to take adequate action in the matter of violent crime, and the risk run in releasing prisoners, especially when they have abjured the path of violence, is altogether imaginary.

The Congress has given during the past few months ample evidence of its desire to take severe notice of indiscipline and breach of the code of non-violence that the Congress has laid down for itself. Nevertheless the Congress invites the attention of Congressmen to the fact that indiscipline in speech and action, calculated to promote or breed violence, retards the progress of the country towards its cherished goal.

In pursuit of its programme of release of political prisoners, the Congress has not hesitated to sacrifice office and the opportunity of passing ameliorative measures. But the Congress wishes to make it clear that it strongly disapproves of hunger-strikes for release. Hunger-strikes embarrass the Congress in pursuit of its policy of securing release of political prisoners. The Congress, therefore, urges those who are still continuing their hunger-strike in the Punjab to give up their strike, and assures them that whether in Provinces where Congressmen hold ministerial offices or in other Provinces, Congressmen will continue their efforts to secure the release of detenus and political prisoners by all legitimate and peaceful means.

In view of the situation that has arisen in the country, the Congress authorizes the Working Committee to take such action as it may consider necessary and to take the direction of the All-India Congress Committee in dealing with the crisis whenever necessity arises for it.

Harijan, 26-2-1938

474. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,[1]

How shall I reproach you for not writing? What is the reason? I do hope to leave this place probably on the 20th or the 21st. I shall see the gain in your weight. Ramachandran did not turn up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Urdu: G.N. 394

475. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY HERALD"[2]

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938[3]

The fear that I had entertained about the unwarranted interference by Governors or the Viceroy with the due course of provincial autonomy has been justified in an unexpected manner. I can only hope that what I regard as a grievous error may be somehow or other rectified. I hope that there is nothing to warrant another fear that has possessed me, namely, that the British authority has been getting tired, perhaps also alarmed, over the headway Congress and Congress Ministers are making along constructive lines. And yet it is most difficult for me to realize that the Viceroy would allow a grave crisis to be created over what must be in his estimation a paltry matter. I have read and pondered over Section 126 (5) of the Government of India Act. The Governor-General is authorized by that Section to use his discretion "for the purpose of preventing any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of India or any part thereof". Many prisoners convicted for crimes of violence in pursuit of a political motive have been discharged before now and during the

[1] The superscription is in Devanagari.

[2] This and the following item appeared under the title "Government Must Undo Mischief".

[3] From *The Hindu*, 18-2-1938

period of office of the Congress Ministries. I do not know that any menace grave or otherwise has been thereby created in respect of peace or tranquillity in any single part of India. Congress Ministers throughout the seven Provinces have given ample testimony of their readiness and ability to cope with forces of disorder. The Congress stands more to lose than Government if during its regime in any Province disorders take place. I understand that the Ministers in the Provinces concerned have, previously to asking for discharge of prisoners, assured themselves of the change of mentality of the prisoners. Surely, it is they who according to law are in the first instance responsible for law and order. The Governor and the whole weight of British might is always in reserve, if in spite of the efforts of the Congress Ministers disorders take place, with its well-known efficiency in suppressing disorders when they actually take place. Surely, there was no warrant whatsoever for interference with the deliberate decision of the Congress Ministers in the matter under discussion. I cannot help thinking that the Ministers who have resigned have taken, under instruction from the Working Committee, the only honourable course open to them.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

476. INTERVIEW TO "THE LONDON TIMES"

HARIPURA,
February 18, 1938[1]

Gandhiji said that he could not understand the steps taken by the Governor-General. He said that it was just the kind of interference which he had dreaded on Congress acceptance of office and which fear had become justified by the recent events. He therefore infers from this interference that possibly British authority is alarmed over the rapid progress the Congress is making in its constructive policy, and in the hold it is strengthening over people. But surely that was only to be expected. He hopes, however, that the interference is wholly unjustified and that though the crisis has been precipitated by the Governor-General's action, somehow or other the mischief done will be undone. But it is of British making and the undoing has also to come from the British side. By the marvellous manner in which Congress Ministers have embarked upon social and economic legislation, the Congress has given ample proof of its desire to seriously work its office programme.

Harijan, 19-2-1938

[1] From *The Hindu*, 18-2-1938

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477. LETTER TO SHAM LAL

HARIPURA,
February 20, 1938

DEAR LALA SHAM LAL[1],

Please tell the hunger-strikers that I feel deeply grieved that they have disregarded my appeal[2]. I wish they would still listen and give up the strike. I would try for their release even by going to the Punjab as soon as doctors give me the permission and I have fulfilled previous obligations. The Congress Resolution[3] too should induce abandonment of the strike. I do hope this appeal will not be in vain.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1284

478. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

VITHALNAGAR, HARIPURA,
February 20, 1938

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Devdas complained against your today's speech. Then came Jayaprakash. He was extremely unhappy about it. I think your speech was too aggressive. The Socialists cannot be won over in this manner. If you feel that you have made a mistake, please get Subhas's special permission and go up the dais, wipe their tears and make them smile. We ought not to give tit for tat. Forgiveness adorns the strong. Their tongue should not cut like a sword. I wished to talk to you but there was no time at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 218

[1] Member, Legislative Assembly

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Prisoners' Relief Society, Lahore", p. 335, and "Statement to the Press", p. 340.

[3] *Vide* "Resolution on Ministerial Resignations", pp. 376-9.

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479. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

February 21, 1938

You may settle down there if Vidya keeps well and you have good work. Father you should forget. Not to do so is to irritate the boil.[1]

Ask Jeramdas to do it today.

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

480. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[2]

February 23, 1938

I have read the Governor-General's statement[3] with the respect and attention it deserves. I had hoped that it would give some satisfaction, as was given at least to me and, if I may say so, a large number of Congressmen when he made a pronouncement upon the Congress demand for certain assurances as a condition precedent to the acceptance of ministerial responsibility by Congress members of the provincial Legislatures. It reads like a special pleading unworthy of a personage possessing unheard-of powers.

No one has questioned the propriety of examining the cases of prisoners to be discharged; but what I have questioned, and the Congress most emphatically questions, is the propriety of such examination by provincial Governors in provinces said to be enjoying complete provincial autonomy. That duty and the right of examination belong solely to responsible Ministers as I understand the Government of India Act and the convention in responsibly governed Colonies. The Governors' duty and right are to advise their Ministers on the question of broad policy and warn them of danger in their exercise of certain powers, but having done so to leave their Ministers free to exercise their unfettered judgment. If such were not the case, the responsibility would become a perfectly meaningless term, and the Ministers

[1] The addressee had consulted Gandhiji in connection with his stay at Nainital and his relations with his father.

[2] This appeared under the title "How Crisis Can Be Avoided".

[3] Dated February 22

responsible to their electors would have as their share nothing but odium and disgrace, if their responsibility had to be shared with Governors in the daily administration of affairs by law entrusted to them. It is hardly graceful for His Excellency to quote against the poor Ministers their non-exercise of their undoubted powers to prevent Governors from examining individual cases. The Congress Resolution[1] describes their forbearance as exemplary patience. I would venture to add that probably it was also the inexperience of the Ministers who were totally new to their task. I am afraid, therefore, that unless this crucial question is decided in favour of the Ministers, it will be difficult for them to shoulder the grave responsibility that the Congress has permitted them to take over.

I am glad that His Excellency has drawn public attention to the method I adopted in Bengal. He might have noted also the difference between Bengal on the one hand and the U. P. and Bihar on the other. In Bengal I was dealing with a Government which was not bound by the Congress manifesto in any shape or form. The Ministers there rightly or wrongly would not listen to a wholesale discharge of convicted prisoners. I was treading upon very delicate ground in pursuance of my promise to the prisoners. My motive was purely humanitarian, and the only weapon that I had at my disposal was an appeal to the human in the Bengal Ministers. And I am glad to be able to testify that I was not speaking to hearts of stone. The situation in the U. P. and Bihar is totally different. The Ministers there are bound by the manifesto which gave them victory at the polls. They had not only examined the cases of all prisoners whose release they were seeking but, being fully aware of their responsibility for the due preservation of peace in their provinces, had personally secured assurances from the prisoners in question that they no longer believed in the cult of violence.

One thing in His Excellency's statement gives me hope that the impending crisis might be prevented. He has still left the door open for negotiations between the Governors and the Ministers. I recognize that the notices were sudden, because in the nature of things they had to be so.[2] All the parties have now had ample time for considering the situation.

[1] *Vide* "Resolution on Ministerial Resignations", pp. 376-9.

[2] The Viceregal statement read: "In the case of Bihar the demand was received by the Governor at 1 p. m. and cabled for action by the Chief Secretary by 4 p. m. the same day. In the case of the United Provinces the time limit set for compliance was also brief to a degree."

In my opinion the crisis can be avoided if the Governors are left free to give an assurance that their examination of cases was not intended to be usurpation of the powers of the Ministers, and that since they had armed themselves with assurances from prisoners they were free to release them on their own responsibility. And I hope that the Working Committee will leave the Ministers free, if they are summoned by the Governors, to judge for themselves whether they are satisfied by the assurances they may receive.

One thing I must say in connection with the exercise by His Excellency of his powers under Section 126 (5) in the light of his argument justifying the use of sub-section 5 of Section 126. I have read the whole of it. It is entitled "Control of the Federation over Provinces in Certain Cases". Unless the sub-sections have no connection with one another and they are to be read independently of one another, my reading is that in the present case the exercise of powers under sub-section 5 of Section 126 is a manifest misapplication. But here I am treading on dangerous ground. Let lawyers decide the point. My purpose in making this long statement is to assist a peaceful solution of the crisis that has suddenly appeared.

Harijan, 26-2-1938, and *The Hindu*, 24-2-1938

481. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

February 23, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

Your intention was not honest, nor was it correct. All the same, it is good that you did not come, since you also needed sleep.

Send the following telegram to Gosibehn.

"Health good. Hope Jalbhai makes steady progress. Love. Bapu."[1]

Who sent the wire to A. P. saying that I had not seen the statement? But it does not matter now.

The rest when you come in the evening.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The text of the telegram is in English.

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[PS.]

Sushila brought a car when I had walked a little distance beyond the level crossing, and I got in.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11591

482. LETTER TO N. S. HARDIKAR

WARDHA, SEGAON,
February 24, 1938

DEAR DR. HARDIKAR,

I retain the same view that I held in 1920 as to volunteers. You know that at Ahmedabad the Congress had passed a resolution[1] embodying a pledge for volunteers and certain instructions to be followed by them. Experience has proved for me the correctness of the position I then took. It is true that there has not been the response that I wanted. The causes of the inadequacy of response I need not go into at the present moment. Our volunteers for me are, and should be, our non-violent army, irresistible and invincible. Therefore I would expect every adult person to undergo a practical volunteer training for at least three months. I would expect them to give at least one month every year to practical service. Now that in seven provinces the Congress runs the Government the thing should be easy. The first thing, therefore, is to prepare a textbook, giving in minute detail the course of instructions to be imparted to candidate volunteers and then begin the work of instruction not in cities but in villages. I would concentrate all effort on villages. Whilst I note the marvellous mass awakening that has taken place, I am painfully conscious of the fact that a far greater and a far more solid awakening has to take place before we can confidently say that swaraj is ours for the asking. Any extraneous event may put power into our hands. I would not call that swaraj of the people.

If what I have said appeals to your head and to your heart, you should show this letter to Jawaharlal and if he approves, and only if he approves, you should take the next step. I say this with deliberation. I do not want to take a new step in life of a political nature unless I can secure his approval and co-operation.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 100-1.

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Secondly, there is not that meeting of our hearts which is necessary for me to give guidance. You know the reason why. I know that there is no such barrier between you and Jawaharlal. Therefore even though I may say something which appeals to your head and heart, in my opinion I should have Jawaharlal's hearty endorsement before you take any step on the strength of what I say.

I hope you are now keeping perfect health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile: *Mahatma*, Vol. IV, between pp. 272 and 273

483. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter. I have read your letter to Jawaharlal also. I observe that both the letters invite, not written replies but a personal discussion. I do not know whether it will take place in the first instance between you and Jawaharlal or, now that Subhas Bose succeeds him, between you and the latter. If you desire that before this there should be a talk between you and me, I would be delighted to see you in Segaon any time which is convenient to you before the 10th of March after which, if health permits, I might have to go to Bengal. So far as I am concerned, just as on the Hindu-Muslim question I was guided by Dr. Ansari, now that he is no more in our midst, I have accepted Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as my guide. My suggestion, therefore, to you is that conversation should be opened in the first instance as between you and Maulana Saheb. But in every case regard me as at your disposal.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] For the addressee's reply, *vide* Appendix XIII.

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484. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

February 25, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I had your letter. Do stay there if you can remain peaceful. You have my permission to come over. Saraswatibehn is very keen that you should stay on for three months. You should definitely stay on if your health can really improve. I am likely to go that side in April. I have talked to Devdas about your music. He will get in touch with you. When you return you can surely come *via* Ahmedabad. I have already written[1] to you that I had a long chat with Shakaribehn. The whole of last night I dreamt about you. With great impatience and restlessness you said: 'Now please do get me married.' You even showed me the man. I did not know him, nor his name. You did not want to act against my wish but your insistence was tremendous. How is that?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9989. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

485. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SEGAON, WARDHA,
February 27, 1938

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I opened at Haripura the conversation about Hindu-Muslim unity. You were to have talked to me about it the next day if we could meet again. Unfortunately, I was unable to spare the time. I would like you, if you will, to put down your thoughts in writing and let me hear from you.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] On February 16; *vide* p. 369.

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486. TELEGRAM TO SHAM LAL

[On or before *March 4, 1938*][1]

PLEASE THANK AND CONGRATULATE THE PRISONERS ON THEIR DECISION IN RESPONSE TO MY APPEAL[2]. I SHALL LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED ON THEIR BEHALF.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-3-1938

487. INTERVIEW TO REPRESENTATIVES OF SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY[3]

[*March 4, 1938*][4]

Three representatives of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company had an interview with Gandhiji at Segaon. . . . They seemed to be worried by the following among a number of things:

(1) The discrimination clauses.[5] They cited from Gandhiji's article in *Young India* entitled "The Giant and the Dwarf"[6] the following statements:

> "To talk of no discrimination between Indian interests and English or European is to perpetuate Indian helotage. What is equality of rights between a giant and a dwarf? . . ." And again: "In almost every walk of life the Englishman by reason of his belonging to the ruling class occupies a privileged position. . . . The cottage industries of India had to perish in order that Lancashire might flourish. The Indian shipping had to perish, so that British shipping might flourish."

Is the shipping not to revive and rise to its full height in a free India?

[1] The report is date-lined "New Delhi, March 4," 1938.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Secretary, Prisoners' Relief Society, Lahore", p. 335, "Statement to the Press", p. 340, and letter to the addressee, p. 382.

[3] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Swadeshi Industries and Discrimination".

[4] According to *Gandhi—1915–1948 : A Detailed Chronology*, Shantikumar Morarjee and Gaganvihari Mehta met Gandhiji at Segaon on this date.

[5] In the new constitution under the Government of India Act of 1935

[6] *Vide* Vol. XLV, pp. 342-3.

(2) What are Indian or swadeshi companies? It has become a fashion nowadays to bamboozle the unwary public by adding "(India) Limited" to full-blooded British concerns. Lever Brothers "(India) Limited" have their factories here now. They claim to produce swadeshi soap, and have already ruined several large and small soap factories in Bengal. Then there is the Imperial Chemicals (India) Ltd. which has received valuable concessions. This is dumping foreign *industries* instead of foreign *goods* on us!

(3) Then there are companies with Indian Directorate with British Managing Agents who direct the Directorate. Would you call a company with a large percentage of Indian capital and a large number of Indian Directors on the Board, but with a non-Indian Managing Director or non-Indian firm as Managing Agents, a swadeshi concern?

Gandhiji dealt with these points fairly exhaustively in his reply which may be summarized below in his own words:

(1) On this point I am glad you have reminded me of my article written in 1931. I still hold the same views, and have no doubt that a free India will have the right to discriminate —if that word must be used—against foreign interests, wherever Indian interests need it.

(2) As regards the definition of a swadeshi company I would say that only those concerns can be regarded as swadeshi whose control, direction and management either by a Managing Director or by Managing Agents are in Indian hands. I should have no objection to the use of foreign capital, or to the employment of foreign talent, when such are not available in India, or when we need them, but only on condition that such capital and such talents are exclusively under the control, direction and management of Indians and are used in the interests of India.

But the use of foreign capital or talent is one thing, and the dumping of foreign industrial concerns is totally another thing. The concerns you have named cannot in the remotest sense of the term be called swadeshi. Rather than countenance these ventures, I would prefer the development of the industries in question to be delayed by a few years in order to permit national capital and enterprise to grow up and build such industries in future under the actual control, direction and management of Indians themselves.

(3) Answer to this is contained in my answer on the second point.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

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488. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *March 5, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] The States resolution[2] is a call to the States people not to go to sleep but to start work in right earnest. The Congress is deeply concerned about the welfare of Indian States, as the Congress resolution[3] on the Federation should clearly show. We want the States people to carry on ceaseless work in the States, but not in the name of the Congress. The use of the name of the Congress may expose the Congress to insult. If insult could result in good to the States people, I would court it. But it is far from being so. The Congress cannot in the nature of things step into each and every Indian State and protect those who agitate there. It is better able to protect them by not allowing them to use its name. If the States people have begun to understand and respect the Congress it is a good thing, but then let them work with the moral support of the Congress but avoid the Congress name. Whenever the Congress can effectively help the States people it would do so not by actively meddling with their affairs but by acting as an intermediary. Co-operation from within the States is an impossible proposition, and therefore I have been deliberately advising the States people to refrain from having Congress Committees within the States. Some say: 'We would end the States.' Now this cry does neither these friends nor the Indian States any harm. But it would harm them if they were actively interesting themselves in States affairs and trying to work there in the Congress name. The prestige of the Congress would suffer and not gain by the use of the Congress name. Mysore is a case in point. It had a *bona fide* Congress organization but it could not prevent the Congress flag from being insulted.

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes"

[2] Passed at the Congress session at Haripura

[3] Which *inter alia* read: "The Indian States participating in the Federation should approximate to the Provinces in the establishment of representative institutions and responsible government, civil liberties and method of election to the Federal Houses. Otherwise the Federation as it is now contemplated will, instead of building up Indian unity, encourage separatist tendencies and involve the States in internal and external conflicts."

"But," said the friend from the States, "all these things have happened in British India?"

They have, and the Congress has always stood up to the insult. That is because in British India we can adopt civil disobedience for any good cause, but in the States it is impossible. The Congress Committees will have always to be at the mercy of the States and would be in no better case than, for instance, a Committee in Afghanistan, which would entirely exist on the mercy of the Government of Afghanistan. But of course this is my personal view and interpretation.

When I came to India, I had an offer from three Indian States to settle and carry on my work from there. I had to decline the offer.

But we do not ask for active help from the Congress. We want to organize under the aegis of the Congress. The onus of helping us would be upon the Congress, but we do not ask for the help.

There it is, whether you ask for it or not, the onus would be upon the Congress, and it is not able to discharge it. Without being able to render any active support, the aegis of the Congress would be a superfluous affair. A big organization like the Congress cannot allow itself to be stultified. This is all as plain as a pikestaff to me. I do not know how the States people fail to understand this. The best help that the Congress can render today is to destroy the delusion that it can actively help the Indian States. That will automatically mean that the States people must learn to rely on themselves for all internal reforms.

I understand this very well. But look at the resolution as finally passed. The new rider that has been added is absurd. We are allowed to have Committees in States but they will be allowed to do nothing. The position is anomalous.

It is, I am afraid. It was a concession to the States people, but a useless concession in terms of my interpretation.

Then, what shall be our position? Shall we stop enrolling Congress members and begin to organize a separate national organization which will join the Congress under the present restrictions?

The real job is to build up your own organization. But you may continue to be members of the Congress, attend it and keep in touch with it. But your real work will lie in the States. The resolution is permissive. You need not set up a Congress Committee in the States. But my advice is of no value. You

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must seek authoritative instructions from the Working Committee.

Harijan, 5-3-1938

489. TELEGRAM TO MRS. GEORGE JOSEPH

[On or after *March 5, 1938*][1]

STAGGERING NEWS. WANT YOU TO BE BRAVE AND TRUST GOD'S LOVE IN EVERYTHING. SEND FULL PARTICULARS. LOVE FROM US ALL.

BAPU

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

490. DISCUSSION WITH SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

March 6, [*1938*][2]

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, may I ask you a question? What is the future programme of the Board[3]?

[GANDHIJI:] The most immediate piece of work before the Board is the preparation of textbooks for teachers.

Next, the Board must approach the different Congress ministers and chalk out the plan of work for each province, with due consideration for the present limitations and capacity of work.

Thirdly, the Board must itself conduct an experimental centre to test the syllabus it has drawn up, and must revise its own recommendations at every step in the light of the experience thus gained.

Fourthly, the Board must organize and conduct as many training schools as possible. Every training school serves a double purpose. It may not only train future teachers, but every training school also means a demonstration school of basic education.

SUBHAS BOSE: What about the expenses of the Board?

[G.] We shall have to beg for it. I do not think it right to expect any financial contributions from the Congress governments, because that would provide an opportunity for the criticisms of the opposition party.

[1] The addressee's telegram to Mahadev Desai, to which this telegram is a reply, is dated March 5, 1938. It read: "Joseph sinking. Inform Bapu."

[2] The source has these notes placed along with the letters of 1938.

[3] All-India Education Board

SUBHAS BOSE: Bapu, this is as regards the problem of rural basic education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of basic education in urban areas? Some municipalities, e.g., the municipalities of Calcutta and Bombay, are doing some work in this direction, and would like to extend their work in progressive primary education. What is your suggestion as regards the problem of primary education in cities?

[G.] According to my educational philosophy, there is no fundamental difference between the basic education in a rural and an urban area. The aim in both is the same—the development of the intelligence through a vocation. The system of training that is evolved for rural areas will also be applicable to urban areas.

I know from personal experience that the products of primary education in urban areas are good-for-nothing, but, for the present, I do not wish to divide the energies of the Board. If it succeeds in solving the problem of rural education, the other problem will also be solved. If ten years of work are devoted to rural education, you may consider that the whole problem of primary education whether rural or urban has been grappled with.

Subhas Bose next asked whether a representative of a city municipality with some experience of municipal education could not be a member of the Board, so that he could attempt, if he liked, to adapt the findings of the A. I. E. B. for the purpose of urban basic education.

[G.] Certainly. The Board will be a representative body. All the members of the Board are representatives of the city. Where shall I find real villagers as members?

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

491. TELEGRAM TO GLADYS OWEN

[*March 7, 1938*][1]

GLADYS OWEN
VINONA BUNGALOW
SHOLAPUR

COME ANY DAY BEFORE TWELFTH. LOVE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

[1] The draft of the telegram was enclosed with the note to Jamnalal Bajaj, dated March 7, 1938; *vide* the following item.

492. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

March 7, 1938

Subhas Babu can come tomorrow at or any time after 1 o'clock as it suits him. Despatch the enclosed telegram[1], the cost to be paid by Mahadev.

BAPU[2]

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 194

493. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 7, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending all the matter with this. I hope there will be no difficulty in deciphering my revisions. I shall give some time to Manilal. In any case, the time given by you I consider as given by me.

Gole's letter was rather amusing. Do you know that Bhansali has resumed eating? Vijaya has had several letters from Nanavati. He is very much hurt. He may perhaps come some time next week.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11592

494. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 8, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

I thank you for your letter[3]. I hope you have completely got over your indisposition.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] This is in the Gujarati script.
[3] *Vide* Appendix XIII.

CWMG - LXVI

Your letter revives painful memories. I will not discuss at this stage, at any rate, the various debatable points raised in your letter. Suffice it to say that I am at your disposal. If you cannot come to Segaon and my health permits, I will gladly go to Bombay to meet you when you are there. At present I have to go to Bengal and then for a while to Orissa. This will take me through the whole of this month. The earliest, therefore, that we can meet will be in April.

Two questions arising from your letter demand a reply. You ask me whether I have now seen the light. Much to my regret I have to say "no". If I had, I would proclaim the news from the housetops. But that limitation does not debar me from taking advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty.

You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of 'the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country'. I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean. But I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

495. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

March 8, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

I intended writing to you earlier but could not. You must stay cheerfully in any place where you have got to stay. That is the meaning of a fusion of *shreya*, what is good, and *preya*, what is pleasant. You have the power of attaining such a fusion. Develop it still further. Now you must not come unless Saraswatidevi permits you or when you fear that your health is likely to suffer. Did you do anything about the sitar [lessons] ?

I am bound to think about your marriage. Should I not worry about you since you have passed the worry on to me?

[1] The addressee in his reply dated March 17, 1938, agreed to meet Gandhiji in Bombay some time in April.

CWMG - LXVI

How can it be that neither you nor I shall worry? And you do not have to worry at all. I mentioned the thing only in jest and to prove that I was not forgetting you.

You were to tell me about your talk with Hakimji. Why have you not written about it? Do not be lax about your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9990. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

496. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

March 8, 1938

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

I have your letter. I shall recall Sharda only when you two relieve her. I certainly have faith in nature cure but it is not always that we come by the proper cures. I have not yet full faith in Hakimji's knowledge. Of course, I am keeping well.

How is the dairy going on?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5626

497. TALK WITH A PACIFIST[1]

[Before *March 12, 1938*]

[GANDHIJI:] For non-violence to permeate us we should have a living faith in God. Non-violence comes to us through doing good continually without the slightest expectation of return. It simply spends itself and it is its own reward, and done in that spirit it is done not merely for friends but certainly for adversaries. That is the indispensable lesson in non-violence. It was thrown my way by God in South Africa in an atmosphere which was as adverse as it well could be. I was in a country where I knew no European or Indian. I had gone

[1] This is reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Notes".

CWMG - LXVI

there to make a career as a lawyer. But I succeeded in learning the eternal law of suffering as the only remedy for undoing wrong and injustice. It means positively the law of non-violence. You have to be prepared to suffer cheerfully at the hands of all and sundry, and you will wish ill to no one, not even to those who may have wronged you.

Just now a good many people are talking of world peace, promoting peace societies and passing resolutions. This is good as far as it goes. But it may not be non-violence. An army of non-violence exposes itself to all the risks that an army of violence does. Only the latter expects to retaliate even when it is not the aggressor. An army of non-violence runs risks without the wish to retaliate.

[THE PACIFIST:] But the war spirit is creeping slowly over us. How are we to combat it?

I know how difficult it is for you to combat it in England. You have to approach the problem with faith and determination even though you may be very few. I would recommend the study of Richard Gregg's book[1] on the practice of non-violence. A true pacifist refuses to use the fruit of arms—peace and order. So long as we eat a single grain of wheat grown under the protection of arms we participate in violence. When one realizes this one has to be an exile in one's own country and a rebel. But everything has to be done according to the measure of one's strength. A few people with the courage of their convictions can become perfect nuisances to the whole State. How far it is possible to reduce the whole thing to practice is for each individual to judge.

Our English movement for peace is growing. But shall we simply go on enrolling more and more members?

I am not enamoured of numbers. A peace army does not rely upon numbers unless they understand the implications of non-violence. I would, therefore, concentrate on a few becoming saturated with the spirit of non-violence and disciplining themselves for the utmost suffering.

How exactly to act in particular situations is a matter of waiting on God. The answer comes straight in response to prayer from the heart. Such prayer carries with it the anguish of the soul.

Harijan, 12-3-1938

[1] *The Power of Non-violence*

498. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 13, 1938

CHI. KANTI,

I have practically stopped writing these days. I sometimes write a couple of lines to someone like you. I have since long been meaning to write to you and I satisfy that desire today. As regards A. S., you have swung from one extreme to the other. This is violence. I can understand your unwillingness to keep up your relations with her. But why should it be that you cannot go to any place where she is? Why this cowardice? I do not see in her the faults that you see. She gives me no trouble. She has a number of good qualities. How can I send her away? When asked, Ramachandran told me that he could not see any defect in her. You should cultivate patience and generosity. She cannot ask me anything about you. Nor do I tell her anything. That does not mean that she doesn't keep thinking of you. Saraswati also seems to live in fear. Trust me, be calm and give up your unnaturalness. Do come to Orissa.

Prabha cannot go there. I will explain when we meet. The rest you will hear from Mahadev.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7333. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

499. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

SEGAON,
March 13, 1938

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I hope you do not expect the customary words of condolence from me. Hira has departed after repaying her debt and receiving her due. What is there for grief in this? Your duty is clear. You should bring up the child and not harbour even

the thought of marrying again. If you find this beyond your strength, do what is possible for you. Do not deceive yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9518. Also C.W. 434. Courtesy: Shivabhai G. Patel

500. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

March 14, 1938

MY DEAR C. R.,

Read this[1]. I hardly think you can any longer refuse to release the prisoners. How are you? Going to Calcutta tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 2068

501. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 14, 1938

MY DEAR MALKANI,

Here is what you want.[2] Return soon, bringing with you what is best for you and the country.

I shall send your official letter to Mahavir Prasad.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 928

[1] In his letter to Gandhiji Sham Lal had written: "I am glad to inform you that all the terrorists have lost faith in violence. I had a talk with them. It is not a pretence on their part. I would request you to write to the Madras Premier about Madras political prisoners confined in the Punjab jail. He should have no hesitation in releasing them at once."

[2] *Vide* the following item.

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502. TESTIMONIAL TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 14, 1938

Professor Malkani had been teaching in the National College of the Gujarat National University. He is now in charge of the Delhi Industrial Home for the so-called untouchables of India. He is voyaging to travel in Europe for a time. Any assistance rendered to him by friends will be appreciated by the undersigned.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 929

503. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 14, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have added but little to your article. Is it all right? I had gone through yesterday's articles yesterday itself. I have made practically no changes this time in the writings.

We felt no tremors here. The reason may be that our floor is on level with the ground and the walls are of mud. However, such tremors are sometimes wholly local.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

Pyarelal and others had felt the tremors.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11593

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504. A DISCUSSION[1]

[On or before *March 15, 1938*][2]

Gandhiji was discussing with a friend and co-worker his reactions to the Haripura Congress. He said he would make these views known as early as possible for the information and benefit of those who would be responsible for the session in Mahakoshal.

The Congress is a striking testimony to the great organizing ability of the Sardar and his lieutenants as also his ability to command financial help from moneyed friends. But the scale cannot be, must not be, repeated. It is wrong to make lavish use of money even when it is plentiful. I am partly responsible for the use of electricity and motors and motor lorries. For Dev and Dastane's[3] importunity had weakened me at Faizpur. Sardar's thoroughness showed me the glaring absurdity of the use of these things for a village Congress. They made the Congress camp look like a bit of Bombay instead of the multiplied village it should have looked and was intended to look like.

Classes were retained at Faizpur. At Haripura the classification was intensified. There were the leaders, ministers, delegates, visitors and the villagers. The division was not horizontal but vertical. The Congress is our political Mecca. The annual function is not a *tamasha* or a fair, but a *Haj*, a pilgrimage, at which all distinctions as between rich and poor, learned and illiterate, city-dweller and villager disappear. Why should Working Committee members have more conveniences than others? Why should they have food other than the villagers? Should a villager eat different food and be differently housed when he becomes a member of the Working Committee? Or why should a delegate who happens to be a Minister have a much multiplied hut? It is a wholly different thing when one is ill or is used to special food. Such persons should make their own arrangements or have them made by the Reception Committee by previous appointment. Indeed those who

[1] & [2] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's "Haripura Notes–V", 19-3-1938. Apparently this discussion took place before Gandhiji left Segaon for Calcutta on March 15.

[3] Vitthal V. Dastane

have frail bodies should abstain from attendance, unless their presence is urgently required in the interest of the Congress. Vertical division of the camps into different classes sets a pernicious example to the vast number of villagers who attend the Congress. The Congress management has to go out of its way to show the villagers that before it there is no prince and no pauper and that all are equal. If these artificial differences disappear next year, much expense will be saved.

Electric lights are in no way necessary. Visitors should be expected to bring their own lanterns. The Reception Committee will confine itself to the lighting that may be required for the despatch of Congress work and for the safety of the camp. Much work must not be expected to be done after dark.

Motors and motor lorries are a nuisance, bad education for the villagers, disturbing of peace, a hindrance to the proper despatch of work, and conducive to the raising of dust. The distance of ten miles or less from a railway station must be negotiated on foot or in bullock-carts. None but pedestrian traffic should be permitted inside the camp.

The site selected for the Congress should be a solid square block as far as possible. This will ensure a compact camp avoiding long distance between one end of the camp and the other. The layout can be round the quadrangle where the open session is to take place.

There should be one common kitchen from where food should be served at stated prices per course, not to be eaten on the spot but to be taken to the place of residence of the diner.

If these precautions are not observed, the whole idea of villagers' Congress for their education and for establishing a living and national contact between the city-dweller and the villager is likely to be frustrated.

Harijan, 19-3-1938

505. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
March 16, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

We arrived in Calcutta today. Your work must be going on in full swing. Is your pain any better? What food do you take? What do you read? What about sitar?

I am quite well. There was much disturbance from the crowds on the way.

My address here is: Care Subhas Babu, Congress President, Woodburn Park, Calcutta.

We shall start from here on the 24th to go to Delang, Orissa, for [the convention of] the Gandhi Seva Sangh there. We shall have to stay there till the 31st. Pyarelal, Mahadev, Kanu and Sushila are with me.

One letter from you should reach me here and two or three at Delang.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9991. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

506. TALK WITH HARIJANS[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 18, 1938

The Congress which is in a minority today must come to power tomorrow or the day after in Bengal, as its programme is so broad-based as to attract all groups to its fold.

The Bombay Chronicle, 19-3-1938

[1] Following Gandhiji's appeal to join the Congress, some members of the Scheduled Castes had asked him how their political and economic interests could be safeguarded if they joined the Congress which was not in power in the Province.

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507. DISCUSSION WITH KRISHAK PROJA PARTY MEMBERS[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 19, 1938

In the course of the discussion the members of the Krishak Party are reported to have intimated to Mahatmaji their desire to see the political situation in Bengal changed and their readiness to work in co-operation with the Congress Party in the Legislature if the administration of the Province was run on purely national lines and on an economic basis.

Mahatma Gandhi wanted it to be realized that the main object of his visit to Bengal was the release of political prisoners and he would rather not be drawn into local politics. He, however, informed them that he intended returning to Calcutta by the 1st April next from Delang where he would have to attend the annual meeting of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. He proposed to concentrate all his attention during his present trip to Calcutta on tackling the problem of the release of detenus and political prisoners. But on return from Delang he would be free to devote his time and energy to the political problems peculiar to Bengal to which his attention had already been drawn.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-3-1938

508. OUR FAILURE

[Before *March 22, 1938*][2]

The communal riots in Allahabad—the headquarters of the Congress — and the necessity of summoning the assistance of the police and even the military show that the Congress has not yet become fit to substitute the British authority. It is best to face this naked truth, however unpleasant it may be.

The Congress claims to represent the whole of India, not merely those few who are on the Congress register. It should represent even those who are hostile to it and who will even crush it, if they could. Not until we make good that claim, shall

[1] Twenty members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and two members of the Legislative Council had about an hour's discussion with Gandhiji in the afternoon.

[2] From the reference to this article in "Talk with Co-workers", 22-3-1938

we be in a position to displace the British Government and function as an independent nation.

This proposition holds good whether we seek to displace British rule by violent action or non-violent.

Most probably by the time these lines appear in print, peace would have been established in Allahabad and the other parts. That, however, will not take us further in our examination of the fitness of the Congress as an organization ready to displace British authority in its entirety.

No Congressman will seriously doubt that the Congress is not at the present moment capable of delivering the goods if it was called upon to do so. If it was capable, it would not wait for the call. But every Congressman believes that the Congress is fast becoming such a body. The brilliant success at Haripura will be cited as the most conclusive proof of the fact.

The riots and certain other things I can mention should make us pause and ask ourselves whether the Congress is really growing from strength to strength. I must own that I have been guilty of laying that claim. Have I been overhasty in doing so?

It is my conviction that the phenomenal growth of the Congress is due to its acceptance and enforcement, however imperfect, of the policy of non-violence. Time has arrived to consider the nature of Congress non-violence. Is it non-violence of the weak and the helpless or of the strong and the powerful? If it is the former, it will never take us to our goal and, if long practised, may even render us for ever unfit for self-government. The weak and helpless are non-violent in action because they must be. But in reality they harbour violence in their breasts and simply await opportunity for its display. It is necessary for Congressmen individually and collectively to examine the quality of their non-violence. If it does not come out of real strength, it would be best and honest for the Congress to make such a declaration and make the necessary changes in its behaviour.

By this time, i. e., after seventeen years' practice of non-violence, the Congress should be able to put forth a non-violent army of volunteers numbering not a few thousands but lacs who would be equal to every occasion where the police and the military are required. Thus, instead of one brave Pashupatinath Gupta who died[1] in the attempt to secure peace, we

[1] Mahadev Desai, however, reported in *Harijan*, 2-4-1938, that Pashupatinath Gupta, though seriously stabbed, was making satisfactory progress.

should be able to produce hundreds. And a non-violent army acts unlike armed men, as well in times of peace as of disturbances. They would be constantly engaged in constructive activities that make riots impossible. Theirs will be the duty of seeking occasions for bringing warring communities together, carrying on peace propaganda, engaging in activities that would bring and keep them in touch with every single person, male and female, adult and child, in their parish or division. Such an army should be ready to cope with any emergency, and in order to still the frenzy of mobs, should risk their lives in numbers sufficient for the purpose. A few hundred, maybe a few thousand, such spotless deaths will once for all put an end to the riots. Surely a few hundred young men and women giving themselves deliberately to mob fury will be any day a cheap and braver method of dealing with such madness than the display and use of the police and the military.

It has been suggested that when we have our independence riots and the like will not occur. This seems to me to be an empty hope, if in the course of the struggle for freedom we do not understand and use the technique of non-violent action in every conceivable circumstance. To the extent that the Congress Ministers have been obliged to make use of the police and the military, to that extent, in my opinion, we must admit our failure. That the Ministers could not have done otherwise is unfortunately only too true. I should like every Congressman, I should like the Working Committee, to ask themselves why we have failed, if they think with me that we have.

Harijan, 26-3-1938

509. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

WOODBURN PARK, CALCUTTA,
[On or before *March 22, 1938*][1]

CHI. SHARDA,

In my stupidity I did not bring ink and now I have to write with pencil. I hope you will be able to read my handwriting.

Stay there without bothering yourself. You are not going to lose my company now. Are you willing ever to leave my

[1] Gandhiji left for Delang on March 24, 1938. And since he refers to the day of his departure by the date and not as 'tomorrow' it could not have been written on March 23.

protecting wing? Are you going to abandon me when you get married? Chimanlal has of course put you in my charge. Shakaribehn too handed you over to me at Haripura. Moreover, I am constantly on the move at present, hence you cannot [always] be near me. And I have no occasion to take you round with me.

I am writing to Brijkrishna and Devdas that you have received the books. I can understand your hesitation. It is good that you are able to have some music [lessons].

There is nothing very alarming in your having had [too many] motions. The greatest art about eating consists in eating only what one can digest. Hence even if some unwholesome food is taken it should not do much harm. I am doubtful about uncooked gram. But it would do no harm if taken in quantities you can digest. The same is true about berries.

Does Maulvi Saheb come there? I have not heard from him at all. I am going to Delang, Orissa, on the 24th. I shall be back here on the 1st of April. I am all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

In the absence of my . . .[1], do you use the same one daily?

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9976. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

510. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I stupidly did not bring the ink-pot and Kanu is not quite as thoughtful and solicitous as you. So I can only give you a pencil letter.

The bath[2] has been most useful. That it might not have been with me but for your watchfulness was due to Kanu's thoughtlessness. He is still shaping.

[1] One word is illegible.

[2] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira* the addressee says: "A tin bath which used to be taken on journeys when no big bath was likely to be available for Bapu. To lie in hot water was part of the blood-pressure treatment."

I am really keeping extraordinarily well. I have hazarded an experiment for the love of a good man. That has disturbed the b. p. but I hope that it will come under control today. Sushila must describe the experiment if she will.

I am afraid the stay out of Segaon will be prolonged perhaps by a week. I must come back to C[alcutta] for the Working Committee. You must not feel disturbed. Resign yourself to God. When I can usefully take you with me you shall come. And of course you accompany me if I go away anywhere for months. I hope you are keeping well. How about salad greens?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6397. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9992

511. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

CALCUTTA,
March 22, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Either I write with a pencil or not at all. Kanu did not bring the ink-pot and I stupidly refrained. There is no fountain-pen by and there is no ordinary pen or ink in this household. This is a mere business letter, no time for more.

There is no likelihood of a vacancy in C. P. But what I suggest is that you may send in a general letter to the President and respective Premiers the names of those women who, in your opinion, are capable of holding responsible offices. There your function as President should end.

As to Delhi, Brijkrishna is worth his weight in gold so far as honesty is concerned. But I discount his estimates of facts and events. But everything will be fixed up now that the Sardar and Shankerlal are there.

My health is good. I have spoiled it a little by an experiment. I must describe it to you. As for my work here, I can report nothing conclusive.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3849. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7005

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512. TALK WITH CO-WORKERS[1]

[*March 22, 1938*][2]

I could not help writing that article[3]. I want you to read it. I feel ashamed that our Ministers had to call to their aid the police and the military. I am ashamed that they had to use the language that they did in reply to the Opposition speeches. I feel as if the Congress had lost and the British had won. Why does our non-violence fail on such occasions? Is it the non-violence of the weak? Even the goondas should not move us from our faith and make us say: 'We will send them to the gallows or shoot them down if necessary.' They too are our countrymen. If they will kill us, we must allow them to do so. You cannot pit against organized violence the non-violence of the weak, but the non-violence which the bravest alone can exercise. . . .[4] We have, you will say, been sufficiently non-violent. We were non-violent during the civil disobedience campaign, we received lathi blows and worse. My reply is this: We did, but not sufficiently. We could not get independence at the end of the Dandi March[5], as ours was not the unadulterated non-violence of the bravest. We did take many a step forward as a result of the sufferings we went through, but there was lurking in us violence. That was why I had to make that statement[6] in Patna in 1934, and I am sure that if I had not advised the calling off of the civil disobedience campaign, we should have been thoroughly demoralized. We have been moving, since then, further forward step by step. . . .[7] But the time for searching self-examination has come.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

[1] Reproduced from Mahadev Desai's article "Need for Self-examination"

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the talk took place three days before the annual session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh which began on March 25.

[3] *Vide* "Our Failure", pp. 405-7.

[4] Omission as in the source

[5] In 1930; *vide* Vol. XLIII.

[6] *Vide* Vol. LVII, pp. 348-50.

[7] Omission as in the source

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513. FOREWORD[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I have read Sir Abdullah Suhrawardy's collection of the sayings of the Prophet with much interest and profit. They are among the treasures of mankind, not merely Muslims.

I am a believer in the truth of all the great religions of the world. There will be no lasting peace on earth unless we learn not merely to tolerate but even to respect the other faiths as our own. A reverent study of the sayings of the different teachers of mankind is a step in the direction of such mutual respect.

M. K. GANDHI

The Sayings of Muhammad

514. LETTER TO M. A. JINNAH

[AS AT] SEGAON, WARDHA,
March 24, 1938

DEAR MR. JINNAH,

Many thanks for your note. As soon as I reach Segaon I shall see the first opportunity of waiting on you in Bombay.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

[1] To *The Sayings of Muhammad*

CWMG-LXVI

515. AN APPEAL[1]

CALCUTTA,
March 24, 1938

I am sorry to have to interrupt the negotiations for the release of detenus and political prisoners as I must keep an appointment in Delang. I hope to return on April 1, and resume the negotiations. I would urge workers and the public not to hold demonstrations, meetings and the like while the negotiations are going on. I would also urge the prisoners and detenus to be patient and feel sure that I shall leave no stone unturned to redeem the promise I have made for bringing about the desired relief.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-3-1938

516. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

AMTUL SALAAM
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

YOU CAN CERTAINLY GO BOMBAY.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 407

[1] Gandhiji issued the appeal before leaving Calcutta at 8 p. m. for Delang.

CWMG - LXVI

517. SPEECH AT VILLAGE INDUSTRIES EXHIBITION[1]

BIRBOI,
March 25, 1938

Can my voice reach where you are? If it does, please raise your hands. Can those standing over there hear me? (Many hands are raised.) Good. Now please be silent for a few minutes. I do not have the strength to speak to you at any great length. You know that in the whole of our country the land of Orissa is the dearest to me. As soon as I returned to India I began to hear of Orissa's poverty and famine. We raised an amount and sent over Thakkar Bapa in the capacity of a servant of this afflicted province and organized famine relief. I also realized that if I could serve Orissa somewhat I would by so doing serve India. Thus Orissa became for me a place of pilgrimage—not because the temple of Lord Jagannath was there—for it was not open to me, as it was not open to the Harijans—but because I thought of a novel way of touring the country for the sacred mission of the abolition of untouchability. I had heard that the so-called sanatanists were enraged at my mission of removing untouchability and would even try to frustrate it with violence. If they were really so minded, I said to myself, I should make their work easy by discarding the railway train and motor-car and trekking through the country. Moreover, people don't go on a pilgrimage in cars and trains. They walk to the sacred place, with the name of God on their lips. Meditating on Him, they proceed along their way, forgetful of the fitful fever of the world, and mindful only of offering their homage to the Lord—the homage of service. At least for me it is not possible to be so engrossed in meditation while on a rail journey. And if there was trouble in Puri because of the anger of the sanatanists, we could not flee from their wrath. It does not behove a satyagrahi to run away. We must face it. I could not do all this in a car or a railway train, and so I decided to perform the rest of

[1] Held under the auspices of the Gandhi Seva Sangh the Exhibition was declared open by Gandhiji at 8.15 a. m. after a prayer by Gopabandhu Chowdhary and flag-hoisting and the opening address by Vallabhbhai Patel. Some 50,000 people were present. The Hindi report has been collated with the version in Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter".

the Harijan pilgrimage on foot.[1] The temple of Lord Jagannath has the reputation of being the most famous in India, for there all human distinctions are supposed to vanish, and all sorts of people, Brahmin and pariah, brush shoulders with one another vying for the *darshan* of the Lord and even eat His *prasad* out of one another's hands. But evidently it had outlived that reputation and the description had become a fiction, for the priests would not admit Harijans, but throw them out of the doors of the Lord of the World. I said to myself that so long as these distinctions of high and low endured before the very eyes of the Lord of the World, that Lord was not my Lord, that He was the Lord of the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas who exploited his name and kept Harijans out, but certainly not the Lord of the World. My ambition of restoring its old reputation to the temple is yet unfulfilled, and you have to help me in fulfilling it. So long as the doors of the Jagannath temple are closed to the Harijans, they are closed to me as well. Ever since my tour along with the local workers and Thakkar Bapa, my contact with the province has been very close.

The people of Orissa have the doubtful reputation of being opium addicts, even learned men not being free from the vice, as I found ten years ago. They are also indolent and lethargic. I know you will not mind my using this language, for you know the spirit in which it is being used. You know what great love I have for you. The people of Orissa are responsible for its poverty. Orissa is the land of poverty because of its opium, indolence and bigotry. The Exhibition gives me the hope that Orissa can rid itself of all these evils and be once again a land of happiness and plenty. After a round of the Exhibition the predominant thought in my mind is that if Oriyas can throw off their indolence they can get rid of poverty. The Exhibition is bound to be a revelation to the villagers attending it of the great capacities and potentialities of the province. All those who have come here should see the Exhibition not once but several times. When it was decided to hold the Exhibition in this place, no one had any idea that the Government might offer help. The workers' co-operation was taken for granted, for after all they are our own people. But the local Government is also ours. There is nothing surprising if they extended their co-operation. Yes, thanks certainly are due to them. The workers with the co-operation of the Government have been able to

[1] In May 1934; *vide* Vol. LVII, pp. 466-7.

bring into being an exhibition which is well worth a close study by men and women, young and old. There are so many young people around who, if they chose to pick up a thing and make a study of it so as to learn how it was done, could earn their livelihood without great effort.

Man differs from the beast in several ways. As the late Madhusudan Das used to say, one of the distinctions is the differing anatomy of both. Man has feet and hands with fingers that he can use intelligently and artistically. If man therefore depended wholly and solely on agriculture, he would not be using the fingers that God has specially endowed him with. We will be worthy of being called human beings if we utilize our fingers. Moreover, mere agriculture cannot support us, unless it is supplemented by the work of the hands and the fingers. We see in the Exhibition what man's hands and fingers can produce and how they can supplement the income of the land. I would therefore ask every one of you to go to the Exhibition over and over again, pick up a handicraft of your choice and help in casting off the poverty of the land.

The A. I. V. I. A. has come into being to turn every home into a workshop. You should visit the Exhibition with the aim of acquiring knowledge and, having learnt one or the other thing that serves your own purpose, serve the province at large.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 2-3, and *Harijan*, 2-4-1938

518. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING[1]

DELANG,
March 25, 1938

Does my voice reach you there where you are all sitting? Please let me know if you cannot hear me. People have been thinking that I am unwell and that is why I speak in a low voice. It is not so. This is a habit with me. Hence, I would ask you, if you find me inaudible, not to put up with it in order to be kind to me. Even when I was well, I seldom concluded in the same pitch in which I began. While speaking,

[1] Gandhiji arrived at 4 p. m. and addressed the opening session. This is the gist of his speech.

I often forget that I am speaking to others. Then my voice drops and when I realize the fact I raise it again. When I was physically fit, I did not have to make use of a microphone. Today also, if you cannot hear me because my voice is too low, let me say that it is not my fault but that of the microphone. I have been told that the microphone has such power that the lower the voice the greater the number of people it reaches. Hence one should speak in a low voice into a microphone. The people who operate it are also our own people. They do this work in order to earn their livelihood. Please inform me if my voice is not audible to you.

Today, I am in a pitiable position. Although I have come here, I can take part neither in the Executive Committee nor in the convention. I have become a *dharmadhyaksha*[1] and am delivering a speech. This is contrary to my nature. I do not regard myself as a religious head. I am a votary of truth and I seek after truth. In this, you are my fellow-seekers. The proper thing is to compare notes. If, after deliberations, we can arrive at a conclusion, well and good, if not, it matters little. Although today I have become crippled, so long as God keeps me on the earth I do learn something. And I do long to pass on to you what I possess, whatever knowledge I have acquired. I would like to pass it on to you first of all. But sometimes I become impatient. You will find in *Harijan* what I wanted to say in this regard.[2] There is nothing new in it, but it has been presented in a new form. There is not a trace of arrogance in what I am saying to you—I am impatient to pass on to you whatever occurs to me but does not occur to you. I am a worshipper of non-violence and so are you. Many amongst you have faith in it. I have been a worshipper and servant of non-violence for fifty years. There is no exaggeration here. I shall complete seventy soon. My faith in non-violence and my conscious effort to achieve it has been there since I was fourteen or fifteen. Since then I have had my faith in non-violence, based on reason. And my worship of truth dates even further back. For more than fifty years I have, in all my dealings, been relying on truth alone. Only such dedicated conduct results in knowledge and wisdom. If a person who has always acted in accordance with truth and non-violence for more than fifty years makes the claim that he

[1] Religious head
[2] *Vide* "Our Failure", pp. 405-7.

has this one thing, it cannot be called arrogance. Under this belief I also wrote out a brief article.

Although the doctors have forbidden me, I could not restrain myself because of what happened in Bihar and the U. P. This time, too, I wish to tell you many things, but only if I get an opportunity and, if the blood-pressure does not rise. Today I wish to put before you only that which is weighing heavily on me. You should give deep thought to it.

Before that I wish to tell you something about what Kishorelal[1] is going to read out to you. I have gone through his speech. Although weak in body, he has produced a hundred and twenty-three pages. It is in four parts. His idea is to deliver the speech in four instalments on four evenings. In one of these he has generally described our shortcomings and failings. I told him to deliver three of these. At my request, the fourth has been omitted. I shall put before you that which has touched my heart.

Truth and non-violence are the objectives of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. But if we practise these only in our struggle against the Government and not in our private dealings or in inter-provincial relationships, what would we gain? This would imply that even members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh are not consciously truthful and non-violent in their dealings with one another. I am giving you a summary of his speech. He says that there are but a few persons in the Gandhi Seva Sangh, and yet there are differences of opinion resulting in mutual bickerings. Quarrels as such are to be found throughout the world. But we should be careful about their consequences. Our duty is to keep up our efforts. If anyone says that formerly Mahadev was bad-tempered and arrogant but now he is not what he was a year ago, that now he is changed, has become somewhat humble, and if it is something which not only Mahadev but Durga and their son also feel, then it means the influence of non-violence is growing. But if he thinks that he has now attained perfection, and if he no longer has the thoughtfulness and vigilance which he formerly had, he would be making a grave error. A unique feature of truth and non-violence is that one must daily take some spiritual food. Have not the Upanishads said that this is like walking on the edge of a sword? I claimed that my spiritual striving extended beyond fifty years. If from this I conclude that there is no further need for me to

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala, President, Gandhi Seva Sangh

be on my guard, it must be said that my downfall has started from that very moment. If I am lecturing to you, I am also doing it to myself. I do not say this only to impress you. I do not deliver speeches merely for the pleasure of it. I do what the *atman* bids me do. What I am saying to you will have its effect on me too. If that were not so, I would become as insignificant as a blade of grass. Nor should you conclude that I am using these words only to get my work done while sitting with friends. If in our dealings with friends we are not on our guard and do not practise truth and non-violence, but make use of them only in politics, it would amount to practising diplomacy. Truth can also be uttered diplomatically. I do not approve of the English saying "Honesty is the best policy". I do not wish to use truth and non-violence for diplomatic purposes. I am talking of ultimate values. If I am truthful and non-violent in my worldly dealings and if the world responds to me with contempt and if as a result I lose my faith in them, my non-violence is worthless. Then it is merely the best form of diplomacy. You should not take it for an ultimate value. If it is not such a worthless thing, there ought to be love between friends.

Kishorelal and I are sitting side by side. Should Kishorelal have affection for me only if love is returned with love? I have become old, I lose my temper, I am not prepared to listen to anything; should he then forsake me? On the contrary, he should not be displeased, he should remain non-violent, he should have compassion for me. Non-violence, by increasing one's forbearance and love, teaches one truth. Love is not a matter of bargain or conditions. One who remains non-violent towards a non-violent person can hardly be called non-violent! In this case, man follows his own nature. The world will call me courageous if I die in an encounter with a murderer. But I should not take this course in order to get such acclamation.

Kishorelal has also given some instances in his speech. But I have omitted them. What use have we for names? I was afraid that the mention of names and personalities might even have an adverse effect. Hence I have left these out. Now understand this. We should also put an end to provincialism. If the Andhras claimed that Andhra is for them alone, if the people of Orissa claimed that Orissa is only theirs, it will give rise to provincialism. The right thing for both Andhra and Orissa is to be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the country

and the world. And India must offer herself at the altar of the world. That will be her true test. I am not advancing a new idea, I am only reminding you of it on a suitable occasion. The recent incidents in Kanpur and Allahabad have deeply affected me. Such incidents are not going to bring us swaraj. I have discussed the matter with Subhas Babu, Maulana Azad and others. The conclusion I have arrived at after Haripura is that if matters are as we saw them there, despite all our failings we may be able to see *purna* swaraj within my lifetime. If we can accomplish our task intelligently, the British will have to admit defeat at our hands. There will be only one power in India with whom they can discuss matters, and that power will be the Congress. There will be nothing left for them to do. They will be prepared to help if the people so desire. They will ask us what we expect from them. This strength can be generated within us through truth and non-violence alone. If we can develop this strength within us in a year, the Viceroy will have to invite Subhas Babu and ask him what the latter wanted from him. Even the British Government may send for Subhas Babu because the British are losing in power and prestige in Europe. But that is not what I have in mind. A non-violent person has no enemies. But if one who calls himself an enemy loses his strength, a non-violent person feels compassion for him. He does not wish to take advantage of the former's predicament to mount on his back. He resumes his fight only when the former is out of his troubles. This is how I worked in South Africa. I found that it happened not only in the U. P. and in Allahabad, but in the Central Provinces and in other places also. Police and even military assistance had to be sought to put down the riots. I do not wish to say that the Ministers were to blame. What could poor Govind Ballabh Pant do? I am not criticizing him. He had to act in his capacity as a Minister. Whatever he did was correct. The fault lies with me. The conclusion which I drew from what I saw in Haripura was erroneous. I felt that we could accomplish whatever we wanted within a year and that we had developed the strength for it. But I now realize that I had made a mistake. I believe that if today the Viceroy sent for Subhas Babu, or Jawaharlal or me and asked us what we wanted, I would reply that I was not equal to the task. Today, we do not have the strength to respond. If we tell the Viceroy that we do not need the police or the army and that we can defend ourselves, that

we have the weapon of non-violence, that the Muslims are our friends and so are the Pathans, that we shall ourselves tackle the Princes, that we shall bear with the Sikhs, he would conclude that I was out of my wits. This was not the state of affairs in 1920. When we are ready, we shall have within us the strength to come to a reasonable understanding with the Muslims, the Princes and the zamindars. Today, we have power neither over the Princes nor over the zamindars, neither over the Muslims nor over the Sikhs. Leaving aside others, do we have control even over those who are within the Congress ? Not at all. I have seen that there were internal fights to acquire control over the Congress office. I find in the Congress names of persons who were not in the organization at all. But let it be.

I only wanted to say that if this state of affairs continued, we would not win swaraj in thirty years, let alone one. I feel that we cannot truthfully say that we can come to an understanding with all these people. And then again, if we have true non-violence in us we should have the strength to say these things and to act accordingly.

Hence I ask you, is our non-violence the non-violence of the coward, the weak, the helpless, the timid ? In that case, it is of no value. A weakling is a born saint. A weak person is obliged to become a saint. But we are soldiers of non-violence, who, if the occasion demands, will lay down their lives for it. Our non-violence is not a mere policy of the coward. But I doubt this. I am afraid that the non-violence we boast of might really be only a policy. It is true that, to some extent, non-violence works even in the hands of the weak. And, in this manner, this weapon has been useful to us. But, if one makes use of non-violence in order to disguise one's weakness or through helplessness, it makes a coward of one. Such a person is defeated on both the fronts. Such a one cannot live like a man and the Devil he surely cannot become. It is a thousand times better that we die trying to acquire the strength of the arm. Using physical force with courage is far superior to cowardice. At least we would have attempted to act like men. That was the way of our forefathers. That is because some people hold the view that the ancestors of the human race were animals. I do not wish to enter into the controversy whether Darwin's theory is tenable or not. However, from one standpoint we must all have originally been animals. And I am ready to believe that we are evolved from the animal into the human state. That is why physical strength is called brute force. We

are born with such strength, hence if we used it we could be, to say the least, courageous. But we are born as human beings in order that we may realize God who dwells within our hearts. This is the basic distinction between us and the beasts. It is not that the serpent crawls on its belly, whereas we walk on our legs. The bullock has four legs, I have two. We have attained the human form. We are evolved gradually from such species as the serpent, etc., to the human state. Along with the human form, we also have human power—that is the power of non-violence. We can have an insight into the mystery of soul-force. In that consists our humanity. Man is by nature non-violent. But he does not owe his origin to non-violence. We fulfil our human life when we see the *atman*, and when we do so we pass the test. Now is the time for our test. God-realization means seeing Him in all beings. Or, in other words, we should learn to become one with every creature. This is man's privilege and that distinguishes him from the beasts. This can happen only when we voluntarily give up the use of physical force and when we develop the non-violence which lies dormant in our hearts. It can be awakened only through real strength. Do we really have this non-violence of the strong? If not, we are in the sorry plight of Trishanku[1]. The better thing would be to admit that ahimsadharma is an impracticable ideal and then to give it up and adopt violence. But now we are unable to advance even a step farther than the non-violence of the weak. Now we have no alternative but to choose between the two. If you do not decide this issue, who will? If you regard non-violence as a principle and not a policy and if you live for it, it becomes your responsibility, although your number may be small, to give proof of true non-violence in your own lives. If your non-violence is genuine and not assumed just to disguise your weakness, the faults pointed out by Kishorelal will not arise at all. I have been saying this since 1920.

You will ask me—what then should we do? You should understand well what I tell you. There are several things you can do. I wish to take up one of these. That is the misunderstanding or hostility between Hindus and Muslims. Our mutual ill will is on the increase. What happened in Allahabad, what took place in the U. P. today, may happen tomorrow in Bombay and Calcutta. In Calcutta, it may even be worse than in Allahabad. This is not something new in our country.

[1] Who remained suspended in mid-space between heaven and earth

If this is solved, other issues will soon be resolved. In this lies our test. You can ask me what you should have done in Allahabad had you been true followers of non-violence. I would say that Govind Ballabh Pant was not needed there. That issue should have been tackled by the Allahabad Congress Committee. It could have mustered ten thousand volunteers. I had presented a draft of their pledge in 1921.[1] I had prepared it myself. The Congress approved of it and I had also put it before the Khilafat Committee. Hakim Saheb was in the chair. Hasrat Mohani opposed the motion. He said that I wanted to make slaves of the Muslims. They may well remain non-violent in word and deed but Islam does not ordain them to remain non-violent in thought. He accused me of wanting to dominate Muslim minds as well. The *ulemas*[2] who were present there understood what I wanted to convey. Maulana Azad is a very intelligent person. He had understood me right at the beginning. I told them that I did not wish to make myself or any other person the master. But I wished to give this status to non-violence. Finally, they adopted the draft pledge. This pledge is seventeen years old. Despite this, even today we have not formed such a band of volunteers. The pledge has not been annulled by the Congress. Our resolution is in the records of the Congress office. It must be lying with Kripalani. But it lies buried in files. In my opinion, not a word from it needs to be eliminated. If we had such bands of volunteers at Allahabad or the other places, Hindu-Muslim riots would not take place. If we had a batch of a thousand volunteers, they could go over to a thousand such localities. They would carry the sword of truth and the shield of non-violence. If there are a thousand goondas and if we are alone or only ten, we would go there and die, get killed. We are pledged to non-violence. Hitler's soldiers go to kill, we go to get killed, as Gupta[3] did. I would have preferred him to have died alone. Why did he go to find out a Muslim comrade? This is not to criticize him. This is just a point I am putting before you. This is because I claim to be an artist working with non-violence. I say that Gupta had no need to take along a Muslim with him. But then there was only one Gupta. The picture that I am painting before you is something far grander. Imagine that Sarup moves up in the Allahabad riots and I come to hear that she gets killed

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 100-1.
[2] Muslim divines
[3] Pashupatinath Gupta; *vide* p. 406.

while trying to restore peace and that she gets killed without a trace of anger against the people—I would then dance with joy. I would say people have lost their sanity, Sarup has fulfilled her life. She got killed. If we had ten or twenty thousand such persons, would they not do anything? And what if we do not have ten or twenty thousand? Even if there is a single person, he should get killed. Even if there is only one person who has the faith, he should allow himself to be killed, but should not bow down to the fanatics, the goondas. Take the example of Sparta. Though they were an armed people and also few, they laid down their lives but would not leave their places. We should have much more courage than they had. If we think that we cannot accomplish this task without a thousand men, our non-violence is not worth the name. If we do not have such courage, let us not talk of non-violence; let us not defile it. Non-violence is a weapon against which neither the sword nor any other power can avail. Even if there are a crore of people on one side and a single votary of non-violence on the other, even then the latter would not say that he would surrender to the might of arms. He will demonstrate the fact that poisonous gases and other weapons are futile against non-violence. He will not bend as did Austria against Hitler. It is for this reason that I wish to place before you this [principle]. It is of primary importance. You should understand it and also discuss it here. If we put this non-violence into practice, Kishorelal's task would be lightened. First we shall examine our conduct towards one another and see whether we are indeed followers of such non-violence. And, on the strength of this non-violence, we shall also win over the Muslims.

This is one point I have mentioned to you. I have many more in my mind. This programme has been with us for the past seventeen years, and we have been sleeping over it with total indifference. I have reminded you of it. If I am as strong as I am today, I shall appear before you and you can ask questions about it. For me this is a very grave matter; my heart is full of it. I have direct experience of this kind of non-violence. If we have been unable to fulfil it during these seventeen long years, the fault lies with me. It is my belief that even in politics non-violence can work. In 1920 I had stated that through non-violence we could win swaraj within a year. I repeat that had it been an experiment with unadulterated truth and non-violence, I am sure a year would have been more than enough. If the country and the Congress feel that swaraj cannot be won

through non-violence, they may well give me up. This does not imply that they are ready for violence right now. They will make use of truth or untruth, violence or non-violence, whatever is possible under the circumstances. That, however, will not be my programme. If there is truthfulness in you, and if we come to the conclusion that non-violence is a weapon of the weak, we ought to throw it away. If you are of the opinion that putting down riots by a non-violent army is an empty dream, you must also come to the conclusion that swaraj cannot be won through non-violence.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 5-12

519. DISCUSSION AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH

DELANG,
March 26, 1938

BAPU: I have not come to tell you anything. If anyone of you wants to raise any questions about the point that was made yesterday or about anything else, he may do so. Hence I shall not begin a discussion.

PRESIDENT: Kripalaniji wants to say something about what was discussed yesterday. I call upon him to start.

KRIPALANI: I would like to say something about the riots in Allahabad where two groups were engaged in a clash. Together with the police, the Congressmen also rushed to the scene. How could the Congressmen or the satyagrahis go where one man was blindly stabbing another? How would they know in advance who was going to pull out a knife and at which moment? In former days the Hindus at any rate used to listen to the Congress workers. As for the Muslims, their hatred of Congressmen exceeds their hatred of Hindus. Now when the Congressmen, impelled by sentiments, are risking their lives and getting killed, even the Hindus have started abusing them. What I want to know is: have we weighed our policy at all? We want to give our lives for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. But, if the Muslims slay our great leaders, will the Hindus have more hatred for them or less? If a great man sacrifices his life, will the consequences not be exactly the opposite? Supposing Bapu sacrifices his life tomorrow, I am sure the Hindus will never forgive the Muslims for the ghastly murder. And there will be no Hindu-Muslim unity for the next two thousand years. What happened

to the Jews? Even today Christians all over the world despise them for crucifying Christ and persecute them. I urge Bapu to consider whether or not one should have a sense of proportion in sacrificing one's life. We shall never fulfil our purpose if we act without any thought of the Congressmen.

BAPU: Kripalani has raised very good points and they deserve your best consideration. If we do not or cannot have satisfactory answers to his questions, we must give up non-violence as I said yesterday. There certainly are solutions to Kripalani's problems even if he or you may not be satisfied with them. There is nothing new about the methods adopted in these riots. The same thing has been going on for years. What is new is that people are stabbed in the streets or under cover of darkness. I do not know how the riots started in Allahabad. But if they began with two groups of fifty men facing each other, we can certainly do something. We can go and stand between them and allow ourselves to be killed. But when the riots give rise to widespread fear in the city, people confine themselves to their own localities. This is as good as an invitation to those so inclined to indulge in secret assaults. What can we do in the face of such secret assaults? This is Kripalani's problem. When this method of secret killing is adopted, shops are closed and people do not stir out. They avoid going into each other's localities. Will the poor creatures go there to be killed? It is a different thing if one goes out for some very urgent work or inadvertently, or if a Muslim disguises himself to go into a Hindu locality. In this case they may get killed. But no one goes out in order to get killed. No one wants to die. My conscience tells me that every Congressman should be trained to go into localities where people run away after stabbing. In countries like France and Germany, everyone is required to join the army. In these countries the law ordains that people should be prepared to die. If we too have such a band [of volunteers] who would be ready to sacrifice their lives during such riots, something could be done about these stabbings, although secret.

KRIPALANI: Bapuji, it may be so. The Congress workers should go into both the localities, and they do go. They have done it in Allahabad also. But they are not as safe as a Christian can be. The question is whether the Congress has developed such strength. We have got the courage to die. We are not cowards. But we are few in number. Did not the people who went to the Muslim localities in Allahabad die? The goondas did not spare them out of any consideration for the Congress. My question is whether the

Hindus' hatred of Muslims will increase or decrease if Congress workers are killed in this manner.

BAPU: I merely wanted to show that we have a solution to the problem. If a few of our men or many of them are killed that way, it will ultimately serve the purpose. My opinion is not baseless. I am well aware of the difficulties involved. But we must know whether or no we have any solution. What do the British, German, French, Italian peoples do? They prepare for war in the same manner. They keep themselves well equipped to face any new power that may emerge. Should we be less alert than these countries? Should we not prepare ourselves fully for our non-violent struggle? Should we sit back and say that we are not strong enough? This is not a matter about which we can remain silent. It is a new experiment. Non-violence has not been tried in politics so far. Non-violence was practised in the olden days too. But it always remained a matter of individual pursuit. Such people, later on, either fled into the mountains or lived in solitude in the villages. They took no interest in the public weal. I have started a new trend. Non-violence, if confined to an individual, cannot be the supreme dharma. I at any rate shall not worship a man who practises non-violence in a cave. Such non-violence has no use for me. I believe in that non-violence which can be practised in the world of practical realities. I am not interested in the liberation a man may get by practising non-violence after renouncing the world. I do not care for individual liberation which would leave others out. One can find liberation by serving others. That is why I have to come here and explain things to you. Now let us have a full understanding of our policy. Let us put ourselves to a test. We may describe our policy by any other name, but let us at least know what it is. If we have come to the conclusion that non-violence was useful to us at one time but that it is no longer so, we must make a public declaration of it. Let us at any rate not exhibit our inertia and ignorance. If we do not decide our policy in all seriousness we would be only betraying ignorance and fear. For, in such a situation we would not increase our strength even if we had an army of millions. And here, too, what really troubles me is that we would be doing harm to our millions. When the real time comes, the people will flee to their villages instead of fighting the danger. What worse can happen to our millions?

Those others who have no faith in non-violence will accuse me. They accuse me even today. They are blaming non-violence; they are blaming you. They exaggerate so much and say such things as I could not have thought of even in my dreams. They say that I have formed a sect. They think that the training I am giving in non-violence has proved very harmful for India. And some of them even go to the extent of saying that our real strength does not lie in non-violence. They say that this passive policy of non-violence has ruined us. In their view, the man who has done so much harm is as good as a thorn. And it would not at all be inconsistent with their policy to remove this thorn. I may be exaggerating, but is this not the gist of what they say? It is not that I am paying them a compliment. My thoughts are the same in public and in private. In their place, I would be probably more fiery than they are. But I never for a moment think that I am going along the wrong path. On the contrary, my faith is confirmed day by day. This is no small matter. We have a solution for this [problem]. We have not tried it in full measure. The solution is no doubt correct. But we have tried it on a very small scale. We are not practising non-violence with conscious understanding. Right now, it is our duty to give it a fair trial once again. But we at any rate must be confident of our success. The test of our success is that no trouble should start from our camp. If it does we must admit that we cannot attain swaraj through non-violence. For us, the freedom struggle consists in the confrontation between the non-violent and the violent camps. This does not mean that the people on the other side are taking up arms right now. They too are brave and are willing to adopt non-violent means, as the Communists are. They are no less ready to get beaten up by the police. But our paths are not the same. They might say that they can remain peaceful while fighting with the Government but not in mutual quarrels. There are others who may say that they can adopt peaceful methods in the field of politics but not in Hindu-Muslim clashes. But we cannot talk in such terms. For us, this problem is as important as the problem of achieving swaraj. If non-violence can serve no purpose during such riots, we must put it completely out of our minds. But I am certain that it can definitely work. We are unable to solve the problem because of the third power in the country. Hence, [it is said], let us first defeat the third power. Let us come to terms till then. After that the Hindus and the Muslims will confront each other and decide the issue. I have been hearing

this since the year 1920. From that time on I have been thinking over the problem. I will never accept such a situation. It is true that the presence of the third power is one reason for the Hindu-Muslim differences. But I do not believe that these differences would be resolved merely by eliminating the third power. If we have not been able to extinguish [that fire] so far, it is time we searched some new way of doing it. I have only one way of attaining independence as well as Hindu-Muslim unity, and that is satyagraha. We adopted the path of satyagraha against the Government for the attainment of swaraj. And we did succeed to some extent. We offered the Salt Satyagraha[1] and refused to pay taxes to the Government. But we have done almost nothing with regard to this (Hindu-Muslim question). Whatever we have done is not particularly non-violent. We have had the Unity Conference. We had parleys with Mr. Jinnah. We had talks with the Ali Brothers. We arrived at a couple of agreements. But all these do not go to make the path of non-violence. All these are political methods. And then, they did not even make much headway. For they were not backed by any real strength. We had the Lucknow Pact of 1916. But there has been no agreement of any consequence after that. I wrote to Jinnah that I would even go and meet him.[2] But what should I do even if I did so? Both the Hindus and the Muslims have in their hearts scant respect for the Congress. Under the circumstances, how can the agreement be successful? If in the event of a riot the goondas on both the sides declare that they would not attack those with white caps, if we ourselves have confidence that the Congress workers would not be attacked, then we may say that we have achieved something. This task would be accomplished if we can have a band of one or two thousand workers wedded to non-violence. And what if we cannot? Our success is not solely dependent on numbers.

Let us now come to the practical side. I never do anything without practical considerations, for I am a practical visionary. True, there is something in laying down one's life out of sheer devotion to duty. But that can be done even by a soldier pledged to violence. The reason why I think in practical terms is different. It is quite likely that if I go there, or Kishorelal and Kripalani go, or if I am killed, the goondas might get converted. I may not even go where this is not likely to happen.

[1] In 1930

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. A. Jinnah", pp. 395-6.

But those who lay store by faith will say that I am thinking in practical terms, and that I lack faith. But one practical consideration is always before us. For instance, Vallabhbhai is doing so much work that I would certainly not allow him to go and get killed. If I send Manilal, the poor chap will be killed. But I will not send Vallabhbhai as long as I can help it. I would send others. Let us thus carry on work while bearing in mind the practical aspect of it. I have some such practical consideration before me. If some two thousand outstanding Congress workers have to sacrifice their lives, I shall not think that we were not practical. History will not say that we had indulged in madness. I would only feel that we had fulfilled our vow. I am sure history will testify that non-violence is a weapon of the strong, and that we laid down our lives for our cherished principles. Such is my undying faith. We have been somewhat slack and off our guard. That is why we did not recognize the power of non-violence. For we have not had enough faith in it.

MATHURA BABU: What will you say in reply to the remark about Jesus Christ?

BAPU: Kripalani has put it upside-down.

SWAMI: What measures can we take to put a stop to secret assaults?

BAPU: I agree this is a very complex problem. Since we cannot save others from such assaults, we should get ourselves killed in such cases. These assaults do not stop when some people are killed because those people do not deliberately go there to get killed. And it is mostly the poor people who are killed. How is it that rich and respectable people do not go and get killed? It is a different matter if some of them are killed that way without their knowledge. We must visit the Muslim localities in the event of such secret assaults and killings. We must make it a point particularly to visit the houses of the suspects. We may go to Shaukat Ali. If he puts the blame on the goondas, we should ask him to accompany us and take out posters against the goondas. In the same way I had approached Chhotani[1]. The leaders of these goondas are supposed to be powerful, are they not? From this point of view, mass contact with the Muslim community acquires a new meaning altogether. The real way of making mass contact with the Muslims is that

[1] Mian Mohammad Haji Jan Mohammad Chhotani

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we should seek opportunities to know them and serve them. Serving the Muslim masses without any expectations is the only honourable and effective way of winning their hearts. I would like to give it priority even if I have to suspend political work. But it is not necessary to stop political work. We find easy opportunities of serving and knowing the Muslims. For instance, Mahadev and I often travel by trains. Often there are Muslim passengers in the compartment. But our people do not talk to them spontaneously. We do not offer them our food and other things. This is just one instance. There are so many other things. After hearing this some even amongst you might say that I am talking utter nonsense. Those who talk in this manner consider the Muslims as people of a different community. But I want to accept them as our own people. This is a question of a change of heart on our part. How can we express the love and respect that fill our hearts? I know there are quite a few Muslims who regard the Hindus as infidels and do not wish to associate with them. But all Muslims do not harbour such hatred in their hearts. There are enough Muslims who consider the Hindus as their compatriots and believe that it is only by living in amity that both these communities can look after their interests and make progress. But we should not be frightened even by those Muslims whose hands hold knives and whose hearts are filled with hatred. We must win their hearts too, so that even they find it impossible to kill us. After all, is it that we alone are human beings and they are not? Even they are bound to appreciate human qualities some time. They are sure to understand our way some day or the other. This is a question of union of hearts. Communal trouble may be halted temporarily by means of some political compromise, but that will not bring about unity of hearts. I would like to tell each one of you that if there is any such trouble in the villages where you have settled down, you must sacrifice your lives there. There is this great difference between me and the socialists. They believe in first converting the whole world to their view and then taking up these things. Individual action is not part of their programme. This is not the way of non-violence. It can begin with individual action. I do not say that my work can start only when I have an army of a thousand workers. I live in Segaon. Should any such incident happen there, I must plunge into it. Wardha is at a distance of five miles from Segaon and quite a large number of Muslims live there. If something happens there and suppose Jamnalalji is unmoved, I must go there and

jump into it. Now, if Kripalani asks me if I have given any practical thought to the matter, I would say that this was my practical consideration. Under these circumstances it would be my duty to die even if I were all alone. Similarly, this would be the duty of each individual. He has to be prepared to die. We should not ask whether we shall achieve swaraj by thus allowing ourselves to be killed in communal clashes. For us, there is no other way of achieving freedom except through non-violence. And it is my hope that we are developing that power, unless whatever has been done during these twenty years has been in vain.

KRIPALANI: To you, non-violence may be a matter of individual action and may bring liberation to your own self. But you are not content merely with that. You consider non-violence a means of social service as well. Not only this, you consider it also a social force. Under such circumstances, you have no right to miscalculate. You must understand that you may not do anything from which society cannot benefit. You say you should go and allow yourself to be killed. But you must remember that if the Muslims so completely lose their heads that they kill you, the Hindus will not forget this thing for the next two thousand years. They will regard the Muslims as the enemies of all mankind. They may forget this thing after two thousand years and unite, but as far as you are concerned, it cannot be gainsaid that from the point of view of society, you will have done a wrong calculation in thus throwing away your life. Thus, in all matters we shall have to think out what is going to be our gain or loss.

KAKASAHEB: When there was trouble in Bombay during the visit of the Prince of Wales[1], you did take a practical view. You did not go to persuade the Parsis because you thought that your action would not produce any good results.

BAPU: I agree that I took a practical view. And, like that, I do make such calculations. But my calculations too can sometimes go wrong. Do I not have a right to commit blunders?

KRIPALANI: It is not only your right, it is your nature. You want to go against nature. You have no patience. I know that many people will hide their cowardice behind my argument. But, for that reason, why should we be foolish enough to sacrifice needlessly so many gallant lives? We must think about it from the national point of view.

KAKASAHEB: But who will decide this matter—you, society or Bapu?

JAMNALAL: Neither we nor Bapu. The nation, that is, the Working Committee will do it.

[1] In November 1921

KRIPALANI: What I wish to say is that you have written to Jinnah that you do not find the atmosphere [favourable]. Under such circumstances, if you find yourself alone in the midst of a riot and if it becomes your duty to plunge into it, my only request is that you should not sacrifice your life.

BAPU: This consideration is irrelevant. Please forget me and Jawaharlal. You think of your own self and of the country. We claim to represent the entire country. Millions of Congressmen are ready to die for the country. What is their duty? The leaders will look after themselves. But I am talking to you about the duty of Congressmen in general. The instance of Jesus Christ will not be applicable in this case. The death of Jesus had no untoward effect on the world. Yet another difference is that Jesus did not go to die on his own. He was crucified. Yet, by his death, his teaching spread far and wide. Leave aside all these things. Think of it from the individual point of view. Social force is something that follows it. I have given my example only from that point of view. I have not done so with the idea that I am a leader or a general. When the occasion arose, I demonstrated my quality of leadership too. What I then did was but calculations. People were shouting why I was not coming out. They were probably calling me a coward too. I listened to everything in silence. The leader does not think of what other people may be saying. I was shouldering at that time the responsibility of leading a movement. But now we have to experiment in sacrificing our lives on a larger scale. I have not tried such an experiment so far. Whatever happens, cowardice must be discarded. Non-violence is not for the helpless and the timid. That was the reason why I wrote to an Andhra friend that if he could not remain non-violent and would die a gallant death, he should fight with physical force. Running away is cowardice. Even today I feel that I had suggested the correct way to him. I have still not tried and seen the result of sacrificing lives on a large scale. I wanted to tell him that it was quite plain that battles in the past were fought with the sword. What I mean is that I have no tried and tested remedy to prevent this. My understanding and my experiences in other fields suggest a remedy which I think will be successful. I am not ashamed to acknowledge my imperfections. But I am not so shameless that I would stop with mere acknowledgement. I make constant efforts to do away with my imperfections. What I am placing before you today is the result of this very effort. If your conscience does not accept what I am saying, just forget it. You need not hesitate out of respect for me. In the

matter of the Hindu-Muslim problem, our love will not be proved by argument or physical force. If our love proceeds from the heart, ours cannot be the way of the sword. We cannot answer abuse with abuse and fists with fists. The real test of love lies in sacrificing ourselves and thus answering the lack of love in others. The time has now come to try this experiment. I have given[1] you a call through *Harijan* and now personally. Consider this from the individual point of view. You can discuss it with me if you want and then present it in your own words. It is not as if I had tried this experiment and was now presenting it as an infallible remedy.

JAMNALAL: We must have more discussion on this point. The thing is not as simple as Bapuji thinks it to be. It must be considered from various points of view. Every man cannot be used everywhere. We have to have a certain sense of proportion here also. Take me, for instance. I was present at Banaras when communal violence raged there. I had to go into a troubled area for some personal work. But my friends prevented me and held me back. I was convinced by their arguments. And I did not go. Now you and I will have to decide whether what I did was right or wrong.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 18-26

520. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 27, 1938

You have just heard the resolution[2]. I suppose no one will have any objection to it. My task is to caution you on this issue and to explain its implications. Am I audible to all of you? If you ask me to interpret the resolution, I shall do so.

[1] *Vide* "Our Failure", pp. 405-7.

[2] The resolution on the methods to counteract communal riots is not available. It was decided not to pass such a resolution. The members, however, were urged . . . to take note of the following statement. "After considering *pujya* Bapuji's views and the members' discussions during the last four days on the subject of communal discord, a consensus was reached that the experience with regard to such strifes was not such as could enable the conference to formulate in the form of a resolution any opinion or scheme. However, in the interest of the country, it was imperative to remove communal differences and encourage friendship among the different communities. Members of the Sangh should make efforts in this direction following the guidance given by *pujya* Gandhiji."

This resolution is not for the whole of India. It is also not meant for the Working Committee. It is meant only for those who have come here. And to them I wish to say that wherever they happen to be when a riot breaks out, whether they happen to be alone or in a group, whether they find a co-worker or not, they should be prepared to lay down their lives in order to put down the riots wherever they might have started. This does not mean that they should simply go and get killed. No doubt they should lay down their lives. But they must also think whether they are doing so in anger or out of love. If they do not have love in their hearts, their laying down their lives is pointless. You should try to understand this well. I would like to admit before you in all humility that what I say to you is meant also for myself. This is because I also keep thinking about what I say to others, what I have done, what its possible implications are, what my duty in the matter is. Even while having my meals, while discussing other matters, this issue weighs on my mind. Only yesterday, such matters came up before me, which I cannot mention now; and this is not the occasion for it. I shall speak of them on some other occasion. Today, I cannot even say what we should do in any given situation. We should of course be prepared to lay down our lives. But our task is not complete with that. Our desires and our actions should be based on understanding. What is it that inspires us to act? What will be its outcome? Is this the best possible path? Or can there be an even better path? That should be our line of thinking. It is thus that we can find the right path. We should engage ourselves in our work intelligently. As I was thinking along these lines, I found that there were many hurdles in our way. If you ask me how we can overcome all of these, I can give neither you nor myself a satisfactory answer. I would only say that if you believed in these principles you too should experiment with me. In that case, we shall certainly find the way. This resolution is before you. You should give much thought to it and then be prepared to discuss it. Because, if we do not wish to give up our tenet of non-violence, we should think over what we should do in such a situation and start preparing for it now. You do not have merely to pass this resolution, you have also to implement it. You have also to create a favourable climate for it. You should find a Muslim locality within your field of service and there create such an atmosphere. If anything untoward happens in this locality, you should accept the responsibility. Every individual cannot make

the entire country his field of work. After all we have to know our limitations. In a city like Bombay you cannot take the responsibility even for the whole city. You should find out how many Muslims live in the locality where you happen to reside, get yourself acquainted with them, serve them, and do whatever you can. There should not be a single Muslim child whom you do not know. We should take each individual Muslim in our locality and build in his mind trust for us. If we resolved this issue fully, we shall develop the strength to solve other problems as well, for this is the biggest hurdle in our way. A satyagrahi alone can render such service. He should specially keep himself in the forefront of such service. You may ask what special service he can render. If you render sincere service there will be no such incidents in your locality. And if such a situation does arise in another locality and if you prepare to go there alone to resolve the dispute, the Muslims in your locality will co-operate with you. At least they will take care of their own locality. You will be able to go to the other localities, and that too with greater courage and confidence. Today, I myself do not know how I am going to do all this work. I have explained the resolution all right but whom shall I invite to implement it? Those whose help is to be sought in this work will have to be trained in self-confidence. And that by itself will, again, not be sufficient. We shall also have to prepare them for the time when they will be tested.

It is for this reason that I explained to you how we could put this resolution into practice. The second part of my speech deals with a question of the greatest magnitude. Let me caution you. Think well before you answer. I shall put the question to you in brief.

The question is whether your non-violence is that of the brave or of the coward? Is it the result of your weakness? If it is the result of your lack of strength, I insist you discard it. It will cripple and weaken us. That certainly is not the aim of non-violence. This does not mean that I am asking you to take up the sword right now. There is a place for non-violence in the war strategy of the weak also. But such unarmed opposition is not my non-violence. You may adopt even that. But before doing so you will have to renounce the non-violence in which I believe. Today, you and I bear the burden of this non-violence [of the strong]. If we openly renounce it, we shall relieve ourselves of that burden.

It is not because we are unarmed that we have adopted this non-violence. Ours is the non-violence of the brave. Although

I have been experimenting with it for fifty years, I have no cut-and-dry answers to all the questions. When I start thinking what I would have done if I had been in Spain now or in China or Austria, and if Hitler had attacked these countries and I found men and money being drained away, my head starts reeling. You may well argue how much the non-violence that has made only this much progress even after fifty years' experience can help us in our struggle. If you think like this, you may give it up. For me, there is no question of giving it up. My faith in it is unwavering. I shall however ever regret that the Lord has not favoured me with such clarity of expression that I could explain my ideas to others.

I mean ours should not be the non-violence of the cowards who are afraid of war, of bloodshed, whose hearts tremble at the shouts of killers. Our non-violence should be the non-violence of the Pathans. I have lived with them. They are not afraid of killing or getting killed. I have cited this example so that I may compare myself to a Pathan boy. A Pathan boy is fearless. If there is bloodshed he does not hide himself in his house. He finds pleasure in fighting. He does not stop to think that he might be injured or even killed. He is never afraid of being hurt. I have seen one standing unmoved in the midst of blood gushing from his many wounds. I do not mean to say that all Pathans are like this. But I have seen such Pathans with my own eyes. What I wish to say is that experimenting with non-violence is the work of such brave persons. I myself have not yet reached this stage. There is lot of cowardice in me. I talk of satyagraha, no doubt. But in the face of killings I cannot have the fearlessness of the Pathans. If I have to go and face such a situation, my heart's one wish would be to escape alive. If per force I do go, my heartbeats would quicken. And, in my heart of hearts I would be afraid lest a bullet or a stone should hit me. I reached Bombay (in 1921) when the riots were raging. Stones were being hurled. I wanted to save myself from the melee, but what could I do? I was the leader of the non-co-operation movement. I went in most unwillingly. At heart, I wished someone asked me to stay at home; that would have indeed been welcome. When I reached there the people were in a frenzy. Anasuyabehn was with me. She is a brave woman. Who was I to protect her? People had lost their heads. I saw mounted policemen advancing towards us. At the most, there must have been forty of them, but they were advancing with such unconcern as

though there was not a man on the road. They were followed by officers in their cars. My heart trembled. We wanted to go to the Fort area. We reached Abdul Rehman Street *via* Pydhonie. There was heavy fighting in the area. My heart was thumping. I do not know how high the blood-pressure rose. As soon as the mounted police and army officers arrived the people who were till now in a riotous mood ran helter-skelter. I do not wish to take up your time narrating the whole incident. My idea is to tell you that you should give some thought to this. I have spoken of my own cowardice. But those who were brandishing knives and sticks turned out to be no braver. I have compared my own courage with a Pathan's. Non-violence is the weapon of such fearless persons full of courage.

This will show clearly how I should experiment. If there is real love in my heart and a feeling of oneness, why should I feel nervous to go there? Why did my heart thump so? This clearly implies that even in me the feeling of non-violence has not grown to the extent that would make me fearless and free of doubts. Fearlessness born of love is the general characteristic of non-violence. If it is not yet born in our hearts, this experiment is for that very purpose. While carrying on this experiment, we shall acquire the strength to face death smilingly. But we have fallen into complacency. When there is peace on all fronts we do not prepare ourselves for such eventualities. And when the occasion arises we do not know what to do. If we do not wish to try this experiment whole-heartedly and in all seriousness, I humbly request you to give it up. I also wish to point out to you that mere debating will not resolve the issue. Open discussions do clear up our reasoning to some extent. It is true that on the question of non-violence also we shall have to exercise our reasoning till the last. But I must tell you that non-violence is not a matter solely of the intellect. It is a matter of faith and devotion. If you have no faith in the *atman* or in God and prayer, non-violence is not going to prove useful to you. If it is in fact the supreme dharma, as we believe it is, then it must work on every occasion and at every place. It has so much potentiality. If we cannot recognize it the fault lies with us. Realizing the whole range of the power of non-violence or having a vision of its whole power depends on our spiritual effort. If you are convinced of it and, after striving for 17 years, if you have developed this faith that whether or no we win swaraj, that irrespective of what happens to the world,

we have achieved this one thing, you should try it intelligently. Your knowledge will grow with your *sadhana*. But you will not become omniscient. God alone is omniscient. He is not so stupid as to let all become omniscient and omnipotent. Thanks to our imperfections we can still aspire to it. God has assured us that when we realize our weakness and take refuge in Him, He is with us. The *bhajan* "Rama is the strength of the weak" is not a versification of some music teacher; it is a factual statement by someone who had experienced it.

If you have any doubts or hesitation you should not pass this resolution. Take at least one night to think over it. Pray to God to enlighten your intellect. This is not a resolution to be passed by a majority. Even if a single member amongst you stands up and says that he does not have this faith, he still has the right to tread the path of non-violence. You should certainly not pass it by a majority.

Now let us come to Jamnalalji's question. If we, who are members of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, accept ministerships, can we order firing? Today, in Allahabad Govind Ballabh Pant is a Minister. He is not a member of our Sangh. But is he for that reason less non-violent than we? I know him very well. But what could the poor man do? I want to tell you that had I been in his place I would have acted similarly. When I accept ministership, I take the responsibility for peace and honest administration. Of course, I could think this matter over before accepting the ministership. But I cannot ask any member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh not to accept ministership solely on this account. I am aware that this would mean lowering of my standard. But after all my non-violence cannot deviate from what is practical. I wish to work through non-violence while yet solving the problems of everyday life. If while I am a Minister Hindus and Muslims start fighting amongst themselves, and if I realize that I can stop this violence and bloodshed by calling in the army and having a handful of men shot, I would have to resort to this course for the sake of restoring order. I will have to give orders to stop the massacre with the least violence.

I am opening my heart to you in order to explain all this to you. If outsiders hear what I am saying, I cannot say what interpretations they will put on it. There must be journalists present here, but they do not know their profession. They should not be cross with me, I too have been a journalist, and I too have experience of reporting. But these people do not wait to discriminate between fact and fiction since they must

fill up a page and create a sensation. Hence I wish to state rather plainly that not a word from what I say shall go out.

Well, this was a digression. Now visualize Pant's position. The Hindus and Muslims of his city have lost their heads. They are butchering each other. Life and property are not safe. What then shall he say? Should he say to himself that although he is a votary of non-violence he sees no non-violent way of facing this situation? He examines the doctrine of non-violence, but finds it silent over the point—but he does have in his hands brute force; hence he should take recourse to it. He does not lack manliness, so he will not remain passive. He would again seek the help of non-violence and not use brute force. But if such an occasion arises again and he does not find a non-violent way, he should again act in the same manner. Pant should publicly declare that non-violence did not avail; the people did not help him and all the same they have made him a Minister. He should therefore do whatever suggests itself to him. You must have understood my point. It is now needless to discuss the issue any further. If you wish to ask any other questions please do so.[1]

Seven minutes are left. Let me answer Rajendra Babu's question in the mean time.

His point, as far as I can understand, is this: I now know all of you. Knowing you as you are, I should put something before you which you can do. Even if you thought for the whole night or, for that matter, for ten nights, you cannot know yourselves better than I know you. Hence I should put before you the minimum that I want. This is his question.

I have already shown the remedy. Rajendra Babu has said that even if we thought for ten nights we shall make no progress. Yet I would again ask you to think all night. Tell me tomorrow if you can. For this I may start my silence earlier today and break it earlier tomorrow, so that after thinking it over all night you can discuss it tomorrow. My point about cautioning you is to be found in the second part of my speech. In the first part I mentioned the minimum that you can do. I have said that we should increase our contacts with the Muslims in our village or locality in a spirit of service. We should widen our circle of Muslim friends. We should serve them with

[1] Rajendra Prasad then asked how the problem could be solved in the prevailing atmosphere of violence, while even members of the Sangh were not strong enough to try non-violence even though they might be convinced of its efficacy.

sincerity and not by flattering them. If they ask us to get this or that for them we should refuse to do so. We should apply our reasoning, cast off our fears and without flattering them go on doing what we regard as our duty. For instance, we should gather Muslim boys and give them milk; even if their parents have suspicions, I should like to prove through my conduct that I was not doing this in order to convert them to Hinduism. Gradually their suspicion will be removed. At least we shall come to know the boys. Now suppose a riot breaks out in the mean time. In that case after this experience we can go into that locality without fear. I have in this matter less experience but more faith. And now I have also lost my strength. Had it not been for this reason I would not be sitting like a fool doing nothing. Take up one locality and try the experiment. Nevertheless I must say one thing. If you carry out this experiment your self-confidence will grow a hundredfold. You will know your strength. We have only one weapon and that is non-violence. It will be applied extensively and in many ways. You will think of putting this remedy to many other uses. As you tread the path of non-violence, new weapons will come into your hands of which I am not aware.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan (Delang-Orissa) ka Vivaran, pp. 36-42

521. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your two letters. Of course you shall have all the guidance about the Mirza correspondence. Anasuya's[1] letter is typical of her. She seemed at one time to be satisfied with what had happened. Shariff[2] has certainly put up a good defence.

It is very hot here. Melting.

Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri. They return tonight.

You would have liked the Exhibition here. It is very well arranged. Over 12,000 people visited it yesterday.

[1] Anasuya Kale
[2] Minister of Law and Justice in the Central Provinces

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Lilavati is here. So is Kanti.

You will have to be strict with Vijayasingh. It won't do to pamper him. I am hoping that your judgment about him would prove true. Your previous letter disturbed me a bit. You will neither be hasty nor dejected over the result of your efforts in the villages. It is an uphill task especially when it has to be done through paid agency.

Nothing yet from Sikander Hayat[1]. I have to see Jinnah in April in Bombay.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3850. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7006

522. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

CHI. MIRA,

I have a moment to spare. We are all melting. I suppose it is good for me for the b. p. is 160-96. Ba and some of the party have gone to Puri.

I am glad you are able to help Vijaya and Munnalal. It is good that M. himself wanted you to help him.

We return to Calcutta on 1st but may even on 31st. I shall know then when we may expect to leave for Segaon.

It is as well that Amtussalaam has gone to Bombay. Her brother's company will be some compensation and the humidity of Bombay may suit her. Let us hope.

They are giving me as much rest as they can here.

Tulsi Maher is here and so is Kanti. He has very long vacation. Frydman[2] and Uma Devi[3] too are here.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6398. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9993

[1] Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Premier of the Punjab

[2] & [3] Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, and his wife who had adopted this Indian name

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523. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. You have no reason to be unhappy. Who can be as happy as you? We have to do certain things as a matter of duty. Why feel unhappy over this? I certainly didn't like that you had to rush off all of a sudden. But in life we have to do a good many things like that. Let me know what special work you have to do there now. I shall be in Calcutta for three days if not more. I shall know after some decision is taken about the detenus. Write to me there. The address is: 1 Woodburn Park, Calcutta. Couldn't you have come with Jayaprakash?

I am keeping good health. The blood-pressure rises sometimes, but comes down again.

Kanti must have given you the rest of the news.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3510

524. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

March 28, 1938

CHI. VIJAYA,

You might think I had completely forgotten you. But it is only today that I have some time to write a few brief notes. You seem to be progressing well. Get completely all right by the time I return. Don't give up hip-baths and friction-baths. Go over to a diet of fruit juice as soon as you feel the slightest trouble.

I am keeping well enough. It is very hot here. But it does not trouble me. I hope you have not decided not to write to me if I do not write to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7078. Also C.W. 4570. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

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525. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

March 28, 1938

CHI. BHANSALI,

I hope you are doing well. You will be glad to learn that these days while I do my sacrificial spinning the yarn rarely snaps. Of course, it does surprise me. You also should try to spin even, strong and unbroken yarn, though the quantity may be less, instead of spinning much and for many hours. It is good that you are taking the injections. Let us hope that will put you right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8354

526. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

March 28, 1938

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have already sent the answers to your questions. Try to discover why you keep good health in Bombay without any effort while you barely manage to do so in Segaon. Is the cause psychological or external? If it is external, is it the food and water or the climate, or both? If it is food, you can eat the same food in Segaon as you do in Bombay. If the reason is psychological, [the cure] is in your own hands. If it is the climate and water, we are helpless. But I don't think that they count so much.

The date of my return will be decided in Calcutta.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10745

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527. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

CHI. SHARDA,

Today is my Silence Day. And I also have some time. It is pretty hot here. We are a goodly company. Ba, Lilavati, Manilal and his wife Sushila are with me. Kanti has come from Bangalore. Your letter should have arrived here. It has not yet arrived. It may come tomorrow. We shall reach Calcutta on the 1st or maybe on the 31st. My health has been good so far. I have cut down my intake of food. Now the blood-pressure has come to 160-96.

Prabhavati has gone to Patna, Amtul Salaam to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9992. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

528. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 28, 1938

Having heard the discussion we have had now and Kishorelal's brief report of the discussion in the afternoon—having heard it all I have come to the conclusion that this proposal should not be put before you. You should not conclude that this is a result of the argument advanced by a few friends. The discussion I heard here has also left the same impression on me. This does not mean that those who have faith in this may not act upon it. It only means that in this matter I do not wish to force anyone. But I certainly insist upon the principle underlying this proposal. It is not something unnatural. If you have understood my point it will gain weight when you act upon it and carry it out according to your capacity. [Passing] a resolution will not by itself suffice. Take [for instance] Jamnalalji's suggestion. He says that so long as Muslims do not

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become members of our Gandhi Seva Sangh, it will be futile to make efforts in this direction. What he says is true but we shall find the correct remedy after we have served them and our action has borne fruit in the form of a closer contact with the Muslims. Of what good will it be if one or two persons become members reluctantly? We shall achieve something only when our relationship with the Muslims becomes that of the servant and those whom he serves. So far the Congress has been doing what Jamnalalji suggests. What it did was good, no doubt. They got many Muslims enrolled as members. But they had to be coaxed into becoming members. This is a kind of flattery, or you may call it a politically motivated policy. What I have said today is not for political reasons, although it may well have a welcome political outcome. Today I place it before you solely from the standpoint of non-violence. If we are really experimenting with the non-violence of the strong, we ought to make an effort to bring about friendship between Hindus and Muslims. So far there has been no friendship. It was only an attempt to win them over through flattery. There was a policy behind all that. We maintained friendly relations merely from a practical point of view; it was like a business-man's practical policy. So far we have not put our non-violence to the test in regard to this issue. If today we can take this test in non-violence and pass it, we shall move a thousand steps forward on the path of winning freedom through non-violent means. If you really believe that swaraj cannot be won without non-violence, you will also have to admit that our non-violent means will not be effective without Hindu-Muslim unity. As I delve deeper into this question many things come up before me. After all I am being guided by my intellect, am I not? Nowadays, I am relying solely on my intellect. But mere intellect makes one insane or unmanly. That is its function. In such a situation Rama is the strength of the weak. My innermost urge is for pure non-violence. My weakness is that I do not know how to make it work. I use my intellect to overcome that weakness. If this intellectual cleverness loses the support of truth, it will blur my vision of non-violence, for is not non-violence the same as truth? Mere practical sense is but a covering for truth. "The face of truth is hidden by a golden lid."[1] The reasoning faculty will raise a thousand issues. Only one thing will save us from these and that is faith. Hence Gangadharrao

[1] *Ishopanishad*, 15

said that he did not feel weak. For him, the argument of weakness is hollow. But others have doubts whether non-violence can accomplish this. Kripalani had raised the doubt about what policy we could adopt where there are secret attacks on individuals. This is a kind of guerilla warfare as Prabhudas called it. There was in Banaras nothing but peace. In Sarnath however four Hindus were done to death. Now how can our non-violence help in such a situation? I say, think a little deeper. This is but a part of our war strategy. You despair that no friendship will help there. I tell you it certainly will. It is not that a handful of persons have lost their sanity. Its root lies in the fact that the atmosphere is vitiated. But then I cannot say right now how far it can be purified through our service. You must not reduce your service to a bargain. Non-violence cannot work in this way. In the case of non-violence we on our part start acting without any doubts. Take the instance of April 6, 1919.[1] Where were the Congress Committees then? We announced a proposal. Millions responded to our call. Tell me how this could have happened. Everyone felt as if a miracle had occurred. People thought that at the bottom of all this there must have been a mighty scheme, but there had been no such thing. However, it was certainly supported by a lot of prayer. The same thing happened in the case of the Dandi March. Who had organized and planned it? I myself was not aware of anything. There was faith and nothing else. I too did not know what God would do. I had only the faith that it would all turn out as it did. You have evidence that I had no clear idea of it. I do not know how it all really happened. This is how non-violence works. Today, we think of our weakness. Actually, it is not our weakness. The fact is that we have no faith in non-violence. This lack of faith makes us doubt whether non-violence can solve the problem. Millions have this faith in the matter of swaraj. But with regard to Hindu-Muslim unity we find not even a thousand such persons. What we need is that we should have faith in non-violence not merely as a means to swaraj, but independently as well. Whether we win swaraj through non-violence or not, we must achieve Hindu-Muslim unity. For us, it is not a means to swaraj. I have not been able even to create the climate for it. Not even a thousand persons share my views on this question. Just as I say that I do not want swaraj if it is to be won through untruth and violence,

[1] *Vide* Vol. XV, pp. 177-88.

today I would also say that I do not want swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity. I say this because I want that in independent India Hindus should not suppress Muslims, nor Muslims Hindus. I want to see that all are equal. You may perhaps find this aspect of the problem rather new. If this is something new for you, so is it for me. I can see no straight way in front of me. There is total darkness ahead. Despite this, I have the confidence that if I go forward with faith, I shall certainly reach my destination. If you realize this, you should start working on this even without a resolution. In a way this problem is even more difficult than that of swaraj. Millions of people today aspire for swaraj. Not even a handful of people care for Hindu-Muslim unity. We will have to solve this problem independently. There are many difficulties because we seek the welfare of the Muslims while serving them. We do not want to encourage their selfishness by pampering them. Take for instance the incident cited by Prabhudas. I totally disapprove of what he did. If a Muslim zamindar insists that the Hindus should not celebrate Holi, should I ask the Hindus to agree to it simply because these poor people listen to me? I will certainly not do it. You may say that to celebrate Holi would be suicidal. I would tell the Hindus that they should not give up their religious practice on this account. I would myself ask the zamindar to come forward and kill me, for I would light the Holi fire right in front of him. I would ask the Hindus not to break the heads of Muslims, but rather to sacrifice their own. We shall give up nothing through fear. I shall certainly do what I have a right to do and what I may. If I have to fight for this, I shall do so in a non-violent manner. I went to make friends with Jinnah Saheb. But if for this reason I allow myself to be suppressed and do not fulfil my duty, it is no friendship. This is not a new approach. The important thing is that service should be the basis of friendship, and no other motive or self-interest as was the case with my childhood friendship. The friendship which I had then formed with the Muslim boy[1] was for the sake of meat-eating and ended with it. But today, I am asking you —you who make friends with the idea of service and who with your mature intellect believe in *atman* and *Paramatman*—to serve them. Such friendship will result in unity.

Now the question of girls. What should they do? Should they be scared at the sight of Muslims? That ought not to be. But it does not follow that they should enter the fray at the time

[1] Sheikh Mehtab; *vide* Vol. I, p. 4, and Vol. XXXIX, pp. 20-5.

of riots or become the victims of secret attacks as a matter of dharma. Of course, if there is a girl like Mridula it is another matter. She is not afraid of anyone. She does not care even if the Muslims kill her. Girls who are self-confident should go in. But those who are afraid, who lack this self-confidence, who do not have a strong heart should not go there. "But the man of doubt is lost."[1] If I am overcome by doubt I will hardly touch a serpent. Women who have doubts must never come out before Muslims. I know of many such instances. I tried to tell you about this in a way you would understand. You should not feel that the whole discussion has been futile. My mind too has become clear. You have drawn my attention to several difficulties. In spite of them, after this discussion, I am even more strongly convinced that this is what we should do and shall have to do. Let us not form any committee and so on. Each one is a committee by himself. Each is his own leader and his own soldier. The servant is himself the master. Where the climate does not exist, what is the use of forming committees? When the time comes we will lose our heads. The real thing is to keep our heads—our reasoning—clear. There is no question of any confrontation. Dastane asks me to appoint someone for the task. This is not a matter to be dealt with in this way. In the same matter what may be dharma for one person may be its opposite for another. Let us not betray our souls. Let us not corrupt our intellect. If we wish to strive for non-violence we should follow the *yamas* and *niyamas*[2]. This advice of our forefathers is absolutely correct. I am not placing anything new before you. I shall show what strength underlies our forefathers' advice. I have derived this from their own books. We cannot observe ahimsa without fulfilling the vows. This does not mean that whoever is morally depraved and given to drinking commits violence. But then it is certain that he does not sincerely observe non-violence. We must examine everything from this standpoint, viz., whether it helps or hinders non-violence. I too can drink alcohol but as medicine, provided a vaidya prescribes it for me. If this movement of ours is conducive to non-violence, let us at least demonstrate unity amongst all Hindus.

Why did I stretch this point? Because the other point that I wish to make follows from this. You must never forget one

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, IV. 40

[2] The rules and regulations prescribed for the attainment of spiritual progress

more fact regarding Hindu-Muslim unity. It is a test for every religion. Even if there be nothing special about Hinduism it must have something distinct about it. Otherwise how could it come to have the name Hindu? [Now] does this distinctiveness consist in playing Holi? Does the distinctiveness of Islam consist in hit-and-run tactics? Does Hinduism teach animality? And did the Prophet's religion teach lawlessness? My point is that you should first become a true Hindu and then go to the Muslims. Till then no unity is possible. I know there are many Muslims who believe that so long as Hindus do not recite the *kalmah* they will not be saved. But if we prove through purity in our life and perfection of conduct that one can be saved even without reciting the *kalmah*, the Muslims too will be impelled to have respect for the Hindus. Such true unity will not be achieved through any political agreement. Such business pacts are futile. What is needed is an understanding based on dharma, where there is no question of a bargain. For this, friendship between brave people and the non-violence of the strong are required. Even if a frightening *smashan*[1] interposes—such non-violence will fearlessly make its way through it. I do not claim that I have attained such non-violence. I am afraid of every [little] thing. Perhaps I am the weakest and the most cowardly of all. But I am all the same a devotee of true non-violence. I tell you that so long as we do not attain the non-violence of the strong and our conduct is not truly religious, the Muslims will have no respect for our religion and love for us.

GANGADHARRAO: If the resolution is withdrawn the consequence will not be good.

BAPU: I don't agree.

JAMNALAL: I had a special reason when I said that we should have Muslim members. Only a Muslim can persuade another Muslim if the latter misbehaves, and the same applies to Hindus. But I find that even the most respectable Muslim seldom raises his voice against the misdeeds of his community. On the other hand one can keep them in good humour only by justifying their every action, good or bad. I cannot tolerate this state of affairs. I cannot uphold what Prabhudas did. Must we stop our music for fear of losing the Muslims' friendship? Friendship does not imply that we give up resistance to injustice. But this, more or less, has till now been the policy of the Congress as well as the Gandhi Seva Sangh. In my opinion appeasement cannot bring about unity or love.

[1] Literally, cremation ground; here death and desolation

BAPU : If we have formed the notion that we should suffer the atrocities of the Muslims in mute submissiveness it is absolutely wrong. If until today I have not said that we must also resist injustice inflicted by them, here I say it now. We should now tell the Muslims also that they have been unjust and, if they beat us up for saying it, we should get beaten up. As for the resolution, we should have it after making some efforts and gaining experience in the matter. It is likely that experimenting on these lines someone may get some new inspiration. In that case we can call a special session of the Sangh before the end of the year.

DASTANE: If not this resolution, let us have another commensurate with our faith and strength.

BAPU: Yes, we can do it if you like. But in my opinion, it would be proper to do so only after making an experiment and gaining experience.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa) ka Vivaran, pp. 50-5

529. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[After *March 28, 1938*][1]

I can say you are now doing my work. It was a great relief to me that you were looking after Amtul Salaam and that you saw her off.

You won't worry about me. I shall try to be there as early as I can.

Be patient with Lilavati.

Love.

From the original: C.W. 6423. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 10018

530. SPEECH AT A. I. S. A. WORKERS' MEETING

BIRBOI,
March 29, 1938

Gandhiji proposed that efforts should be made to give eight annas as minimum wages to spinners working for eight hours a day, thus allowing at least fifteen rupees per month. Mahatmaji also said that the price of khadi

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, p. 441.

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should be so fixed as to bring more money from the rich and less from the poor. Gandhiji asked members seriously to ponder over his proposals.

The Bombay Chronicle, 30-3-1938

531. SPEECH AT GANDHI SEVA SANGH MEETING

DELANG,
March 30, 1938

This is the last day of the present session. I myself was not aware that I was going to speak today. Kishorelal told me that I was expected to speak. Later I also felt like it. Before I say what I wish to, I shall answer a question.

It has been asked whether every member of the Working Committee is not expected to put in 1500 hours of work in the Gandhi Seva Sangh every year. The question has been posed by Jethalal. Although the idea is very good it cannot be put into practice. Today, we must give up our insistence on this. Everyone should put in as much physical labour—not mental or intellectual—as possible. However, we cannot go so far as to expect daily four or five hours' work from the members. This is not an association of labourers. If it can become one, well and good. But today it is an association of educated people. If we wish to take five hours work daily from the Working Committee, we should ourselves do it first. How can those people find the time for all this at present? In this country the trouble is that those who are supposed to be big men get very little time. Where can Vallabhbhai find so much time? In that case we should ask him to quit. But then we cannot do without him. We ought to realize our limitations.

Yesterday I had decided to remain silent on what I am now going to say. But I changed my mind this morning. I am glad that Mahadev has told you something about what has happened, and now that he has said something I feel like speaking out all that is in me. The various items of constructive activity that you are doing are only outward expressions of truth and ahimsa. They only reveal how far they can carry you on the road of ahimsa and truth, and ultimately to freedom. The removal of untouchability is one of the highest expressions of ahimsa. It is my daily prayer, as it should be the prayer of you all, that if untouchability does not perish it were far better that Hinduism perished. This prayer found its most poignant expres-

sion during my Harijan tour of which the principal objective was the opening of the temples to Harijans. They tell me that the untouchables do not wish to enter the temples. Even if this is true, the reason behind this is that we have made such monsters of them that they no longer have any need for temples. Even if they do not care to go into the temples it should be our concern to permit their entry. And I have declared day in and day out that whoever believed in the removal of untouchability should shun temples which were not open to Harijans. Now, how could I bear the thought of my wife or my daughters having gone to such temples? I would plead with them, would go on bended knees to dissuade them from going to these temples, and might have to deny myself personal ties with them if my entreaties failed. I have tried to live up to this principle all these years, and I felt humbled and humiliated when I knew that my wife and two ashram inmates[1] whom I regard as my daughters had gone into the Puri temple. The agony was enough to precipitate a collapse. The machine recorded an alarmingly high blood-pressure, but I knew better than the machine. I was in a worse condition than the machine could show. The *Gita* teaches us the lesson of detachment, but that detachment does not mean indifference to shocks of this kind—failure in duty on the part of one's dearest ones. The three who went were the least to blame. They went in ignorance. But I was to blame, and Mahadev was more to blame in that he did not tell them what their dharma was and how any breach would shake me. He ought to have thought also of its social repercussions. We should understand our individual as well as our social dharma. How did it affect me? I turned pale. My grandson says that the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reports that Kasturbai did not go in but waited outside. If that was so I would have leapt high. But how could she at all go there after having lived with me for fifty years? And why did the two other women go? Are they not my daughters ? That too is my fault. This act of theirs has depleted our soul force. We ought to be more vigilant. By looking upon women as [mere] women we overlook such matters. That is not the way of non-violence. This is a matter of awakening. It was Mahadev's task to have reasoned with them. And, if they were not convinced, he should have brought them to me. I would have told them that I was their spiritual father and not opposed to their religion. I could be their spiri-

[1] Durga and Velanbehn; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", pp. 455-7.

tual father only if they and I belonged to one faith. If their faith could be identified with mine I could reason also with the people: "What is the use of [going to] such temples?" They were ignorant, I know, but we are responsible for their ignorance, and it is the reverse of ahimsa not to dispel their ignorance. I sent them to Puri not to go into the temple, but to stand just where the Harijans were allowed to go and refuse in protest to go beyond that limit. That would have been the right kind of propaganda, and they would that way have done Harijan service. To do scavenging work or to eat with Harijans or to feed them is not enough, if we do not deny ourselves the going to temples and the like so long as our kith and kin, the Harijans, are denied their use.

If we do not go even to the temples which have been regarded as sacred for hundreds and thousands of years, where such great men as Chaitanya[1] have gone in to offer worship, where we long to go, simply because our Harijan brothers are not allowed, it would be a great act of dharma and, if God really is in the temples, as we believe, it will certainly have its effect. The *pandas*[2] had come there and said that the Harijans could go along with us. Quite correct. For a *panda* the silver coin is God. I therefore prevented Rajendra Babu's sister from going in. Some may say that I exercised undue pressure. I would say I saved her from *adharma*. If I intruded it was in the name of religion. Like these three women many others must have gone and must be intending to go. I have expressed my feelings for the sake of these people. What can I say to those who cannot restrain themselves even after this?

There is another aspect of the case. The sanatanists believe that untouchability is part of Hinduism, and so do the Mussalmans and the Christians who think that Hinduism is nothing if not don't-touchism. But the virus of untouchability has infected them too. They shun the Bhangis. You cannot finally solve the Hindu-Muslim problem until you have removed the stain of untouchability by non-violent means. The Muslims will then cease to regard us as unbelievers.

They will then say that we might be idolators but God is in the idols too. Hence, I have asked the idol-worshippers to befriend the Muslims. That is the path of courageous non-violence. Perhaps Maulana Saheb also believes that Gandhi is what he

[1] Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, also known as Gauranga Mahaprabhu, founder of the Vaishnava sect in Bengal

[2] Priests

says he is, but the other Hindus are steeped in untouchability. It is our responsibility to change his opinion of us.

Then there are the Harijans themselves. How are we to carry to them the conviction that we are with them through thick and thin, that we are completely identifying ourselves with them, unless we can carry our families—our wives, our children, brothers, sisters, relatives—with us in our programme of the removal of untouchability?

Is it possible that a member of the Gandhi Seva Sangh might claim that his dharma is different from his wife's and sister's? This is neither religious tolerance nor is it non-violence. People will think we are hypocrites. Intense faith is what is called dharma. The essence of dharma is non-violence; it is another name for it. Its power is such that the sword would drop from the Englishman's hand. The Muslim's lawlessness would be held back. Patanjali has said that violence becomes ineffective when confronted by non-violence. If this has not happened till this day it is because our non-violence has been that of the weak and timid.

[From Hindi]

Gandhi Seva Sanghke Chaturth Varshik Adhiveshan(Delang-Orissa)ka Vivaran, pp. 65-7

532. NOTE TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

[Before *March 31, 1938*][1]

I did not mean to say that you should not stay with me or accompany me. I cannot take every member of my family to other people's houses.

My health will not permit me to do much work in Calcutta. Even if Birlaji consults me I shall not give him much time;[2] it all depends on my health. Do only what Shankerlal asks you to do. I shall regain my health, if at all, only on my return to Segaon.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2470

[1] From the addressee's letter to Gandhiji, as also from the contents of this letter, it appears that this was written from Delang which Gandhiji left on March 31, 1938.

[2] The addressee wanted to discuss with Gandhiji the Birla Mills labour problem.

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533. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELANG,
[On or before *March 31, 1938*][1]

Gandhiji was asked in Delang what the Ministers' attitude should be over the appointment of Acting Governors in the Provinces. . . . He said that acting appointments should not be made from among the services in the Provinces.

Ministers will not relish the idea of a subordinate official suddenly becoming Governor to whom they have often to refer for guidance and who may even preside over their deliberations. Such a Governor cannot act with detachment nor can he command the respect and confidence of the Ministers. I should think that the Viceroy or the Secretary of State would think twice before making such appointments. Ministers would be right, indeed it might be their duty, to protest against such an appointment. I do not know that such an appointment might not be *casus belli*. In the Colonies generally I have known the practice of Chief Justices of Supreme Courts acting as Governors in the absence of permanent ones.

Harijan, 2-4-1938

534. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 31, 1938

CHI. MAHADEV,

What a gift so early in the morning! But if even one mistake is not corrected immediately, it will lead to a succession of others. All the same I will tolerate thousands of mistakes, but I can never part with you. Even death at the hands of a *bhakta* is preferable to salvation at the hands of those who have no love for one. There is, therefore, no question of your leaving.

Now I will list your mistakes.

I don't blame Durga or Velanbehn at all. Ba has already made atonement; not by fasting but by confessing her lapse to me with utter simplicity. She thus made holier yesterday our holy relationship of over fifty-five years.

[1] Gandhiji was in Delang till March 31.

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But what did you do? Either your negligence or your blind love for Durga let her do a wrong thing. And afterwards when you came to know of my pain, you started a fast without thinking. Fasting is no remedy for thoughtlessness or wrong-thinking. The remedy lies in right-thinking. When I came to know about your fast, I tried to dissuade you, but to no avail. I advised you to think carefully instead of fasting. You did not do that. You did not even try to understand my point of view. Yesterday I asked you very tenderly whether you had understood what I said. The reply you gave then was not proper. Your behaviour was still worse. Instead of attending Maulana's speech, which it was your duty to do, you went away to cry. And as a result you threw a silly poem at me. Last night also you should have given some time to Maulana, which you did not do. You did not, thus, fully avail yourself of the opportunity of serving a Mussalman. Had my words yesterday had their intended effect, you would have gone today to Puri with a band of workers and would have shaken up Puri. But perhaps I myself was not sufficiently serious, otherwise I should have thought of this right in the beginning. If your duty is as clear to you as daylight, I would even grant a day's leave and also let you take along with you anybody who might be ready to go. This may be done even today if it is possible.

You say that you 'interpret' me, but may I ask to whom? Is it not to Velanbehn?

Your poetic imagination sometimes blinds you to reality. There is nothing but cowardice in your letter. If you decide to leave me, will Pyarelal stay on? And if Pyarelal leaves, will Sushila stay? Of what use to me is her extraordinary intelligence? She has such intelligence that it sometimes pains me to think that it will rust if she stays with me. Why does it not occur to you that I could let all of them go if I let you go? They will all run away. Lilavati will simply go mad. I will suffer even that, if such be my lot. But I will never send away you or anybody else. And yet how can I prevent anybody from running away? Let this incident inspire poetry in your heart. Correct your error if you see that you have made one. If you cannot see it, ask me to explain it to you. If you think that I have committed any error, correct me. This is no time for crying or fasting. You should read less, but think more. Study carefully all that has been done here. You yourself should utilize Sushila's and Pyarelal's talents

and thus lighten the burden on you. Take work from Lilavati too. This incident shows me that being crushed under the weight of external activities, you think less. Thereby you will be able to do much less by way of 'interpreting' me.

How much more shall I go on writing?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am not revising. I have finished the letter just now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11594

535. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

March 31, 1938

CHI. LILA,

I am sorry that I will not be able to speak today. But it is as well that it is so. I have already written to Ba and made my suggestion regarding Kanam. If she permits you to take charge of him, do so. If you do, you should give up the kitchen work. You may give some help if necessary. Mix well with Nanavati. Talk less. Don't speak thoughtlessly. Never shout at anybody. Our servants are not mere servants. Treat them as your own little brothers and sisters. Cultivate cordial relations with Mirabehn. She is doing very good work at present.

Continue to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9370. Also C.W. 6645. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

536. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

March 31, 1938

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

How are you? Would you not regard Sushila's letter as coming from me? You yourself wrote that I should not write [myself], that a letter from Sushila or anyone else would suffice. If you steadied your mind you must soon get well. I am all

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right. The rest from Sushila's letter. You did well to have your tonsils removed.

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 398

537. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

March 31, 1938

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I got your letter. You will not receive any salary but I shall let you have time to read books on spirituality and so on. You will be posted nowhere but in Segaon. I see no inconvenience in your visiting your home once a year. I might send you to Wardha if any work comes up there. If you find these conditions acceptable, you may come over on the 15th April or even earlier depending on my reaching there. Remember, moreover, that my stay in Segaon is rather uncertain, although I shall certainly spend there the four months of the rainy season. Anyway, in Segaon you shall have ample *satsang*[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4290

538. LETTER TO SARASWATI

March 31, 1938

CHI. SARASWATI,

Ba and I were very sorry that you could not come, but what could be done? We have to live as God disposes, shouldn't we? I hope to send for you soon enough. Can you stand the heat? Will you keep up your studies? Reply promptly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6166. Also C.W. 3439. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Literally, company of good men

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539. INTERVIEW TO RAJA OF PARLAKIMEDI

BIRBOI,
March 31, 1938

The Raja Saheb[1] requested Gandhiji to enlighten him on the policy of the Congress with regard to the zamindari system.

Gandhiji who is observing silence owing to ill-health wrote the following on a slip of paper:

I am glad you have come. I wish I were speaking and well enough for a fairly long discussion. You are quite right in saying that I do not wish the extinction of old zamindaris. All Congressmen do not think so. The remedy lies in the hands of zamindar friends. How it is so, I have shown through the articles I have written. Nevertheless, if you so desire, I will gladly set apart some time to meet your friends. That cannot be in Calcutta. I am hardly in a fit state to cope with the work I have there. I can, therefore, only see you at Segaon when I reach there unless there is a breakdown in my health.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-4-1938

[1] Ex-Premier of Orissa

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGES[1]

1. Our public work should be carried on and State education should be given in the language of each linguistic area. This language should be the dominant language in that area. These Indian languages to be recognized officially for this purpose are: Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu), Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Assamese, Sindhi, and to some extent, Pushtu and Punjabi.

2. In the Hindustani-speaking area both Hindi and Urdu, with their scripts, should be officially recognized. Public notifications should be issued in both scripts. Either script might be used by a person in addressing a court or a public office, and he should not be called upon to supply a copy in the other script.

3. The medium of State instruction in the Hindustani area being Hindustani, both scripts will be recognized and used. Each pupil or his parents will make a choice of scripts. A pupil will not be compelled to learn both scripts but may be encouraged to do so in the secondary stage.

4. Hindustani (both scripts) will be recognized as the all-India language. As such it will be open to any person throughout India to address a court or public office in Hindustani (either script) without any obligation to give a copy in another script or language.

5. An attempt should be made to unify the Devanagari, Bengali, Gujarati and Marathi scripts and to produce a composite script suited to printing, typing and the use of modern mechanical devices.

6. The Sindhi script should be absorbed in the Urdu script which should be simplified, to the extent that is possible, and suited to printing, typing, etc.

7. The possibility of approximating the southern scripts to Devanagari should be explored. If that is not considered feasible, then an attempt should be made to have a common script for the southern languages—Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

8. It is not possible for us to think in terms of the Latin script for our languages, for the present at least, in spite of the various advantages which that script possesses. We must thus have two scripts: the composite Devanagari-Bengali-Gujarati-Marathi; and the Urdu-Sindhi; and if necessary, a

[1] *Vide* p. 7.

script for the southern languages, unless this can be approximated to the first.

9. The tendency for Hindi and Urdu in the Hindustani-speaking area to diverge and develop separately need not be viewed with alarm, nor should any obstruction be placed in the development of either. This is to some extent natural as new and more abstruse ideas come into the language. The development of either will enrich the language. There is bound to be an adjustment later on as world forces and nationalism press in this direction, and mass education will bring a measure of standardization and uniformity.

10. We should lay stress on the language (Hindi, Urdu, as well as the other Indian languages) looking to the masses and speaking in terms of them. Writers should write for the masses in simple language understood by them, and they should deal with problems affecting the masses. Courtly and affected style and flowery phrases should be discouraged and a simple, vigorous style developed. Apart from its other advantages, this will also lead to uniformity between Hindi and Urdu.

11. A Basic Hindustani should be evolved out of Hindustani on the lines of Basic English. This should be a simple language with very little grammar and a vocabulary of about a thousand words. It must be a complete language, good enough for all ordinary speech and writing, and yet within the framework of Hindustani and a stepping-stone for the further study of that language.

12. Apart from Basic Hindustani, we should fix upon scientific, technical, political and commercial words to be used in Hindustani (both Hindi and Urdu) as well as, if possible, in other Indian languages. Where necessary these words should be taken from foreign languages and bodily adopted. Lists of other words from our own languages should be made, so that in all technical and suchlike matters we might have a precise and uniform vocabulary.

13. The policy governing State education should be that education is to be given in the language of the student. In each linguistic area education from the primary to the university stage will be given in the language of the province. Even within a linguistic area, if there are a sufficient number of students whose mother tongue is some other Indian language, they will be entitled to receive primary education in their mother tongue, provided they are easily accessible from a convenient centre. It may also be possible, if the number is large enough, to give them secondary education also in the mother tongue, but all such students will have to take, as a compulsory subject, the language of the linguistic area they live in.

14. In the non-Hindustani-speaking areas, Basic Hindustani should be taught in the secondary stage, the script being left to the choice of the person concerned.

15. The medium of instruction for university education will be the

language of the linguistic area. Hindustani (either script) and a foreign language should be compulsory subjects. This compulsion of learning additional languages need not apply to higher technical courses, though a knowledge of languages is desirable even there.

16. Provision for teaching foreign languages, as well as our classical languages, should be made in our secondary schools, but the subjects should not be compulsory, except for certain special courses, or for preparation for the university stage.

17. Translations should be made of a considerable number of classical and modern works in foreign literatures into the Indian languages, so that our languages might develop contact with the cultural, literary and social movements in other countries, and gain strength thereby.

Harijan, 21-8-1937

APPENDIX II

THE KOTTAPATAM SUMMER SCHOOL[1]

While I was in Malaya I read a brief report in the papers of the Madras Government's ban on the Summer School at Kottapatam and the subsequent lathi charge on the students. Such a step would have been surprising and reprehensible even during the course of the civil disobedience movement. At the present moment it came as a shock to me. Since my return I have looked further into the matter and the sense of astonishment and shock has not lessened. This incident has illuminated, as by a flash of lightning, the real nature of the new Constitution and the way the Madras Ministry is functioning, for it is this Ministry that is obviously responsible for the steps taken. We see that this Ministry is as much a police ministry suppressing elementary rights of free speech and association as the previous Government was. We see what the new Act means to the people. The same intolerable state of affairs continues and all the soft words thrown out at us cannot stop the aggressive suppression of civil liberty or the use of the lathi on the bodies of our youth. The lathi remains still under the new Ministers as it was before the true symbol of Government.

Some other important considerations arise. The police reporters tried to force entry into the Summer School. Very rightly this was objected to. We have been giving facilities to police reporters at our public meetings but this does not mean that we admit their right to attend our committee meetings and summer schools and the like. This cannot be agreed to. Summer schools for the study of political and economic problems have been held in

[1] *Vide* pp. 24-5.

many places in India. This is a healthy development which I trust will continue, for only by study and discussions can we understand our problems and find the way to their solution.

Another question that arises is the right of an individual or group to refuse to obey an order which it considers objectionable. It is patent that civil disobedience having been suspended disobedience of orders is not desirable. Where such objectionable orders are made reference should immediately be made to superior committees for advice. But sometimes cases arise when immediate decisions have to be made and the burden of such decision must lie on the individual or group concerned and cannot commit the organization. I can conceive of instances of orders which are so derogatory to the dignity of the individual or of the Congress that the individual prefers to disobey them on his own responsibility. This has nothing to do with civil disobedience. It is the inherent right of an individual. This right however must be exercised with every care and so as not to injure the large purposes we have in view, and the individual must take the risk of being judged by the organization.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. I, p. 229

APPENDIX III

LETTER FROM G. CUNNINGHAM[1]

GOVERNOR'S CAMP,
NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE,
ABBOTTABAD,
August 17, 1937

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received a letter from His Excellency the Viceroy in which he has given me the gist of his talk with you on the 4th of August. His Excellency, I understood, told you that he believed there would be no objection to your paying a visit to the North-West Frontier Province, should you desire to do so. I have discussed this with my Ministers, and with their authority I write to inform you that there will be no objection to your visiting the Province. His Excellency, I know, told you that he felt it necessary to ask you to leave all affairs connected with the tribes severely alone during your visit; I understand that you accepted His Excellency's decision in this matter, and I know that you will scrupulously abide by this assurance.

Should there be an opportunity of our meeting, it will be a pleasure to me to renew the acquaintance we made when I was with Lord Halifax.

[1] *Vide* p. 68.

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The question of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, about which you also spoke to His Excellency, is still under consideration by the Ministry; I anticipate that a decision will be reached within the next day or two.

Yours sincerely,
G. CUNNINGHAM

M. K. GANDHI, ESQUIRE
SEGAON, WARDHA

From a copy: C.W. 7991a. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

APPENDIX IV

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION ON ANDAMANS PRISONERS[1]

The Working Committee has learnt with the deepest concern of the hunger-strike of hundreds of political prisoners in the Andaman Islands. The Committee has long been of opinion that the use of the Islands as a penal settlement, more especially for political prisoners, is barbarous. Official enquiries and reports have already condemned such use and non-official opinion has unanimously demanded that no prisoners be sent there. Repeated hunger-strikes by the political prisoners have demonstrated their desperation at the continuance of conditions which they cannot bear, and the present hunger-strike has brought matters to a head and grave consequences are feared. Public opinion all over India is agitated and strongly in favour of the release of the political prisoners there as they have already undergone many years of imprisonment under conditions which are far worse than those prevailing in Indian prisons. The Committee's attention has been drawn to the public statement issued by some ex-prisoners, who were till recently imprisoned in the Andaman Islands and have been now released, in which they have stated on their own behalf and on behalf of the other political prisoners there, their dissociation from and disapproval of the policy of terrorism. They have frankly stated that they have come to realize that such a policy is wrong and injurious to the national cause and they propose to have nothing to do with it. This statement has been confirmed from other sources also.

In view of all these circumstances the Committee is emphatically of opinion that the political prisoners in the Andamans should be discharged. The Committee is further of opinion that the non-political prisoners in the Andamans should be repatriated and the penal settlement in the islands closed. Any delay in taking adequate action is likely to lead to alarming consequences.

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

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The Committee appeals to the prisoners in the Andamans to give up their hunger-strike.

Congress Bulletin, No. 6, September 1937. File No. 4/15/37, Home, Political. Courtesy: National Archives of India

APPENDIX V

NOTES

"Sufficiently Acquainted"[1]

The very first question on which our Assembly Speakers may have to give their ruling will be what, in their opinion, is the meaning of "sufficient acquaintance" with English. For one of the most objectionable Sections of the Government of India Act, 1935, is Section 85, which reads:

> "All proceedings in the Legislature of a Province shall be conducted in the English language.
>
> Provided that the rules of procedure of the chamber or chambers, and the rules, if any, with respect to joint sittings, shall provide for enabling persons unacquainted, or not sufficiently acquainted, with the English language, to use another language."

The first part of the Section is eloquently emphatic of the fact that the Act was meant not for the millions unacquainted with the English language but for the very few acquainted with it. The insult to the millions is so obvious. The permissive proviso offers a kind of healing balm to the injury of the insult. In an Act framed by our own people the operative part of the Section would make the use of the language of the province or Hindi-Hindustani obligatory and the permissive proviso would be for the benefit of the unfortunate ones who might not know either the language of the province or the nation, and therefore must use "another language". That, of course, is by way of comment on the Section.

Those, however, who occupy the Speaker's chair cannot comment on the Section, they will have to interpret it for the members. A commentator of the Act has already anticipated a difficulty and says: "This is a facility (viz., the one offered by the proviso) not open to those who, knowing English, would, as a matter of national self-respect, insist upon using the vernacular language." We shall not quarrel with the commentator's own ignorance, here, of the correct use of the English language, or of the implications of "national self-respect". (Otherwise he would not have used the objectionable word "vernacular" and would have used the words "national language" or "the language of the province").

[1] *Vide* pp. 84-5.

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But apart from the question of "national self-respect" which is bound to be foreign to an Act, on the face of it so disrespectful, any commentator ought to address himself to the meaning of the words "sufficiently acquainted". Does "sufficient knowledge" mean a mere nodding acquaintance or even a working knowledge? Whilst the Speaker may not be guided by "national self-respect" and reverse the disrespectful spirit of the Act, he may certainly put a liberal interpretation on the proviso. "Sufficient" according to the Oxford Dictionary means "adequate, enough"; also "Competent, of adequate ability or resources"; and "adequate" means "proportionate to the requirements" of the case. Now what are the requirements here? Two, viz., that the member of the legislature may give adequate expression to all that he is filled with; and that the rest of the members understand all that he has to say. As regards the first of these requirements, does an ordinary knowledge of English enable one to express one's thoughts adequately? As I write this, I have before my mind's eye a vivid picture of a newly elected M. L. A. who had occasion to travel with Gandhiji some time ago. The M. L. A., as we found afterwards, had a double University degree, but lacked, if I may say without offence, the ability to express her thought either fully or correctly. She was exceptionally refined and cultured but she lacked this gift. She not only could not express herself fully or correctly, she failed to follow Gandhiji fully or correctly. Not knowing Section 85 of the Act, I said to myself, "Thank God she need not speak in the Assembly in English." But knowing the Section, I now ask, must she speak in English, because she is a double graduate and presumed to know English? I should think *not*. It should be open to our M. L. A.s to declare that it is not possible for them to express themselves adequately in English, or at any rate as well in English as they could in their own mother tongue. And this lady, in spite of her double degree, seemed to me to possess a right truthfully to make such a declaration. I am sure that there are many members who are in the same case as this sister.

Take now the second and equally important requirement of the case, viz., that the rest of the members should understand all that a member says. In Bombay, I am told, no less than twenty-two of the members of the Assembly do not know English at all. Are they to sit with their ears closed when a brother member addresses them in choice or indifferent English? The least they are entitled to, I think, is that whenever a member regarding himself as "sufficiently acquainted" with English speaks in English, he must also for the benefit of the non-English-knowing members explain the speech in the language of the province.

These two requirements of the case seem to me so obvious that any Speaker seeking to put a correct, not to say liberal, interpretation on the proviso is bound to have due regard to them.

Harijan, 31-7-1937

APPENDIX VI

K. F. NARIMAN'S STATEMENT[1]

I am grateful to Mahatma Gandhi and D. N. Bahadurji for having taken me into their confidence and shown me a copy of their findings and judgment in an inquiry made by them. I have studied them carefully and must accept them as findings arrived at by judges who were judges of my choice and whom I have the privilege of regarding as my friends. It is open to them to publish their judgment but they have generously offered not to publish it if I publicly declare that I am satisfied with their verdict. I accordingly do so and feel that in doing so I owe a statement to the public.

I am convinced that in the matter of the election of 1934 I neglected my duty as a responsible office-bearer of the Congress and gave some of my friends cause to feel that my neglect amounted to a grave breach of trust. In the matter of election of the leader of the Bombay Parliamentary Party in 1937, I am sorry to confess that I misjudged the general position and on the strength of the statement made by some of the legislators I felt a grievance which I allowed my friends and part of the Press to share with me. As a result, considerable bitterness was aroused and Sardar Vallabhbhai was even charged by a section of the Press with having acted through communal prejudice. I have publicly stated before and do so now that this charge was entirely unfounded and whatever the Sardar did or did not do, was from a sense of public duty. I am sorry that the agitation against Sardar should have taken a personal aspect and even a communal aspect and that I should have been the cause of taking up so much of the time of Mahatma Gandhi and Bahadurji over a grievance which the public have a right to say was more fancied than real.

Having said this I feel that I owe some kind of reparation to the public whom I have all these years claimed to serve. And in order that the confidence in me may be fully restored, I deliberately declare my intention not to seek on the expiry of my term of those offices re-election to all positions and places of trust that I now enjoy and my determination to serve the Congress and the public by being out of those offices in order that passions and bitterness may cease and peace and harmony may be restored.

The Hindustan Times, 17-10-1937

[1] *Vide* pp. 247-8. It is likely that this was originally drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* pp. 274-5.

APPENDIX VII

(*a*) *M. A. JINNAH'S SPEECH AT LUCKNOW*[1]

October 15, 1937

The Muslim League stands for full national democratic self-government for India. A great deal of capital is made as to phrases, more for the consumption of the ignorant and illiterate masses. Various phrases are used such as *purna swaraj*, self-government, complete independence, responsible government, substance of independence and dominion status. There are some who talk of complete independence. But it is no use having complete independence on your lips and the Government of India Act, 1935, in your hands. Those who talk of complete independence the most mean the least what it means. Was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in consonance with complete independence? Were the assurances that were required before the offices would be accepted and the provincial constitutions could be worked consistent with *purna* swaraj, and was the resolution, after the assurances were refused, accepting offices and working the Constitution enacted by the British Parliament and forced upon the people of India by the imperialistic power, in keeping with the policy and programme and the declarations of the Congress Party? Does wrecking mean working?

The present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Mussalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu, and since they have formed the governments in six provinces where they are in majority they have by their words, deeds and programmes shown more that the Mussalmans cannot expect any justice or fair play at their hands. Wherever they are in a majority and wherever it suited them, they refused to co-operate with the Muslim League Parties and demanded unconditional surrender and signing of their pledges. . . .

. . . Hindi is to be the national language of India and *Bandemataram* is to be the national song and is to be forced upon all. The Congress flag is to be obeyed and revered by all and sundry. On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus; only, the Congress masquerades under the name of nationalism whereas the Hindu Mahasabha does not mince words.

[1] *Vide* p. 257. Only extracts are reproduced here.

Here it will not be out of place to state that the responsibility of the British Government is no less in the disastrous consequences which may issue. It has been clearly demonstrated that the Governor and Governor-General who have been given the special powers and special responsibility to safeguard and protect the minorities under the Constitution which was made so much of by . . . the Secretary of State for India . . . have failed to use them and have thereby been a party to the flagrant breach of the spirit of the Constitution and the instrument of instructions in the matter of appointment of Muslim Ministers. On the contrary they have been a party to passing off men as Muslim Ministers by appointing them as such, though they know fully well that they do not command the confidence of the Muslim representatives or the public outside. . . .

The Congress High Command speaks in different voices. One opinion is that there is no such thing as Hindu-Muslim question and there is no such thing as minorities' question in the country. The other High Command opinion is that if a few crumbs are thrown to the Mussalmans in their present disorganized and helpless state you can manage them. . . .

The All-India Muslim League certainly and definitely stands to safeguard the rights and interests of the Mussalmans and other minorities effectively. That is its basic and conditional principle. The Congress attempt under the guise of establishing mass contact with the Mussalmans is calculated to divide and weaken and break the Mussalmans and is an effort to detach them from their accredited leaders. It is a dangerous move and it cannot mislead anyone. All such manoeuvres will not succeed notwithstanding the various blandishments, catchwords and slogans. . . .

Then he warned the Congress against the inadvisability of asking for a Constituent Assembly and admonished them to see that the All-India Federation Scheme embodied in the 1935 Act was not brought into being. He also warned the British empire against their attitude regarding Palestine and concluded by exhorting Mussalmans to fear nothing and to be true and loyal to stand by their decisions as one man.

The Indian Annual Register, 1937, Vol. II, pp. 403-5

(*b*) *LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH*[1]

November 5, 1937

DEAR MAHATMA GANDHI,

I have received your letter dated October 19, 1937, on my arrival here.

As regards publishing your letter from Teethal last May, I am of opinion that I was fully justified in doing so; but your letter means something different from what I understand it to mean. Surely, it was open to you to offer your explanation to the public. The letter was not marked as it is usual to do so when its publication is not desired by the writer, and my message to you was not private. Even now you do not indicate how I have misunderstood your attitude or the contents of that letter. You merely say "I felt deeply hurt over your misunderstanding my attitude".

I am sorry you think my speech at Lucknow is a declaration of war. It is purely in self-defence. Kindly read it again and try and understand it. Evidently, you have not been following the course of events of the last twelve months.

As to reserving you as a "bridge" and "peace-maker", don't you think your complete silence for all these months has identified you with the Congress leadership although I know that you are not even a four-anna member of that body?

In conclusion, I regret to say that I find nothing definite or any constructive proposal in your letter under reply, except that it is written in all good faith and out of an anguished heart, which I reciprocate.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH

The Hindustan Times, 16-6-1938

[1] *Vide* p. 257.

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APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

November 14, 1937

MY DEAR BAPU,

I have just read your article on the A. I. C. C. meeting. Regarding the Mysore resolution you have said that it was *ultra vires* of the A. I. C. C. If this was so then I had no business to permit discussion on it and should have banned it. I am not aware of any constitutional provision which leads to this result and only something in the nature of such a provision can bar a resolution moved in the ordinary way and supported by a majority of the A. I. C. C. Apart from the constitution itself, I am not aware of any previous decision of the Congress or the A. I. C. C. which lays down that such matters should not be considered. Even if there was some such resolution, I do not see how it could prevent the A. I. C. C. from considering a matter if it so chose, unless the resolution was embodied in a rule of practice. The A. I. C. C. is at complete liberty to consider a resolution which may go contrary to a previous resolution passed by itself. If however there is a rule of practice or procedure, this has to be acted upon till the A. I. C. C. does not alter it [*sic*]. There is no question of such a rule, but I do not even know of a resolution which lays down a policy which the Mysore resolution infringes. In statements issued by us in the past mention has been made that the Congress desires to follow a policy of non-intervention in the States. Those statements cannot bar the A. I. C. C. itself from intervening if it chooses. I cannot understand how the legal phrase, *ultra vires*, can be made to apply.

Another question arises, what is intervention? Is a mention of a State in a resolution intervention? Is a demand for civil liberties or a condemnation of repression, intervention? If so, the Congress itself has been guilty of it in specific and unequivocal terms during the last two years.

The Mysore resolution of the A. I. C. C. is very badly worded and, in any event, I did not want it to be passed by the A. I. C. C. just then. But my feelings have little to do with the matter. I have to act as the president of a democratic assembly. The resolution was one of condemnation of repression in Mysore. Are we to refrain from condemning repression in a State in future whatever the nature of this repression? If this repression consists in attacking the Congress itself, insulting our Flag, or banning our organization, are we to remain silent? These matters must be cleared up

[1] *Vide* pp. 292-3.

so that our office and our organization might know definitely what line we are to take up.

You have said that the A. I. C. C. should not have passed the resolution without at least hearing the other side. Do you think that it is feasible for us to appoint inquiry committees to go to States? Will the States agree? On several occasions I have suggested this to States—not a committee but just an individual to go there and inquire from both sides. They have invariably turned this down.

This Mysore matter has been going on for a long time. The Karnatak P. C. C. has taken some steps in the matter. Their secretary has had a long interview with the Dewan of Mysore. I have repeatedly written to the Dewan and put a large number of specific cases before him. He has replied at length without, in my opinion, justifying the State policy. For months past I have been restraining Congressmen in Mysore from indulging in any disobedience of orders and, in fact, no orders have been disobeyed, except by Nariman recently. The Karnatak P. C. C. ultimately considered the situation and condemned the policy of repression in Mysore and asked us for further directions as to what they should do. It is hardly correct therefore to say that the A. I. C. C. condemned anybody unheard or *ex parte*. We pursued all the ordinary avenues open to us.

I am writing all this to you as I want to be clear in my own mind what our policy is. You have censured the A. I. C. C. and me for the course we pursued. I have not yet understood how and where I am wrong and so long as I do not understand it, I can hardly act otherwise.

Yours affectionately,
JAWAHARLAL

MAHATMA GANDHI
WARDHA (C. P.)

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 254-6

APPENDIX IX

BENGAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMUNIQUE[1]

November 18, 1937[2]

During the last session of the Provincial Legislature the Government of Bengal declared its policy of progressive release of detenus as the situation improved, and also gave an assurance that where adequate guarantees of good behaviour were forthcoming, any special cases would be separately

[1] *Vide* pp. 303-5.
[2] From *The Statesman*, 19-11-1937

considered. In the then prevailing circumstances, Government considered that a wholesale release of over 2,000 detenus might lead to difficulties and possibly a recrudescence of violence. Their policy of progressive release was enunciated in the Assembly on August 9 and was approved by the Chamber. In pursuance of this policy a large number of persons have already been released and many others have been placed under modified forms of restriction.

There have since been observed definite indications of a change for the better in the general atmosphere. Recent pronouncements by certain leaders also show that they are exerting themselves to discredit methods of violence. Mr. Gandhi has also assured Government that he would do his best to improve the political situation in Bengal by preaching his cult of non-violence and creating public opinion in favour of it. He has also offered to meet detenus with the object of persuading them not to resort to or assist terrorism or other subversive activities in future. In consideration of these circumstances and on a review of the present situation, Government have decided to accelerate the release of the detenus or the removal of restrictions on them, and have therefore issued orders for the immediate release of about 1,100 detenus subject only to the requirement that changes of address be communicated.

As regards the remaining detenus, no more than 450 in number, a large portion of whom are in camps and jails, Government propose to take up their cases in the near future. Mr. Gandhi has offered to interview individual detenus, a task which he intends to undertake in about four months' time and for which Government will gladly afford him every facility. Government hopes then to be in a position to grant immediate release to those detenus in respect of whom Mr. Gandhi may be able to give Government satisfactory assurances after seeing the individual detenus. In the mean while Government will continue to consider relaxation in individual cases and, if such action appears to be justified, complete release.

It is hoped that the steady development of the policy now set forth will result in the ultimate solution of this perplexing and difficult problem. Its success must, however, depend on the co-operation of the public and the leaders of public opinion in maintaining an atmosphere in which subversive movements will find no encouragement. Government, who have throughout been most anxious to carry out the policy of release of detenus as rapidly as possible consistently with the public safety, cordially welcome Mr. Gandhi's offer of assistance in creating the favourable atmosphere that is essential for the success of this policy.

Harijan, 27-11-1937

APPENDIX X

(*a*) *LETTER FROM MAHADEV DESAI TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*[1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
November 19, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

Your letter of the 8th. I understand all that you say about Samuel's visit, and I am writing to Polak to say that you will gladly meet him if he desires to see you.

About Anupchand Shah's offer it was so good of you to have written to him about the existence of the Gandhi Seva Sangh. I am now writing to him.

Bapu would himself have replied to your letter of the 14th regarding his article[2] on the Mysore Resolution. But he was unable even to dictate his reply. He is so thoroughly washed out that the doctors think that it would be dangerous to allow him to exert himself. But I gave him the gist of your letter. He told me that he was clear that there was an infringement of the policy of non-intervention. He knows that the Congress has been guilty of intervention in the past, but he also knows that it was not proper, and he should not have written the article if he did not feel it imperative to cry a halt. He was glad you recognize that the resolution was badly worded and he is sure that if the other members of the Working Committee had taken care to invite your attention to the fact that the Resolution was *ultra vires*, you would have effectively prevented the speeches to the resolution which were much worse than the resolution itself. Bapu wants me to assure you that he never intended to censure you. You were immersed to the ears in work, and it was the duty of your colleagues on the W. C. to have drawn your attention. You are too good a disciplinarian to have disregarded their advice, but he feels that they failed in their duty.

This cold blunt language of mine fails to convey the feeling at the back of Bapu's mind. He was very deeply exercised over the resolution on the day of that breakdown[3] and he seemed to me to be in the same state as he was talking about the matter today. I stopped him and said I should convey to you what he thought about it as best as I could.

The blood-pressure has been behaving so erratically that the doctors think he ought not to be allowed to take liberties with himself. He wanted

[1] *Vide* p. 306.
[2] *Vide* pp. 292-3.
[3] On November 1

to go to Calcutta within a fortnight, but he himself recognizes that this is physically impossible. He has promised to stay in bed, at any rate until the pressure keeps steady for a fortnight or more.

Yours,
MAHADEV

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 248-9

(*b*) *LETTER FROM MAHADEV DESAI TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*[1]

MAGANWADI, WARDHA,
December 2, 1937

MY DEAR JAWAHARBHAI,

I have your letter of the 27th. It was a surprise to me that you had written at all, and all the greater surprise that you could write at such length. I appreciate all that you say. I simply did not inflict an argument on you as I assumed that you did not want an argument, but simply Bapu's opinion in the light of what you had urged in your letter.

There is no improvement in Bapu's condition and we are withholding all correspondence from him. But I decided that even in contravention of the doctors' orders I must read out your letter to Bapu. He was happy that I read it to him and if it had been at all possible for him to dictate a reply he would have done so. But it was out of the question and I must try to tell you in my own language what was at the back of his mind when he wrote that the Mysore Resolution was *ultra vires*. I wonder if you remember that Bapu said this very thing in the W. C. meeting too. (He had that impression and on asking Jamnalalji he corroborated him.) And he had trusted that the resolution would not be allowed. He was shocked when he found that it had been passed.

In your own letter you admit that the language of the resolution was bad. But I suppose you will say that does not make it illegal. Bapu thinks that it does, inasmuch as it appeals to the people of British India to give all possible help to the people of Mysore. If this does not go against the spirit and the letter of the Lucknow Resolution[2], what else does it do? The Lucknow Resolution was arrived at after a good deal of discussion and deliberation, and reflected the declaration of policy made by Rajendra Babu on 1-8-1935, and adopted by the A. I. C. C. on 17-10-1935. The relevant paragraph in this declaration was this: "It should be understood however that the responsibility and the burden of carrying on that struggle with the States must necessarily fall on the States people themselves. The Congress can exercise

[1] *Vide* p. 306.
[2] Passed at the Congress Session held in April 1936

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moral and friendly influence upon the States and this it is bound to do wherever possible. The Congress has no other power under existing circumstances, although the people of India whether under the British, the Princes or any other power are geographically and historically one and indivisible. In the heat of controversy the limitation of the Congress is often forgotten. Indeed any other policy will defeat the common purpose."

Now this declaration was but a reiteration of the policy that was being followed until then, and the Lucknow Resolution in laying down in the clearest possible terms that "the struggle for liberty within the States has, in the very nature of things, to be carried on by the people of the States themselves", gave that declaration the status of a Congress enactment. The sponsors of the Mysore Resolution forgot the self-imposed limitation of the Congress and went against the spirit of the long-accepted policy of the Congress.

I come now to your other question. You say: "Bapu also refers to a violation of truth and non-violence by the A. I. C. C. resolutions. These are grave charges and should be substantiated," and so on. Naturally, when you were writing this, Bapu's article was not before you. The resolution (Masani's) and the speeches were, he has said, "wide of the mark". He explains how they were wide of the mark, and then asks them "to study and take to heart what Jawaharlal Nehru has said in his elaborate statement on the matter." Then follows the sentence: "I am convinced that in their action the critics departed from truth and non-violence." This is said more with reference to the speeches than the resolution itself. You yourself had to pull up several speakers and ask them to confine themselves to principle and policy. "Many political prisoners had been released and bans lifted," said Mr. Masani, "but there are still some prisoners in the Congress provinces." Is that enough to prove that the Ministers were identifying themselves with Imperialism or they were as bad as Haqs and Sikandar Hayat Khans? Is it true to say that the whole armoury of repression remained, when the Moplah Outrages Act was repealed within two months of the Congress Ministers' accepting office? I will not refer to the other speeches.

As regards the Mysore resolution, Bapu was of opinion that it was untruthful to characterize the policy of the Mysore State as repressive, when we deliberately went there and defied the law. "Abominable repressive measures" and "keeping printed orders ready to be served on those who passed through the State" is not truthful language.

As to the rest of your letter, Bapu deeply appreciated all that you have to say. There can be no question of your accepting anything from Bapu because it came from Bapu, and discipline can never mean "a meek acceptance of one's own view of the matter [*sic*]."

I do not know whether you will have issued your statement to the Press ere this. But if you have not, perhaps you would alter in parts in the

light of this letter, of which or parts of which you may make whatever use you like—though of course it is my letter and not Bapu's and I am posting this without showing it to him. If you feel that the statement should go as it is, you are at liberty to release it—i.e. to say, you may say that you have had an unconvincing answer and that you must act in accordance with the dictates of your own mind.

Regarding violation of truth and non-violence as evidenced in the activities of some of our ministers, Bapu would like you to write frankly and fully, regardless of his recent state of health. For that violation, no matter where it comes from, has to be denounced and if our Ministers are really guilty of it they would deserve to be turned out.

He understands all you say about the Bengal affairs. Far from expecting you to get "wildly excited" over the releases, all he wanted you to say was whether the way he had interviewed the Governor and the Ministers on the question of the release of prisoners and detenus met with your approval or not.

Yours affectionately,
MAHADEV

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 260-2

APPENDIX XI

LETTER FROM K. NAZIMUDDIN[1]

Copy

WRITERS' BUILDINGS,
CALCUTTA,
November 24, 1937

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

Thanks very much for your letter. I am sorry to learn about your indisposition. I hope you will soon completely recover your health.

In our opinion your statement is very fair and we thank you for it. The wording of the Government communique is not perhaps very happy as far as the four months' period is concerned. It certainly brings out the Government's point of view, namely, that only after the end of four months the question of a large-scale release of the remaining detenus will be considered whereas it misleads the public in giving the impression that you will take up the question at the end of four months. But there is nothing in the communique to prevent your coming and interviewing these people before the expiry of four months.

In your letter you have asked that Mr. Sarat Bose should be allowed to carry on the conversation with the detenus in your absence. I

[1] *Vide* p. 309.

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would like to make it quite clear that my objection to this suggestion is not based on personal grounds but on the question of principle. Govt. treat you differently from all other political leaders in India and therefore neither your purpose nor Govt.'s object will be served by anyone else but your interviewing the detenus. After your visit to Hijli, Govt. allowed Dr. B. C. Roy and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to interview the State prisoners. Dr. Roy went there more in the capacity of a physician than a political leader and we made an exception for Mrs. Sarojini Naidu but as far as I am concerned I do not propose to allow any other political leader in future to interview the State prisoners.

I had presumed that personal touch between you and the individual detenu or State prisoner was necessary in order that you might be assured that the individual concerned had become a convinced adherent to the principles of non-violence, following upon a change of heart and as a matter of principle quite independently of personal or political advantage. It was a matter then not of bargaining between you. It was necessary for you of course to explain the principles of non-violence and persuade the subject to their acceptance. But so far as the prisoner was concerned, it was a matter of simple statement whether he had reached that position or not. This point of view has bearing on the question of the correspondence as well as that of interviews with the prisoners by persons other than yourself. We should not object to correspondence under sealed cover between you and any State prisoner or detenu provided that it is understood that such letters as you receive are shown to nobody else.

As long as I am Home Minister, you can rest assured that whatever may be the language of the communique everything that we agreed upon will —*insha-allah*—be given effect to provided nothing untoward happens in the mean time.

I agree with your explanation or amplification of the phrase "subversive movement". The only portion in the letter on which we differ is the reference to the convicted political prisoners. As you are aware we agreed to take certain steps in connection with the convicted political prisoners. I have issued instructions for action being taken on these lines but beyond this Government are not prepared to go.

I agree with what you have stated in your PS.

Repatriation will take place according to plan mentioned to you.

Yours sincerely,
K. NAZIMUDDIN

M. K. GANDHI, ESQ.
SEGAON, WARDHA

From a copy: Birla Papers. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

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APPENDIX XII

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

NEW DELHI,
February 15, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of the 3rd February 1938 which was re-directed here. I did not complain to the Maulana Sahib about the absence of any reply from you. I only mentioned the facts as he was anxious that we two should meet. Anyhow, I am glad to hear from you. My message to you through Mr. Kher, as I informed you in my last letter, was not private. It was only when Mr. Kher went to see you at Wardha that I did say that he should not mention the matter to anyone except you and that if you yourself were inclined in the first instance to take up the matter, then it will be more than half the battle won. On his return to Bombay Mr. Kher told me that it was difficult for you to give a reply as you were restricted not to disclose it to anyone or consult anybody else.

Thereupon I said that it was not intended to be a secret and that he was free and you were free to put your heads together and let me know whether at that juncture you were inclined to take up this matter with your powerful and overwhelming influence which you exercise over the Congress. Then he saw you again at Teethal and from that moment it ceased to be a private matter between two individuals: and he brought me your reply in writing which I had to publish because you know of the controversy between me and Babu Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the Press where it was sought to make out that I was putting every obstacle in the way of Hindu-Muslim settlement. As your letter was not marked confidential I used it. Besides, what is wrong in my saying that I had approached you on my own accord and that was a reply I received from you? I cannot understand why you feel so much about it. You say that I complained of your silence. Well, I do. But you further proceed to say, "Believe me the moment I can do something that can bring the two communities together, nothing in the world can prevent me from so doing." Now, what am I to gather from this? Am I right in interpreting that the moment is not come?

With regard to your opinion that my speech at the Lucknow session and my later pronouncements, which you are pleased to call a declaration of war, I can only repeat that it is in self-defence. Evidently, you are not acquainted with what is going on in the Congress Press—the amount of

[1] *Vide* pp. 349-50.

vilification, misrepresentation and falsehood that is daily spread about me—otherwise, I am sure, you would not blame me.

With regard to your saying that when in 1915 you returned from South Africa everybody spoke of me as one of the staunchest of nationalists and the hope of both the Hindus and Mussalmans, and you ask me a question, "Are you still the same Mr. Jinnah?" and proceed further to say, "If you say you are, in spite of your speeches I shall accept your word." And you say that in my speeches you miss the old nationalist. Do you think that you are justified in saying that? I would not like to say what people spoke of you in 1915 and what they speak and think of you today. Nationalism is not the monopoly of any single individual; and in these days it is very difficult to define it: but I don't wish to pursue this line of controversy any further.

You conclude by saying: "Lastly you want me to come forward with some proposal. What proposal can I make except to ask you on bended knees to be what I had thought you were. But the proposals to form the basis of unity between the two communities have surely got to come from you." I think you might have spared your appeal and need not have preached to me on your bended knees to be what you had thought I was. As regards the formation of proposals which would form the basis of unity, do you think that this can be done by correspondence? Surely, you know as much as I do what are the fundamental points in dispute. In my opinion it is as much up to you to suggest ways and means of tackling the problem. If you genuinely and sincerely desire and you feel that the moment has come for you to step in and with your position and influence you are prepared to take the matter up earnestly, I will not fail to render all the assistance I can.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

APPENDIX XIII

LETTER FROM M. A. JINNAH[1]

NEW DELHI,
March 3, 1938

DEAR MR. GANDHI,

I have received your letter of the 24th February, 1938. I am sorry for the delay in replying as I was not well. In your letter I missed the note of response, first whether you are of opinion that you see light now

[1] *Vide* p. 387.

and the moment has come, and secondly, if so, whether you are prepared to take the matter up in right earnest, and thirdly, I find that there is no change in your attitude and mentality when you say you would be guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as Dr. Ansari is no more. If you pursue this line you will be repeating the same tragedy as you did when you expressed your helplessness because Dr. Ansari, holding pronounced and die-hard views, did not agree and you had to say that although you were willing, but what could you do? This happened, as you know, before you went to the Round Table Conference. At the Round Table Conference the tragedy was repeated by you when you seemed to be willing to accept provisionally certain terms: but you there also expressed that you were helpless as the Hindus were unwilling and you, as a representative of the Congress, would have no objection, if the Hindus and Mussalmans came to an agreement.

We have reached a stage when no doubt should be left that you recognize the All-India Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organization of the Mussalmans of India and on the other hand you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is only on that basis that we can proceed further and devise machinery of approach.

Of course, I shall be glad to see you, although I shall be equally glad to see Pandit Jawaharlal or Mr. Bose, [as] you may desire. The matter as you know will not be clinched without reference again to you by either of them. Therefore, I will prefer to see you first. In any case, I am sorry to say that I cannot come to Segaon to see you before the 10th March. I have to go to Bombay and also I have fixed various other engagements of my tour. But we can fix up the time and place that may suit us both.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. JINNAH

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-6-1938

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CHRONOLOGY

(*August 1, 1937 — March 31, 1938*)

August 1: Gandhiji was at Segaon.

August 3: Left for Delhi.

August 4: Reached Delhi.
Had interview with Viceroy regarding question of lifting ban on Abdul Ghaffar Khan's entry into Frontier Province.

August 5: Reached Segaon.

August 11: Had discussion with D. K. Mehta and P. B. Gole.

August 12: Discussion with D. K. Mehta and P. B. Gole continued. In statement to Press repudiated *Bombay Sentinel* report on his interview with Viceroy.

On or after *August 16:* In telegram to Rabindranath Tagore stated that he would do his utmost to end crisis arising from Andamans prisoners' hunger-strike.

August 20: In statement to Press on Nariman-Sardar controversy invited evidence from witnesses.

Before *August 24:* Sent message to Travancore Women's conference, Quilon.

August 27: Through telegram appealed to Andamans prisoners to abandon hunger-strike.

August 29: All but seven Andamans prisoners suspended hunger-strike.

August 31: Releasing to Press his correspondence with Andamans prisoners, Gandhiji expressed hope that they would be discharged unconditionally.

September 1: Received news of Chhotelal Jain's suicide; paid tribute to him through *Harijan.*

September 3: Sent telegram urging Andamans political prisoners to give up hunger-strike.

September 8: Telegraphed another appeal to Andamans prisoners.
Wrote to Viceroy regarding Andamans prisoners.
Sent message to Tiruchengodu Taluk Political Conference.

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Before *September 11:* Had discussion with Ravishankar Shukla, Owen, De Silva and other educationists.

September 11: In telegram urged Andamans prisoners to "end national anxiety by suspending strike".

Before September 13: Gave interview to William B. Benton.

September 14: Telegraphed Nilratan Sarkar to keep him informed about Rabindranath Tagore's health.

September 15: In statment to Press appealed to Government for release of Andamans prisoners.
Met Justice Madgaonkar.

Before *September 24:* Sent message to Karnataka Unification League, Belgaum.
Andamans prisoners suspended hunger-strike.

September 25: Gandhiji issued appeal in *Harijan* for flood-relief in Orissa.

October 1: Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram calendar celebrated.

October 2: On his 69th birthday Gandhiji sent message to Friends of India Society, London.

October 6: Acknowledged birthday greetings through Press.

October 14: D. N. Bahadurji visited Segaon with his judgement on Nariman-Sardar case. Gandhiji wrote concurring note on it.

October 16: Issued statement to Press on Nariman-Sardar case.

October 17: In statement to Press appealed to Andamans prisoners not to resort to hunger-strike.
Paid tribute in *Harijan* to Manilal Kothari.

October 22: At Wardha presided over Educational Conference.
Met Acharya P. C. Ray.

Before *October 23:* Sent message to Shop Assistants' Conference.

October 23: Spoke at Educational Conference.

October 25: Left Segaon.

October 26: Arrived in Calcutta in morning.
Attended Congress Working Committee meeting in afternoon.
Met Rabindranath Tagore and discussed communal tension in Bengal.

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October 27: C. W. C. meeting continued.
Gandhiji had discussion with Bengal Premier and three of his ministers about release of detenus and Andamans prisoners.

October 28: Met N. R. Sarkar.
C. W. C. issued statement on "Vandemataram".

October 29: Gandhiji gave interview to deputation of political sufferers from Bengal and Punjab.

October 30: Met Andamans prisoners in Alipore Central Jail.

November 1: Issued statement to Press on negotiations for release of Andamans prisoners.
On medical advice cancelled departure for Wardha.

November 2: C. W. C. passed resolution on Nariman-Sardar case and released it to Press.

November 4: Gandhiji postponed Frontier tour and informed Abdul Ghaffar Khan through telegram.

November 7: Had discussion with ex-detenus in evening.

November 9: Had interview with Governor at Barrackpore in afternoon.
Gave statement to Press.

November 11: Met N. R. Sarkar in morning.

November 12: Met internees from Deoli in Presidency Jail.

November 16: Had discussion with Fazlul Huq, Khwaja Nazimuddin, B. P. Singh Roy, Nawab Habibullah of Dacca, H. S. Suhrawardy and N. R. Sarkar in afternoon.

November 17: Met Sir George Campbell and Arthur Moore in morning.
Continued discussion with Khwaja Nazimuddin, N. R. Sarkar and B. P. Singh Roy.
Left Calcutta at 12.50 p.m.
Reached Kharagpur at 4 p. m.
At 5 p. m. visited Hijli Detention Camp.
In Interview to 'United Press' declined to comment on his negotiations with Bengal Government.

November 18: Arrived in Wardha in evening.

November 21: Issued statement to Press on Bengal Government's communique.

November 27: Wrote Foreword to *Acharya Kripalanina Lekho*.

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December 6: Left Segaon for Bombay on medical advice.

December 7: Reached Bombay; stayed at Juhu.

December 14: Met Aga Khan and his son.

December 21: Met Maharaja of Rewa.

1938

January 2 and 3: Had discussions with Congress Working Committee.

January 5: Had discussion with Rajendra Prasad.

January 7: Met C. Rajagopalachari.
Gave interview to Press at Victoria Terminus Station before departure from Bombay in evening.

January 8: Reached Segaon.

January 10: Saruprani Nehru died.
Gandhiji telegraphed condolence to Jawaharlal Nehru.

January 11: Sent telegram to political prisoners in Punjab jail to give up hunger-strike.

January 14: Through Press issued appeal to Punjab prisoners to abandon hunger-strike.

Before *January 15:* Had discussion with Dr. Zilliacus and other members of New Education Fellowship Delegation.

January 18 to 20: Had discussion with Lord Lothian.
Gave message for "Lord Lothian and Responsible Statesmen".

January 23: Sent telegram welcoming Subhas Chandra Bose on his arrival at Karachi from London.

January 24: Had discussion with B. C. Roy and N. R. Sarkar.

February 2: Had discussion with Subhas Chandra Bose.

February 3 to 5: Attended Congress Working Committee which met at Wardha.

On or before *February 8:* Had discussion with John De Boer.

February 8: Left Segaon for Congress session at Haripura.

February 9: Arrived in Haripura.
Offered condolences to Lakshmibai, widow of N. M. Khare.

February 10: Opened Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition.

February 11: Addressed sanitation volunteers.

February 12: Visited exhibition.

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February 13: Visited exhibition pertaining to cattle-breeding and dairy-keeping.

February 15: Gave interview to Amin, General Secretary of East African Indian Delegation.
Addressed volunteers.
Bihar and U. P. Ministries resigned.

February 16: Gandhiji spoke at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition.
Issued statement to Press on Ministerial crisis.

February 17: Had interview with Tushar Kanti Ghosh.

Before *February 18:* Drafted resolution on resignation of Ministries.

February 18: Congress Working Committee discussed resolution on resignations.
Gandhiji gave interviews to *The Daily Herald* and *The Times.*

February 19: Attended Congress session.

February 20: Through letter to Shamlal urged Punjab prisoners to abandon hunger-strike.

February 21: Congress session concluded.

February 22: Gandhiji addressed volunteers.
Governor-General issued statement on resignations of Ministries.

February 23: Gandhiji reached Segaon.
Issued statement to Press in reply to Governor-General's statement.

February 24: Invited M. A. Jinnah for personal discussion.

On or before *March 4:* Through telegram to Shamlal congratulated Punjab prisoners on their decision to give up hunger-strike.

March 4: Met Shantikumar Morarjee and Gaganvihari Mehta.

March 8: Wrote to M. A. Jinnah agreeing to meet him in Bombay.

March 11 and 12: Had discussion with Vallabhbhai Patel.

March 15: Left Segaon.

March 16: Arrived in Calcutta in morning.

March 18: Met Vernon Bartlett of *News Chronicle.*
Talked with Harijan members of Bengal legislature.

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Had discussion with Khwaja Nazimuddin from 2 p. m. to 5.25 p. m.

March 19: Had discussion with Subhas Chandra Bose and Abul Kalam Azad.
Met Krishak Proja Party members in afternoon.

March 20: Met leader of Independent Praja Party.
Had discussion with Bengal Congress leaders.
Met Khwaja Nazimuddin at 3 p. m.

March 22: Met Governor regarding release of political prisoners.
Met Rabindranath Tagore in evening.
Wrote article on Allahabad riots asking Congressmen to analyse their non-violence and urging them to "put forth a non-violent army of volunteers".

March 23: Met Lord Bishop of Calcutta in evening.

March 24: Wrote Foreword to *The Sayings of Muhammad.*
Issued appeal to public and political prisoners for restraint while negotiations for release were going on.
Left Calcutta at 8 p. m.

March 25: Arrived in Delang.
Addressed fourth annual session of Gandhi Seva Sangh.
Opened Gandhi Seva Sangh Exhibition.

March 26: Spoke at Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting.

March 27: At Gandhi Seva Sangh spoke on resolution regarding methods to be adopted to counteract communal riots.

March 28: Addressed Gandhi Seva Sangh.
Kasturba, Durga Desai and others visited temple at Puri.

March 29: High Priest of Puri called on Gandhiji.
Gandhiji presided at Council of All-India Spinners' Association in evening.

March 30: At Gandhi Seva Sangh spoke on Kasturba's visit to Puri Temple.

On or before *March 31:* Gave interview to Press on appointment of Acting Governors in provinces.

March 31: Gave interview to Raja of Parlakimedi.

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ERRATA

PAGE	FOR	READ
1 Item 2, line 6	find [anything] against	find against
57 * Line 7	Even	Even so,
94 * Post Script	Lakshmi Ramman	Lakshmi Ammal
198 * Paragraph 2, line 1	minutes	merits
348 * Item 440, paragraph 3, line 2	Jamnadas	Jamnalal

* Due correction made.

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