THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXII

(1945-1946)

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VOLUME EIGHTY-TWO

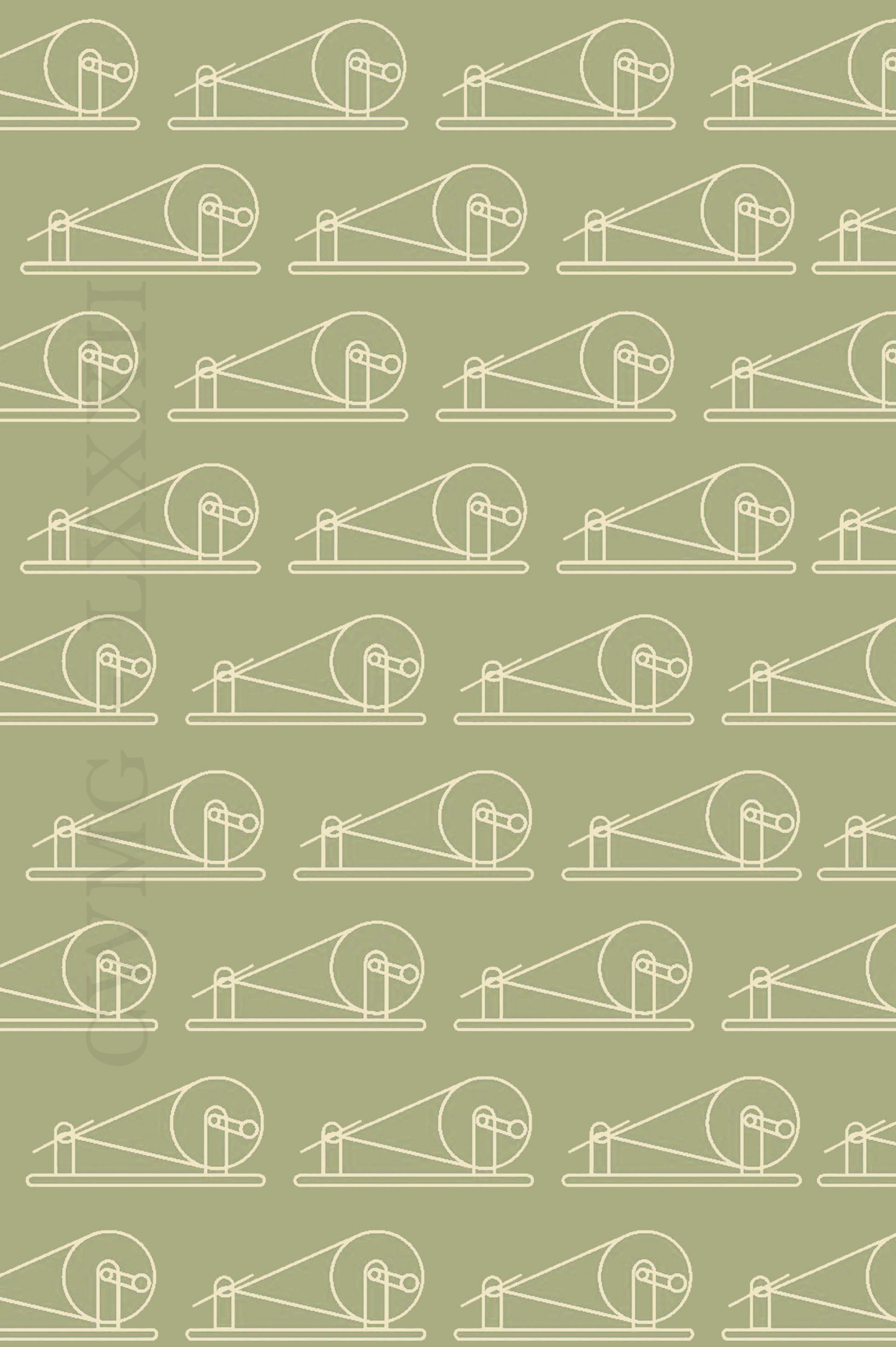


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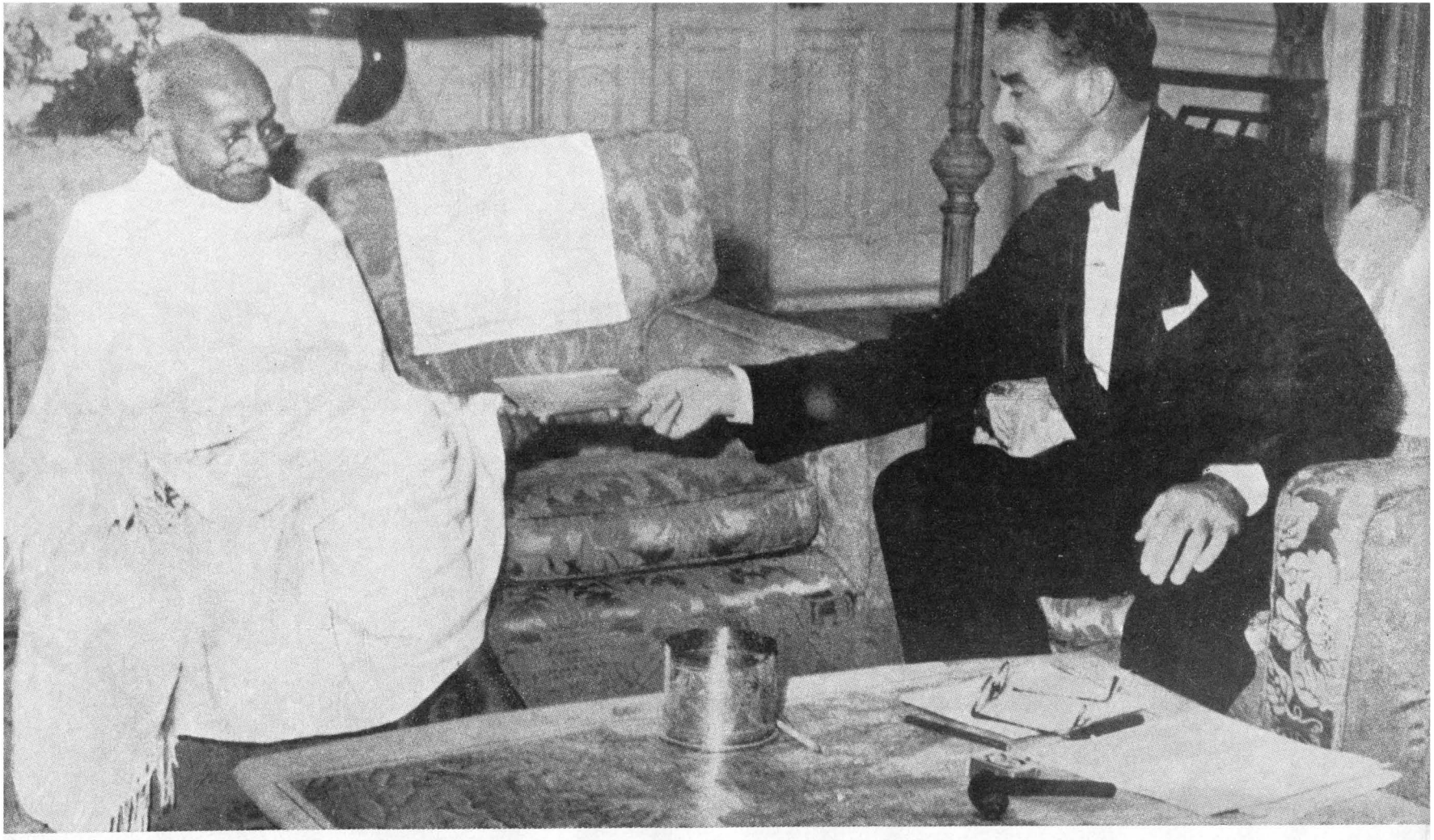


THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

LXXXII

(November 1, 1945 – January 19, 1946)

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WITH GOVERNOR R. G. CASEY IN CALCUTTA

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THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
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PREFACE

The period covered by the present volume (November 1, 1945—January 19, 1946) was one marked by expectation and anxiety, as much for the rulers as for the country. Political activity, in so far as it concerned the masses, revolved round the elections to the Central Assembly and provincial legislatures, being held in pursuance of the programme announced by the Viceroy in September. The elections were to be followed by the setting up of a constitution-making body, in which the Muslim League might or might not co-operate. This body in turn would work out a constitutional frame-work for a free India, which again the League might or might not accept. British constitutional experts were consequently busy throughout the period (as the documents in *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, reveal) devising alternative formulæ that would stand some chance with Jinnah, whom they felt they must appease.

One thing was quite clear: the British could not any longer go on governing India as of old. Things were fast getting out of their hands and they lived in fear of a mass uprising. Field Marshal Auchinleck gave it as his opinion that should such an eventuality present itself "nothing short of an organized campaign for the reconquest of India" would suffice. In Calcutta on November 21 and 23 police had to open fire no less than 14 times to disperse anti-Government demonstrations, killing 30 and wounding some 200 people.

Economic distress all over the country was on the increase. There was shortage of food, especially in Bombay, Bengal, Bihar and U. P. Extensive areas in Bengal were further suffering from the ravages of floods and pestilence (p. 275). For much of the time covered by the volume—seven weeks to be precise—Gandhiji was in Bengal, providing "whatever consolation his presence in their midst could give to the victims of . . . famine" and doing "whatever he could to relieve their distress" (p. 149). In a series of meetings with Governor Casey he deliberated on ways and means to bring relief to the suffering masses. He commended the Governor's idea of harnessing river waters that went waste, but pointed out that it was a long-term proposition. "The millions, meanwhile, must be taught to utilize every minute of the working hours . . ." (p. 182). To this end he

proposed a khadi scheme, to be worked by the Government in co-operation with workers engaged in constructive programme, that would "bring almost immediate individual relief to the crores by occupying their admitted leisure hours" (p. 201), for, as he pointed out, the question was one of utilizing waste labour, as under the Governor's scheme it was one of utilizing waste water (p. 202).

It was this waste labour that Gandhiji wanted to see harnessed for the constructive programme, which he felt strongly was "the truthful and non-violent way of winning *poorna* swaraj. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence" (p. 67).

He also took up with the Governor the case of political prisoners languishing in Bengal jails "all of them having undergone sentences above ten and most of them above fifteen years" (p. 215) and of untried detenus, "detained only on one-sided secret evidence" and pressed for their discharge. He even took time off to pay a visit to some of these prisoners lodged in the Alipore and Dumdum jails. Then there were grievances involving official high-handedness—for instance the delay in restoring back to the inhabitants twenty-eight out of the ninety-eight villages acquired for war purposes in the Feni taluka (p. 382), the behaviour of some soldiers going berserk and indulging in plunder, arson and rape (p. 387), non-availability of seed potatoes to farmers, and so on. These grievances called for immediate redressal, for which Gandhiji sought the Governor's intervention. Gandhiji had as many as six meetings with Casey at Government House and "each night," the latter reported to the Viceroy, "his departure was remarkable in that probably 150 of our servants (Muslim and Hindu) lined the passages and the entrance to the house, to see him—all salaaming profusely" (*TOP*, VI, p. 617). Gandhiji also took advantage of the Viceroy's visit to Bengal to see him on December 10.

But by far the largest share of Gandhiji's time in Bengal was claimed by the masses whom he met every day at the evening prayer, by political and social workers, and above all by those engaged in constructive work. At prayer meetings and other public gatherings, attended by thousands upon thousands, he exhorted the people to be calm, peaceful and disciplined (pp. 221, 248, 276 and ff.), to ply the charkha and adopt khadi (pp. 248, 276, 297, 332, and ff.) to be fearless (p. 256) and have faith in God. "We are engulfed in darkness today," he said at one of the gatherings, "our prayer today to God is to lead us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth, and let us

have peace—peace not only for India but for the entire world'' (pp. 156-7).

The *Harijan* weeklies continued to be under suspension during the period and Gandhiji's writing was confined for the most part to answering the innumerable letters he received. Thus, of the 599 items in the volume, letters, notes and telegrams alone account for 493, while reports of speeches, interviews, talks and discussions make up another 72. Some of these letters are to the Viceroy's Private Secretaries, Jenkins and afterwards Abell, and they dealt with such themes as the ill-treatment of political prisoners—Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Rammanohar Lohia and Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi—in jails (pp. 35, 114-5, 180 and 227), the commutation of death sentences on certain freedom fighters (pp. 28, 36, 113) clearance for a medical mission from the Congress to Burma and Malaya, which the Government refused to grant (pp. 378-9) and the alleged incitement to violence by Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders of the Congress. This charge was the subject of much correspondence between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and there were rumours that these leaders might be arrested. Strongly defending Nehru Gandhiji wrote to Jenkins that the doctrine of ''forget and forgive'' could only apply ''to the excesses of a soldiery in action but surely not to inexcusable butchery, inhumanity, bribery, corruption and the like . . . if the Government's hands are clean they have nothing to fear from publicity'' (p. 68).

He was also in correspondence with the Viceroy concerning the trial of ex-soldiers of the I. N. A. and when a ''garbled version of one of his letters found its way into the press he was concerned, for, he told Jenkins, ''whatever influence I exercise is purely moral, whether with the people or with the Government'' (p. 6).

Organizational problems connected with the work of the Charkha Sangh and the Kasturba Nidhi demanded much of Gandhiji's attention at the time (pp. 31, 37, 52, 232, 261 and ff.). The problem had become somewhat complicated because quite a few of the workers had been persuaded, either by themselves or by others, that they should contest elections to the Assemblies. Gandhiji was quite clear that those engaged in constructive work should keep themselves aloof from active politics. They could not do two things at the same time. ''A Charkha Sangh worker,'' he wrote, ''will remain a true voter and will vote for the candidate put up by the Congress but he will not bother to canvass for him. He will not deliver

speeches supporting him. . . . How can a man ride two horses at the same time? One who joins the Charkha Sangh should devote himself wholly to its activities . . .'' (p. 19).

Gandhiji's interest in and involvement with nature cure had continued to grow. ''What lay dormant for years'' had ''awakened without any effort on my part. How can I resist it?'' (p. 93) he wrote in a letter. At the time his chief preoccupation in this area was to make the nature cure clinic at Uruli Kanchan an institution for the poor. ''From January 1,'' he wrote to Dinshaw Mehta, ''it should become an institution for the poor and cease to be one for the rich . . . . From the 1st January let the rich come after the poor are accommodated but only if they can live as the poor'' (p. 75). Gandhiji went into minute details of the working of the institution—accommodation, sanitation, book-keeping, sign-board, and so on. In a letter to Munnalal Shah he wrote: ''I was not unaware that meat, even beef, is cooked in the kitchen there. . . . You need not get alarmed and run away. It should be enough that you yourself do not eat either meat or beef. But you cannot prevent others from doing so'' (p. 207).

The individual as a person had of course always been of supreme importance to Gandhiji. As he said: ''those who make mistakes with individuals cannot make much success with causes; for the latter are never apart from individuals'' (p. 95). Consequently a large number of letters are concerned with personal problems of correspondents—with regard to work, to interpersonal relationships and so on. There were misunderstandings between Munnalal Shah and his wife and between Sharma and Gadodia that needed to be cleared up (pp. 110, 194). To a woman correspondent he gives hints on walking: ''It will be good if you give up the habit of walking about as you read. It spoils the eyesight and sometimes thoughts also wander . . . the eyes have to look around and take note of the surroundings and watch out for any obstructions in one's way'' (p. 84). He advises yet another correspondent on humility: ''Greatness lies in becoming small and smallness in assuming greatness. We should therefore only serve by becoming as small as dust particles'' (p. 176).

There are reflections on art and music and sociocultural questions. Rejecting the doctrine of art for art's sake and echoing Tolstoy he wrote to Munshi: ''It has always seemed to me a terrible thought that the end of art is for it to be made interesting. Leaving aside debauchery, even hypocrisy, violence and untruth can easily be made interesting'' (p. 9).

At Santiniketan, where Gandhiji spent a couple of days he had this to say on the music there: "Music in Santiniketan is charming, but has the professor there come to the conclusion that Bengali music is the last word in that direction? Has Hindustani music . . . anything to give to the world of music? If it has, it should have its due place at Santiniketan. Indeed I would go so far as to say that Western music which has made immense strides should also blend with the Indian" (p. 251). He also felt that the music of life was in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. "Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity?" (p. 251)

On Arya Samaj Gandhiji reiterated the views he had expressed on earlier occasions. "There is much in the Arya Samaj," he wrote, "that I love, but I just cannot accept *Satyarthaprakash* as scripture . . . Hinduism, it seems to me, is already assimilating all that is good in the Arya Samaj, and this is the distinctive feature of Hinduism" (p. 11).

On terrorism as political behaviour Gandhiji admitted of no compromise. He told Ian Stephens: "I have discussed this question of violence threadbare with so many terrorists and anarchists. It is terrible whether the Arab does it or the Jew. It is a bad outlook for the world if this spirit of violence takes hold of the mass mind. Ultimately in destroying itself it destroys the race" (p. 151).

His faith in non-violence he affirmed in a resolution he drafted for the Congress Working Committee that met in Calcutta. Referring to the spontaneous uprising of the people in 1942 it said: " . . . the policy of non-violence adopted in 1920 by the Congress continues unabated, and . . . such non-violence does not include burning of public property, cutting of telegraph wires, derailing of trains and intimidation" (pp. 200-1).

Gandhiji's incessant quest for truth finds expression in the volume is some further reflections. To Pilate's question there is no simple answer and Gandhiji says: "I write the truth as I see it. Absolute truth alone is God. It is beyond reach. At the most we can say it is *neti*, *neti*. The truth that we see is relative, many-sided, plural and is the whole truth for a given time. There is no scope for vanity in it and the only way of reaching it is through ahimsa. Pure and absolute truth should be our ideal. We can reach the ideal only by constantly meditating on it, and reaching it is attaining *moksha*" (pp. 39-40). Such a quest calls for faith, and here Gandhiji has this to say:

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"Faith becomes lame when it ventures into matters pertaining to reason. Its field begins where reason's ends. Conclusions based on faith are unshakable whereas those based on reason are liable to be unstable and vulnerable to superior logic. To state the limitation of science is not to belittle it. We cannot do without either—each in its own place" (p. 368).

The pursuit of truth also called for detachment. Asked how he managed to keep fit, Gandhiji answered that in a large measure "it is due to the practice of detachment of mind. By detachment I mean that you must not worry whether the desired result follows from your action or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct. Really it means that things will come right in the end if you take care of the means and leave the rest to Him" (p. 152).

Equally he thought it important not to be too much tied up with the past. What if the British Government in 1942 instead of co-operating with the Congress chose to thwart it? He refused to shed any tears over it—for that was past—and he advised the people to do the same. The present was enough to claim their energy and attention (p. 314). The same idea is expressed in "A Thought for the Day". "The past belongs to us but we do not belong to the past. We belong to the present. We are makers of the future, but we do not belong to the future" (p. 443).

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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.

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

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

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

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1. TELEGRAM TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

POONA,
November 1, 1945

PRABHUDAYAL
C/O KAKA KALELKAR
OPPOSITE MAHILASHRAM
WARDHA

YOU CAN COME.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 11672

2. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

November 1, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I send you without correcting the letter that Chi. Arun[1] has written. I talked to him and so did Kanu[2] and Abha[3], but he refuses to budge. I showed him your letter despite your wish to the contrary, for I did not wish to stop him if he showed the slightest desire. The fact is that he likes it here very much. The discipline here is strict but it does not irk him. Please, therefore, console everybody there and tell them that they must celebrate the Diwali without Arun. On my part I take as much care as I can of his studies. Aminbhai teaches him drawing with great affection. He plays and eats and is in high spirits all the time. He is deeply attached to Kanu.

Manu[4] gives me the massage and Sushila[5] sprays me. All my requirements are looked after well and you need not therefore come here for my sake. There is nothing to worry about.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4964

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Kanu Gandhi, son of Narandas Gandhi
[3] Wife of Kanu Gandhi
[4] Manu Gandhi
[5] Sushila Nayyar

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3. LETTER TO MAGANLAL P. MEHTA

November 1, 1945

CHI. MAGAN[1],

Herewith a letter from Chi. Champa[2]. On reading it I feel that you ought to go to Rajkot immediately and render her whatever help you can. If you feel you must have advice from someone you trust, you may seek it in Rajkot. If you wish to take an adviser along from Bombay, you may do so. I have already written[3] to Champa that I could give no help from here. Return Champa's letter after reading it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

4. LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI

November 1, 1945

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

The character sketch you have given of Sardar is good but how is it that I don't find Mahadev in it? If you can think of Sardar without Manibehn, only then can you think of him without Mahadev. Is it merely due to oversight? Or is there art in leaving out Mahadev?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Son of Dr. Pranjivandas J. Mehta for long a close associate of Gandhiji
[2] Wife of Ratilal Mehta, the addressee's elder brother
[3] *Vide* Vol. LXXXI, p. 335.

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5. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

November 1, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

I have your letter. What more shall I say about your health? The sooner you go somewhere for rest the better it will be for the country.

You have sent three names for the Working Committee. It will be better if in this matter you consult the present members and then announce the names. I have an impression that the Congress will have to meet some time soon. In that case will it not be better if the vacancies are filled by fresh elections? But if they have to be filled now, I think the three names that you have sent are all right. However, the members will be the best judges.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
19-A, BALLYGUNJE CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

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

6. LETTER TO DESHPANDE

November 1, 1945

BHAI DESHPANDE,

I have been told that those who take part in *prabhatpheri* speak ill of Shri Bhopatkar[1]. Find out about this. If they speak ill of any leader try to stop them. What is the good of doing this? I see the harm clearly. So long as they are in the Congress no one should speak ill of others.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] L. B. Bhopatkar, General Secretary, All-India Hindu Mahasabha

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7. LETTER TO MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

November 1, 1945

PANDITJI,

I have had your book[1] read out to me from beginning to end. These days while I spin I have a friend read out to me some book which I think is worth reading. I am disappointed with your book. From what you had said I had expected that I would learn something new from it and at the same time some light would be thrown on the Hindu-Muslim question. Right from my childhood I have lived with Muslims and when I went to London Providence placed me in close association with Christians, Muslims and Parsis. Hindus of course were there. I came into contact with the intellectuals among them and that is how I read the holy books of all the four religions. I came to the conclusion that we could know the true facts about any religion only after reading its sacred books. I also read quite a few criticisms of them. I can say that I have also read the Muslim critics you mention in your letter. I had a talk with Muslims in South Africa about those books and also with an Englishman who had become Muslim. After coming here I read the works of Maulana Shibli. As a result I have realized that every religion contains both truth and untruth. The root of all religions is one and it is pure and all of them have sprung from the same source, hence all are equal. This equality of all religions has been included by Vinoba among the eleven vows in a Marathi *sloka*, which is daily recited in the prayers.

Non-violence, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya*, non-possession, body-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness on all occasions, equal respect for all religions, swadeshi and *sparshabhavana*[2] these eleven vows should be observed in a spirit of humility.[3]

[1] *Vide* also Vol. LXXXI, p. 410.

[2] Refusal to treat anybody as untouchable

[3] अहिंसा, सत्य, अस्तेय, ब्रह्मचर्य, असंग्रह।
शरीरश्रम, अस्वाद, सर्वत्र भय वर्जन।
सर्वधर्म समानत्व, स्वदेशी स्पर्शभावना।
ही एकादश सेवावी नम्रत्वे व्रत निश्चये।

Vide also Vol. LXI, p. 38.

I am trying to live in accordance with this and so are my associates.

As it is, the letter has become quite long but since you have taken so much trouble and have also sent to me extra copies of your book, I felt I should at least let you know my stand.

I do not wish to argue with you. I have an answer to what you have suggested but I see no need to give it here. I therefore think that what I have said is enough.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

8. *LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN*

November 1, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB[1],

I have your English letter. Why did you write in English?

I have received the printed constitution you have sent. I have gone through it. Though great pains have been taken in drafting it, I have doubts about its usefulness. I feel that if we all become one at heart, it will be easy to frame a constitution. In my view it is well-nigh impossible to achieve unity through a constitution. This is what I think.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

NAWAB ALLAMA MASHRIKI SAHEB
ICHHRA, LAHORE

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

9. *LETTER TO SHAMALDAS GANDHI*

[After *November 1, 1945*][2]

CHI. SHAMALDAS,

I have your letter. I have already written that it[3] might have been due to oversight. Now I understand. But such haste

[1] Leader of the Khaksars, a communal para-military organization

[2] From the reference to Gandhiji's earlier letter to the addressee; *vide* p. 2.

[3] Absence of reference to Mahadev

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is unpardonable. Always remember rashness is madness. You did know about his birthday[1]. If you did not, it is a grave offence.

I had thought you were a skilled journalist but you don't seem to be one. In a well-organized office, blocks of photographs are always kept ready. And so also most of the write-ups. Have a look at the special issue of *Janmabhoomi*. It is very good.

"VANDEMATARAM" KARYALAYA
BOMBAY

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

10. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 2, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN[2],

I wonder whether you have seen the enclosed[3] which I saw yesterday. His Excellency should know that this garbled version of my letter[4] in question is not of my doing. I believe that the few workers in my office are too faithful to give out anything without my permission, which could not be given for the simple reason that whatever influence I exercise is purely moral, whether with the people or with the Government. And that influence loses in effect by premature publication. I know that there is nothing confidential in what I have written to His Excellency. But it is not meant for the public until the several results contemplated by the correspondence take place or His Excellency desires otherwise.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure: 2

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 42

[1] Vallabhbhai Patel's birthday on October 31

[2] Private Secretary to the Viceroy

[3] Press clippings containing reports that Gandhiji had approached the Viceroy about the INA prisoners awaiting trial before a Court Martial.

[4] Presumably the reference is to Gandhiji's letter to the Viceroy dated October 19, 1945.

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11. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

POONA,
November 2, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Of course you can't forget me. Your post has been coming regularly. And it gives me all the information I want.

Good Shummy[1] gives me news about you and the family, forbidding me to write in reply. I have taken him at his word.

Pyarelal is quite well and has also commenced some work. I entertain the hope that he will settle down to work.

Sardar returns tomorrow from Bombay.

My programme, D.V., is : Leave here 19, Bombay 20, Sevagram 21 to 29, entrain for Calcutta 30 morning, reaching Calcutta 1st December.

Gomati[2] has been suffering from fever of long duration, now Chhaganlal Gandhi is laid up. Poor Kashi[3]!

I am well. No worry on my account.

You must keep well. Love to your party and the friends there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4171. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7807

[1] Lt.-Col. Shumshere Singh, addressee's brother
[2] Kishorelal Mashruwala's wife
[3] Chhaganlal Gandhi's wife

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12. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
POONA,
November 2, 1945

MY DEAR BHARATAN,

I had your letter yesterday.

You have given a cautious and judicious opinion on Bhailal's[1] project. That is not what I wanted exactly from you. Did I tell you that I lent him your book[2] in typescript, which you gave me to read for my foreword, and he cock-suredly told me that his scheme was exactly in conformity with your thesis? I said to him, and I repeat it now, that if I have understood your thesis correctly, his project is quite contrary to the letter and the spirit of your thesis. The rule of thumb that I applied was to know whether his scheme would succeed if it was multiplied to the extent of covering 700,000 villages. And my answer was it could not succeed within a measurable distance of time. This fundamental objection is apart from the fact that he, a tried engineer and therefore an accurate man, has dared to build his scheme largely on his calculation that people will do this and that and the other thing will come true. If what I have said is true and really flows from your book, as it does from my instinctive belief, you have to say so in black and white. If my argument is sound, the way to amend your opinion is to supplement what you have given already by adding that, according to your book as interpreted by you, the project is bound to fail in terms of the millions, and is likely to fail even within the limited compass, because he has built largely upon speculations, a thing which a tried engineer should never do. Did you also notice that his project contemplates a mill[3] split up into fragments, owned by the villagers or one intelligent villager? Just think what it means. It must resolve itself into one gigantic State-owned mill or mills centrally situated. In other words, 700,000 villages must be

[1] Bhailalbhai Patel, an enthusiast of rural development through application of modern technology; he later became leader of the Swatantra Party in Gujarat. *Vide* also "Letter to Bhailalbhai Patel", 26-12-1945.

[2] *Capitalism, Socialism or Villagism?*

[3] Flour mill

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converted into 700 or 70 cities. In still other words, a large portion of the population must die of starvation, famine and the like or be cut to pieces by the sword or blown up by gunpowder.

Love.

BAPU

SHRI BHARATAN KUMARAPPA
C/O SETH SHOORJI VALLABHDAS
CUTCH CASTLE, OPP. SANDHURST BRIDGE
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

13. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 2, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

I think I have told you that I observe silence while spinning. I do listen, though not to what people say. Valjibhai therefore reads things to me. In this manner I heard the whole of your speech at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan[1]. I liked what you said regarding my resignation.[2] I was glad, too, that you had firmly expressed your views regarding the national language. But I feel that what you have said about writers is not correct. I would let the thing pass if the views expressed were not harmful. If I have not heard right, please correct me. I have understood your view to be this : that if a writer can make his art interesting he has fulfilled himself. It has always seemed to me a terrible thought that the end of art is for it to be made interesting. Leaving aside debauchery, even hypocrisy, violence and untruth can easily be made interesting. Would such writing be called art? On your recommendation I read *Prithivivallabh*[3]. According to me it owes its popularity not to the interest it sustains but to the meaning it contains. Besides, you have beautifully blended the beautiful languages descended from Sanskrit. But, as you have not been able to forget that history[4], can you, as a historian,

[1] Held at Udaipur which was presided over by the addressee

[2] Gandhiji resigned from the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan on July 25, 1945, as the Sammelan could not commit itself to Gandhiji's policy that the national language should neither be Persianized nor Sanskritized but should be harmonized under the name Hindustani and should be written in both Devanagari and Persian scripts.

[3] A historical novel by the addressee

[4] Of Gujarat

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forget the whole of Muslim history? Even if you can do so, can you make the whole of India forget it? Can you reverse the flow of water and make it go upward? After the British have left, will it be possible to wipe all the consequences of the British connection off history?

I have placed these two ideas before you with some hesitation, for I do not regard myself either as an expert on art or as a student of history. I, however, felt it was my duty to place before you the experience I have gained as, with my eyes open, I have wandered around the world. I realize, of course, that the principle which I have followed in this very letter in welcoming your views regarding the national language might equally well apply to your ideas on these two subjects.

I liked your Press statement correcting the article which appeared in The *Chronicle*. I had been considering asking you about it, when I read your reply. What is this confusion regarding Jawaharlal's letter? Or is it just a concoction?

From Gujarati : C.W. 7690. Courtesy : K. M. Munshi

14. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

November 2, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

Your questions are very good. This much is clear to me : whether public institutions have members of different religious persuasions or not, members belonging to the majority communities cannot celebrate their festivals in a manner which would hurt the religious sentiments of others. The Ganapati festival, and such others, are entirely of a political character and have nothing to do with religion. We cannot, therefore, celebrate them. But celebrations which are part of religious practice must be observed. For instance, in the Ashram Imam Saheb used to give, at my instance and request, the call to the faithful and we used to pray. The call is an essential practice in Islam. It is believed to be superior to the Church bell of the Christians. I think I have now answered your question regarding public institutions. If I have left out any point, please ask again.

It is not easy to answer the question what should be done now regarding Hindu practices. It is very easy for me to describe what I myself do. And I am also quite clear in my mind about the correctness of what I do. But I am not so clear how far

the Hindu community should go or which reforms to advocate even in the face of opposition from it. Probably Kishorelal remembers—as I do, if I am not imagining it—that he had once suggested the omission from our prayers of the verses referring to Ganapati, Saraswati and the Earth. I could not accept this. I know that the form of Saraswati described in the verse is purely imaginary. The Ganapati also is an imaginary figure and stands merely for "*Aum*". But the popular beliefs about both take the descriptions literally; hence we have the images of Saraswati and Ganapati. If, therefore, we were to eliminate all these practices, Hinduism would be transformed into something quite different; it would, you might say, take the form of the Arya Samaj. There is much in the Arya Samaj that I love, but I just cannot accept *Satyarthaprakash* as scripture. Dayananda Saraswati was a great man and he believed in what he preached. He did, therefore, make an impact. Hinduism, it seems to me, is already assimilating all that is good in the Arya Samaj, and this is the distinctive feature of Hinduism. I do not wish to go, or take you, into still deeper waters just now. If I am destined to live up to 125 years or for many more years still and if my non-attachment becomes as deep as I wish it to become, my views will become clearer and firmer and I will also find a language that appeals to the heart. Till that time arrives, be content with this prosaic explanation that I have given. I have of course always expressed, and will continue to express, random views from time to time as occasion demands. And this will some day lead—if it is so destined—to perfect clearness. At present my attitude is, *neti*, *neti*[1]. You may derive what comfort you can from this. I am unhappy that I am not able to answer your questions as clearly as you have put them.

I have stated my view regarding the Ganapati festival. I will add this :

1. Wherever there is a Ganapati temple, the *arati*, etc., should continue to be performed for the present. There is room for reform in the *arati* and the ceremonial. *The arati* as it is performed at present is crude. There is no music in it. It can easily be made musical and sweet to the ear. The ceremonial also can be made more solemn by employing a better priest.

2. There is no religion at all in the Dussehra celebration. Its only sanction is custom. I have always been opposed to it since my childhood. Even if we wish to equip the people with

[1] "Not this, not this".

arms, the Dussehra celebration has no meaning. Instead of worship of arms, the people, including even children, should be taught the use of arms, as is done in the West.

3. Plying the charkha on the Charkha Jayanti Day amounts to ceremonial worship of it. To introduce into it a ritual is to bring the charkha into disrepute. If you ask me why, when they spin, I permit them to have a lamp with ghee during broad daylight, my answer will be that in a large measure it is due to my sense of tolerance, also to my weakness. I have always opposed the ceremonial worship of the *Gita* or the manner in which Gita Jayanti is celebrated at present. I have also forbidden the composing of a hymn in praise of the *Gita* to be recited on the Gita Jayanti Day.

4. I do not approve of any leader's photograph being worshipped or of *arati* being performed in front of it, but I have not always opposed these things publicly though I did oppose them in my mind. Since such worship of human beings runs in the blood of Hindus, I have remained indifferent to them. In this matter I am the greatest culprit, as it is the worship of my image that has become most widespread. Since it cannot be prevented, do what I will, I derived a kind of false consolation when the worship of other leaders also started. This, of course, does not mitigate my guilt. It is very difficult to say where this thing will take us. There is some basis of truth in this practice, namely, that man himself being, in a sense, an image, he will always remain an image-worshipper. The forms of such worship will vary for different faiths, but in essence the thing remains image-worship.

5. You may be sure I am opposed to the practice of inviting Brahmins and breaking a coconut at a foundation-stone-laying. And yet I have tolerated this. But since the time I learnt to regard all of us as belonging to one class, namely, the *Atishudras*, all these rituals have taken a different form in my mind. The new form[1] was first put to use on the occasion of the marriage of Tendulkar and Indu. It is a long time since then, but I have seen no defect in the practice. On the day itself the new form seemed very impressive indeed.

Vanu[2] is getting along very well. If the clinic[3] continues in existence, she will complete one full year here. She will lose nothing. On the contrary, I believe she will gain something. I

[1] Marriage according to the Ashram rites
[2] Vanamala, addressee's daughter
[3] Nature Cure Clinic, Poona

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do feel sorry that I am not able to give her as much attention as I should like to but my preoccupations have become so serious even here and I have to husband my time so carefully that I have no leisure left for anything else.

Sardar will return tomorrow. Dinshaw is with him. He is returning today.

It is some days since Pyarelal's fever subsided. The weakness too, is gradually going. My heart is there all the time and urges me to hurry back. But my sense of dharma keeps me here. I will know more after Sardar's return.

How is Babla[1] getting on? Is Mani[2] with you or at the Ashram? Is she all right? Has Durgabehn[3] recovered?

How will Kishorelal[4] be able to stand the Sevagram winter ? But where else can he go in Gomati's[5] present condition ? Think over this. In any event you can keep the room warm with a brazier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9138b

15. LETTER TO SURENDRA B. MASHRUWALA

November 2, 1945

CHI. SURENDRA,

I have your letter. I felt relieved reading it. Since you will be there till I come I shall be less worried about Gomatibehn. Sushilabehn[6] expressed her readiness to go over for her sake but I did not think it necessary to relieve her from her work here till I had more information. I knew before I got your letter that medicines had been discontinued and I was happy. The final date for my arrival there is 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM

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

[1] Narayan Desai, son of Mahadev Desai
[2] Addressee's wife
[3] Durga Desai, widow of Mahadev Desai
[4] & [5] Kishorelal G. Mashruwala and his wife
[6] Dr. Sushila Nayyar

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16. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA KILLAWALA

November 2, 1945

BHAI RAMCHANDRA,

I have your letter. Only those who knew the two men should engage in any agitation on their behalf. Then alone will it be seemly. Maulana Saheb and the Congress are doing their utmost for the release of all detenus. You should be satisfied with that.

If you send a brief but full statement of the facts about the two, I will not hesitate to do what I can. That either you yourself or someone who knows them should send the facts to the Press is certainly one way.

Blessings from
BAPU

RAMCHANDRA KILLAWALA
22 RAM MANDIR ROAD
VILE PARLE

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

17. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER

November 2, 1945

CHI. KAILAS,

I have your letter. I must admit that I am disappointed in you. Prabhudas praised you sky-high. I literally believed him and strongly recommended to the secretary of the Ashram that you be admitted, but you did not prove worthy of that praise. You caused anxiety. It will be good if you have settled down even now. Prabhudas's mother is almost an invalid, though she has her wits about her. His father is bed-ridden. If you had remained there as his daughter how much less I should have had to worry ? As long as you do not cultivate true devotion to service, as long as you have not controlled your palate and have not learnt to treat all children as your own, I do not see how you can do justice to the kindergarten. It is more difficult to run a

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kindergarten than to run a school for grown-up children. Very few realize this. Kindergartens are the vogue these days. 'What is there in teaching the children?' There are many who nurture such ignorance. I hope you are not a victim of it. This letter is not to dissuade you from gaining some kindergarten experience but I feel it would be desirable if you served Kashibehn to supplement your experience. Show this letter to Shantabehn. Do what you think right.

Think of the number of mistakes you have made in writing down a small *sloka*. Your Devanagari writing is not at all well formed. What did you expect to gain by citing a *sloka* like that? How nice it would have been if you had given the Gujarati meaning of the *sloka* provided you had understood it. Your Gujarati handwriting also invites comment. Even your own signature is not well formed. And you drag it right to the edge of the paper. The letters are so badly formed that I am returning the letter for you to see.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

18. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

POONA,
November 2, 1945

BHAI ATULANAND,

I have your letter and also the book. I am reading it. I shall soon write to you again. Have you finished *Call it Politics*[1]? You do follow Hindi, don't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 1485. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

[1] The title is given in English in the source.

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19. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

November 2, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I got your letter only yesterday. It could have arrived only yesterday. By the time this reaches you, you will have left for Bengal. Fix the meeting of the Charkha Sangh for the 27th or 28th.

About the letter from Sialkot I shall send an article. So I do not write separately.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

20. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN DUBE

November 2, 1945

BHAI RAMNARAYAN DUBE,

I have your letter. It is all right that you are sending your book but please give up the thought of dedicating it to me. If the book has power, that itself will be true dedication. I cannot say that I shall be able to read your book carefully. Maybe it will arouse my interest when I glance through it.

As for meeting me, you can think of it when I have settled down at Sevagram.

RAMNARAYAN DUBE
C/O PANDIT RAMNARAYAN MISHRA
KAL BHAIRON, BANARAS

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

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21. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

[Before *November 3, 1945*] [1]

Mahuva is said to be a health resort. The harbour therefore should suit you.

I have an impression that there are facilities for education in Mahuva. At one time Dudhabhai was running a school for Harijans there and the attendance too was pretty good. Find out and tell me whether it still continues.

You have gone to a place where there is much scope for service. The people there are bigoted. Hence very few wear khadi. You may find an odd person here and there wearing it. It is as good as a virgin field. Besides, being an important part of the State, we can see its influence.

Do as much as you can and keep writing to me. I have an impression that Raichandbhai's son also stays there. It is not that he has followed Raichandbhai's profession. He used to write to me and his ideas are good. Do not go looking for him. It may be you will hear about him.

Sardar has gone to Bombay for five days. One misses him when he is away. He is so full of humour and so sociable.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Ba Bapuni Shili Chhayaman, p. 234

22. THE CHARKHA SANGH AND POLITICS

A khadi worker has sent the above letter[2] to Jajuji, Secretary of the Charkha Sangh. He has forwarded it to me to discuss it in *Khadi Jagat* and to give my opinion on it. The Charkha Sangh is not a small organization. Even today the workers or the

[1] From the reference to Vallabhbhai Patel who returned from Bombay on November 3, 1945.

[2] Not reproduced here. The correspondent had suggested that workers of the Charkha Sangh might be permitted to take part in the election activities in their spare time.

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servants—whatever you call them—of the Sangh are to be found all over India. Their number is about 3,000. I consider this a small number. Their number should increase considerably when khadi spreads in the country. Even if we have one worker for every village, the number of workers on the rolls of the Charkha Sangh should be 700,000. This requires a lot of money. But from this one should not conclude that it is impossible to have so many workers. I have never believed that. When the cause is good and there is a spirit of service among the workers the money is always found. I have founded and conducted institutions all my life. In my experience there has not been a single institution which was closed down or which could not make progress for want of money. On the contrary I have found that some institutions ceased functioning or could not make progress for want of workers. You should not ask how, if not on the strength of money, big factories function and recruitment to the Government offices is made. Those who do not understand fully what I have said above, raise such doubts. I never said that money could serve no purpose. If money served no purpose how could we have become its slaves? I would go to the extent of saying that without money we cannot go ahead. But what I want to say is that if we want to become slaves of money we should give up the idea of serving the people. And it is the lot of slaves to be suppressed. If however we consider money as our slave and use it as a means and that too for rendering service, then we are making good use of it. For the work of service, our first and indispensable need is workers and when we have such workers money will come chasing them. They will not have to go in search of money. That is why I say that if we get seven lakh or even more workers we may take it as though we had the money in the safe. It may be said that we do not pay enough to tempt or attract workers. I admit it. But it is only the spirit that matters. Those who join such philanthropic institutions as the Charkha Sangh do so for the sake of service and not for salaries. They do take monthly salaries because like the rich the poor too have to feed themselves, but they do so only to keep themselves alive and fit for service. Such workers do not eat or drink or dress merely for pleasure.

If we assume that such are the workers of the Charkha Sangh then they do not have any time to take part in politics. The Charkha Sangh cannot function at all if the workers devote eight hours to office work and spend the rest of the time in pleasure or otherwise. Because they are the people who will make

or mar the Sangh. Therefore they should devote their spare time to making themselves more competent for improving its activities, such as learning all the processes of khadi-making, studying its science, and doing well all that they do.

This does not mean that the workers of the Charkha Sangh have no interest in politics or other activities. They are and should be interested in such activities. However, they should keep that interest in check and give expression to it through their work in the Charkha Sangh. Then only can they understand true politics. A Charkha Sangh worker will remain a true voter and will vote for the candidate put up by the Congress but he will not bother to canvass for him. He will not deliver speeches supporting him. He will not devote his time to such work. Congress work is peoples' work. The Congress belongs to the people. The Charkha Sangh has been created by the Congress and the Charkha Sangh also belongs to the people. Just as political work is Congress work the Sangh work is also Congress work. How can a man ride two horses at the same time? One who joins the Charkha Sangh should devote himself wholly to its activities and one who joins politics should devote his entire time to politics. In this way both supplement each other's work. What I said above is at the back of the rule that the workers of Charkha Sangh should not take active part in politics.

POONA, *November 3, 1945*

[From Hindi]
Khadi Jagat, December, 1945

23. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
November 3, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

It is not right that you have not written to me at all recently. I was to reply to your other questions only after I had received your reply to my suggestion, and that is still so.

Kanchan is on fire. Who else but you can quench that fire? Even if you released her, she would not marry anybody else. And she is not one to satisfy her passion through illicit relations with somebody. And yet passion is burning her up. She does not know the value of *brahmacharya*. She has married to gratify her passion. You did not tell her about the condition

of *brahmacharya* when marrying her. Is it not your dharma, now, to satisfy her? If you were completely free from passion, I would have had nothing to tell you. After giving Kanchan the gift of children you may observe *brahmacharya*, or you should calm her not with anger but with pure love. You should look after Kishorelal, Gomati, Chhaganlal and Borde, and so also should Kanchan. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8428. Also C.W. 5601. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

24. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

November 3, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I have your letter. I feel sorry for you, and equally sorry for Munnalal. I have written to him and told him in so many words that he should set up house with you and that, if the two of you cannot voluntarily observe self-control, you may have children. However, if he cannot bring himself to agree to this I cannot force him against his will. You should, therefore, remain calm. Show this to Munnalal. If he refuses to change his mind you should leave the matter to God and engross yourself in work. For the present I should like you, if your health permits, to look after Gomatibehn, as also the others who are ill. We shall discuss the question of your accompanying me when I come. You had wanted to accompany me to Madras. Now you suggest both Madras and Bengal. That will have to be thought over. We shall do so when I arrive there. Meanwhile you should remain calm, get well and serve as much as you can. You are a fine worker. Let service be your husband, your hobby, your all. But if that cannot be, it does not matter. In any case do not think one thing and speak another.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8260. Also C.W. 6985. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

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25. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

November 3, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

You too have fallen ill. What is to be done when even a warrior falls ill? Get well soon. Ask without the slightest hesitation for whatever services you need.

I hope Kashi[1] is well.

If you are not able to write, let Kashi write.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9224. Courtesy : Chhaganlal Gandhi

26. TELEGRAM TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

POONA,
November 4, 1945

JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

YOUR TWO WIRES ANNOUNCING BIRTH OF SON TO MADALASA. HOPE MOTHER BABY PROGRESSING WELL.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 264

27. LETTER TO PRESTON GROVER

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD,
POONA,
November 4, 1945

DEAR GROVER,

The Press man in you speaks again. I entirely agree with you that my statement, whether it grips or not, has undoubtedly

[1] Wife of the addressee

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a world of meaning in it. You shall have it some time for yourself, even if not for the Press. I am quite clear in my mind that neither the public nor the Press are eagerly waiting for my speech or my action. Therefore, let me take my time, untrammelled by outside considerations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PRESTON GROVER, ESQ.
ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA
TIMES OF INDIA BLDG.
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

28. LETTER TO MADALASA

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

You are now the mother of two sons. Janakibehn is so delighted that she sent me two telegrams. Were it not for her wire, I would not have known. I sent a wire[1] in reply, which she must have received.

I got your letter and was pleased to read it. When I return from the tour, you may take me to your place.

It is very good indeed that your mother-in-law is with you. I hope both of you are well.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 326

29. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I wonder whether you know it, but Kishorelal and Gomatibehn are getting weaker and weaker. The cold of Sevagram does not suit them. They shrink from asking for anybody's

[1] *Vide* p. 21.

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services. Gomatibehn is actually ill. She is suffering from some kind of typhoid. The constant fever has now come down a little. We trust and hope that it will come down to normal. But it will take some time for her to leave the sick-bed, and it will be quite a while before she is able to look after herself. She would not accept the services of anyone who may offer them, and if they can help it, neither of them would accept anybody's services. I would like it if someone were to stay with them now and look after them. There is no question as to whether they will like it, for I have not heard of their having ever complained to anyone about not getting any service. But wouldn't my heart complain? If, therefore, you can get away from there and go to Sevagram, and if your health permits you to look after them, I think it would be the best arrangement. In that case you will also have to cancel your plan of accompanying me to Calcutta. I believe it will be February by the time I finish touring and return to the Ashram. By that time, winter will be over and we may hope that both of them will have got well. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 21st. I should like both of you to go to Sevagram before then. I think it necessary for Manilal to accompany me on my tour, not to look after me but to gain experience which might help him in his work and to get to know people. He, therefore, will not be there all the time. Arun will certainly accompany me to Sevagram. One cannot say what progress he will make in studies, but I think he is showing himself to be a good servant. He has taken to Kanu and, therefore, he is bound to learn to serve. Hence he also will help. Besides, if both of you agree of your own accord, not for my sake, to let Arun stay and grow up in the Ashram, as he now says he would like to do, he will study and also acquire practical wisdom. Moreover, he has now become friends with Aminbhai, who is a learned man, and stays in the Ashram. Probably you do not know him. Manilal is certain to know him. He is an artist like you, but a much better one. Arun has already started learning from him. And Aminbhai says that if he were given two years' time Arun would learn much more here than he would by joining even the best of schools. This may perhaps be too optimistic a view. But what difference does it make to us? It is a fact that his company is beneficial. My purpose in writing all this about Arun is to tell you that he has the spirit of service in him and that, since he will be with you in the Ashram, you will not get bored there. Kishorelal and Gomatibehn will thus have the benefit of your service without any hardship

to you. If they feel that you are likely to suffer in any way by staying there to look after them, they are not the type who will put up with it. Let me add too that Kashi also is tired out. She cannot work much now. And Chhaganlal is on sickbed. He has continuous fever. If it turns out to be as prolonged as Gomatibehn's, he also will require to be looked after. I believe, therefore, that it will be good if you are in the Ashram for his sake at any rate. I have thus put before you what I believe to be your duty. Both of you may think over this and do what you consider right. If your presence there is not essential, both of you should at once leave for the Ashram. You may write to me from there and tell me what you intend to do. Ila[1] will be with you, of course. But my impression about her is that she is not likely to be a burden on anybody. And, moreover, she cannot stay without you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4965

30. LETTER TO ANASUYA SARABHAI

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. Is there any Divali? Who will celebrate it? Are you all right? How is Shankerlal[2]? I am well. There is so far no visible improvement in Sardar's health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : G.N. 11564

[1] Addressee's youngest daughter
[2] Shankerlal Banker

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31. LETTER TO GAJANAN NAIK

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. GAJANAN,

I have your letter. I am glad to read it. You will be able to do real service only if you assimilate the lesson I imparted to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

GAJANAN NAIK
AKHIL BHARATIYA GRAMODYOG SANGH
MAGANWADI, WARDHA

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

32. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. JANAKI MAIYA,

Your joy must have added a cubit to your stature. You will have had my telegram[1]. Now you must give up all attachments and look after Jamnalal's work of cow-protection. You must become an expert in that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5852

[1] *Vide* p. 21.

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33. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
November 4, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

Dinshaw has had a talk with your brothers. As a result he is not keen any more about going to Nasik.[1] So you may proceed on the assumption that the Nasik idea has been given up. About the building we may continue along the present lines. If I find that Dinshaw still wishes to go to Nasik, I shall have a talk with him. We shall see if any building or land is available then.

We shall all reach Bombay on the 19th. I shall leave Bombay for Wardha on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 8074. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

34. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHOWDHARY

November 4, 1945

CHI. MANORANJAN CHOWDHARY,

I have your telegram. I am not taking any interest in the elections.[2] As I know very little about the matter, I have not sent a telegram. But why are you standing against a Congress candidate? In a way you also belong to the Congress. Congress is not an enemy of the Hindus. It is a different thing if the Congress candidate is bad. In that case I should like you to tell me. From the newspapers I find that the Hindu Mahasabha has made it their dharma to oppose Congress candidates everywhere. If that is so, this action of yours too will be dharma and not the opposite of it. Sir Radhakrishnan in his speech at Karachi has given an account of what the members of the Hindu Mahasabha are doing in Sind. Everyone, and especially you, should see

[1] *Vide* also "Statement to the Press", 21-11-1945.

[2] Elections to the Provincial Assemblies were scheduled to be held in the winter of 1945-46 and to the Central Assembly before the new budget.

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it. If all that he has said and all that I have been hearing is true, it will save neither the Hindu dharma nor India. For persons like you it is very necessary to think over all this. I showed your telegram to Sardar also. He returned from Bombay last night. He was also pained to see the telegram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MANORANJAN CHOWDHARY
143/3 NO. UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

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

35. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 5, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I thank you for your letter[1] of 1st instant informing me of the action taken on my letter of 29th ultimo on khadi.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 70

36. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

POONA,
November 5, 1945

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your postcard. My congratulations to the spinners. If you have not sent the figures of yarn to Narandas, at Rajkot, please do so. Instead of incurring expense in sending the money, use it there itself for Harijan work.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9521. Also C.W. 440. Courtesy : Shivabhai G. Patel

[1] It read : "I have shown His Excellency your letter of 29th October about the exemption of khadi shops from the Provincial controls against hoarding and profiteering. The letter is being passed on to the Industries and Civil Supplies Department, who will inform the Provincial Authorities of your views."

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37. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 6, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

A copy of the petition sent to His Excellency on behalf of Shri Basuda Singh of Fyzabad District has been sent to me for seeking Government sympathy. From the petition, I gather that it is a case of political hue, belonging to the 1942 disturbances period. It easily falls under the principle that guided His Excellency's decision in the Ashti-Chimur[1] cases. May I therefore ask for the usual commutation of the death sentence[2]?

May I also ask for an early consideration of the case by reason of the fact that the period for execution has been fixed for 19th instant?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 56

38. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. Why do you lose heart? I will reach Sevagram on the 21st. If you come then it will be fine. I shall make whatever arrangements I find necessary. Do not run away even if it gets too cold. As for illness, it is the lot of the human body. We have to learn to bear it cheerfully. That itself brings half the relief. You are a sensible and wise woman. You must not yield to despair.

[1] Thirty persons were sentenced to death for violence during the Quit India Movement at Chimur and Ashti in C. P. Later on the sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. *Vide* also Vol. LXXIX, p. 335.

[2] The sentence was commuted to life imprisonment; *vide* "Letter to Sir Evan M. Jenkins, 25-11-1945.

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I hope Anand[1] is in good health.
And so also Shakaribehn[2].

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C. W. 10062. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

39. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. CHAMPA,

Your arrival there was unexpected. But never mind. It will be enough if Ratilal[3] does not follow you. Become one with the Ashram people as sugar does with milk. It is impossible to live in the Ashram at present in any other way. Be satisfied with whatever comforts are available. Live carefully so that you or the children may not fall ill. I hope to return there on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 1095. Courtesy : Champa R. Mehta

40. LETTER TO TARA MODAK

November 6, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Keep on sending *Shikshan Patrika*. If you have anything to ask, by all means do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

TARABEHN MODAK
996 HINDU COLONY
DADAR, BOMBAY

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

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Addressee's mother
[3] Addressee's husband

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41. LETTER TO LILAVATI PARIKH

November 6, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. You must tell your father everything and then take his advice. If you do not have that much courage, I am afraid you will not be able to do anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

LILAVATI PARIKH
[C/O] OCHCHHAVLAL NATHABHAI SHETH
KALYAN MOTI'S CHAWL
ROOM NO. 30/31
BOMBAY 4

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

42. LETTER TO VASUMATI D. PANDIT

November 6, 1945

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter of October 31. I see from it that you have not received my previous letter. There is nothing wrong with my health. I am quite well.

I shall leave here for Bombay on the 19th, reaching Sevagram on the 21st. I shall leave for Calcutta on November 30 and be there for a month and three weeks. Then maybe 15 days in Madras. Then again back to Sevagram for 5 or 7 days and thence perhaps to the Frontier Province. Only on returning from there can I settle down in Sevagram. This means that right now my stay in Sevagram cannot be permanent. If therefore you want to spend a little time in the Ashram you can do so only in my absence. But do as you feel inclined.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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43. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 6, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter as also the cheque for Lila Jog. I shall of course forward your letter to Mridulabehn. Still it is certainly right to send the cheque.[1]

What you say about Sushila Pai is right. It was never my intention to make one of the two permanent. But as long as Sucheta stays there, whether as a candidate or for examinations, she will be considered a candidate for the post of organizing secretary. Won't she? So the same should hold good in the case of Sushila Pai also. She also wanted it that way. But I saw that Sucheta did not like it. So if Sushila Pai goes there it will be just to observe the work and to see if she can adjust herself in the office. Sucheta is going to let me know her decision only after seeing you.

BAPU

THAKKAR BAPA
BAJAJ WADI, WARDHA

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

44. LETTER TO JOSH

November 6, 1945

BHAI JOSH,

I have your letter. I knew that your *josh*[2] would come down. Now I see that you wish to have a heart-to-heart talk with me. Please come on the 13th. I will keep myself free at 3 in the afternoon.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JOSH SAHEB
TAHIR PLACE
SHANKER SETH ROAD, POONA

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

[1] *Vide* p. 37.
[2] Anger

45. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your postcard. Sushilabehn has explained my view in her long letter. You must have received it by now. A short note has been written to Khurshedbehn today. See that too. I shall be in Bombay on the 19th and 20th, in Sevagram on the 21st and on the 1st December in Calcutta.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2488

46. LETTER TO M. S. KELKAR

November 6, 1945

BHAI KELKAR,

I have your letter. To say nothing of deciding to open a nature-cure clinic, I have not even considered it. I have been wishing to open one for years but it has merely been a wish. Your views are such that you cannot work in any institution. It is a different thing that a man like me may get work from you. There should be a separate institution for you. But I know that it is never going to come. So let things go on as they are and let us all do what work of service we can. I see no other way.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

M. S. KELKAR
C/o G. B. SAHASRABUDDHE
WEAVING MASTER, MOHATA MILLS
AKOLA

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

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47. LETTER TO SAILEN BOSE

POONA,
November 6, 1945

CHI. SAILEN,

I have your letter. God is merciful. Blessings to Bela.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI S. C. BOSE
59 FORBES STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

48. LETTER TO NORALMAL PHULOMAL

November 6, 1945

BHAI NORALMAL,

I have your letter. I was distressed to hear about your health. May God keep you. Get well soon. Write to me either in Urdu or Devanagari. Sindhi and Urdu scripts are almost the same. Only the languages are a little different. Learn Hindustani after you get well. I have the Rs. 20 sent by you.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI NORALMAL PHULOMAL
SUB-DIVISIONAL CLERK, P. W. D.
NARA SICHAI, SUKKUR
SINDH

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

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49. LETTER TO M. R. BONDRE

November 6, 1945

BHAI BONDRE,

Come whenever you wish before the 11th. I will spare a few minutes for you at 5.30 p.m. when you come. I hope Nalini is all right.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

M. R. BONDRE, B.A.,B.T.
11-C HARI NIVAS, SHIVAJI PARK
LADY JAMSHEDJI ROAD
BOMBAY 28

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

50. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

November 6, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

I have your letter. It is good you were saved from the calamity this time.

I have talked fully with Saralabehn. I still talk to her whenever I have time and I shall continue doing so. I hope to reach Sevagram on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

VICHITRA NARAYAN
GANDHI ASHRAM
MEERUT
UNITED PROVINCES

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

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51. LETTER TO R. R. DIWAKAR

November 6, 1945

BHAI DIWAKAR,

You did come but you did not ask for time to see me. I had thought you would come and have a talk with me. That is why I did not write anything on what you had sent.

What you say about income tax will not work. The rest seems to be all right. I am sending a copy of what I have drafted.[1] It will give you some idea of what I think. If you wish to say something about it, do so. I shall leave here on the 19th morning.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

52. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 7, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to thank you for your letter of 1st instant regarding Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee.[2] I anxiously await the result of further examination ordered by His Excellency of certain points arising out of the statement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 60

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] Sheel Bhadra Yajee had complained that he and some others had been ill-treated while in detention; *vide* Vol. LXXXI, p. 338. Jenkins on behalf of the Viceroy denied the allegation but promised further examination.

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53. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 7, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have to thank you for your letter of 1st instant regarding the mercy petition of Shri Haridas Mitra and three others.[1] Will you please convey my thanks to His Excellency for the commutation of the death sentences?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 51

54. LETTER TO PRAVINA PANDYA

November 7, 1945

CHI. PRAVINA,

It is good that you wrote and introduced yourself. I do remember you but if you had not written I would not have remembered the details.

I am glad that you wish to be forgiven for writing the letter. That shows also that you should have procured a postcard beforehand. You have messed up your signature. Correct it.

Show this letter to Tara[2], Mohan[3], Ramu[4], Gopalkrishna[5] and others and give them my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

PRAVINA
[C/O] DEVDAS GANDHI
NEW DELHI

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

[1] Mitra and Jyotish Chandra Bose were sentenced to death under the Enemy Agents Ordinance for aiding three Indian spies landed by a Japanese submarine. One of the spies committed suicide. The other two were tried and sentenced to death along with their helpers. All the four of them had petitioned the Viceroy for mercy who commuted all the four death sentences to transportation for life.

[2] Daughter of Devdas Gandhi

[3], [4] & [5] Sons of Devdas Gandhi

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55. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 7, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 375—Lila Jog's three months' salary. I am also enclosing the letter Bapa has sent along with the cheque. This is just for your information. Deliver the cheque to Lila Jog and send me a receipt. Your work is then over. The purpose of sending you a copy of Bapa's letter is that you may know that Bapa is firm in his views. My reading is that there is some mutual misunderstanding. It is not that anyone is deliberately lying. What it means is that there is some purpose in what in English is called "red-tape"; that is, to get everything in writing so that there can be no scope for saying something different. Red tape has and does not have a place among family members. It means that none of them are bound to one another and that everything is going on smoothly without friction. Writing down everything begins as soon as friction begins.

Our correspondence in Gujarati must have been published.[1] At the end I inadvertently wrote that you were not resigning as a trustee [of the Kasturba Trust]. I have deleted it in the English translation. It was there in the copy sent to you. Lest any reader should misunderstand, I had written out the sentence at the beginning. But having forgotten about it, finally, I made the thing clear.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Gandhiji's letter to the addressee dated October 15, 1945, was published in *The Hindu* and *The Bombay Chronicle* dated November 8, 1945, along with the addressee's letter of resignation.

56. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

November 7, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I understand about Kailas. I do not have your magnanimity. From where shall I get it? Or you may say there is a difference between yours and mine. Whichever way we look at it the result is the same. Let things take their own course. If Kailas is really so timid, then I feel she should stay with her parents. Let her learn what she can while serving them. This is just my opinion. Of course I shall be happy if she studies at the Talimi Sangh and becomes proficient. I would not like her to serve at the cost of her education. I on my part believe that pure service is in itself education. This is the basic idea behind Nayee Talim.[1]

I hope Gomati is recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

57. LETTER TO K. RAMARAO

November 7, 1945

BHAI RAMARAO,

Even if Panditji has suggested it, why should you ask for a message[2]? Even after having been so close to me, don't you know that asking for messages really brings harm? I know it is difficult to understand this, but it should not be difficult for a person like you. Do men and institutions advance because of praise by others or because of their own qualities and strength and by adding to these day by day? Will you not admit that those who depend on others' praise progressively become enfeebled?

The sacrifice made by the *Herald* is genuine, but does sacrifice need anybody's praise? And what sacrifice can be made by one who expects praise?

[1] *Vide* also pp. 14-5.
[2] For *The National Herald*

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I hope you will be able to follow my *rashtrabhasha*. At least your daughter will be able to explain.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

58. LETTER TO NARENDRA DEV

November 7, 1945

BHAI NARENDRA DEV,

I have your letter. There are occasions when one has to write about those with whom one is very close. The rule to follow is that people closely associated should not eulogize each other. I can write much in support of this but what shall I write to a person like you? Better to spare me from all such things. I am sorry I have not even seen the daily called *Samsar*. Even if it comes here, it is not shown to me because so many editors are kind enough to send me their dailies. I can say that these days I do not read newspapers at all. Clippings from newspapers believed to be useful to me are placed before me. If I send a message to one, why not to the others? Others also do write and ask for messages.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

59. LETTER TO VAMANRAO JOSHI

November 7, 1945

BHAI VAMANRAO,

I have your beautiful letter. It is interesting too.

I write the truth as I personally see it. Absolute truth alone is God. It is beyond reach. At the most we can say it is *neti, neti*[1]. The truth that we see is relative, many-sided, plural and is the whole truth for a given time. There is no scope for vanity in it and the only way of reaching it is through ahimsa. Pure and absolute truth should be our ideal. We can reach the ideal only

[1] Not this, not this

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by constantly meditating on it, and reaching it is attaining *moksha*. For the last sixty years I have been experiencing what I have said above. I am still experiencing it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

60. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

November 7, 1945

CHI. HOSHIARI,

Nowadays you are so calm and so absorbed in various activities that there should be no need for a letter from me. Hence I have not worried.

Why do you not make Gajaraj[1] write for you? It is good that Uncle[2] will be coming in a few days. If God wills it, we shall all reach there on the 21st.

It is good indeed that you went and saw Vinobaji.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

61. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

The same post that brought your letter brings a card from him saying I should do nothing till he says I should. In any case I must not be involved in an appeal for memorial sub[scriptions]. Let Satyavati live in us by each one of us weaving in our lives the virtue we prize most. Let the rich pay money for some such work as appealed to S. and appeals to them.

I am not shifting to Poona. It was a canard. To leave Sevagram would be desertion of which I must not be guilty.

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Balvantsinha

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Jagannath must not take up any Government job. What he should do I cannot say.

I am asking Pyarelal to let you have the list you want.

So you have at last got the work that attracts you and the atmosphere you can like.

Love.

BAPU

SMT. KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
82 DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

62. LETTER TO BACHU

November 8, 1945

CHI. BACHU,

Your handwriting is particularly bad. It is not worthy of you. In my view each character of the alphabet is a drawing, and no drawing is made by scrawling. Whether it is of a mere learner or that of a great painter the broad outline must look the same to the eye. The drawings of a parrot made by a learner and an expert artist will look alike in their general form, but the quality of art in each will reveal who is the learner and who the expert. Similarly, the shape of "અ" drawn by a learner and that of one drawn by an expert artist must appear alike. The difference would be seen only in the quality of art in each. But in the drawings of your letters there is no resemblance at all. I would blame your teacher more than you for this. If you have understood what I have said above and still continue to draw shapeless lines instead of fine letters, I will blame you. Your body must have now become as strong as an athlete's.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 5904

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63. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have your letter. It is difficult to reply to it. But one thing is clear, namely, that you should tell Kanchan in plain words that you do not look upon her as your wife and that she also should not look upon you as her husband. You should accept no service from her. Indeed, you two should not live in the same place. I am prepared to arrange for your stay in different places. This would be a painful duty. But your letter makes it incumbent upon me to take such a step.

As for serving people, you can only tend those of the sick who require tending.

Since I hope that we shall now be meeting on the 21st, I do not write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8427. Also C.W. 5602. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

64. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS[1],

I have your long letter. I cannot say I have read the whole of it, but Chi. Kanu has told me in substance all that I should know. If indeed you have settled down as you say you have, I am happy and Ba's soul will rejoice wherever it is. I see nothing but her holy merit in all this love which Kunvarjibhai and others shower on you. They have become closer to you than your relations by blood. It would, therefore, be excellent if you so lived as to be of help to one another, and I would believe that you had had a new birth.

[1] Brother of Kasturba Gandhi

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I will write to Kunvarji and Manilal. Please do not feel bad on account of Manilal and other relations. All of them would be ready to do their utmost to look after you. If Manilal feels any hesitation in sending you your keys, please believe me to be the cause behind his hesitation. I do not possess a pie which I can call my own, and I do not feel that I have the right to spend any money on your account. I hold that the brothers should reimburse me whatever expense I have incurred on you. Manilal is a poor man. I should be a sinner if I let him earn more from Phœnix than would enable him to live decently. He, therefore, cannot give you or spend on you much from his earnings. He probably does not know how close a bond has come to be formed between Kunvarjibhai and you. Be that as it may, I am writing to him about the keys.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2725

65. LETTER TO KUNVARJI V. MEHTA

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Chi. Kanu has given me a complete summary of your letter. I see your generosity and Ba's holy merit in the great care you are taking of Uncle and in the fact that you are treating him as a respected elder. If Uncle recovers fully, all the credit will go to you, though personally I would give part of it to Bhai Krishnavarma. He has, so far, not asked me even for the expense he has incurred on Uncle and has nursed him as well as he could for the sake of Ba. Had he not come forward to help, I would have been at a loss to know where to put Uncle.

Your idea of helping Uncle run a small store in your neighbourhood is no doubt good, but please do not put it into effect immediately. After his establishment has been wound up, as you have suggested, and he has completely forgotten about it and become perfectly composed, I see no harm in your letting him start a store in partnership with any member of your family. Let not greed make him or anyone of you go in for speculation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2723

66. LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. MANILAL,

I got your letter and postcard. Arun has taken away your letter and has not returned it. He is always in high spirits these days. He soon makes friends with everybody who comes here. So I do not now worry about him. Though he makes no effort, he does learn a little. There is, therefore, no need for any of you to worry about him just now.

Please go to Bombay for the books. Maybe you have already gone there. If you wish, you may certainly pay a flying visit here before returning. But do not come here for my sake at all, for all my needs are being properly looked after. So far as I can judge, you need not come even for the sake of Arun. If, therefore, you come it must be only for the pleasure of the trip. We will leave for Bombay on the morning of the 19th. I should advise you to wait for me in Bombay or, as I have already written, at Sevagram. It is the duty of you two to serve Kishorelalbhai, Gomatibehn, Chhaganlalbhai and Kashibehn as much as you can.

Tell Ila I have no reason to remember her. She does not keep a single promise. She had said she would not leave me, but she went away. And she does not make haste to learn to write so that she can at least write to me. I hope she will now lose no time to learn to write letters to me in a beautiful hand.

I think that it would now be better to send Uncle's keys[1] to Kunvarji Mehta, at Adarsh Dugdhalaya, Malad. He has asked for them. He has written a long letter. He wishes to sell off his things. He seems to be well composed in mind at present.

I forgot to ask you to send Uncle's keys to Kunvarjibhai. Kanu says I have already written about it above. I have not read it over.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4966

[1] *Vide* pp. 42-3.

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67. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your postcard. It is certainly a pity that though you went there early you did not gain the benefit you expected from going early. But one must not hope for any reward for acting upon one's resolutions. If one cherished such a desire, one would have to go on changing one's decisions. A man without firm resolution would be unsteady like a pitcher without a support. Actually the word is ડિસેક્ષન[1] and not ડિસેકસન.

I do have a slightly high blood-pressure, but it is under control.

I hope your study is progressing. Do not forget to do the *asanas* and other things I suggested for exercise.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 10207. Courtesy : Lilavati Asar

68. LETTER TO KANAM AND NIRMALA GANDHI

November 8, 1945

CHI. KANAM,

I have your postcard. You have not yet improved your handwriting as much as one would wish. It is very good that you spent a part of your holidays with Vinobaji. And you took Sanskrit instruction from him which no doubt was also religious.

I hope Usha[2] is all right. Why do you use Arabic numerals while writing in Devanagari?

CHI. NIMU,

Today I have Sumi's[3] letter. She writes to say that a sum of Rs. 125 was stolen from her. This is a case of feeble cattle having too many ticks. The lesson we have to learn is that

[1] Dissection
[2] Addressee's younger sister
[3] Sumitra, addressee's daughter

children should be given as little money as possible. You could have written to Devdas to give her that amount or could have sent it through money order.

Blessings from
BAPU

KANAM RAMDAS GANDHI
KHALASI LINES
NAGPUR

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

69. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

November 8, 1945

BHAI MUNSHI,

In the letter I wrote to you I am afraid I was not able to express myself fully.[1] In the meantime Ramnarayan[2] has sent me the following, which is worth considering. I agree with what he has to say. I am a widely travelled person and I find an echo of my own experience in the paragraph that follows. If you do not find anything in it you may discuss it.[3]

> Tell Bapu that I have always held the view, which has become all the clearer to me while translating some books, that if we wish to make Hindustani the language of the common people, its vocabulary should mostly consist, except for words which have religious associations, of Arabic and Persian words or their derivatives instead of Sanskrit. The seven or eight hundred years of Hindu-Muslim contact has made Urdu a more common language than Hindi. This must be the view of everyone who is not biased and is honest and straightforward. The good of the country lies in our acknowledging this truth.
>
> RAMNARAYAN

Blessings from
BAPU

KANAIYALAL MUNSHI
26 RIDGE ROAD
BOMBAY

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 9-10.
[2] Ramnarayan Chaudhary
[3] What follows is in Hindi

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70. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. KASHI,

I was glad to read your few words. I keep thinking of you all and Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. The latest news is that what Chhaganlal is suffering from is malaria; so I expect the fever will have come down and he will have regained his strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

71. LETTER TO RAMANLAL SHAH

POONA,
November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMANLAL,

I am glad to have the few lines you wrote to me. You are full of the spirit of service. Devote that to the service of Kishorelalbhai and Gomatibehn. If you remain engrossed in service, you will be saved from the thoughts that assail you. And your service will spread like scent.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : Ramanlal Shah Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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72. LETTER TO RAMPRASAD

November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMPRASAD,

I have already written to Rameshwardasji about the bicycle. I shall get the reply in a day or two. You did well in sending the newspaper cutting.

Why is digging being done around where you are building the house? The Government's method of digging for gravel on both sides while making roads is wrong. I have no doubt about it. In my travels in South Africa and England and other parts of Europe I have seen roads but no-where have I seen pits where rain water can collect and breed mosquitoes.

I hope you, Kanta and the baby are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

73. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHAUDHARY

November 8, 1945

CHI. RAMNARAYAN,

I have your postcard. I liked it. Keep on sending your views even if unsolicited. In the course of my tours I found confirmation of what you wrote[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapu—Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha?, p. 164

[1] About the demoralizing effect of war on the people

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74. LETTER TO KUSUM

November 8, 1945

CHI. KUSUM,

Kusum is written in quotes : that means it is not your real name. Why are you so distressed over your widowhood? A true widow does not believe that because the body of her husband has perished, the soul has also perished. A woman is married not to a human frame but to the soul which resides in it. That is precisely the reason why widow remarriage is taboo. That is why your lamenting, thinking of committing suicide and so on are contrary to dharma and justice. Your duty is to serve, giving the first place to spinning. Learn the processes preceding and following spinning. Also study the science of the charkha so that you can understand properly the significance of spinning. You have not stated your age and your education.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUSUMBEHN
C/O SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR AGRAWAL
PANNALAL ROAD
ALLAHABAD

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

75. LETTER TO K. N. KATJU

November 8, 1945

BHAI KATJU,

I have your letter. I liked it very much. But I had written to the Viceroy as soon as I got your telegram. In your letter I have all that I wanted. I will use it and also your name if necessary. But I hope the thing will be done without this being necessary. These days you are under great pressure of work. I hope you are well. How long do you have to stay there?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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76. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
November 9, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.

Your descriptive letter written in detached manner soothes me and removes whatever anxiety I felt.

Of course I never thought you were in any way responsible for the Maulana's statement or Gopalaswamy's publication of my personal letter[1]. I do not resent its publication in the manner it was done. He could not help it. Whether it produced good effect or bad is not of much moment.

You are silent about your health.

Let us hope things will pass off well. . . .[2] has seen your letter.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2111

77. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

POONA,
November 9, 1945

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have your letter. It was, and is indeed good that you did not come. To cling to service is more important than seeing me. You must not start talking about having already grown old. Service when done for the love of God is not burdensome.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DAHYABHAI MANORDAS PATEL
DHOLKA
PRANTIJ RAILWAY

From Gujarati : C.W. 2715. Courtesy : Dahyabhai M. Patel

[1] The letter, dated October 27, 1945, was published in *The Hindu*, 31-10-1945; *vide* Vol. LXXXI, p. 425.

[2] A word is illegible in the source.

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78. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 9, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I have your letter. The correspondence has been published.[1] It is rather interesting how this came about. On the one hand Bapa writes to say that I was hasty in getting it published because I had agreed that we should publish it only after the meeting of the Managing Committee. How nice it would have been if he had had me put it down in writing. I myself have no such recollection. Kanu says that he was present at the time and that I had told Bapa that if something had happened and if the matter was to be published, the sooner this was done the better. Well, that is as it may be. Your own recollection is that I was to give a short statement of my own in the end. I remember having said something like that but I had not decided on it. Having considered the whole thing I felt that since my letter[2] to you gave the entire background it was better published. Now if this step was mistaken how can it be rectified? I don't see anything wrong in publishing the facts. I have not seen what has come out in the newspapers. If you are talking about the English translation, I had certainly approved it but I do not know if the same has appeared in the newspapers. Anyway, for the present I am treating this chapter as closed. It is good you are coming on the 12th. This of course will be posted.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] & [2] *Vide* also p. 37.

79. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 9, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter of November 6. By all means have a separate kitchen. We should not put too much burden on Shamlal, that is to say on his wife.

Nothing has been decided about Sushila Pai. She wishes to come as a joint organizer. It is possible Sucheta will not like it. She will have a talk with you and then write to me. Sushila Pai is a very good worker. She is a learned woman. She was for many years the Head Mistress of Vanita Vishram, Rajkot. She gave up the job on her own. She is a woman of great promise. It is possible that she will not like to join as a clerk. In whatever capacity she comes, it will be only provisionally. I have not written to her again as I am waiting for Sucheta's letter. Please see how the work is to be divided. Spend on the building only as much as is necessary for providing the conveniences. I take it that you will not have to get permission for this from the Managing Committee. I am not going through the rules and regulations. I have passed on that responsibility to Shamlal. In fact we should know it by heart. There was a time when I could do that but of late I have forgotten all about it. I have had to.

I got your letter of today after writing this. Sushila will answer it.

BAPU

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

80. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

November 9, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I like your letter. You have improved your handwriting a lot. But your vowel strokes are not always the same. That is a defect. You make your strokes look like pearl pendants. Nowadays girls have made this a fashion, but it is a mistake. Strokes should always be slanting. At the most you can put a dot on top.

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I am not at all happy that Rs. 125 was stolen from your pocket and I am very angry with Nimu. She could have sent the money by money order. You can always have such dealings with Devdas and you should.[1]

Just because I have appreciated your handwriting, don't think that there is no room for improvement. You should yourself see and try to improve it. Take care of your health, physical and mental. Let me know what you have gained from Nagpur.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

81. LETTER TO KRISHNALAL T. MANIAR

November 9, 1945

CHI. BACHU,

I am glad you wrote a postcard to me. I saw Kanu's handwriting also. May the New Year[2] bring happiness to all of you and may all of you start rendering some service to the country. At the present day that is the dharma for all in India. I am glad you have settled down at the Bank of Jaipur. Become an expert at your job and stick to the bank so that in the field of your work you can earn a name for yourself. I know of two persons who, just like you, began even lower than clerks and yet reached the top and became famous. Both of them are no more. They were Gujaratis but it is immaterial whether they were Gujaratis or not. One is bound to make progress if one sincerely sticks to something and wishes to acquire mastery in it. May you make progress in your work and serve the country through it.

Blessings from
BAPU

KRISHNALAL TULSIDAS MANIAR
C/O BANK OF JAIPUR LTD.
RITCHIE ROAD
AHMEDABAD

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

[1] *Vide* also pp. 45-6.
[2] According to the Gujarati calendar

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82. LETTER TO MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR

November 9, 1945

SHRIMAN PANDITJI,

I have your letter. Thanks. I understand your point but I do not want to enter into discussion with you.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

MAHADEVSHASTRI DIVEKAR
MIRAJ

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

83. LETTER TO V. S. MODAK

November 9, 1945

BHAI MODAK,

I have your letter. I have given up going to the theatre for the last fifty years and I take no interest in it. Please excuse me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

V. S. MODAK
NATYA SAMMELAN
RAJURKAR BUILDING, MAIDAN ROAD
AHMEDNAGAR

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

84. LETTER TO N. G. ABHYANKAR

November 9, 1945

BHAI ABHYANKAR,

I have your Marathi letter written in a beautiful hand. I had no difficulty in understanding it. About Ashtekar I am doing what I consider it my dharma to do. What more shall I

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say? I have expressed my grief. I try to understand as much as I can. I have the lines that have appeared in *Lokshakti*.[1]

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

N. G. ABHYANKAR
130 BUDHWAR
OPPOSITE JOGESHWAR
POONA 2

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

85. LETTER TO SUBROTO ROY CHOWDHARY

November 10, 1945

BHAI SUBRATA ROY[2],

I received your letter of October 24 yesterday. I hope you will forgive me for replying in the national language. Yours is a big programme. It is good. What can be added to it if I say something? May you succeed and may all of you serve India in the right way.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

86. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

November 10/11, 1945

BHAI BRELVI,

Your journal carried the report of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Udaipur. It contains things that Bhai Munshi refutes. The report says that Pandit Jawaharlal had sent a nice message but that it was suppressed and was not read out. Bhai Munshi says that he never received any such message, let alone suppress it. If this is true and someone gave a false report, he should

[1] The official Congress daily published from Poona under the editorship of N. V. Limaye

[2] President, Cambridge University Majlis, an organization of Indian students

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have signed it.[1] Jawaharlal is there. You could have had a talk with him. I want that there should be at least one newspaper in India which has only truth from beginning to end, has no malice and is respected by one and all. Why should not the *Chronicle* which has for its editor, Brelvi, the President of the Editor's Conference be such a newspaper?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

87. TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

Express

POONA,
November 11, 1945

DOCTOR RAJENDRA PRASAD
BETTIAH

YOUR WIRE. PAPERS SAY GOPE HANGED YESTERDAY.[2] WHY SO LATE[3]?

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

88. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter of the 5th instant. May I make use of the information you have given me when I write to the Diwan Saheb? The situation, it is feared, is very grave. Something should be done about it. Meet the people there and do what you can. The volunteers can get together and do a lot of sanitation work. I had mentioned Raychandbhai's name by mistake.

[1] *Vide* also pp. 9-10.

[2] Mahendra Gope was sentenced to death in connection with the 1942 disturbances and hanged in the Bhagalpur Central Jail on November 10.

[3] The addressee had made a last minute appeal to the Viceroy and the Governor of Bihar on November 9, for commutation of the death sentence.

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I am glad you corrected me. Do you have your living quarters and your office in the same premises or are they separate? How does Manu[1] pass her time?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

89. LETTER TO KANCHAN M. SHAH

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. KANCHAN,

I got your letter. I wrote to you on the basis of what you had told me. Nobody has been able to achieve what you aspire for. If you can, I would consider that you have made great progress.

My blessings to Raihana and Sarojbehn. More when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. KANCHANBEHN
C/O RAIHANABEHN
RASHTRABHASHA PRACHAR SAMITI
WARDHA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8259. Also C.W. 6983. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

90. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

November 11, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I am replying to three of your letters together. I liked your personal letter but one sentence in it pained me. Why do you think I did not approve of what you call your "stand"?—you will yourself explain the meaning. If I seem to be changing, it is only an impression. Those who know me will not say this. I consider you as one of them, but why should I discuss all this

[1] Addressee's daughter

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with you? You are just a child to me while I am an old man. You will leave me if and when you are fed up with me.

Come whenever you wish and have me clarify whatever you want clarified.

What you say about *Surveyor* is right. Ask me about Ratnaprabhabehn when we meet. I am sending your letter about the President to Shyamlal and tearing up your personal letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

91. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

November 11, 1945

BAPA,

I have your letter. I had no recollection at all of what you say in your letter. Now that I think of it I seem to remember we did have a talk about the matter. There does not seem to be even a hint of it in our letters. Chi. Kanu says he was present at our talk and that as far as he can remember you had made the suggestion but I had not accepted it because postponing publication of the resignation[1] would have served no purpose. If however the President has no right at all to accept a resignation, then the thing assumes an entirely different aspect. But the case only supports what I have been saying all along, namely, that word of mouth should be considered as having no weight. Only what is written down is true, more so for a person like me whose memory is dim. So if things are put down in writing it will be a safeguard for both. You close your letter with "*khair*"[2]. Do not go by it. Take to heart the lesson you learn from this episode. I consider the episode in itself trivial but it carries significance. It was I who sent a copy of the resignation to the Press.

BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* also p. 51.

[2] The English equivalent of the expression would be "anyway" or "however".

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92. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BAPA,

I got the copy of your letter to Dharmadevji.[1] I was pained and also surprised. We shall discuss this further when we meet. If I said anything about the money for his ashram I do not recollect it. This again shows that mere word of mouth has no value.[2]

I can't trace Suchetabehn's letter. Let us see what happens. We shall discuss that matter[3] also.

BAPU

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

93. LETTER TO RATILAL TANNA

November 11, 1945

BHAI RATILAL,

I have your letter. My messages have dried up. And even if they have not, you should not ask for a message regarding Dhebarbhai[4]. If you cannot understand what this means, ask Dhebarbhai himself.

Blessings from
BAPU

RATILAL TANNA
JANI BUILDING
RAJKOT

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

[1] *Vide* also pp. 77-8.
[2] *Vide* also the preceding item.
[3] *Vide* pp. 31 and 52.
[4] U. N. Dhebar

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94. LETTER TO MOHANLAL GADHADAWALA

November 11, 1945

BHAI MOHANLAL,

I read your letter to Kanu and we also met after that.

I remember Jaisangbhai well; the pleasant memory of my meetings with him is still fresh in my mind. We met quite often when late Punjabhai was alive. I shall gladly accept whatever money he has intended to give for my public welfare activities. He can allocate it for any work of my liking. He can keep it with himself for the time and I shall ask for it when I need it. The activities include Arogya Bhavan and the Dharmsala at Panchgani which is being built for the poor without any distinction of caste or creed.

Blessings from
BAPU

MOHANLAL GADHADAWALA
C/O DURLABHDAS MOTICHAND SHAH
269 MASJID BUNDER ROAD
NEAR IMPERIAL BANK, MANDAVI BRANCH
BOMBAY 3

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

95. LETTER TO N. V. BAVDEKAR

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BHAI BAVDEKARJI,

I have your long letter. I can do nothing in this matter. Now the members of the State [Praja] Mandals been been released. Consult them.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI N. V. BAVDEKAR
PHALTON SANSTHAN PRAJA PARISHAD
PHALTON STATE

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

96. LETTER TO LALITA BOSE

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. LALITA,

If you can't read Hindi, someone will read this out to you. Why should I write in English?

Did you type the letter? What are you doing?

I am glad you sent the Netaji photographs. They are beautiful.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI LALITA BOSE
38-2 ELGIN ROAD
CALCUTTA

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

97. LETTER TO SHRIPATICHARAN SAHU

POONA,
November 11, 1945

BHAI SHRIPATI BABU,

I have your letter. I don't know how much I shall be able to do in Bengal. Please keep all the literature ready. I don't believe that there is any grief that cannot be overcome.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SHRIPATICHARAN SAHU
C/O CALCUTTA INS. LTD.
15 CLIVE STREET
CALCUTTA

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

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98. LETTER TO BHAGWATICHARAN SHUKLA

POONA,
November 11, 1945

CHI. BHAGWATI,

Now marriages cannot be performed in the Ashram. I can arrange at some other place in Wardha outside the Ashram. I shall not be able to attend the function. The ceremony will be performed by a Harijan, as was done in the case of Tendulkarji.[1] It will be better if it is done according to the Civil Marriage Act.

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAGWATICHARAN SHUKLA
"NAGPUR TIMES" OFFICE
NAGPUR

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

99. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

November 11[2], *1945*

BHAI RAJEN BABU,

I have your telegram. But how long it took! Mahendra Gope was hanged yesterday and your telegram has come today. How did this happen? Did I not give my opinion in the case? It will be good if in this case also you find out the facts as I had asked you to do in the case of Mahendra Chowdhary[3]. Was the case really political?

I want proof.

I hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* also pp. 10-3. Tendulkar and Indu were married on August 18, 1945.

[2] The source has "10", obviously a slip since Mahendra Gope was hanged on November 10, 1945; *vide* p. 56.

[3] A political prisoner who was sentenced to death on the charge of dacoity with murder and was hanged in Bhagalpur Jail on August 7, 1945; *vide* Vol. LXXX, pp. 426-7 and Vol. LXXXI, p. 19.

100. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter[1] of 6th instant in reply to mine[2] about certain I. N. A. prisoners. My business was to bring to His Excellency's notice the feeling of the country in the matter, not merely as I read in the public Press.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G.E.B. ABELL, ESQ.
DEPUTY PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 41-2

101. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have to thank you for your letter of 6th instant in reply to mine[3] of 2nd instant regarding certain Press cuttings to which I had drawn His Excellency's attention.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 43

[1] It read : "His Excellency has seen your letter to Sir Evan Jenkins of 29th October about the trial of certain members of the I. N. A. He asks me to say that he notes your views, and presumes that they are based on articles appearing in the newspapers, in which the facts are not always correctly stated. His Excellency naturally cannot express an opinion on the merits of cases which are *sub judice*."

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXXXI, pp. 438-9.

[3] *Vide* p. 6.

102. LETTER TO LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE

POONA,
November 12, 1945

DEAR LORD LAWRENCE[1],

How nice that your wedding day should coincide with my birthday? Thanks for your congratulations.[2] May I reciprocate them? Is not wedding a new birth?

Did I not know you first through Lady Lawrence during those suffragette days?[3] I was then a novice in the art of civil resistance and had friendly differences with the late Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter but not with your wife and the late Mrs. Despard.[4]

With kind regards to both of you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. HON'BLE LORD PETHICK-LAWRENCE
11 OLD SQUARE
LINCOLN'S INN, LONDON W. C. 2

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 174

[1] Secretary of State for India

[2] In his letter dated October 4, the addressee had said : "I have only just learnt that your birthday coincides with my wedding day! I hasten to send, rather belatedly, the best wishes of my wife and myself and the hope that in this troubled world we may all contribute to a happier future."

[3] Gandhiji had met Lady Pethick-Lawrence at a suffragette meeting during his visit to England in 1906.

[4] Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter had shown resentment when Gandhiji criticized some of the militant suffragettes. Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence had stood by Gandhiji on that occasion.

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103. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

POONA,
November 12, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

You are incapable of hurting me. That is the difference between you and me. I seem to have made it my occupation to hurt others. Even that does not pain me. I have placed before you the facts. I am glad that you do not find any disparity in your suggestion and mine. I have had a talk with the Professor also. Do help and remain on the committee on your own condition.

It is not proper that Gomati wants to look after everything even though she has not yet fully recovered.

Blessings from
BAPU

ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM

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

104. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 12, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Manilal complains that you keep on working even though you are weak. Why are you doing this?

Blessings from
BAPU

SEVAGRAM

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

105. LETTER TO HARIGANESH PHATAK

POONA,
November 12, 1945

BHAI HARIBHAU,

Come today after the prayers at 7.30 if you can. Suggest some other time if this does not suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 6104

106. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

POONA,
November 12, 1945

BAPA,

I have asked Haribhau to come today. I shall settle the matter here. Do not worry. I shall return both the letters after they have been dealt with.

BAPU

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

107. FOREWORD TO "CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME—ITS MEANING AND PLACE"

This is a thoroughly revised edition of the *Constructive Programme* which I first wrote in 1941.[1] The items included in it have not been arranged in any order, certainly not in the order of their importance. When the reader discovers that a particular subject though important in itself in terms of independence does not find place in the programme, he should know that the omission is not intentional. He should unhesitatingly add to my list and let me know. My list does not pretend to be exhaustive; it is merely illustrative. The reader will see several new and important additions.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 146-66.

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Readers, whether workers and volunteers or not, should definitely realize that the constructive programme is the truthful and non-violent way of winning *poorna* swaraj. Its wholesale fulfilment is complete independence. Imagine all the forty crores of people busying themselves with the whole of the constructive programme which is designed to build up the nation from the very bottom upward. Can anybody dispute the proposition that it must mean complete independence in every sense of the expression, including the ousting of foreign domination? When the critics laugh at the proposition, what they mean is that forty crores of people will never co-operate in the effort to fulfil the programme. No doubt, there is considerable truth in the scoff. My answer is, it is still worth the attempt. Given an indomitable will on the part of a band of earnest workers, the programme is as workable as any other and more so than most. Anyway, I have no substitute for it, if it is to be based on non-violence.

Civil disobedience, mass or individual, is an aid to constructive effort and is a full substitute for armed revolt. Training is necessary as well for civil disobedience as for armed revolt. Only the ways are different. Action in either case takes place only when occasion demands. Training for military revolt means learning the use of arms ending perhaps in the atomic bomb. For civil disobedience it means the constructive programme.

Therefore, workers will never be on the look-out for civil resistance. They will hold themselves in readiness, if the constructive effort is sought to be defeated. From one or two illustrations it will be seen where it can be and where it cannot be offered. Political pacts we know have been and can be, but personal friendship with individuals cannot be, prevented. Such friendships, selfless and genuine, must be the basis for political pacts. Similarly, centralized khadi can be defeated by the Government, but no power can defeat individual manufacture and use of khadi. The manufacture and use of khadi must not be imposed upon the people, but it must be intelligently and willingly accepted by them as one of the items of the freedom movement. This can be done only from the villages as units. Pioneers even in such programmes can be obstructed. They have had to go through the fire of suffering throughout the world. There is no swaraj without suffering. In violence, truth is the first and greatest sufferer; in non-violence it is ever triumphant. Moreover, men composing the Government are not to be regarded as enemies. To regard them as such will be contrary to the non-violent spirit. Part we must, but as friends.

If this preliminary observation has gone home to the reader, he will find the constructive programme to be full of deep interest. It should prove as absorbing as politics so called and platform oratory, and certainly more important and useful.

POONA, November 13, 1945

Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place

108. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

NATURE CURE CLINIC,
6 TODIWALA ROAD, POONA,
November 13, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I have just seen Reuter's message from London about the threatened arrest of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.[1]

I admit that Pandit Nehru's speeches are hot, if the British rulers do not want to part with power and hand over to the people what is theirs. They are not, if the British professions are real. It will be wrong to attribute hatred or malice to him. He undoubtedly speaks strongly against the I. C. S. men. But there he speaks the people's mind. And he is right. The fine doctrine propounded by His Excellency of "Forget and Forgive" can only apply to the excesses of a soldiery in action but surely not to inexcusable butchery, inhumanity, bribery, corruption and the like. If his statements are wrong, they should be tested through an open and impartial tribunal. If the Government's hands are clean they have nothing to fear from publicity.

I will not waste His Excellency's time by arguing about the obvious.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 57

[1] According to a report Sir Maurice Hallett, Governor of U. P., had sought the Viceroy's permission to arrest Jawaharlal Nehru. The Viceroy declining, he had approached the Secretary of State. The Viceroy's House on April 12 issued a Press Note saying the report was a fabrication. *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 481. It is now known, however, that Wavell considered the speeches being made by Nehru, Patel, Pant and other Congress leaders as incitement to violence and was contemplating "before long . . . another violent suppression of Congress". *Wavell—The Viceroy's Journal*, p. 180 *passim*.

[2] Writing to Secretary of State Wavell said considering Gandhiji's "present state of health . . . it is possible that the letter was written by

109. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

POONA,
November 13, 1945

CHI. BABU,

I have your letter. You have not said what your "one last"[1] attempt was. See that it does not become too late for improvement.

I know that Chokhawala is busy. I do not expect from him the courtesy of a letter, because it is wrong to cherish any hope at all.

Why does Shakaribehn get migraine?

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10063. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

110. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

POONA,
November 13, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have your letter.

I have been working since the last eight days on the booklet regarding constructive work. That is to say, I have been giving it every minute that I can spare from time to time. I finished it two days ago, but I made so many revisions that I intend to get some portions rewritten. So that has taken another two days and is likely to take two more days still. To that extent the pamphlet will become new and perfect. I could have polished it still further. But is not greed a hill that lives and grows? It is not inert. Do not believe all that has appeared in the newspapers regarding Sardar's biography. I have not seen the report.

Patel or Nehru and merely signed by Gandhi" ! *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 48. In his *Journal*, p. 185, he describes the letter as malevolent.

[1] *Vide* pp. 28-9.

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When I heard about the plan for presenting a book of tributes to Sardar, as promised, I put an end to it and suggested that an authentic biography be written instead. There would be no question of presenting it to him. I therefore refused to give a message when they approached me and thus stopped the plan for tributes. It was Munshi[1] who took the lead and I, therefore, suggested that if he took up the work he would be able to do full justice to it. I have not inquired what happened or is happening after that. I do not know whether you are writing the biography or getting it written. You may ask Munshiji direct. The work is entrusted to Patil and Tendulkar. The latter is to work as Munshi's assistant. If, therefore, Munshi has agreed, you should put together all the material you get and send it to Munshiji. If he is not going to do the work, ask me again. I had also suggested that the date for publication of the book should be announced right now and we should adhere to it.

You may take it that as regards the journals[2] I am ready. I do not know, though, how far I shall be able to cope with the work. But I think I must do it if the publication can be resumed without difficulty. You need not flatter anybody. Mavalankar or you may meet the Magistrate officially and ask him. If he agrees, take out a licence. We should give no binding, orally or in writing. Only if the Government also wants the publication of the journals to be resumed may we bring them out. It would be intolerable if they were to demand a security as soon as an article appeared. If they are interested in the publications being resumed, they will have to give us the required paper. After all, how much would we need? There is no question of advertisements. We shall have to print a large number of copies. We must print as many as there is a demand for. I expect that we shall have to print at least as many as we used to do. Give me full details. And give me reasonable time for the first issue. You may, thus, assume that I shall be ready even if I am touring at the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9957. Also C.W. 6931. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

[1] K. M. Munshi
[2] *Harijan* and allied publications

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111. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

November 13, 1945

CHI. JUGATRAM,

I have your letter. Of course you have my blessings, but blessings are creepers that can climb only on hedges and tree-trunks. This means that they are only a kind of indication. So if your trunk is strong my blessings would climb up like a creeper. Here trunk means wisdom or keenness of thought.

It is good you have sent for Vaikunthbhai[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

JUGATRAM DAVE
SWARAJ ASHRAM
VEDCHHI, P. O. VALOD
DISTRICT SURAT

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

112. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

POONA,
November 13, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I was very happy with our talks yesterday. We could not have discussed more yesterday and it is my view that we shall not be able to finish our work at a single sitting. We must meet from time to time. I am so made that if I had the strength to travel about, I would seek you out, stay with you for a day or two, have some talk and then leave. Though I am not in a position to do that now, you may know I have done such things before. I want that people should know us as we know each other. If in the end we find that our paths are different, then so be it. Our hearts will still remain one, for they are one. The talks we had yesterday have given me the impression that there is not much difference in our outlooks or the way

[1] Vaikunthlal L. Mehta

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we understand things. I want to tell you how I have understood you. If there is any difference you will let me know.

(1) The crucial question according to you, is how to ensure man's mental, economic, political and moral development. That is my position too.

(2) And in doing so every individual should have equal right and opportunity.

(3) From this point of view there should be equality between villages and cities. And therefore their food and drink, their way of life, their dress and their habits should be the same. If such a condition is to be brought about people should produce their own cloth and food and build their own houses. So also they should produce their own water and electricity.

(4) Man is not born to live in the jungle; he is born to live in society. If we are to make sure that one person does not ride on an other's back, the unit should be an ideal village or a social group which will be self-sufficient, but the members of which will be interdependent. This conception will bring about a change in human relationship all over the world.

If I have understood you correctly up to here, I shall take up the second part. I have had Rajkumari translate the letter which I wrote to you earlier. I am getting this also translated and will send the translation along with this.[1] I serve two purposes by getting the letters translated. First I can explain to you more clearly in English what I want to say and secondly I shall be able to know better whether I have understood you fully or not.

Blessings to Indu.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

113. LETTER TO R. V. GOGATE

November 13, 1945

BHAI GOGATE,

You have frankly expressed your views. I like that. I told you I would answer your two questions. First, I am not impressed by the American system. I have regard for their enthusiasm and courage but at present we cannot proceed on those lines, nor

[1] Amrit Kaur's translation of this is published in *A Bunch of Old Letters*.

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do I wish to do so. That is why I do not like your new village scheme. My advice is that if you have the time, go and see our villages and do what you can. Go and see what my associates, the Kumarappa brothers and the other three are doing.

I have always liked to keep good relations with America but I have never liked having an agency there, nor do I like it now. This is more or less a matter of self-satisfaction if not self-deception. If we build up strength in India itself, it is bound to have its impact. The British Government spends lakhs of rupees on spreading falsehood. Must we imitate their ways to spread truth? I know the clergy in America do such things. I also know that there is, as there should be, a lot of difference between propagating truth and propagating untruth. What more shall I say?

PROF. R. V. GOGATE
U. N. R. R. A.
IMPERIAL HOTEL, NEW DELHI

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

114. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

November 14, 1945

BHAI BHULABHAI,

Jawaharlal told me that he had had a talk with Bakshi Tekchand regarding Jallianwala Bagh. He thinks it would be good if the two of you could get together and complete the work of the Trust Deed.[1] Bakshi Tekchand is prepared to look after everything in the Punjab. Discuss this with him and do what is necessary.

I had your wire but your letter has not yet come.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* also p. 77.

115. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

November 14, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

Naturopathy or any other work is never stalled for lack of funds. But it certainly is stalled if it lacks purity and sincere workers. The figures you have quoted must remain on paper only. If the thing had been all that easy in practice, we would have progressed a great deal by now. We have to sweat to increase 4 to 20; increasing 20 to 100 or 100 to 500 is just a dream. But it does not matter. Man can only make an effort. There is no need for you to come here. I am fully booked. I shall be in Bombay on the 20th. You can drop in there. I shall leave for Wardha the same day.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
MALAD
BOMBAY

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

116. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

November 14, 1945

CHI. RADHA,

I have your postcard. You are quite modest. Can we say that now you have settled down in Rajkot?

Manilal and Sushila are at Akola. Their son Arun is with me. I shall send your postcard to Manilal.

I hope all of you are all right. You must do some work of service.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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117. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

POONA,
November 14, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

My cogitations go on. The institution should close down on December 31. From January 1, it should become an institution for the poor and cease to be one for the rich. You have so far insisted that the poor should be taken only after the rich have been accommodated but those who are really poor can hardly reach you and if anyone reaches you, they will have to pay the rates the rich pay, which will completely ruin them. From the 1st January let the rich come after the poor are accommodated but only if they can live as the poor. The institution should have more cleanliness than it has today. Money is not necessary for maintaining cleanliness, but it requires care, love, truth and knowledge. So it is better that cleaning work is started from today, but I am afraid it is not possible because no one listens to the others and everyone is his own master. If anyone takes interest in work, it is only to please you. Therefore there can be improvement only if someone from among the people I mentioned above starts working from today. If this thing does not appeal to you, both of us will have to repent ultimately because I believe that cleanliness is a part of God. I would amend the saying "cleanliness is next to godliness" and say "cleanliness is godliness". But only if cleanliness is both internal and external can we call it an attribute of God.

A sign-board should be hung here from January 1. It should be written in Marathi, Devanagari, Urdu and English. I have not in my mind formed a precise idea but it would be somewhat as follows. "The poor are given nature-cure treatment here". The name Healthotorium should be removed. There is no need for any name. It does not befit a poor institution. In fact it does not befit any. The English would consider it "vulgar".

We should not use foreign things whether they are patent or not. The poor cannot afford a bottle of *Isapgol* packed in England, Robinson Barley, Quaker Oats, Sanatogen, Horlicks, malted milk or Merck's Glucose. We, from here, cannot teach the

people to take these things—it is immaterial who is here—whether Sardar, some Raja or I. We must make Sanatogen here. Things similar to Horlicks and malted milk should be made here and also something like glucose should be available.

The kitchen can no longer function on the lines it has been doing so far. Today you have the means to feed even a king. But those means must be given up tomorrow. The liberality with which fruit and other things are used here hurts me much. It ought to be changed. Can't we manage with jaggery and lemon?

You must develop the habit of writing. Let your Gujarati be faulty, it can be expressed in good language. Little booklets should be brought out from here. You will have to pay a lot of attention to all these things. I do not know how you will be able to do that while earning 4-5 thousand rupees a month. But bear in mind that if you cannot do it the University will remain merely a dream. I have a capacity for boundless work and also for planning. But I do not have a magic wand by waving which I can create a university. Further, I do not have the knowledge required for that. Therefore I am helpless. If I was not helpless I would have started a nature cure clinic of my own, and would have carried on all my activities from there. But God did not grant me that. Although I was, and still am, very enthusiastic, which is why I am clinging on to you, you are a big man and you have allowed your knowledge to stagnate. That is a big stumbling-block in your way. Your dream will be realized only if you can get over it. If your heart bids you that it is not possible, then leave me even now. I shall not feel bad. Sardar is worried how I am going to cope with the work. His worry is meaningless because no one compels me. God impels me to do the work. If He wants to stop the work He will do so. But you seem to have faith in me, so I must warn you about my helplessness. And I must let you know the limitations and faults I find in you. More when something strikes me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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118. LETTER TO BAKSHI TEKCHAND

November 14, 1945

BHAI BAKSHI TEKCHAND,

Pandit Jawaharlal was here for a day. He told me that you were prepared to make a Trust Deed about Jallianwala Bagh and also look after it. Before 1942 Bhulabhai was assigned the task of the Trust Deed but some obstacles kept delaying it. Then war broke out and the work of the Trust Deed was left in the air. I shall be glad if you discuss this with Bhulabhai and complete the work of the Trust Deed.[1]

Mukerji, who has been the secretary of the Jallianwala Bagh committee for years, will see you. It will be some time before he reaches there.

I am happy that you have once again taken up public work.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR BAKSHI TEKCHAND
LAHORE

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

119. LETTER TO DHARMADEV SHASTRI

November 14, 1945

BHAI DHARMADEV SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Bapa has also written about you. Did I tell you that I would get you some monetary help from Bapa? I don't remember anything about it. My memory has become hopeless. If I say something and it is of some use you must get it in writing from me.[2] Moreover, Bapa further writes and says that owing to the cold weather the hospital may have to be shifted to some other place or the whole work may have to be stopped. Is it advisable to do anything in these circumstances? What is

[1] *Vide* p. 73.
[2] *Vide* p. 59.

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to be done if you cannot get local people to do and continue the work? All this seems difficult. Write everything in brief.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

120. TELEGRAM TO ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN

POONA,
November 15, 1945

BADSHA[H] KHAN
CHARSADDA

DID YOU RECEIVE LETTER SAYING LADY DOCTOR READY? WIRE IF YOU WANT HER NOW.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

121. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

November 15, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS,

I have your letter. I see you are working at great speed. I on my part am doing what I can from here.

I have gone through Motilal's and your opinion. I agree with it. But there is one thing neither of you appear to have considered. The words are : "one should not refuse to sell [khadi] which is worth buying." Now the question is which khadi should be considered "worth buying". One might say that the khadi which had been produced according to the conditions laid down by me was "worth buying". Isn't that so? Why can't I say that I will sell my khadi only to the person who pays me the highest price for it? This gives rise to many more questions but I do not wish to discuss them. They are irrelevant at the moment. But I have been forced to write this because it is not irrelevant to point out the snag which I notice and which prevents me from publishing your views. So if it can be put right, I would of course like to get it done, so that it can be published. But if there is something wrong in my way of thinking, I should not proceed with it for the moment.

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I hope to reach there by the morning train on the 19th. Sardar and others will be with me. I shall leave for Wardha on the 20th evening.

Now about Munshi. I did not like the article[1] you showed me which appeared in the *Chronicle*. I found malice in it. Munshi had come here on business of his own. I asked him about it. He showed me the mistakes in the article and there were other defects also. Even if Jawaharlal had sent a message[2], Munshi did not get it. Afterwards Jawaharlal also came and when I asked him he said that he did not have the slightest recollection of having sent a message. He might have told somebody to send one but it was of no value. The gist of this is that there is very little truth in newspapers and they are full of falsehood. If a man acts believing in their veracity he must lose. I certainly do not wish to see you lose.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANGALDAS PAKVASA
29 DOONGERSI ROAD
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

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

122. A LETTER

November 15, 1945

BHAI,

I have carefully gone through your letter. I like it because you have taken pains to clear your mind. I have come to the conclusion that under the circumstances you should not start work in my absence. Since you have ordered goods to the value of a thousand rupees, you should first dispose of them and then wash your hands of the ointment business. Then when I come that way again I shall, if you are ready, have you start your work under my supervision. If at the time you are not prepared for it I shall not hold you responsible.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] *Vide* also pp. 9-10.
[2] For the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan

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123. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

November 15, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Mukerji will tell you what I have done here. I have noted down all that has happened. Hear him if you have the time and are well enough, otherwise just sign the cheque[1] and send him away.

What is there to write to you. You are always in my mind.

Your younger brother
M. K. GANDHI

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
BANARAS UNIVERSITY

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

124. LETTER TO AMMU SWAMINATHAN

November 15, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I take no interest and no part in elections. Please, therefore, keep me out of it.

Write to me in the national language or in your mother tongue Tamil.[2] Keep English for English people. At least make a beginning.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI AMMU SWAMINATHAN

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

[1] For the Trust Deed of Jallianwala Bagh

[2] The addressee's mother tongue was, however, Malayalam; her husband's was Tamil.

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125. LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE

November 15, 1945

BHAI DASTANE,

What can poor Akka[1] or Vatsala[2] tell you? All your daughters are good and wish to give you the minimum trouble. At the same time they want to take the minimum obligation from others. But I know the way they depend on you unknowingly. Of course I don't blame anyone. Our circumstances often are such that we cannot get out of them. That is why I advise you that you should take up *grihasthashrama*[3] and the more you purify it and remain pure yourself the better will you serve the country. Today we are all intoxicated. Intoxication is not always due to liquor, *ganja* or opium. I have seen that being intoxicated with vanity or the craze for swaraj is at times worse than the intoxication of liquor. To know our *swadharma* and to be engrossed in it is our supreme dharma. That is why, let me add, I can only discuss things with you but I cannot think as you do. Do take as much as you can digest from what I say and go ahead.

I would suggest you have a talk with the members of the Working Committee. I cannot go very far. My position is like that of a 'tenant at will'[4]. The difference is great. I am what I am without any conscious effort on my part, and the poor tenant at will desires to stay for ever. I came across a *sloka* by Bhartrihari, "In fact one who is attached to sense-objects and one who is free from them are both in the same position. The latter voluntarily gives up sense-objects and enjoys bliss, while the self-indulgent one too has to give up his sensual pleasures every now and then and earns only misery." Bhartrihari has crammed a great deal of wisdom into this. Let us all drink that nectar and attain bliss.

I have communicated to Kripalaniji some of my ideas about the elections. I am discussing things with Shankarraoji. Now

[1] & [2] Addressee's daughters
[3] Householder's estate
[4] Gandhiji uses the English expression.

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it is time for me to go for my walk. I shall take a stroll with him and shall tell him what I think about the elections.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI VASUDEV DASTANE
VAKIL SAHEB
BHUSAWAL

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

126. SPEECH AT KHADAKVASALA[1]

November 15, 1945

In a short speech Gandhiji stated that he had nothing new to say. He was getting old and had decided to conserve his energy by observing silence. He appreciated the effort of serving villagers through the health centre and of spreading knowledge of child nursing. He remarked that there was ample scope for such work in the seven lakhs of villages of India.[2] Gandhiji said :

To provide facilities for a safe delivery to a few women is a poor consolation. Your success will be measured by the education you can give to the people around in maternity.

The Hindustan Times, 16-11-1945; and *Mahatma*, Vol. 7, p. 19

127. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

POONA,
November 16, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. You have well described your difficulties. You are gaining plenty of experience also. Learn to cultivate sweetness even from it. Many people get embittered by bitter experiences and feel frustrated because of repeated disappointments. If you do so, then your study of the *Gita* will have been in vain.

[1] Gandhiji, accompanied by Vallabhbhai Patel and Shankarrao Deo, visited the village at the foot of Sinhgad Fort and opened a road prepared by the villagers. He also visited the Health and Maternity Department conducted by the Poona Rotary Club.

[2] What follows is reproduced from *Mahatma*.

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We have to make our path through the Brahmin-non-Brahmin, Hindu-Muslim, and inter-provincial differences and march ahead with our work.

Shanti[1] will have recovered by now. Bal[2] has obtained the highest degree in engineering and has become a Ph. D. He was here for four or five days. He has gone with Kakasaheb to Kashi. He does not seem to have given up everything that he had learnt in the Ashram. He is still unaffected in his speech. He participated fully in the prayers here. He sang *bhajans* for our benefit with great enthusiasm. More when I have the time.

I hope Suru[3] is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7379. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

128. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

November 16, 1945

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your postcard. You must give up the craving for letters in my handwriting. I am dictating this lying down in the evening after the prayers. Sometimes two lines suffice, but at times I have to write at length. You had better leave it to me when I should write myself or when and to whom I should dictate.

Now that you have started the exercise[4] do not give it up. You can go up to 108 *namaskars*. Many *asanas* can be performed while doing *suryanamaskar*. It is largely for you to see which ones will suit you best. Consider also whether you should go up to 108 *namaskars*. There is no point in losing weight by starving. One has to reduce weight if one has put on any because of some disease, but that too not by starving oneself. If even with regular exercise and balanced diet you put on weight, let it be so. You need not worry about it in the least.

[1] Addressee's son
[2] Bal Kalelkar
[3] Addressee's wife Saraswati
[4] *Vide* p. 45.

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You have used the word 'stunt' in a wrong context. You can translate it as *dhating* in Gujarati. The changes in diet or other methods adopted for reducing weight cannot be called stunt. Those who digest what they have studied keep on pursuing the study in order to acquire more knowledge without even thinking about the examination results. While studying they build up their bodies as best they can because keeping the body healthy, strong and lustrous is also a part of learning. I give you full encouragement to study what you have undertaken not for the sake of getting a degree but for the knowledge that you will acquire while studying for it. Since you have already studied Gray[1] once, it should be a mere child's play to go through it a second time. The oftener you read it, the more knowledge you will gain.

It will be good if you give up the habit of walking about as you read. It spoils the eyesight and sometimes the thoughts also wander. While walking one can think over and digest what one has read or think of the work one has done during the day, and so on. But the eyes have to look around and take note of the surroundings and watch out for any obstruction in one's way. One cannot walk with eyes closed but a person like me who walks with the support of others enjoys the pleasure of doing so. But that is not for you.

Stick to your decision not to attend Lakshmidas's wedding.

I have signed at two places. That shows how bad my memory is.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

129. LETTER TO ATULANAND CHAKRAVARTY

POONA,
November 16, 1945

BHAI ATULANAND,

I have your postcard. I have sent the thing on to a historian who has also made a serious study of the Hindu-Muslim question. I am awaiting his reply. A leading Congressman told me that it would not do any good to write anything like this in the name of the Congress because the atmosphere was such

[1] Henry Gray's *Anatomy of the Human Body*

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that people had shut their ears to objectively expressed views of others and such being the case anything said was bound to be misunderstood. Therefore, I am not keen to have this published. Seeing the atmosphere that prevails I myself hold a similar view. But lest I do injustice to your endeavour I have sent it to a historian for his opinion. This much I can say that it will not be possible to have it published as quickly as you want. Let us see what comes of it and what I finally decide.

My visit to Bengal will not be long in coming now. I hope to reach there on December 1st. Do meet me there. Let me, however, tell you that the final decision lies not with those with an English education but with the millions of people who know their mother tongue or the national language. Therefore, write the original in your mother tongue, Bengali; and for other provinces in the national language in both the scripts. If you agree with what I say, start reading and writing the national language in both the scripts. Would Rabi Babu's writings and poetry have had any impact on Bengali if he had written in English?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : 1486. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

130. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

POONA,
November 16, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Let us assimilate *Gitai*[1]. Only after everybody is able to sing *Gitai* in harmony, understanding its meaning, can we think of *Auz Billa*[2] and other things. In that case we shall have to do the same about Zend [Avesta]. It is better to master one thing before taking up another.

It seems proper to keep the same time for prayer everywhere.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4536

[1] Translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* in Marathi by Vinoba Bhave
[2] The verse from the Koran included in the Ashram prayer

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131. LETTER TO LILA JOG

November 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

Thanks for acknowledging receipt of the cheque for Rs. 375.

Don't you have the slightest knowledge of the national language? If you don't, at least you must be knowing your mother tongue. Women who volunteer to work among village women can scarcely expect to do their work through English. I am of course a villager. Why do you write to me in English?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI LILA JOG
30 SHIVAJI PARK
DADAR, BOMBAY 28

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

132. LETTER TO N. VYASATIRTH

November 16, 1945

BHAI VYASATIRTH,

I have your letter. You must be aware that ordinary marriages no longer have any interest for me. I am interested, if at all, in a caste Hindu marrying a Harijan. For, if we wish to observe *Varnashrama* dharma, we should all belong to one caste, i. e., of Harijans. And how else can we prove that we have really become Harijans? But what if marriage between a Bhangi and a Brahmin is not for observing dharma but for indulgence? All the same you have my blessings if your marriage is for the service of the people and if both of you live a life of self-restraint.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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133. LETTER TO AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE

November 17, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I can see your love in everything you do, but you must temper your love with reason. Yesterday I could not go where I intended to go, could not do what I intended to do. I only watched the *tamasha*[1]. Such things give me a fright. I am also past the age when they could interest me. I had intended to inspect all the living quarters and latrines in the sanatorium and to offer suggestions. I had intended to talk to the doctors and joke with the patients. I have to say none of this was done. I had especially brought along Nargisbehn. She could not see anything. I would not take her to watch a *tamasha* at any time. Impelled by your love I spared three hours out of a busy schedule. These days it is not an easy thing for me to spare three hours. They are not mine, they belong to the people. And you should not be instrumental in my wasting even a minute. Now do this much. I want the estimate of expense incurred on a single hut and also how much out of it was spent on the septic tank. If you can easily procure a plan of the hut and the septic tank, I would like to have it. The septic tank is a good device. There was some rank grass around and it seems valuable water, containing manure, flowing from the tank is going waste. Something had better be done about it. What things do they make at the glass factory?

Blessings from
BAPU

AVANTIKABAI GOKHALE
TALEGAON

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

[1] Traditional musical folk-play of Maharashtra

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134. LETTER TO HARBHAI TRIVEDI

November 17, 1945

BHAI HARBHAI,

What are you doing these days? I have no idea at all of your mental state but Chi. Chandu has woken up. She also has written after a long time and that too about you. I am sending a copy of her letter. I want you to send the reply to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

135. LETTER TO SUMITRA GANDHI

November 17, 1945

CHI. SUMI,

I have your letter. The less you adorn the letters, the better they look. I realize more and more each day that handwriting can be made into an art. What sort of animal is this "study"[1]? I hope the water shortage is over.

We shall all leave here on the 19th and reach Sevagram on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

SUMITRA GANDHI
PILANI

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

[1] Gandhiji uses the English word.

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136. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

November 17, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

Your letter contains what one would expect it to contain. My advice is that you should write to Bhai Kumarappa and Satis Babu to send their views. Also mention that this is on my suggestion. I shall form my opinion after that. There is plenty of time, so there is nothing to worry about. Since you will be following my suggestion, I shall have very little to do or to remember and shall be able to give my opinion immediately.

I hope you are all right. Do drop in if you feel like it on the 20th. I, however, see no need for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

VAIKUNTH L. MEHTA
P. O. BOX 472
BOMBAY

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

137. LETTER TO T. S. AVINASHLINGAM

November 17, 1945

BHAI AVINASHLINGAM,

If the chairman of a committee sends blessings for some work of his own committee, does it not amount to his blessing himself ? Is it proper? At any rate you should spare me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI T. S. AVINASHLINGAM
KASTURBA GANDHI NATIONAL MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE
P. O. SHRI RAMAKRISHNA VIDYALAYAM
COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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

138. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

November 17, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I got your letter and two Khaksar officials also came and saw me. I was very happy. I shall reach Bombay on the 19th but that will be my silence day. The silence will end at about 7.30 p. m. At that time I have a meeting with a few Hindustani teachers. On the 20th we have to catch a train for Wardha but still I have told the Khaksar officials that you may come at 3 p. m. I shall wait for you then. If you want any change in the time, please send a message to me at the Birla House.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

139. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POONA,
November 18, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your good letter. Subbaroyan talked to me for a few minutes. He is anxious about you. In a democratic organization and especially one in which violence is eschewed, things will happen as they do. But they must come right in the end. Nobody going there is likely to help. "Experience teaches." There is much that is going astray. But I don't worry and work away in faith.

We are off tomorrow morning. I leave Bombay on 20th, leaving Sevagram on 30th November.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2113

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140. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

Please read the enclosed letter and return it to me with your opinion on what should be done. They have sent the money as royalty on the sales of the translation, but since we are not entitled to it I feel tempted to utilize it for the many other activities under my charge instead of crediting it to the Navajivan account. But then I also feel that I had better send it to you. I am, therefore, sending the cheque herewith. If, now, you yourself feel that the money should not be credited to the Navajivan account, then, and only then, return it to me. At present I am spending money as it comes from different accounts. I do not see any of these to be specially in need of this money. Hence both of us can consider the matter objectively.

I sent you yesterday the pamphlet on constructive programme after revising it with great labour. Inadvertently, it was posted as unregistered packet. I shall, therefore, feel worried till I get an acknowledgment from you. For I have kept no copy of it. But I derive what comfort I can from the story of Newton who, after being slightly upset when the manuscript on which he had been working for many years was destroyed in a fire by somebody, proceeded to write it all over again. And with this thought I keep patience. I hope it will not be lost on the way. But if it is, I will revise another copy. It will mean loss of some time, of course. If, therefore, you received it safely, spend money on a wire, but if you don't get it send another copy with your suggestions so that I may start work on it immediately.

Enclosures :

1 cheque and 1 letter

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9958. Also C.W. 6932. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

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141. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have read the whole of your letter, I also understand what you say. Is it necessary to enter into any discussion about it? "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" is a law without exception. Nobody can alter it. So we must think only about ourselves. "All relations of a man are selfish in their love." You have found in Kunvarji a true relation.[1] Blossom under the shade of that *Kalpataru*[2] and do what you said in your letter to me. I shall then be perfectly happy.

I shall reach Bombay on the 19th noon. I shall be observing silence the whole day. Till two o'clock I shall be busy with the needs of the body. Any time after that you and Kunvarji or others may come if you wish and tell me whatever you wish to in two or three minutes. Otherwise there is no need for you or anybody else to come.

Pretend that I had not come at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MADHAVDAS
C/O SHRI KUNVARJI MEHTA
GANGA SADAN, MARWA ROAD
MALAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2728

[1] *Vide* also p. 43.
[2] Mythical tree that yields all one's wishes

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142. LETTER TO JATINDRA DAS

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. PARAM OR JATINDRA DAS,

I wanted to write to you yesterday, but could not find the time. And today I have your letter. Even now I cannot write at length. You are doing good work. If you try to come over in a hurry, all your efforts will be wasted.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

143. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

POONA,
November 18, 1945

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have no doubt that you have done everything possible with regard to the land at Nasik. Dinshaw is an eccentric man but he is very good, generous and simple-hearted. In the matter of nature cure he is the only man on whom my eyes are fixed. I shall go on encouraging him in his virtues and, if I can do so, it will be of much help to the patients. Therefore, when I saw that he was himself not keen on going to Nasik, I dropped the matter. With that I also decided to begin the new term of the institution from here and run it for the poor. So far only the rich have come and the poor have remained behind. But now the rich who wish to be admitted here will have to come after the poor. The rich will get the same facilities as the poor. At the same time it is certain that an attempt will be made to observe the rules of cleanliness as meticulously as possible. No doubt it is a difficult task. I should not cultivate such an interest in my declining years. But what lay dormant for years has awakened without any effort on my part. How can I resist it? God's will alone will prevail. For the time being the institution of which you too are a trustee has been closed. If it is to come

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into existence out of the activities here, it will. Whatever happens will be proper from all points of view. I shall write to you if I have to go to Nasik or need money to carry on this institution. At present I am just watching. There is some money lying with me. I shall manage with it. Since it is the condition of this trust that the management will not be left in Dinshaw's hands, you may as well say that the responsibility will be mine.

I have read Shivnath Singh's letter you sent me. It did not make a favourable impression on me. He has written at great length.[1] I am writing a brief note to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 8075. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

144. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

POONA,
November 19, 1945

CHI. VANUDI,

Avarice is the root of all evil. Why are you so stingy? Even at the cost of your life, introduce here and get others to adopt Mani's cleanliness and neatness. But all this with love. I shall then be assured that you will make the man you marry happy, you yourself will be happy and will serve the country.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5795. Also C.W. 3018. Courtesy : Vanamala M. Desai

145. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

POONA,
November 19, 1945

BHAI BALUKAKA,

I have received your offering. Observe silence and carry on your work with a sense of detachment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 976. Courtesy : G. N. Kanitkar

[1] The letter dealt with nature cure treatment. The addressee had suggested that Gandhiji might call the writer if he liked the letter.

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146. LETTER TO DUNCAN GREENLEES

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

MY DEAR DUNCAN,

Your letter. I do hope that I shall be in Madras and that we shall meet. No time for more.

Love.

BAPU

PROF. DUNCAN GREENLEES
BHIMILIPATAM
ANDHRA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

147. LETTER TO KHURSHED NAOROJI

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER[1],

Those who make mistakes with individuals cannot make much success with causes; for the latter are never apart from individuals. What you want to say is that individuals are not to be thought of apart from the causes they may represent or may be induced to represent. But this is all nonsense. Let the God of Truth alone guide us.

BAPU

[PS.]

I have no merchant princes. You are at the Conference; send details to Kasturba Fund Secretary[2].

SHRI KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI
82 DARYAGANJ, DELHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] Amritlal V. Thakkar

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148. LETTER TO ANNE MASCARENE

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. What I want to say is that Marybehn should not have come out in public. Now it is done. I have to go to Bengal and Madras. I do not know when I shall settle down at Sevagram.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MASCARENE
THE STATE CONGRESS
TRIVANDRUM
TRAVANCORE

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

149. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have your letter. Follow the dictates of your heart. No matter what I say, if you have doubts you must pause. I know that your first duty is to strengthen the peasant organization in Andhra so that it becomes a model for the whole world. It is difficult for me to go there.

Blessings from
BAPU

PROF. RANGA
NIDUBROLU
ANDHRA

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

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150. LETTER TO R. ACHUTHAN

ON THE WAY TO SEVAGRAM,
November 19, 1945

BHAI ACHUTHAN,

I have your letter. But why is it in English? Why not in the national language? Your arguments are correct. Remember that only he who helps himself achieves anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI R. ACHUTHAN
CONSTRUCTIVE SECTION
P. O. BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

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

151. LETTER TO KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI

November 19, 1945

BHAI KHANDUBHAI,

What message can a labourer give to a labour union? I have not heard of anyone sending a message to himself.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI KHANDUBHAI DESAI
MAJOOR MAHAJAN SANGH
LAL DARWAJA

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

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152. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

BIRLA HOUSE,
November 19, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I have your letter. I just cannot do as you desire. At 11 a. m. I have a massage. Even otherwise I am busy the whole day. I have not even a minute free. The meeting can be arranged with some difficulty for 3 p. m. It is true that I told those who had come to see me that if the meeting was to be private, I would go to any place. But no private meeting is possible at the place you suggest. The biggest problem is the condition you have laid down. I cannot speak on behalf of the Congress. I can speak for myself and I think I have already conveyed[1] my view to you that though you have taken great pains in drafting the constitution, it is not workable and it cannot appeal to others. I still think as I have said earlier, that only if all the communities are first united at heart and wish to sit together and decide the issue will it be possible to frame a constitution. So what the Congress will do is beside the point. Personally, too, I cannot agree with you on your constitution. As I have said, though there are some good features in it and I appreciate the trouble you have taken, I am afraid we shall not be able to agree at the forthcoming meeting. I had thought and I still think, that whatever the outcome of our meeting might be, we should meet and at least try to understand each other's point of view.

Your letter gives me no such hope.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

[1] *Vide* p. 5.

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153. *DISCUSSION WITH HINDUSTANI PRACHAR SABHA WORKERS*

BOMBAY,
[*November 19, 1945*][1]

To a question why the Urdu script should be imposed on a person who did not like it and wished to learn the national language only through the Devanagari script, Mahatma Gandhi replied :

It is not a question of liking or disliking. If you do not like the Urdu script, then I conclude that you do not like Hindustani. The Urdu script must be learnt. Without effort and sacrifice we cannot dream of winning freedom. So far as the provinces of Bombay, Gujarat and Maharashtra are concerned, the question of learning the Nagari script does not arise at all as everybody knows it already. Then, where does Hindustani Prachar come in? In learning the other script, do not think you are conferring a favour on anyone. It should be considered as your duty. It is a national work and everyone should do it. By learning both the scripts you can better understand both the Hindi and the Urdu developments of the language. I can understand Sanskritized Hindi, but what about the masses? It is our duty to learn both the scripts. Then alone can we honestly serve the country in a humble way. According to me one who does not have a liking for the Urdu script has no liking for swaraj also. The masses do not understand pure Hindi or pure Urdu, so Hindustani should be evolved in such a way that even the illiterate masses can understand it.

Mere slogans would not help in achieving the goal of freedom. Taking as little trouble as possible and looking to your worldly advancement will leave your swaraj just a dream. Nagari and Urdu are both equally dear to me. So when I say learn the Urdu script I have no enmity towards the other script. Our swaraj cannot be given to us as a gift, but we shall have to win it through our untiring efforts.

To understand our people and win swaraj for our country, do not be deterred from this small effort of learning the two important scripts of our land. To keep faith, one must be cent

[1] From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 25-11-1945

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per cent faithful. It is not a bit of bread which you can break up in pieces. The language of a people cannot be divided, it is one and indivisible like Truth. Therefore, whether you like it or not you will have to learn and love Urdu.

Asked whether script should be given as much importance as language, Gandhiji replied :

Language and script are both necessary in practice. How are we, after all, to solve the question of writing to our own Muslim brethren who know only the other script? If we argue, 'What have we to do with them?', then I say why bother about swaraj? I want to learn all the thirteen scripts and want to know them equally well. Had you given one-seventh of the time to the learning of these scripts which you have given to English, you would have learnt all the thirteen scripts by now. It is not difficult to learn the Urdu script. It can be done with great ease and facility.

A *pracharak* asked why the Urdu script should not be taught to the student after the Nagari is learnt. Mahatma said :

If I had been a teacher, I would have taught four or five scripts at the same time. I did not take even eight days to learn the Urdu script. There should at least be four or five such teachers who may know the two scripts perfectly and may be able to teach them. It could be left to the option of the teacher whether he taught the two scripts together or one after the other. But he should examine them in both before giving them a certificate.

Regarding the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Babu Purushottam Das Tandon's attitude to the script issue, Mahatma Gandhi said :

Tandonji is my friend. I love him. We have lived together for a long time. But now, on this question, we are taking two different paths; but we do not stand in each other's way. Personally, for myself, I want to see Saraswati after the union of Ganga and Jamuna.

The Hindu, 26-11-1945

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154. LETTER TO INAYATULLA KHAN

BIRLA HOUSE,
November 20, 1945

ALLAMA SAHEB,

I have your letter, which has hurt me deeply. You have totally misunderstood what I said out of great love. I am helpless. What I had told you was never meant for the Press and so far as I am concerned I would like to say that whatever we have been writing to each other should not be sent to the Press. Still, you can send it if you think it fit. Excuse me for not replying in English. You think that if we write in Urdu or any other Indian language it can be misinterpreted, and if we write in English it can mean one thing only. But I hold exactly the opposite view.

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

155. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHA,
November 21, 1945

I had purposely refrained from correcting or contradicting reports about my shifting to Poona and establishing a nature cure hospital on an extensive plot of ground in Poona or even Nasik. All this was wrong, as most unauthentic reports in the Press are. These have always cost me dear, perhaps the public more than me. There was, however, a grain of truth in the ounce of rumour. Dr. Dinshaw Mehta knew me before I knew him and, ever since I have known him, I have liked him. I have been myself a nature cure man before all known to me. Of them, Dr. Dinshaw has made the greatest impression on me and he is a dreamer like me. He wants a nature cure university; so do I. He has made over to a Trust his concerns at Poona and Sinhgad. Their nominal cost, according to the schedules to the Trust, is, in round figures, Rs. 50,000. I have allowed myself to be one of the Trustees. The other two are Dr. Mehta himself and Mr. Jehangir Patel who is interested in nature cure. Hitherto Dr. Mehta's institution has been meant for monied men and then for as many poor people as he could safely take. Patients have all been residential.

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From the 1st of January next, this institution will be devoted to the service of the poor. The rich will be taken only if they can accommodate themselves to remain with the poor, and expect no more space or comforts than the poor will get at this institution. The guarantee will be that the standard of cleanliness, shorn of luxury, will be the highest attainable in any institution of the kind. Treatment will be both indoor and outdoor. Outdoor will naturally be more than indoor.

The Birlas have interested themselves in me for years. And they were prepared to give me in Nasik as much land with buildings as were required for the institution. But Dr. Dinshaw was not whole-heartedly inclined to favour the Nasik idea, unless I consented to include in the Trust the going concerns at Poona too. I could not shoulder the burden. Hence the Nasik project had to be dropped, for the time being at any rate.[1] Dr. Dinshaw will still remain the sole Director so far as the technical part is concerned. This institution, if it is to grow at all, will require the silent blessings of the poor, the financial support of the rich, active co-operation of genuine naturopaths of India and sympathy of the medical fraternity. Its present site is too small for the requirements of the poor. Moreover, it will largely depend upon the leaseholder whether the institution can in any case remain located on the present site.

The Hitavada, 22-11-1945

156. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
November 21 [*1945*][2]

AMTULSALAAM
CARE HUMAYUN KABIR
26 AMRALI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

YOUR LETTER. SORRY ABOUT ILLNESS. DON'T WORRY. JOIN ME CALCUTTA WHEN QUITE RESTORED.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 488

[1] *Vide* also p. 26 and pp. 93-4.

[2] The year is illegible in the source. However it is inferred from the reference to the addressee's illness, *vide* p. 109 and Gandhiji's visit to Calcutta where he reached on December 1, 1945.

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157. TELEGRAM TO H. L. SHARMA

WARDHAGANJ,
November 21, 1945

DR. SHARMA
KHURJA

RECEIVED BOTH LETTERS.

BAPU

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 343

158. LETTER TO CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA

November 21, 1945

CHI. CHANDRASHANKAR,

Just now as I start writing, your letter is placed before me. Of course I do get news of you. And when the Sardar is there what more can one want? I have secured the books you recommended. I do want to glance through them but what am I to do? Please send Joad's[1] book when you come across it. Also Hodge's[2]. I understand about your health but I am glad that you are able somehow to carry on your work. Reading your letter for a moment I wondered if it was Mahadev's. You and a few others have been copying his handwriting but you beat all the rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHANDRASHANKAR SHUKLA
KRISHNA BHAVAN
BANGDI MATA'S ROAD
RAOPURA, BARODA

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

[1] C. E. M. Joad
[2] Charles Hodge

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159. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

Since you will certainly not be back before I leave Sevagram, I am writing you this letter. You should know that the Nagpur Bank was Jamanalal's, which he had started for the service of the people. The idea was, and ought to be even now, that it should serve as a savings bank for the poor. The bank, therefore, must never crash. In other words, the Nagpur Bank should crash only when the Bank of England or the Imperial Bank do or when there is some great natural calamity. That is, it must have the reputation that it will be the last not the first to crash. That you are Jamnalal's heir really means that you are heir to that reputation, and it was because of this belief of mine that I advised the Jallianwala Trust to let its funds remain in the Nagpur Bank and to try to transfer still more deposits to it. I have given the same advice to Kumarappa, namely, that he should deposit the Village Industries Association's funds in that Bank. That confidence must not prove to have been misplaced. But the moment I alighted at the railway station yesterday Bharatan told me quite the opposite. He of course spoke gently and since I am the President of the Association, asked for my opinion. Kumarappa had written to me and asked me whether he should deposit the Village Industries funds in the . . . .[1] Bank. Vaikunthbhai had advised in favour of it and, therefore, Kumarappa had assumed that I also would agree. But I expressed doubt and did not give my consent. Kumarappa, however, had already deposited the money. But now we must withdraw it. In that case we shall lose the interest. And what if, despite our readiness to lose the interest, we cannot withdraw it. So Bharatan asked my advice. Kumarappa is not here just now. But I told Bharatan that if the Bank people objected, we must put up a fight and insist on withdrawing the money, for otherwise I felt the money was insecure and it would be like killing a buffalo for a leather thong. I do not know even today what kind of an

[1] The name is omitted in the source.

establishment the . . . Bank is. I do have some vague idea about it, of course. But I generally dislike and distrust new banks. I would not, therefore, readily agree to deposit money in them. Then the question arose : if not in the . . . Bank, why should we keep the money in the Nagpur Bank? Is it also not a comparatively new bank? Comparatively yes. Bharatan then added that it was being rumoured that the Nagpur Bank would close down in a month or two because it had incurred losses and it was feared that the deposits were not safe. He suggested, therefore, that it would be wise to withdraw the money in time. I did not believe the rumour and remained undisturbed in my mind, but I wanted to know what was at the back of the rumour. Radhakrishna[1] was with me at the time. I asked him. He explained the position. I felt reassured and told Bharatan that we must deposit the money in the Nagpur Bank and nowhere else. However, I felt that I must inform you. Hence this letter. Think over this and be on your guard. It is no ordinary matter to be Jamnalal's heir. You are his heir because you are his son. I am his heir because I am his adopted father. My interest is to see that his name remains untarnished. You and I shall have proved ourselves his true heirs only if the ventures he started are not merely kept up but become models of their kind.

It may be that you will earn a lot of money and be reckoned a millionaire. But what is to happen to the philanthropic ventures and the Bank he started in the last years of his life? What is to happen to the cause of the poor cow, of khadi, of the Village Industries Association? Did I not settle at Wardha at his behest, ignoring Sardar's anger born out of his love? He could have easily secured for me ten orchards against one here, but he could not find for me a Jamnalal there and, therefore, I let go the ten orchards. And now, I do not wish even to feel that I have lost Jamnalal. This rests entirely in your hands, in Radhakrishna's and Janakidevi's. Janakidevi, however, is uneducated and the hope of her shaping up which I had cherished has dried up after Jamnalal's passing away. I therefore cannot explain to her the position about the Bank and have not even tried. Radhakrishna is very clever. He has practical sense but cannot be said to be educated. You have been to England and have, besides, made some mark as a business man. As for self-confidence, you have more of it than is good for you. Be that as it may, as heir to Jamnalal and head of the family it is to you that I have to look up. I,

[1] Addressee's cousin, Radhakrishna Bajaj

therefore, advise you to do the best you can to bring glory to your father's name as a philanthropist. If you think it beyond your capacity, be humble and caution me in time. Not all sons can or do follow in the footsteps of their benevolent fathers. If, therefore, you also fail to do so, nobody can point a finger at you. And in any case who am I to do so? But as a grandfather I should at least advise you and caution you. Having done so, I would quietly accept what you do. I think I have said enough. Ponder over it carefully and let me know, at any rate, whether the advice I have given to Bharatan is correct or not.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3058

160. TALK TO STUDENTS OF SAMAGRA GRAMSEVA VIDYALAYA[1]

SEVAGRAM,
November 22, 1945

I expect much from the students who have come here for study. Not only I but also those who take interest in this work, expect much from you. There are many educated people in India who criticize and run down our programme. Some of them oppose it on principle. At present I do not want to say anything about them, though I have a ready answer for them. But we should listen to those who have some interest in this work and wish to take some part in it. Such people hope for much from khadi work, village industries, *goseva* and work of Harijan uplift. We should therefore make strenuous efforts to fulfil their expectations. If you have come here in order merely to earn your livelihood, then that hope will not be realized.

Many people study in Government colleges. They get degrees there. They think that with that education they will earn money and fame and at least become clerks in some Government office, or if not, they can certainly get jobs as peons. And they become peons not for the sake of work, but in the hope of getting promotions in future and making some money on the side. This means that they believe that once they enter Government service, their life is secure. This is a matter which needs careful thinking. The Government has provided several facilities in their colleges.

[1] The institution started functioning from October 2, 1945.

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They have provided spacious buildings, offered large scholarships and given travelling facilities. How can we compete with all this?

I have already shown several ways of solving this problem. You have not come here for comforts or for the sake of salary. If you want to succeed in your aim bear in mind that you have not come here merely to learn crafts. Of course you have to learn crafts but you should not rest content with that. Artisans are already there in villages. They have been doing the same work from generation to generation. How can you compete with them? Do learn the process, but along with that you must acquire scientific knowledge. We should think again and again why we are doing this work, how we should proceed about it, how we can link it with swaraj. Swaraj has to be attained through non-violence. There are crores of people living in the villages of India. We have to emancipate them, serve them and make them understand the value of this work. If you believe that the mill-owners can feed the people and if you are satisfied with it then you should not study here. But the mill-owners can provide for only a handful. Mill-owners never think at all of the crores of people. I have not come across any mill-owner so far who has told me that mills can provide work for the millions.

You have come here to accomplish a Herculean task. You have to serve crores of people. It is immaterial that you are only sixty-one in number. But you will have accomplished something if you leave after gaining scientific knowledge. All the sixty-one of you have to become guardians or trustees for the millions of people. If your example is followed, the number will increase. This Vidyalaya is like the Gangotri[1]. Its flow will swell like that of the Ganga. This has been my dream for the last 25 years. The hope that I have cherished has not yet been fulfilled. Still I am not disappointed at all because I never lose heart. A great enterprise does not move quickly. Non-violence marches forward slowly but steadily. Its way is straight. It will overtake those who move with the speed of an aeroplane. This is my firm belief.

The knowledge that you gain here is to be imparted to the villagers. You have to create interest in them for such knowledge. But this is not an easy task. I have been here in Sevagram for the last so many years. The headquarters of the Charkha Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh, Goseva Sangh and so on are situated here. There are very good workers also. The facilities that are not available anywhere else are available here. In spite of all this, I have not been able to do what I wanted to do. But you

[1] The source of the Ganga in the Himalayas

should not lose heart because of that. You should ask yourselves why we have not been able to do it. The teachers should have an answer for this. Those who are sitting here are neither hypocrites nor cheats. They are sitting here with a firm belief that sooner or later the key to this problem will come into their hands. We have to multiply Sevagrams. We have to think not of a single village but the whole of India. I sometimes think of the whole world as well. If we had to take care of Sevagram only or had to work without concern for non-violence and truth, then we could have accomplished the work but that would not have removed the sufferings of this world. India is a tiny spot in the world and in it Sevagram is but a speck. Whatever is possible in Sevagram can also be possible in the world. I am prepared to spend 100 years for it.

I shall teach you whatever I know if you are prepared to learn it with patience. But it will not help you to earn money. I can easily earn a thousand or two thousand rupees. I stayed for 20 years in South Africa, I can speak some broken English also. Moreover, these days I am considered a mahatma too! So anybody will give me two thousand rupees. But I don't want all this. On the strength of it I can collect crores of rupees, but not for myself. So far as I am concerned I want nothing more than plain bread. In the same way you should also be content with plain bread. The work here is not easy. If you are not satisfied with the work here you should leave. You can earn enough money elsewhere but if you wish to stay here, you should stay with a contented mind. If you have this feeling that you are one with the millions, then you will succeed.

You have come here from different Provinces. You eat together and live together. Your heart should be clean and you should feel that we are all one. I have started saying that we are all Harijans—indeed Bhangis. Only when you imbibe such an attitude, will our work succeed. You will have to be alert every moment and carry on the work. You will be examined and you will be given a certificate. But that will not prove your worth. The certificate will not be for showing to others. It will enable you to know that you have reached a certain standard and that you have to proceed further. Today certificates do carry weight but we have to change our values, change our way of life and also our attitude towards these things.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1945

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161. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1945

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I am dictating this in Gujarati in order to save time. I got your letter. I had expected to see you here, instead of which I saw your letter full of real distress. It was not the lamentation usual in your letters. I felt in it, instead, your sorrow at having fallen ill at the wrong moment. I too, therefore, felt unhappy. Maganbhai[1], too, gave me a vivid description. And then I heard from Jajuji[2] such a beautiful account of your spirit of service and courage that my heart overflowed with joy. We shall now be meeting in a few days. Do not be carried away by your joy and run up to Sodepur. Get well first and then come.

I am glad that you have found shelter in Humayun's house. I am in good health. Those who were ill here are gradually recovering.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 502

162. LETTER TO MADALASA

November 23, 1945

CHI. CRAZY MADALASA,

I have your letter. Now that Shrimanji is there, do as he advises. You have too many advisers. That is bad. You should listen only to one person whom you respect and follow his advice. Do not listen to anybody else, and if someone comes to talk to you just close your ears. You will then quickly recover. And don't worry in any case. Since you have given birth to a child, you must bring him up well. It will be enough if, for his sake

[1] Maganbhai P. Desai
[2] Shrikrishnadas Jaju

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at least, you can forget your craziness and become, if not a *jnani*, at least a sensible woman.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 326-7

163. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

SEVAGRAM,
November 23, 1945

BHAI GADODIAJI,

I got all your letters and Dr. Sharma's and quite a number of them, I may say, but I did not think it proper to get involved in all these things. Now I see that I shall have to devote some time to the matter. You emphatically proclaim your honesty and I have as yet no reason to doubt it. You have already given me the reason for believing that your conscience is clear and I have accepted it despite opposition from others. But the attacks of Dr. Sharma and others on your attitude towards khadi have shaken my opinion. I wrote one or two strong letters to Dr. Sharma. I am sending you the letter I got in reply. He insists that it should be sent to you. You can give whatever reply you want to and send it along with his letter.

I am writing this letter with a heavy heart. Dr. Sharma's complaint is not a new one. He had the same complaint when he had come to see me a few months after my release from jail. But I did not pay much attention to it. Let Chi. Saraswati also read this letter. She may also say what she has to.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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164. LETTER TO SHARAYU DHOTRE

November 24, 1945

CHI. SARAYU,

I am glad to have your letter. But I continue to have doubts about the propriety of what you are doing. Anyway it will be enough if you work for the well-being of the person whom you consider your husband and do not have the slightest lustful desire for anyone else. I shall be happy if you write to me sometimes.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

165. LETTER TO BABUBHAI

SEVAGRAM,
November 24, 1945

BHAI BABUBHAI,

I have your letter. I am not in the least satisfied. I may be mistaken, but how can I say I am satisfied when I am not? I can see no place for what you say in the dharma that I have known and observed. Dharma Sanghs are not formed that way. Your support for English is very lame. If you could only bring credit to Gujarat! If you could do so even now I would consider it enough. Its fragrance will spread on its own. Give the enclosed letter[1] to Sharayu.

Blessings from
BAPU

AHMEDABAD

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

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

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166. LETTER TO NAVIN GANDHI

November 24, 1945

CHI. NAVIN,

I have your letter. It is not very clear but it will do for my purpose. I am sending it to Dr. Krishnavarma. I wish you would learn to describe things clearly as they are.

Blessings from
BAPU

NAVIN GANDHI
45 NEHRU ROAD
VILE PARLE

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

167. TELEGRAM TO DAUD GHAZNAVI

[On or after *November 24, 1945*][1]

MAULANA DAUD GHAZNAVI[2]

DR. GOPICHAND FREE DO HIS WILL.

GANDHI

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

168. TELEGRAM TO DR. GOPICHAND BHARGAVA

WARDHA,
[On or after *November 24, 1945*][3]

ACT AS YOU WISH.

BAPU

From the original : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram dated November 24, seeking Gandhiji's permission for Dr. Gopichand Bhargava to contest the election to the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

[2] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

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169. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

Under pressure of work and preparations for shifting from Poona to Sevagram I had overlooked acknowledging your letter[1] of 9th instant regarding Shri Basuda Singh. Meanwhile, I saw in the papers and from private telegrams received from Bihar that His Excellency had commuted the death sentence. Will you please therefore convey my thanks to His Excellency for the commutation ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 56-7

170. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I thank you for your letter of 16th instant acknowledging mine of 13th instant[2] regarding Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 58

[1] It informed Gandhiji that execution of Basuda Singh had been stayed as his mercy petition was under consideration of the U. P. Governor.
[2] *Vide* p. 68.

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171. LETTER TO SIR EVAN M. JENKINS

SEVAGRAM,
November 25, 1945

DEAR SIR EVAN,

I write this in continuation of my letter[1] of 10th October. Since then I have seen other such accounts in the papers and now I have with me a young man (Shri Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi) who came to me while he was yet in his teens, without being recommended by anybody, as a poor youngster. This was in the year 1935. Ever since then he has never been out of my observation. He was arrested in connection with the 1942 disturbances, and has lately been discharged. He came to Wardha in a dilapidated condition. I was then at Poona. He reported his arrival and I telegraphed to him to come there so that I could look after him better and, if necessary, get Dr. Mehta's assistance at his sanatorium where I was staying. He narrates tales of terrible torture, into the details of which I do not wish to go at this stage.[2]

On top of this I have received a communication from Dr. Lohia's friends and they tell me that Dr. Lohia has gone through torture himself. He is an able, cultured man who sacrificed a position of ease and luxury for the sake of the cause of India's independence. I know him well and, through him, also his father.

It is difficult to disbelieve all the accounts that have appeared in the Press and the two incidents mentioned above. I suggest that His Excellency goes deeper into the matter and not reject the statements as an exaggeration undeserving of any attention. I take comfort from the fact that in your letter of 1st November in reply to mine of 10th October, you tell[3] me that though His Excellency believes the story to be exaggerated, he is making further investigations. I plead for investigation into all other such statements and, if he proposes to do so, I am prepared to send you

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXXI, p. 338.

[2] Writing to the Secretary of State on March 5, 1946, the Viceroy said : "It has now been established that Vidyarthi was never brought to Delhi and that his allegations are a complete fabrication. Devdas Gandhi has admitted this . . . ." *The Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 1112.

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 36.

such details as I possess about the two cases mentioned here and others about which I may be able to speak with some confidence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 63

172. NOTE TO G. V. MAVALANKAR[1]

Silence Day, Monday, November 26, 1945

You should wish to live up to 125 years for the sake of service and go on doing more and more service. If I am the only one to cherish such a wish, I would dry up like a lone tree.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1256; also *Sansmarano*

173. LETTER TO RAMANAND TEERTH

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1945

BHAI RAMANAND SWAMI,

I have your letter. As I have said earlier, you should not approach me for advice. Pandit Jawaharlalji is the President. You should ask him and do as he advises.

I hope you have recovered by now.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

174. LETTER TO BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

SEVAGRAM,
November 26, 1945

CHI. BHARATAN,

Read at least this much Hindi. I am not taking you for *Harijan*. This is just one of the possibilities. You are not bound in any way.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The addressee had gone to Sevagram to seek Gandhiji's blessings on his birthday. As it was a silence day Gandhiji wrote this for him.

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175. TALK WITH MEMBERS OF HYDERABAD STATE CONGRESS

8 p.m., November 26, 1945

I have said this after careful consideration. Earlier I said nothing as everything was in a mess. Now it is a different thing. I have read it. I am myself quite unhappy that I am not able to guide you properly. This much I can say. Do send a reply that the ban should be lifted and the State Congress should be recognized. For the rest Jawaharlalji should be consulted.

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

176. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[SEVAGRAM][1],
November 27, 1945

CHI. MANI,

I got your two letters. I am sending you the letter meant for Kanjibhai[2]. Post it along with your letter.

Ask them to consider one thing about the Yeravda Pact. It has a provision regarding ten years' limit. But it is not there in the 1935 Act. Can it, then, be legally enforced? Let Pakvasa[3] think about it. He may, if necessary, consult counsel. My own view is clear. The law will not help. But there can be no two opinions that politically we can fight. It will have to be considered, of course, whether it would be advisable to raise the issue just now. But we shall discuss this after you arrive here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 137

[1] The source however has Poona.

[2] Kanaiyalal Nanabhai Desai, President, Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee, from 1946 to 1956

[3] Mangaldas Pakvasa, President of the Bombay Legislative Council

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177. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. BABUDI,

I have your letter. I shall be very happy if you get well soon. I am leaving on the 30th. I hope to hear about you even during my tour. Chimanlal[1] is accompanying me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10064. Courtesy : Sharda G. Chokhawala

178. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS G. KAPADIA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I have your long letter. I read your plan of work. I wish that you will go on serving according to it. Take Dr. Kesani's treatment and get well. I understand about Dr. Krishnavarma. You should have a frank talk with him. I am of course going to do that. Others also who criticize him must write plainly. I know of no case where mincing of words has cured anyone. My impression is that it makes people worse. To make indirect suggestions and then expect good results means that for the sake of improving something, one may do wrong and speak untruth.

I received Kunvarji's letter. I am not writing to him today. I am saving time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2726

[1] Chimanlal N. Shah, addressee's father

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179. LETTER TO JEHANGIR P. PATEL

November 27, 1945

BHAI JEHANGIR,

It is good you have reached there. I am considering sending someone from here for keeping the accounts and so I have been doing a lot of thinking. We would like to have all possible help from you.

I hope Mother is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

JEHANGIR PATEL
PATEL BROTHERS
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

180. LETTER TO ZOHRA CHAWDA

November 27, 1945

CHI. ZOHRA,

I have your letter. I did not know you had such a sense of humour. I was very happy to learn that you had made one of the rooms shine like a mirror. Do the same with the other rooms and all of you then use them as mirrors. This will save the expense on a mirror.

You slept a lot. If you keep sleeping like that, you will recover quickly. A sick person should sleep as much as he can.

I have Vanu's letter but I am not writing to her today. I am very busy.

Blessings from
BAPU

ZOHRABEHN

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

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181. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

Champabehn[1] is going to stay here in the same way as the others do. About Sarala's education I have made it clear to her that while she stays here, she can neither have tuition from outside nor expect any other special facilities. She can receive only the education available here and she has to do as much work for the Ashram as her body will permit. She will have to be content with the food provided here and she will have to bear all expenses. She already knows spinning and other activities.

Efforts should be made gently to make Kanjibhai abide by the rules or else he must be suffered with love. Only love can understand the language of love. It would be a crime to make a mechanical approach.

2. I have already had a talk with Kailasbehn. She will stay in the Ashram. This is a similar problem. Here too the key lies in love. The same applies to Om Prakash.

3. I would love to keep Govind in the Talimi Sangh but only if Sankaran is convinced.

4. I do not know anything about Mavjibhai. I have just met him and his wife. With regard to them do what Kishorelalbhai and Naraharibhai say.

5. There is nothing to be said about Govind Reddy.

6. I should be happy to make the acquaintance of Mohan Singhji[2], but I have no time. I would like to utilize his services as a blacksmith and carpenter.

7. While looking after the management, it will be good if you can take classes in the spare time. But I too have looked after the management, haven't I? For me management itself had become a [training] class. I was a teacher as well as a pupil. The manager keeps an eye on everyone and sees how he sits, how he eats and what he reads. If within this framework, you can have a class, it will be all right. For instance, at Kocharab, all

[1] *Vide* p. 29.
[2] Mohan Singh Thakur; *vide* p. 140.

education was given in the Ashram. I had made a list of all those who were qualified to teach. Probably only one or two hours were reserved for teaching. I had assigned some work to myself too and I used to do my share.

8. Workers have got to learn all the processes concerning cotton. Let this instruction be imparted at Khadi Vidyalaya. The three R's must be taught. I shall not be able to go into the details of how it is to be done.

9. Even if Vinoba takes selections from *Al Fateha*[1] and *Mazda*[2] it will have to be in Arabic and Pehlavi. They can be accompanied by Vinoba's translation to bring out the meaning. In my view there is some value in reciting them in the original. I do not take the position that everything should be in the mother tongue or the national language.

10. You are right.

11. What you say is correct. I am used to one room only and I have not had two separate rooms. It is the same thought with a slight difference at the Christ Seva Sangh.

12. I have written at length about clothing. Go through it.

13. Now I myself take spices. But I hope I do that only by way of medicine. I take them at the instance of Dr. Mehta but I am not even aware of their existence in my food. The significant change is that we have now realized they have as much place in medicine as they have in taste. Wheat is cooked in so many different ways for taste and we also make *roti* out of it to fill the stomach.

14. The quantity of milk is all right. Maybe, even one lb. is enough.

15. Gajraj has started going to the Talimi Sangh. I think we should keep him there full time.

16. Think things over and write to me further if you wish. There are two sides to it.

17. Write to Purushottam Gandhi[3] in this regard.

18. Consider in this matter the person concerned and the convenience of the Ashram. I may agree to allow a deserving person [to stay in the Ashram] even for eight days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4537

[1] & [2] From the Koran and the Zend Avesta for inclusion in the Ashram Prayer

[3] Elder son of Narandas Gandhi

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182. LETTER TO MAHESH DUTT MISHRA

November 27, 1945

CHI. MAHESH,

I have your postcard. I never thought that you were good for nothing. Do write to me when you are on leave. I can send for you if it is convenient.

My address : Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, 24 Parganas.

Blessings from
BAPU

MAHESH DUTT
9 HAMILTON ROAD
ALLAHABAD

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

183. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SEVAGRAM,
November 27, 1945

CHI. URMILA,

I hope you will understand my Hindi. I shall certainly talk to Jawaharlal.

Arrangements will be made for you here. You will get a room with a lavatory near by. You will be able to cook for yourself.

I shall be busy with my work in Sodepur but you can come whenever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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184. WHY THE INSISTENCE ON THE YARN CLAUSE[1]

November 27/28, 1945

This is an old argument.[2] One wants to do many good things but is too lazy. However, when a rule is made the work becomes easy. Then one finds that one has gained the strength to do the work one could not do before. By making the yarn clause compulsory, we do not coerce people. We only make it easy for those who want to spin. How long can they spin who have no heart in it? It will be hypocritical if they spin as a demonstration. Hypocrites only do harm to themselves. They cannot harm khadi in any way. I would in fact go so far as to say that he who takes up spinning out of a desire for praise will gradually develop an interest in the activity and then continue to spin willingly. If even after long practice he cannot find interest in spinning, if he still finds it a tedium he will give up khadi. That will not harm us in any way.

If the khadi bhandars close down because of the yarn clause they well may. And I do not care whether anyone buys khadi or not. I do not wish to run a shop. I want people to learn spinning. In Bombay 300 or 350 charkhas are plied. But this number means nothing. What I want is that there should be as many charkhas plying there as there are homes. If the cities are to imbibe non-violence there is no other way. The Government have the force that destroys; I have the charkha. The charkha alone can save us from destructive force. All other methods are useless.

If the enforcement of the yarn clause results in reduced sales of khadi and if the consequent loss forces us to close down the khadi bhandars, we may close them down. We cannot maintain khadi bhandars to sell khadi. You will say that if khadi bhandars in the city close down we shall have to sell khadi in the villages and that khadi cannot sell in the villages as it can in the cities. I agree that khadi cannot sell in the villages and it should

[1] According to the source this is a summary of what Gandhiji had said at discussions with the Charkha Sangh workers on November 27 and 28.

[2] It had been suggested that those who could not tender yarn for the purchase of khadi should be allowed to buy it for cash, and that making the tendering of yarn compulsory would amount to coercion.

not. Khadi is not to be sold in the villages, it is to be worn there. It is to be spun and worn. Rather than that we should have to get licences from the Government for khadi bhandars it is better that khadi dies, it is better that the khadi shops close down. Khadi cannot survive if it has to depend on others for its survival. Then it will be its lot to disappear. Once you understand the idea behind khadi you will not be nervous. You will not wonder how khadi bhandars and khadi centres will carry on. Since we have taken that step, since we have dared, we must be prepared to face difficulties. If we have to suffer set-backs we must be prepared for it.

You ask about woollens and silks. Who wears them? Can the poor do so? Why should we take all the trouble for a few rich people? These things cannot become universal. We may certainly keep stocks of woollens and silks in khadi bhandars as we keep other things there but we must understand that that is no part of our work. We may not apply the yarn clause to woollens and silks. We may not ask for yarn when selling these. Do we ask for yarn when selling other village handicrafts? Woollens and silks come in that category. If we remain steadfast, the importance of khadi will not diminish. If we think of meeting the expenditure of khadi bhandars out of the proceeds from the sale of woollens and silks, it will not help khadi, it will only harm it. If we carry on the khadi activity with the help of woollens and silks we shall become crippled. We shall not be able to carry on with the khadi work. Khadi work can sustain itself. It does not require dependence on anyone.

No one can kill khadi. How can mills do so? Mills may themselves be destroyed. We do not worry on that account. All the activities concerned with khadi, right from the picking of cotton to the weaving of khadi, should be carried on by the khadi bhandars. Selling of khadi is only a minor activity. Kakubhai is the secretary of the Bombay khadi bhandar. I want to see how skilled he is. I want to see in his hand not a pen but a charkha. He should be an expert in all the processes employed in khadi. If I were in a bhandar I would spin, I would card. We have to teach people spinning and weaving through the bhandars. Today we do try to teach people how to ply the charkha. But if khadi is to reach every home we must teach people ginning, carding and all the other processes. I do not much care for buying slivers. One should make slivers oneself. Today machine-made slivers are used. The practice must stop. Everyone should card his own cotton, make his own slivers and

then spin. Only then can we say that we have adopted khadi. I have become a lover of hand-carding. Even inferior cotton such as *mathia*, hand-carded, can yield yarn of the fineness of 20 counts. The mills cannot produce yarn of a count higher than six or seven from this cotton. I prefer hand-carding to carding with a bow. It does not expose one to the risk either of consumption or asthma. Even a queen in her palace can easily take this up. Even children and old men can card and make slivers. It is a simple and easy activity.

Today we must not think of spreading khadi by carrying it about on our backs and hawking it. We have not to give anyone ready-made khadi. We shall say, 'take this charkha, take this cotton, card it, make slivers and spin. Get the weaver in your village to weave it and then wear it.' I would in fact say that the khadi bhandars not only should not have khadi, they should not even have slivers and cotton. If people demand them we may give them cotton and the necessary tools and arrange for spinning to be taught. You will then see that the country will have no dearth of khadi or cloth as such. Cloth is frequently rationed and still cloth famine persists. I can remove it. If I was made responsible for it, I could provide cloth to everyone. I am going to Bengal. If they do as I desire, I shall see that there will be no cloth famine there.

You ask if you should provide khadi for hospitals. For where will the patients find yarn, how will they be able to spin? Similarly there are the Congress committees, the district boards, the banks. Then there are exhibitions, Congress meetings and so on, which require khadi worth thousands of rupees. Where can they all find the yarn? Would it not be right to give them khadi without insisting on yarn being tendered? I say that if these institutions cannot tender yarn they should give up the idea of khadi. They can borrow the yarn, they can make their members spin or they can obtain it from friends. I want to allow no exceptions to the rule. I have taken in hand the nature cure clinic of Dinshaw Mehta at Poona. Do you think I can use mill cloth there? I said to Dinshaw, 'I shall give you my yarn and you can buy khadi in exchange.' Everyone will have to give yarn, be he a raja or a maharaja.

The yarn clause allows for buying yarn from the neighbours, but this is against my intention. I do not want this. What I have said is that people may take yarn from their neighbours but they may not pay for it. We do not take things from our friends by paying for them. That would be commerce. If we do

not have something we take it from the neighbours and later when we get it ourselves, we return it. As a good neighbour he may not take it back but in any case no payment is involved.

There is in the resolution also the provision for one's servant doing the spinning. It is the same as the members of one's family spinning and one tendering the yarn in one's name. But it would not be right if someone were to employ a servant specifically for spinning because that is the same as buying the yarn. If a servant employed for household work spends a little time on spinning for his employer we can have no objection. At the Times of India office, Bombay, they wanted some khadi. They came to me and asked, 'Where shall we find the yarn?' I said, 'You have so many peons and workers in your office who do nothing but paste addresses. Allow them an hour or two every day for spinning. Teach them the art. And use the yarn so produced to buy khadi.'

I suggested spinning clubs being organized in cities. But I see a different meaning has been put upon what I had said. The club at Bombay became an agency for the sale of yarn. Workers are employed who spin for wages and then people buy the yarn to procure their khadi from the bhandars. This is to murder truth. What I had said was that since large cities are too cramped and people have to live in very small rooms where there is no space for spinning or keeping the charkha or carding, clubs should be organized in various localities and in the precincts of khadi bhandars where people could go to card, make slivers and spin.

This could remedy the lack of space for spinning. Also it would be easier to arrange for instruction in spinning. But the clubs that have been started are of a totally different kind and they should be discontinued. We should not leave hold of truth. We must not deceive ourselves. We must give up the lure of selling khadi. We should now develop an interest in teaching khadi. If this results in the sale of khadi stopping we should not mind it. But the khadi of my conception can only prosper by this means.

You ask what should be the character of the Bombay khadi bhandar now. I myself am anxious to make my idea clear. In the first place we must shift the bhandar from a central market like Kalbadevi. We should take it to a suburb such as Dadar or Vile [Parle], where we can find enough space. The work of the bhandar also should undergo change. The manager will not try and persuade people to buy khadi. He will sit in the bhandar and spin on the *takli*. His co-workers will do the same.

He will talk to the customers and try to explain to them the new khadi policy. If someone is willing to learn spinning he will teach him. He will not use ready-made slivers. He will teach all the processes, beginning with hand-carding. He will also gather at the bhandar some artisans. He will have looms operated where the yarn spun can be woven. He will have charkhas and other implements manufactured. He will repair the implements of the customers. The surroundings of the bhandar will be clean and the air will be pure. There will be cleanliness. The charkhas will be in proper order and the atmosphere will be congenial for spinning. It will also have facilities for selling khadi. The Bombay bhandar up to now has been a clearing-house. It will still be that though in a different way. So long we only worried about what the Bombay customers wanted. If a handkerchief of a particular design was in vogue we told the production centres to make such handkerchiefs. If it was a sari with a particular border we told the Andhra people to make such saris. We even used to send representatives of the bhandars to those far away places to explain what exactly was wanted. We took up printing saris at Masulipatnam. It revived a dying craft. But if we do not now change our method of work the same thing will be the undoing of khadi. Now the centres will have to meet the needs of the areas around them. They have to produce things with that end in view. In the matter of designs they do not have to follow the directives of the Bombay bhandar. Bombay will have to accept whatever varieties and designs are left and be content with that. It is no part of our duty to provide to the cities the designs they want. Our duty is only to teach how people can produce things that they want.

That is the reason why I want the bhandars to be shifted from a central bazaar. Take some place on the outskirts of the city which is attractive. Create beauty in wilderness. It is said that the English once had their factory on the banks of the Tapti on the outskirts of Surat, from where they started running the country. They wanted to suppress the khadi and other village industries of India. Our mission will be to revive them. If some stray artisan happens to come to you, put him at a loom. Start the work of carding, spinning and such other activities. Let a model village grow up there. Make the khadi bhandar an attractive centre. Those who seek peace from the noise of Bombay will go there on Saturdays if not every day. They will buy their khadi and learn carding. If you make things you need in the village way the city folk may also find an interest in such activity.

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If you talk about our responsibility to the people of Bombay I shall ask : 'What responsibility?' If the people of Bombay continue their old interest, what shall we do? Will you be able to interest yourselves in horse-racing, gambling, cinema, theatre, dancing? What can you do about people who want to pursue these? Yes, if they want the facility to live in the style of a villager we may invite them. That will be doing our duty. You say that in a city like Bombay where people are politically conscious we can make khadi a success only if we are able to persuade them that the success of our political work depends on our pursuing this new khadi policy. I shall only answer that khadi has value to me only if it is a symbol of ahimsa. An American once said that it was not words that grew but it was the work. Your success will depend on what kind of khadi bhandars and what kind of surroundings for them you can create with your faith and *tapascharya.*

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, January 1946

185. KASTURBA NIDHI'S POLICY REGARDING EDUCATION

November 28, 1945

Whatever work regarding education is carried on under the Kasturba Nidhi, whether it is for children or adults, should be given only through manual labour and handicrafts.

Trained teachers will be required to carry on this work properly. Arrangements should be made to give training to these teachers in registered training schools.

So long as such teachers are not ready, education can be imparted through manual labour and handicrafts but instruction in handicrafts should also be given in a proper way.

The teachers should study the literature of Nayee Talim and carry on their work on those lines as far as possible till they get properly trained.

From a copy of the Hindi : Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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186. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. VANUDI,

I got your letter. I have no doubt about your purity, nor about your firmness of mind. But if you yourself have some doubt, however faint, regarding the propriety of what you do, you should carefully think over it and change your habits suitably. Suppose, for instance, you tell somebody in jest that you are married and have a few children, and add that your mother-in-law is dead. Such jokes are permissible, but the dangers in them are easy to see. That is why even in the highest circles we still hear criticism of certain things that take place in theatres. If a married man acts the part of Rama in a play and a woman married to another man that of Sita, how far is that desirable for both? It also requires to be seriously considered what kind of effect such Rama and Sita produce on the spectators. That carried away by the modern trend we may do or like improper things or see others doing that is altogether a different matter. I do not wish to dwell at length on this, nor have I the time for that. But you are a thoughtful girl and I have, therefore, put before you in a few words an important question for you to think over.

I hope you keep good health, and trust that all of you devote yourselves to keeping the Arogya Bhavan clean in every possible manner. You have with you many visitors now. Use the services of them all in cleaning up the place. I am trying to send Munnalal there. I expect he will arrive there in about a week.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I had Zohra's letter and I tore it up.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5796. Also C.W. 3019. Courtesy : Vanamala M. Desai

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187. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA P. KAMDAR

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

Though you have become the mother of so many children, you are still as foolish as ever. If I cannot write to you owing to pressure of work and ask somebody else to do so, what is wrong in that? You did a good thing in giving me all the news of the family. Do come when I settle down again in the Ashram and stay there as long as you wish. Bring your son with you. Perhaps you do not know that in Poona Valji[1] used to come every day to read books to me. I would quietly spin while he read to me for half an hour or three quarters of an hour.

I hope your health is good. Now I am going on a tour of Bengal and Madras and am not likely to return before February.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI HARI-ICHCHHABEHN P. KAMDAR
KHADIA POLE
RAJMAHAL ROAD
BARODA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7475. Also C.W. 4921. Courtesy : Hari-ichchha P. Kamdar

188. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your postcard, as also the report sent by you. The latter seems to have been drafted by you. If so, your English is weak. Ordinarily this should not count as a deficiency in one, but in India it is; for we take pride, though we ought not to, in being able to speak and write a foreign language correctly.

[1] Valji Govindji Desai

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I am a lover of all languages and take scrupulous care to write correctly, but I am more eager to convey my meaning and am not scared of making mistakes. Were it not so, I would never have been able to speak in Hindi and other languages. Having said this, my criticism of the report is that its English is not correct. I have no time to revise it and return it. The report itself is good and, therefore, I show it to everybody who is interested in it. I am now sending it to Jajuji to read.

I shall not feel sorry that you will be breaking up an organization which you have brought into being. Your leaving it will amount to breaking it. I only hope that your action will not be an expression of the rashness and anger which I have observed in your nature. Sometimes it becomes one's dharma to humbly cling to the organization one has set up, despite the co-workers' coolness towards oneself. I have been doing this from a much earlier age than you are at present and it has certainly benefited me. Endurance is a virtue worth cultivating. You are a student of the *Gita*. Ponder the profound truths contained in it. After cautioning you thus, I unreservedly accept your decision. If you teach the students who come to you and take more intimate interest in their lives, you may perhaps be able to create another organization with their help. In future lay stress from the very beginning on all the processes relating to cotton. I have come to realize from daily experience that this is of the utmost importance.

My good wishes for the result of your examination.

The tour starts on the 30th. Manilal arrived last evening and Devdas left for Delhi yesterday morning. He had come in connection with Kasturba Fund work.

Blessings to Chi. Saru and Shanti.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7380. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

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189. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter as also Jehangir's.

I do wish to offer you some suggestions but that will be when I can spare the time. For the present I shall say only this much. Give full encouragement to those who are engaged in the cleaning activity. You must also pay as much attention to it as you can while doing your own work. You will have already decided to dispose of all the furniture. You can take it to Bombay and sell it there to recover the price or if you want me to dispose of it you will let me know, so that I may make arrangements from wherever I am. We shall not sell it at a throw-away price.

Bhai Munnalal will be going there in six or seven days. He will take part in the cleaning activity. I think he can keep the accounts and do for you whatever shopping there is to be done. He is well versed in all the three things and has done them all before. I understand that Mr. Mange is looking after the accounts and shopping. I wish to keep him entirely out of all this. I have no doubt that he should train himself for something else. He should become a naturopath. He should also educate himself. If you wish that Munnalal should not go there in my absence or if you have any other plans, you can send a wire to the Ashram. It is necessary that what we wish to start[1] from January 1 should be started at home as early as possible.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] Nature Cure Clinic at Uruli Kanchan

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190. LETTER TO SATYADEV

SEVAGRAM,
November 28, 1945

CHI. SATYADEV,

I was glad to have your letter. I would like to have a copy of the order you have mentioned. I just cannot agree to what you say. I think there is some misunderstanding. You had better ask Jawaharlal also and write to me at Calcutta. There I shall be staying with Satis Babu at Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

191. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Q. The object of the constructive programme is stated to be the preparation of the people for a non-violent political order. Is this definition correct? Or will it be better to define such a social and political order as one in which no one would be able to exploit the labour of another?

A. Your definition is correct but it is incomplete. In what way it is incomplete will be explained in the answer to your next question.

Q. If my definition is correct I feel such a social and political order can be achieved theoretically even by our making the largest use of machinery. In that case is it necessary to have the maximum number of village industries for the non-violent political order? If so why?

A. Non-violence cannot be divided into compartments. Non-violence is an inherent attribute of man or, at any rate, it should be an attribute of man during his waking hours. Devotion to non-violence is the highest expression of his conscious state. If we thus conceive ahimsa we should satisfy all our necessities by the labour of our hands. If we do not do this we shall have to depend upon other powers and as long as such condition persists we shall be unable to realize a state of fearlessness. Another danger in making more and more use of machinery is that we have to make great efforts for the protection of it, that is to say,

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we shall have to keep an army as is being done today elsewhere in the world. The fact is that even if there is no danger of aggression from outside we shall be slaves to those who will be in control of the big machinery. Take the case of the atom bomb. Those nations who have atom bombs are feared even by their friends. If we take a wise view, we shall be saved from the working of machinery.

Q. One of the reasons given in favour of hand-spinning is that it makes one self-sufficient. Can one who is self-sufficient serve society better than one who is dependent on others? Do you mean to say that there is such a connection between self-sufficiency and social service that the more one is self-sufficient the more is one's capacity for social service?

A. In order to satisfy this doubt also we will have to keep in mind the non-violent outlook because truth and non-violence form the foundation of the order of my conception. Our first duty is that we should not be a burden on society, i. e., we should be self-sufficient. That means self-sufficiency by itself is a kind of service. After becoming self-sufficient we shall use our spare time for the service of others. If all become self-sufficient no one will have any difficulty. In that case no one will be required to undertake service of others. But we have not yet reached that stage and therefore we have to think of social service. Even if we succeed in realizing complete self-sufficiency, man being a social animal we shall have to accept service in some form or other. That is, man is as much dependent on others as he is dependent on himself. When dependence becomes necessary in order to keep society in good order it is no longer dependence but becomes co-operation. There is a fragrance in co-operation and there is no one weak or strong among the co-operators. Everyone is equal. There is a feeling of helplessness in dependency. Members of a family are as much self-dependent as interdependent, but there is no feeling of mine or thine. That is why they are called co-operators. Similarly when we take a society, a nation or the entire mankind as a family all men become co-operators. If we can conceive a picture of such co-operation we shall find that there is no need of depending upon lifeless machines. Or we shall have to use them the least, not the most, and therein lies the real security and self-protection of society.

Q. You lay more emphasis on spinning than on agriculture. Is there any political reason behind it? Or is it because people cannot take to farming as easily as they can to spinning?

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A. I do not make such divisions as social, economic and political. What is political is also social and economic. One includes the others. It is true that we make and have to make such divisions for clarity of understanding. One of the reasons why I have not laid stress on agriculture is that even my knowledge of it is almost nil. How will I be able to enlighten you if I put emphasis on it? It is not so in the case of the charkha. I have acquired enough knowledge of it. Secondly under foreign rule the charkha had died out; it had been destroyed. Agriculture can never be destroyed but its form has been so changed that it has increased the slavery of the people. The third reason for putting emphasis on the charkha is that skill of hand has a very small place in agriculture. There is hardly any other industry in which the hands and the fingers are so much used as they are in the various processes that go to make khadi. The fourth reason is that foreign power first takes hold of the land and through it controls the other things. Therefore Government help is very necessary for improvement in agriculture. For these and other similar reasons I have laid more emphasis on hand-spinning.

Q. One of the features of the material development of human society appears to be that man is tending to move more and more from self-sufficiency to dependency. Don't you think this tendency is not right and that there will be revival of the opposite tendency?

A. I take this question to mean that society is advancing towards machinery. If I have understood the question right, my answer is that society must get rid of its slavery to the machine. By being slaves to the machine our slavery to our senses and their activity also increases immensely.

Q. Are you confident that the constructive programme will be able to achieve its object during your lifetime by mere propaganda? Don't you think taking into consideration human frailties (lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and jealousy) that there will be need for "legislative aid"[1] to make the people take to the constructive programme on any wide scale especially in this machine age? Will there be any violation of the principle of non-violence in taking such help from the elected representatives of the people? If so how?

A. I have said many a time that we will have to take help from the Government on our own terms. Not only that, we will have to take help from the whole world. There was a

[1] The phrase is in English in the source.

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time when I felt that we could have only the barest minimum of help from the legislators in the matter of constructive programme. But now I have come to realize that if the representatives of the people go into the legislatures we can secure their help. Along with this we must bear in mind that we cannot appreciate the value of the constructive programme properly if we cannot carry it on in adverse circumstances. Other people of course can't. I can say dispassionately but from experience that the strength of the people has increased in proportion to the progress of the constructive programme. If we can make the constructive programme universal and get it implemented through the people, then swaraj is in our hands.

SEVAGRAM, November 29, 1945

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, December 1945

192. LETTER TO J. S. HOYLAND

SEVAGRAM, WARDHA,
November 29, 1945

MY DEAR HOYLAND[1],

It gladdened me to see your letter after such a long time and made me happy to find that Prof. Privat[2] and his wife[3] were with you. Of course I remember the communion we had at Woodbrooke, now as you remind me, fourteen years ago. I suppose Woodbrooke has grown during this what may be called fairly long lapse of time, and I wonder how the 'School for the Imbeciles' we all visited[4] is faring.

My love to all. I am looking forward to the visit of Horace and Agatha.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JOHN S. HOYLAND, ESQ.
WOODBROOKE SETTLEMENT
BIRMINGHAM 29

From a photostat : C.W. 4512. Courtesy : Woodbrooke College and Mrs. Jessie Hoyland

[1] A Quaker and member of the India Conciliation Group along with Horace Alexander and Agatha Harrison; was in India for sixteen years teaching at Hislop College, Nagpur; afterwards taught at Quaker College Woodbrooke.

[2] & [3] Edmond and Yvonne Privat

[4] At Woodbrooke on October 18, 1931; *vide* Vol. XLVIII, p. 184.

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193. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND SHAH

November 29, 1945

CHI. UTTAMCHAND,

I have such deep faith in you that I am sure that you will succeed in your new undertaking, too, and that the work of the Charkha Sangh under its new policy will progress in Gujarat at least. Remember that it is your duty to take care of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9443

194. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI[1]

[Before *November 30, 1945*][2]

Arun is a good boy but he is not up to the mark. He does not even know additions, though he talks of additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions. It was only when I tested him yesterday that I could understand the report given to me by Valji. But it is not his fault. It is the parents' fault and now that of us all who are here. I am the first among them. Am I not?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4960

[1] This was written at the back of Arun's letter to his parents, i.e., the addressees.

[2] From the reference to Arun, who was with Gandhiji in Sevagram till he left for Sodepur on November 30, 1945

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195. FOREWORD TO "GANDHIAN CONSTITUTION FOR FREE INDIA"

Perhaps the expression "Gandhian Constitution" is not a fitting title for Principal Agrawal's[1] pages. It may be acceptable as a convenient and compact title. The framework is really Principal Agrawal's, based on his study of my writings. He has been interpreting them for a number of years. And as he is anxious not to misinterpret them in any way he would publish nothing without my seeing it. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is obvious. The disadvantage lies in the reader mistaking the particular writing being my view in every detail. Let me then warn him against making any such mistake. If I were to commit myself to every word appearing in these pages, I might as well write the thing myself. Though I have endeavoured to read the constitution twice, with as much attention as I was able to bestow on it during my other engagements, I could not undertake to check every thought and every word of it. Nor would my sense of propriety and individual freedom permit me to commit any such atrocity. All, therefore, I am able to say is that the brochure contains ample evidence of the care bestowed upon it by the author to make it as accurate as he could. There is nothing in it which has jarred on me as inconsistent with what I would like to stand for.

The author was good enough to make such alterations as I thought were necessary.

The word "constitution" must not mislead the reader into thinking that the author has made any profession to give him a complete constitution. He has made it perfectly clear in the beginning pages that he has only laid down broad lines to indicate what a constitution of my conception would be. I regard Principal Agrawal's to be a thoughtful contribution to the many attempts at presenting India with constitutions. The merit of his attempt consists in the fact that he has done what for want of time I have failed to do.

M. K. GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA, November 30, 1945

Gandhian Constitution for Free India

[1] Shriman Narayan Agrawal

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196. LETTER TO MANAGING COMMITTEE OF THE TALIMI SANGH

November 30, 1945

Yesterday I went to see the Talimi Sangh hostel. You know Hoshiaribehn[1] who stays in the Ashram. I have sent her son Gajraj to your school. He insisted that I should see his school. Even yesterday morning he came and said : "You will come, won't you?" I said: "What shall I do at your school? I would rather see the place where you sleep." I had intended to send his mother too. Anyway, I went there after my morning walk to keep my promise. I was pained by what I saw there. I noticed filth and mismanagement which should not have been there. I had not wanted to spend much time there, but I could not bear what I saw there and spent half an hour or three-quarters of an hour explaining things to Pandey.

I found there were puddles of water in front of the verandah of the children's hospital. It offended the eye. The children wash themselves right there. This breeds mosquitoes and so much of water is wasted. We should collect the water in a tub. Or we may wash beside the trees near by. If there were a thousand boys it would be a disaster. Going through the room I found the same thing in front of the verandah on the other side.

Then I went to the children's dormitory. Even at the entrance there was a lot of dirt. I went in. Mats were not properly kept. I had the bedding of a boy unrolled. It was very dirty. The bed-sheet was torn. It was stitched in a couple of places, but very crudely. The other tears had not been attended to. They should have been patched. If the sheet was too badly torn it could have been doubled and stitched. Many times in jail I had got mattresses made that way. They are warm and strong. The cotton of the mattress had collected into big lumps. It was not warm. That cotton should have been taken out and carded again. Several pieces of cloth were discovered from under the mattress. They were very dirty. I would have kept those pieces clean and used them for patching. The mat was very dirty. It should have been washed.

[1] Niece of Balvantsinha. According to Balvantsinha Gajraj had complained to Gandhiji that Talimi Sangh was a very dirty place.

I examined the floor. It is used for sleeping but is in a very bad state. Pandey said cow-dung was not available. It is better if cow-dung is available. But one can do without it. Where was there cow-dung in South Africa? We managed with earth. There was a wooden shelf fixed to the wall for keeping things. When I touched it my hand was covered with dust. I wiped my hand on Pandey's hand. It also got covered with dust. One boy had put his ink-pot on the mat. Where else was the poor boy to put it? But there was no method about it. I examined each and every pen and nib. I saw also the ink-pots. That is my way. That should also be the way of Nayee Talim. Everything was wrong from my point of view. These are small things. But small things make up big things. It does not require money. It requires a keen vision, it requires art. It is our duty to teach these. It is the purpose of Nayee Talim. It is the teacher's fault if it is not done. It is your fault. I would say that it is my fault. After all, the responsibility lies with me. What is the point in starting a thing and then giving it up? If someone says that in this way he can look after only one boy, I would say admit only one boy. Do not admit more. An element of untruth enters if we admit more boys and cannot look after them.

As I came out, I noticed the sacking you have hung up along the verandah. For this I must quarrel with you. A verandah is designed to admit air and sunlight. By fixing sacking around it you shut out both. And the room at the rear becomes absolutely useless. If you say it can't be helped because the boys are too many, I would say that we should take only as many boys as we can accommodate. We should not take more.

Pandey's mother Kodamba was in very dirty clothes. She looked like a maid servant. She did not even know Hindustani. And she has been with us for two months. Even Pandey's own clothes were not quite all right. The neck was open and so also the cuffs. We are labourers. Our shirts must have half sleeves. Brass or glass buttons are useless for us.

I had a brief discussion with Asha Devi[1]. But I am writing in detail because these matters, though small, are very important. And failing in these points, we depart too far from our objective.

I have read this again. It seems to be all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 5888. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Ashadevi Aryanayakum

197. LETTER TO MOHAN SINGH THAKUR

SEVAGRAM,
November 30, 1945

CHI. MOHAN SINGH,

I wanted to have a long talk with you. But I am sorry that I could not.[1] While I am dictating this, Sushilabehn informs me that you have repaired the pump. I knew that you would do it. I knew your great ability for mechanical things. Develop it fully and if any such work comes up in the Ashram continue doing it. Go on observing the power of the spinning-wheel.

I had noticed that your help had become inevitable in the camp run by Kanubhai. I realized that you had culinary talent as well when I saw the bread and the biscuits you made with tomato juice in an ordinary oven. I wish you would develop this talent too and give its full benefit to the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 10430. Courtesy : Navajivan Trust

198. SPEECH AT MAHILA ASHRAM[2]

WARDHA,
November 30, 1945

I am not going to Bengal to serve four or five persons, but I am going to Bengal to serve crores of persons.

Referring to *garba* dance which the girls executed, Gandhiji said :

No doubt *garba* dance is famous in the world but this is no time for such dance.

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

[2] According to the source the inmates of the Ashram entertained Gandhiji with songs and folk-dances and also presented a khadi sari, dhotis and a beautiful garland made out of khadi.

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He said that he was going to Bengal to serve humanity and wished that the girls would shower blessings on him and pray for his successful programme.

Referring to the sari spun by the inmates of the Mahila Ashram from the yarn produced in non-stop spinning during last Gandhi Jayanti, Gandhiji said that he would not like to take the sari with him.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-12-1945

199. RATIONAL APPROACH TO NON-VIOLENCE[1]

According to me what the All-India Congress Committee meant is clear. If constructive work is not carried on keeping non-violence in mind and accepting it rationally, India will not achieve swaraj as a result of it. A lot of work always went on in our villages but it was not informed by the knowledge and the vision of non-violence. So all we achieved was that we did not become as bankrupt financially as we are today. And when foreign invasion started, we abandoned the village industries one after another. Work for eradication of untouchability, uplift of Adivasis, equal rights for women, imparting training and bridging the gulf between the poor and the rich and so on had never been taken up. When we realized that to achieve real freedom the only royal way was that of non-violence and truth, our range of vision extended to the whole of India and beyond it to the whole world, and despite India being a slave country its fame spread in the world. I am firmly of opinion that if, as stated in the question, we forget all other aspects of non-violence except non-killing of human beings, non-violence will not remain non-violence, it will become bereft of truth, its universality will be lost and we shall never achieve swaraj. If ahimsa includes destruction of others' property, boycotting Government servants, going underground and so on, then, we can neither awaken the crores of people nor give them the correct training in fearlessness. If we want to work non-violently, then it is necessary to accept the restrictions

[1] This was in reply to the question : "How far is the inference correct that in trying to make non-violence practical and progressive, people could arrest others or run away, go underground and destroy property but not kill or hurt anyone?" It was to make this point clear that the All-India Congress Committee deliberately added the words "accepting non-violence rationally".

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laid down by me. But if we do away with these restrictions then there will be no other alternative for us but to abandon non-violence and to train the people for violence. That this way is totally futile for us has been proved by this barbarous war. At any rate by openly accepting the way of violence we save ourselves from deceiving our own people and the world at large.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, November 1945

200. SPEECH ON NAYEE TALIM[1]

November 1945

Nayee Talim means teaching through craft. That basic craft has to be selected in the light of the conditions and produce of the region. For instance, it would not be proper to have khadi as a means of teaching in a region where cotton does not grow, but has to be imported for the purpose.

If Nayee Talim can be proved to be self-supporting through khadi, then the same thing can be applied to other industries too. What I mean by making education self-sustaining is this. Just as the expense on food and clothing for the children studying in Government schools is borne by their parents, similarly, in Nayee Talim schools, parents will have to bear the expenses on food and clothing of their children. But the expenses incurred in the schools of today on books and fees will be saved.

There should be no place for books in Nayee Talim. Initially some expenses may have to be incurred on cotton, carding-bow, and *takli* and so on. Afterwards the only expenses will be on the teachers' salaries, stationery, and the salaries of peons, etc., if they have to be engaged.

Suppose, there are thirty boys in one school. They will handle all the processes right from collecting cotton from the field to spinning and weaving the yarn into cloth. Through every process the teacher will educate them so that their intellect sharpens day by day. This will result in students' making ever new discoveries in the methods employed in the khadi industry which will make it more productive and profitable.

The cloth produced by students will be purchased by their parents at any price. It will be the teacher's duty to see that

[1] This appeared under the title : "Self-reliance in Nayee Talim".

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through his students he creates an awareness in their parents that they may not even touch foreign and mill-made cloth. We should also see that an atmosphere of self-sufficiency in cloth and khadi is created. We shall have to create an atmosphere of our own. For bringing khadi to the stage it has reached today, we had to make efforts and create the climate. As a result no one now can root out khadi. The same thing can be said of Nayee Talim also. If the teacher is unable to create the necessary atmosphere, Nayee Talim cannot become self-reliant and cannot make headway. If he succeeds in creating the atmosphere and sharpening the intellect of the students, then the entire expenditure from beginning to end on Nayee Talim can be met from the sale of cloth produced by students.

Students will be equipped for earning when they leave our schools. We do not promise them jobs. The Government also does not promise employment to students who are trained at enormous expense in Government schools. But our students will be brighter than the students of Government schools and will easily find occupations for themselves.

We must remember that when atmosphere had to be created for Government schools, they had to put in considerable effort in spite of the way being clear. The atmosphere we have to create is for revival. That which has been destroyed has to be revived in a new way and we look upon it as a peaceful way of attaining swaraj. It should be easy to do this. We do not find it easy as we have not gone to the villages with the correct attitude and have made no real attempts at all. Now we have Nayee Talim. If it does not work a miracle and develop power, then what is it good for?

We do not realize the full significance of boys and girls being entrusted to our care from their childhood and undergoing craft-based education in our schools for seven years or more. And the modern education which is being imparted to us teaches us that schooling can never become self-supporting. This creates some confusion in our minds. It is my firm belief that if Nayee Talim cannot become self-supporting, then the teachers do not understand what it is. In my view, amongst other characteristics self-reliance is the most important characteristic of Nayee Talim.

If this is so for the education of boys and girls, then adult education must also be self-supporting. If we believe that it is difficult to convince adults about the value of education, then I have to say that this is nothing but an old illusion. And the

teaching of the three R's in adult education is no part of our Nayee Talim. The meaning of adult education is that we will give them, through their own language, all-round education of a pure and socially useful life. And if they do not easily become self-supporting, in my view there is some serious defect in that education. We should not also forget that complete co-operation should be the basis from the very beginning. Those who know the full meaning of co-operation will raise no doubts about self-reliance.

QUESTION : Today only those students go to Government schools whose parents can pay for their food and clothing. We expect that under Nayee Talim, all the children of a village will go to school. There may be many among them who do not have the necessary food and clothing in their homes. What is the responsibility of Nayee Talim in such cases?

A. I have just stated the ideal that parents will provide for food and clothes. Even now boys do eat and wear clothes. The parents will pay to school whatever they spend on their children's food and clothing. The diet we give will have a scientific basis. The expense will be a little more because of the milk. That expense will be met by the school. But when we persuade the parents to bear the expense on food, then they will pay for milk too. Those who are very poor will be very few; but if they are really poor then we can certainly bear the entire expense.

I shall not worry about what clothes the girls and boys should wear because my ideal for them is a loin-cloth or clothes that a baby wears. It may be a brief *kuchchha.* We can easily make it. When girls develop breasts something will have to be done to cover them. The answer is a piece of cloth of the kind that is in vogue in the South. It is a different matter what provision is to be made in winters. You may not provide them any wraps but you must give them enough to wear. All this will be our property—the boys and girls of the same age group will wear them. One thing should be kept in mind, that these boys and girls will stay with us most of the time. We can easily bear all this expense. According to us the clothes for the poor and the rich will be the same. If the clothes are clean and of the right size, they will look as neat and tidy as naked children look.

Q. (a) Will there be an increase in the demand for cloth if an atmosphere of self-reliance in cloth is generated?

(b) Even if parents want to purchase cloth produced by their children, do they have the means to pay the price that we may ask for it?

A. Any price must of course mean reasonable price. This merely means that those who do not even touch khadi today, will certainly buy the cloth made by their children if we sell it at a reasonable price. There will be no question of making a large profit on it. The price of every item will be different but by and large the difference between the cost price and the selling price will be almost the same. Even if the price of fancy goods is higher, still comparatively it will be much cheaper. Those who buy them will pay the price willingly. When self-reliance in cloth is achieved, everyone will accept khadi and will do so willingly. Then Nayee Talim will have reached its peak. No one will even care for me if this happens during my lifetime.

All my answers apply to the present time, the present conditions.

Q. Training of teachers is a vast field that we have before us. In what way are we to practise self-reliance in this training.

A. Your question is, how can those who have come here to be teachers become self-reliant? If young students can become self-reliant, the teachers must become self-reliant. The question is only one of bearing the expense of one's own food, clothing and education. My point is that if teachers themselves cannot become self-reliant, how can they make the students self-reliant? In fact well-to-do persons who have come here not for salary but for service, will not need any supervision. They will learn all occupations attentively and carefully. They will not waste anything because of carelessness. Such people will be able to meet their entire expenses from whatever occupation they undertake. Your curriculum ought to be such that teachers and students can earn enough for their expenses while they learn. You too will be put to the test in preparing such a curriculum. I like this question very much because it is a good sign that you have raised this question in the very beginning. Aryanayakum has written : "I have understood and agree with it." This means that I also should have the same thing in mind that he has.

If your syllabus is not based on the above lines, let me know. Perhaps I may be able to make it with your help. I go so far as to say that even wood should not be available free of charge. Bear in mind that we want to work in co-operation. We also want to learn true co-operation. Hence the fruits of everyone's intelligence and skill should go into one pool. As I go on writing the subject becomes more and more interesting to me.

I become more and more confirmed in my belief that self-reliance is the key to our success. This is proved by long experience.

[From Hindi]

Khadi Jagat, November 1945

201. LETTER TO KALIDAS DEV SHARMA

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
December 1, 1945

BHAI KALIDAS,

The reply to your letter is given below.

The International Brotherhood League[1] should be preserved in its essence. Those who sincerely believe that helping the Congress is as good as helping the Brotherhood League should help the Congress.

Look at the fate of the Communist Party.[2] There cannot possibly be any opposition if your League works for the Congress according to the views of the Congress. That Asia is for Asians is a cardinal truth. To tell the foreigners to quit Asia is the clear cry of an anguished heart.

This is not meant for publication.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8232

202. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
December 1, 1945

BHAI SHRIMAN,

I am sending today your booklet[3] and my Foreword[4]. I finished everything at 9.30 last night. In between I only took time off for eating and spinning. Let me know if any changes are necessary in the Foreword.

[1] This was founded by Krishna Nath Sarma.

[2] Communist members of the A. I. C. C. were at the time facing an inquiry for indiscipline.

[3] *Gandhian Constitution for Free India*

[4] *Vide* p. 137.

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Let me know if you do not agree with the changes I have made in your booklet.

You will see that I have left the place of the Panchayats at the taluka and district level rather vague. They are only advisory bodies. Why should they be given a place in the legal framework? Even the necessity for their existence is a matter of doubt. When the villages really come to life, the need for advisory bodies should be less. The Provincial Panchayat would attend to everything and would get things done through talukas and districts. If you think there is any snag in this line of thinking let me know. I have put in as much hurried reading as I could.

It is worth considering if Pakistan and the Princes can have any place in my conception [of India]. Remember that the Gandhian plan can be successful only if it can be achieved through non-violent means.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have sent the booklet and the Foreword by separate registered book-post.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 308

203. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

ON THE TRAIN TO CALCUTTA,
December 1, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have gone through circular 12 and Dhwaja Babu's letter. I am of the opinion that the fund that we have will be enough for the training in handicrafts and adult education. If both the activities go on together the expenses will be lessened. These funds should not be made to cover the other five activities. This does not mean that we are not to pursue those five activities or that they are of secondary importance. We shall conduct them with a separate fund. If we think of all the seven activities we may not be able to deal with any one. I am therefore of the opinion that this fund should be earmarked only for the two activities. Even when the fund grows later on, it should be limited to only the two activities. Of course all this requires hard work and intelligence.

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If necessary you may use this letter. I am returning the circular and Dhwaja Babu's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

204. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS[1]

December 1, 1945

I know America and America knows me.[2] People in America who want messages do not really know me. You are prompting me to say something, but why do you not pay for my Harijan Fund?

Another journalist asked Mahatmaji : "Can we send what you said for publication?" Mahatmaji laughed and said :

Cook it, digest it and assimilate it. Use your journalistic sense and you will see what I have given you is something other than a stunt.

Questioned regarding his reactions to major questions of the day, Gandhiji said :

Great problems lie before us and as and when they arise, my views will be there.

He declined to commit himself further.

When one of the newspapermen queried him about his travel from Wardha, Gandhiji, with his proverbial fund of wit, retorted jokingly :

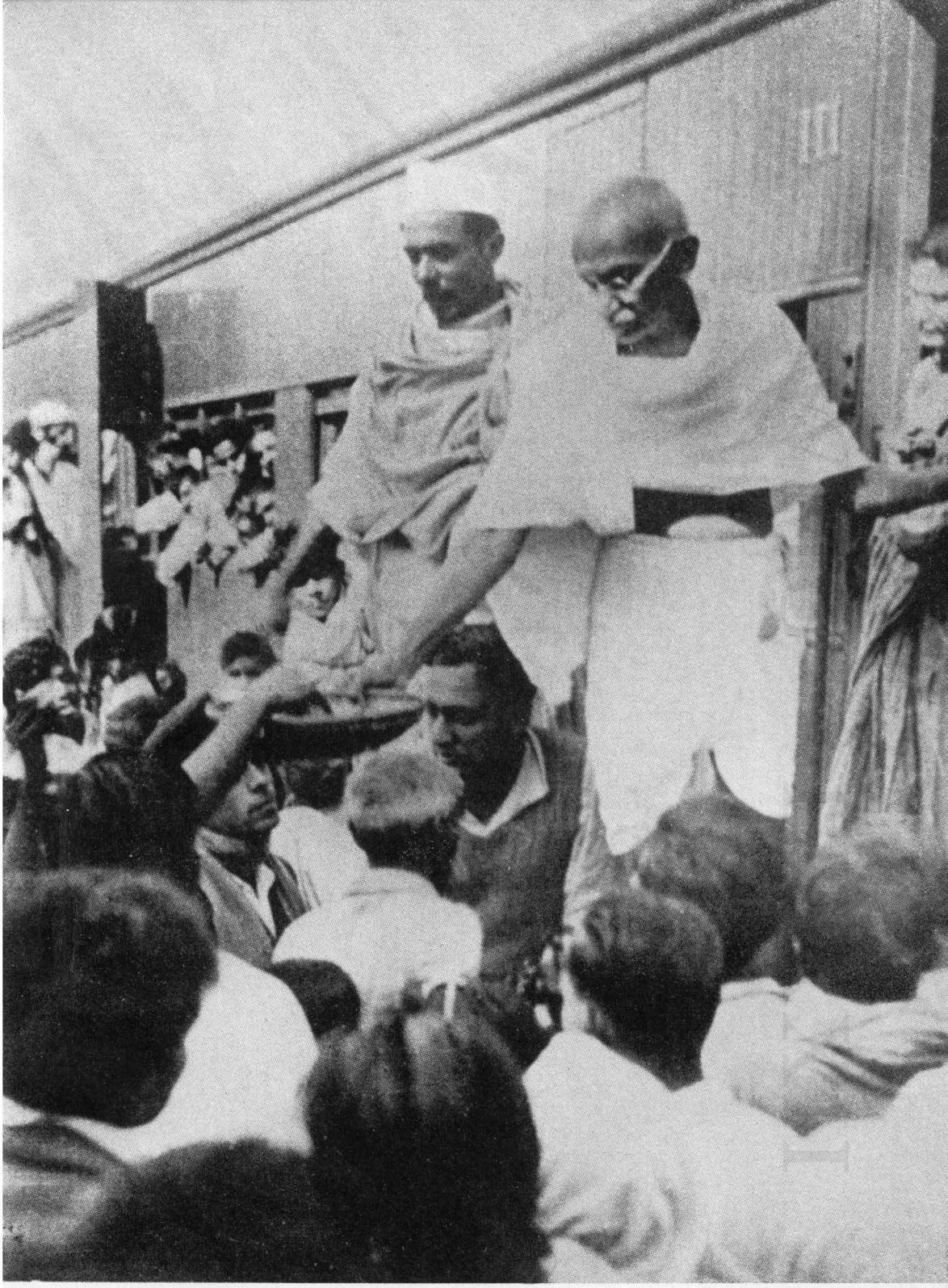
You have been travelling with me and if your journalistic instinct does not prompt you to answer that question, resign your post and take to something more useful in life.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-12-1945

[1] While he was on his way to Calcutta, a number of journalists had entered Gandhiji's compartment at Kharagpur and travelled with him till the train reached Mourigram.

[2] One of the journalists had asked for "a message for America and American people".

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COLLECTING FUNDS FOR HARIJANS IN BENGAL



AT DUM DUM JAIL WHERE HE MET THE DETENUS

205. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 1, 1945

He began by referring to his attempts made since 1914, when he was in England to learn Bengali. He made some progress in it, though he could not keep up his Bengali studies. It was his ambition to be able to speak to the people of Bengal in Bengali so that he might be able to penetrate into their hearts. He was sorry he could not do so on the present occasion. He was also of the opinion that no Indian could call himself a full-fledged citizen of India unless he could speak to the people of the various provinces in their own tongues. Failing this proficiency in the different languages it was the duty of every Indian to learn at least Hindustani which alone could be the *rashtrabhasha*[1] of India.

He then proceeded to give the etiology of his present visit to Bengal. Ever since his release from prison, he had been anxious to visit Bengal but he could not do so owing to ill-health. Moreover, he did not want to visit Bengal unless he was sure that the authorities would welcome his visit and that there would be no restrictions on his movements. He was not prepared to submit to any restrictive orders on the one hand or on the other to offer civil disobedience against such orders under conditions now prevailing in the country. Even after the way for his visit to Bengal was clear it had to be postponed for several months on account of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was in need of nature cure treatment and needed his (Gandhiji's) presence by his side. He was glad, however, that after all he had been able to come to Bengal.

Explaining next the object of his visit, Gandhiji said that it was purely to offer whatever consolation his presence in their midst could give to the victims of Bengal famine and to do whatever he could to relieve their distress. He had not come to take part in the politics of the province or in the forthcoming elections. In fact, as they all knew, he took very little interest in these things. Where his chief interest lay was too well known to need reiteration.

Mahatmaji then concluded after appealing to the people assembled to contribute their mite to the Harijan Fund as a token of their sympathy with the cause of the abolition of untouchability as also to ameliorate the condition of Harijans. Incidentally he mentioned that in this way he had

[1] National language

collected 2 lakhs of rupees for the Harijans since his release. The proceeds of the autograph fees that he charged were earmarked for the Harijan Fund. Anyone by paying a fee of Rs. 5 could have his autograph. There could be no exemption on the ground of poverty because according to him the autograph-hunting was essentially a rich-man's hobby. Anyway, there was none poorer than the Harijans and consequently none had a right to cheat the Harijans out of the autograph fees which had been premortgaged to them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 2-12-1945

206. DISCUSSION WITH IAN STEPHENS[1]

SODEPUR,
[On or after *December 1, 1945*][2]

GANDHIJI : Arguing on those lines, you will be able to understand the prejudice in South Africa too. The root cause—a false notion of preservation of the race and economic status—is common to both. The difference is only one of degree. If you apply concrete facts to individual cases it is half a dozen of one and six of the other. It is on a par with the racial prejudice here.

IAN STEPHENS : Oh, no. Here it is much less.

G. Yes, owing to the vast disparity in numbers. But take the case of the individual who actually suffers. His experience does not differ from that of the coloured men in South Africa or America.

I. S. We, Englishmen are apt to forget that side of the question.

G. Habit becomes second nature. There may he no deliberate intention either.

I. S. In the Punjab and Delhi races mix much more freely than elsewhere. Was that due to the fact that the disparity in numbers was comparatively less there?

Gandhiji was of opinion that the contrast presented by Bengal in this respect was perhaps due to the violent spirit having manifested itself there on a much larger scale than in Delhi or in the Punjab. The Punjab did

[1] This report by Pyarelal appeared under the title "With an English Friend". Ian Stephens, a correspondent of *The Statesman*, Calcutta, was of the opinion that colour bar and racial segregation was at its worst in South Africa, and did not agree with Gandhiji that it was equally bad in America.

[2] Gandhiji reached Sodepur on December 1, 1945.

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show the violent spirit in some measure. But it was not a patch upon Bengal. The daring of the Chittagong Armoury Raid was neither attempted nor duplicated anywhere else.

I. S. I have often thought over it, and it has always baffled me how these Bengali young men, so gentle by nature, have drifted into violence.

G. I have solved it for myself. They feel they have been unjustly libelled in the past. Lord Curzon harped on their softness. It soured them. So they say, 'We may not be wealthy, but surely we are not effeminate.' So they adopted this devious method and surpassed every other province in daring. They defied death, defied poverty and even public opinion. I have discussed this question of violence threadbare with so many terrorists and anarchists. It is terrible whether the Arab does it or the Jew. It is a bad outlook for the world if this spirit of violence takes hold of the mass mind. Ultimately in destroying itself it destroys the race.

I. S. And it has spread all over the world for the last two or three years.

G. Look at the latest ukase of Gen. MacArthur[1]. He has divided the entire Japanese nation into two categories, those whom he calls war criminals and those who do not come under that label. As I read it, it struck me that this was not the best way to introduce democracy among the Japanese—a race so proud, so sensitive, so highly organized along Western lines. They will do what the Italians did in Garibaldi's time on a much larger scale. You cannot deal with the human race on these lines. Whatever happens in one part of the world will affect the other parts. The world has so shrunk.

This evoked from the friend the observation that he did not think that the world had deteriorated so much theoretically as it might have during the last three years. Gandhiji agreed with him though his grounds, he remarked, were different.

I. S. My reason for that belief is that in spite of the fact that suffering, for instance in Indonesia and elsewhere, has been appalling during the last three years, the human mind has not been equally warped.

G. My hope is based on a detached view of the situation. Whilst in detention in the Aga Khan Palace I had leisure to read and think. What struck me was that whilst practice

[1] Douglas MacArthur, U. S. Army General; Commander of the occupation forces in Japan after the War

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showed deterioration, the mind of man had very much progressed. Practice has not been able to keep pace with the mind. Man has begun to say, 'This is wrong, that is wrong.' Whereas previously he justified his conduct, he now no longer justifies his own or his neighbour's. He wants to set right the wrong but does not know that his own practice fails him. The contradiction between his thought and conduct fetters him. His conduct is not governed by logic. Then, of course, there is my standing prediction in favour of non-violence that it will prevail —whatever man may or may not do. That keeps my optimism alive. Extensive personal experience too confirms my belief that non-violence is self-acting. It will have its way and overcome all obstacles irrespective of the shortcomings of the instruments. It makes no difference how we arrive at our conclusion, but it keeps us fresh and green.

The conversation next turned upon Gandhiji's pet theme of living up to 125 years. Gandhiji's visitor wanted to know how he managed to keep physically fit. Gandhiji replied that outwardly he owed his physical fitness to strict adherence to regular habits in eating, drinking and sleeping and to his partiality for nature cure principles which he had adopted strictly in life since 1901. Reminiscently he described how up till 1901 he used the medicine bottle but had almost thrown it away and for forty-five years he had lived more or less according to nature cure principles.

G. But, in a still greater measure, it is due to the practice of detachment of mind. By detachment I mean that you must not worry whether the desired result follows from your action or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct. Really, it means that things will come right in the end if you take care of the means and leave the rest to Him.

He based his belief on the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* which he had called his "dictionary of action".

The friend remarked on the close analogy between the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita* and the thesis presented in Aldous Huxley's[1] *Ends and Means*. The mention of Aldous Huxley's name revived in Gandhiji's mind memories of old days about Aldous Huxley's father[2] whose writings he used to read during his student days in London in 1889.

I. S. But there is a physical side all the same?

[1] British novelist and critic; in later life became increasingly drawn to Hindu philosophy.

[2] Gandhiji presumably has in mind T. H. Huxley, biologist and writer, who was, however, the grandfather of Aldous.

G. Yes, only I attach greater importance to the mental. What you think you become. Thought is never complete unless it finds expression in action and action limits your thought. It is only when there is a perfect accord between the two that there is full, natural life.

I. S. But what about the legacy of one's past life? It cannot be written off the balance-sheet.

G. I have my answer for that. If my past conduct does not warrant the full span of life, no matter however correct my present life may be, I can still counteract the effect of past mistakes by attaining complete detachment between the mind and the body. Detachment enables one to overcome the effects of past faulty practice as well as handicaps of heredity and environment. Normally speaking, every deviation from the rule of nature, whether ignorant or wilful, e. g., anger, ill-temper, impatience, errors in conjugal life, exacts its toll. But there is this promise that if you have arrived at complete detachment you can rub out all these. "Except ye be born again, ye cannot have everlasting life." Conversely, you can have everlasting life if you are "born again". There is no hurdle placed before death. You can turn over a new leaf and begin life anew here and now; the past will not disturb its tenor provided you have completely severed yourself from it and its legacy by the axe of detachment.

On the previous occasion when this friend had visited Gandhiji, Gandhiji had done all the talking and the friend had listened. This time Gandhiji had intended that he would only speak in answer to questions and let the friend do the talking but the friend again had the better of his resolve. Gandhiji remarked, discomfited, at the end of their talk :

I admit defeat. After all you are a practised journalist.

I. S. I am only human.

Harijan, 7-4-1946

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207. *DISCUSSION WITH MEMBER OF FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT*[1]

CALCUTTA,
[On or after *December 1, 1945*][2]

F. A. U. MEMBER : However much we may want to be friendly the past tradition clings round your necks and drives you to desperation. It seems to me, that there is hardly any hope of giving to a young Bengali student an idea of the better side of Englishmen unless perhaps he is transferred to England. The atmosphere in India is so poisoned that I wonder if it would not be better for Englishmen not to attempt to come to work in India just now but to wait for better times.

GANDHIJI: Any friend, who is a real friend, and who comes in a spirit of service, not as a superior, is bound to be welcome. India, when she has come into her own will need all such assistance. The distrust of Englishmen, as you say, is there. It won't disappear even by transporting Indian students to England. You have got to understand it and live it down. It has its roots in history. The late Charlie Andrews and I were bed-fellows. There were scarcely a thought in our mind which we did not share. He even adopted Indian dress though sometimes with grotesque results. But even he could not escape suspicion. He was even dubbed "a spy". His was a very sensitive spirit. He suffered unspeakable anguish under these unmerited attacks and I was hard put to it to dispel the baseless distrust. 'If he is a spy, I am a spy,' I said to these critics. In the end C. F. A.'s spirit triumphed.

Pearson[3] was C. F. Andrews' disciple and friend. He too came in for his share of distrust. Then there is Stocks[4]. "If

[1] A war-time organization, begun in 1914, it was reorganized in 1939 to give those with pacifist views an opportunity to serve the suffering and the distressed. It came to India in 1942 after the Midnapore cyclone and again in 1943 during the Bengal famine. Its presence in 1945 was due to widespread famine conditions all over India. This appeared under the title "An Englishman's Difficulty" by Pyarelal.

[2] Gandhiji reached Calcutta on December 1.

[3] W. W. Pearson, a British missionary worker in Bengal and for some time a teacher in Santiniketan

[4] Samuel Stokes, a British missionary and an associate of C. F. Andrews. He was a member of the Congress and courted arrest in 1920; became a

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I am to serve India I must become an Indian," he said to himself and married a Christian Rajput. He was boycotted by the Rajputs. The Government distrusted him too in the beginning. But he has lived down the distrust of both the Government and Indians.

If then, even a C. F. Andrews and a Stokes and others had to labour under distrust, for you to be distrusted may not be wondered at. So far Indians have known Englishmen only as members of the ruling race—supercilious when they were not patronizing. The man in the street makes no distinction between such an Englishman and a good, humble European, between the Empire-builder Englishman of the old type that he has known and the new type that is now coming into being, burning to make reparation for what his forefathers did. Therefore, if one has not got the fire of sacrifice in him I would say to him: 'Do not come to India just now.' But if you are cast in a heroic mould there will be no difficulty. You will in the end be taken at your worth if you persevere. Anyway those of you who are here have no reason for going back.

The same friend was able to elicit from Gandhiji what he considered to be the weak spots in the Indusco Plan of Chinese co-operatives. Firstly, the Indusco was a product of abnormal times. Its production was war-time and war-purposes production stimulated by the Japanese blockade. Secondly, it was organized by foreign missionary enterprise and their work was tainted by the proselytization motive.

G. If you try to merely copy the Chinese co-operatives in India you will end in miserable failure. Here you have to work among Indian Christians. The temperament is different, the character is different, and the circumstances are different. Co-operation which is rooted in the soil always works. You have therefore to find out for yourself what type of co-operative is best suited to the Indian temperament and soil. Even those who have become converts to orthodox Christianity are today veering round.

M. By "veering round" you mean going back?

G. Yes, I mean going back to real Christianity, to Christ, not Western Christianity. They are beginning to realize that Jesus was an Asiatic. Having seen this they are reading their Bible through Indian eyes. You should study the meaning of Indian Christianity through J. C. Kumarappa's book *Practice and Precepts of Jesus*.

Harijan, 31-3-1946

Hindu to deliver the message of Jesus to the Hindus; changed his name to Satyanand, and took up work for the uplift of the Hill tribes at Kotgarh.

208. MESSAGE ON RAJENDRA PRASAD'S BIRTHDAY[1]

[*December 2, 1945*]

Rajendra Prasad is a true patriot. Long live Rajendra Prasad.

The Hindu, 4-12-1945

209. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 2, 1945

Addressing the congregation after the prayer Gandhiji said he would like to thank them and congratulate them because they had maintained silence and were peaceful during the prayer. The gathering of this evening was very big indeed. On Saturday the prayer meeting was less crowded. On both the days they had shown remarkable discipline. So he would thank them and hope they would continue to behave calmly in future also.

The prayer song which was sung this evening had a special significance. Gandhiji said it was very appropriate in the conditions obtaining at present. The song was also sung in a very melodious tune.

In the song there was an appeal to God to lead humanity from darkness to light. It said the humanity was engulfed in thickening darkness and had lost vision. So they were praying to God to give them strength and lead them to light.

The import of the song was that they must be freed from all bondage and attain enlightenment. The freedom from bondage also included the winning of swaraj. India wanted release from the bondage.

We are all engulfed in darkness today. Not only India but the world also is engulfed in darkness. India wants peace. So also does the entire world. We are all travellers groping in that thickening darkness. We are all blind and cannot feel the absence of light.

The prayer we have offered is the most important thing of this evening. I was in South Africa when I used to pray privately.

[1] The news report which carried the item was dated December 2, and was exclusively published in *Advance* on the occasion of Rajendra Prasad's 61st birthday.

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When I returned to India I saw the necessity of holding mass prayers. I have been holding mass prayers since then. There is of course the necessity of individual praying in his own way.

Our prayer today to God is to lead us from darkness to light, from untruth to truth, and let us have peace—peace not only for India but for the entire world.

Gandhiji said he did not like the shouting of slogans. The shouting of slogans disturbed the peaceful atmosphere which was the condition prerequisite to holding prayer. So he would request them not to disturb the peaceful atmosphere of the place by shouting slogans.

In conclusion, Gandhiji asked the gathering to remove untouchability from their midst. Untouchability was a slur on humanity.

Gandhiji then requested those who had assembled to contribute their mite to the Harijan Fund.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-12-1945

210. SPEECH AFTER PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 2, 1945

I know your love for me. I also want to love you. I also want to win your heart. But that I want to achieve through work. Do not ask for my *darshan* or want to touch my feet. I am not God; I am a human being. I am an old man and my capacity to stand the strain is limited. If I am to appear before you again and again my strength will be exhausted. And I will not be able to do work.

So my request to you is that you should not ask for my *darshan* or request me to stand before you so that you may touch my feet. If you come at prayer time you will have my *darshan*. But I want to impress upon you that I like peace. I do not like shouting of slogans or claps. They irritate me. If you love me you will not do so.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-12-1945

[1] The source had reported that this was in response to requests from a large number of people who arrived at the Ashram after the prayer was over. Gandhiji returned to the lawn and spoke to them for a few minutes.

211. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

Just got yours (at 11.45). The mail closes at noon. You may take all the time you need, whether at Delhi or Simla. Come when you can. I am in Calcutta till 10th at the least. Then is all uncertain.

Pyarelal is well and working. Sushila is in Sevagram looking after Madalasa. She is due here on 5th.

All well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 4172. Courtesy : Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 7808

212. LETTER TO NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

DEAR NIRMAL BABU[1],

Your sweet letter. You will do exactly as you please.

In order to interpret my writings, you should be for some time in Wardha when it is fairly cool.

Your amœbiasis may not be removed but can certainly be brought under control by nature cure methods. I suggest your coming to the clinic in Poona when I am there. From 1st January it will be for the poor.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 10511

[1] Professor of geography and anthropology, Calcutta University. He first met Gandhiji in 1934 at Wardha and thereafter devoted himself to study and propagation of his ideas.

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213. SILENCE DAY NOTE TO R. G. CASEY

[*December 3, 1945*][1]

Do you want me to come tomorrow? 7.30 is better for me, but I could easily come at 7 p. m. if that is better for you.

I have brought a lot of literature for you that I promised yesterday—of this more tomorrow.

From a photostat : G.N. 809; also G.N. 810

214. LETTER TO ARUNA ASAF ALI

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

CHI. ARUNA[2],

I have read your letter carefully. How I wish I could meet you openly and have you with me for a few days. I love you too dearly to talk to you through letter-writing. Know that I have been silent not through indifference but by design. I am trying to reach the truth. You are helping me. Go on doing it. You can help me much more by appreciating *than* following my advice.

For the present no more.

Hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source carries the following note by Casey, then Governor of Bengal : "Notes passed to me by M. K. Gandhi during our 'talk' on December 3, 1945—one of his silence days—during which I talked to him for 1½ hours; he said nothing."

[2] Wife of Asaf Ali, a Congress leader. She was a member of the Congress Socialist Party and had played a prominent part in the Quit India movement in 1942, ever since when she had continued to work underground.

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215. LETTER TO NARGIS CAPTAIN

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 3, 1945

DEAR SISTER,[1]

Just a line to thank you for your note. Of course you will point out the things you mention, when we meet. I have to work double speed. But I am so far well. I did read Jh's words. Love to you two.

BAPU

SMT. NARGISBEHN CAPTAIN
DUNLAVIN LODGE
POONA 5

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

216. LETTER TO SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

SODEPUR,
December 3, 1945

MY DEAR SARAT,

Whilst writing this I am on my back with mud-pack on the abdomen.

Nathalal saw me too. I like your reply to him. But we must talk more when you are free.

Please don't ask me to come to your place for Gita's[2] wedding. She saw me yesterday. She has grown. You know how my views have grown about marriages. Whether I am present or not Gita and her husband (to be) have my blessings. (Here I went off to sleep.)

Of course I have to come to your house, the old house, to Mona[3] and the rest of the Deshabandhu[4] family. You must

[1] The superscription is in Gujarati.
[2] Addressee's daughter
[3] Daughter of C. R. Das; *vide* also "Letter to Mona", p. 168.
[4] C. R. Das

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tell me how and when. It must be after the Working Committee meeting[1].

Love.

BAPU

SHRI SARAT CHANDRA BOSE
1 WOODBURN PARK
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

217. LETTER TO KRISHNAVARMA

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

BHAI KRISHNAVARMA,

I have your letter. The charge against you is that you are hypocritical and given to falsehood. My own experience with you is the opposite, but nevertheless you are thoughtless and impatient and your thinking is not consistent. That is why your work does not shine. I have already told you that if you cannot accommodate more people in a hygienic way have only one. If I send someone from here, my fear is you will not be able to put up with him. So I feel you should do what I say. If you insist I may think of sending someone but if you do you may have to repent it later.

DR. KRISHNAVARMA
NATURE CURE HOSPITAL
MALAD, BOMBAY

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

[1] To be held in Calcutta from 7th to 11th December

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218. LETTER TO VALLABHRAM VAIDYA

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

BHAI VALLABHRAM,

I have your letter. After I return to Sevagram and settle down there you may certainly come if you wish.

Maybe you are not acquainted with my views as they have progressed. They were of course implicit in all my writings but of late they have become more explicit. I have no longer any interest in marriages, whether within the caste, inter-caste or even interprovincial. Therefore, so far as possible, I do not say anything anywhere on the subject of marriages. As it is I hardly ever attended any and now I have firmly stopped attending them altogether. What I believe is that if we want to preserve whatever is good in *varnashrama* every Hindu has to become not only a Shudra but an *atishudra*[1], and regard himself as such. And as a true indication of it marriages should really take place only between *atishudras* and the so-called other varnas. These marriages also should be not for the sake of indulgence but so as to observe restraint and keeping in mind the restrictions it implies.

Now I can send my blessings to Chi. Ramakant and Chi. Tara. May they be happy, live in restraint and may their alliance be doubly devoted to service. Often after a marriage instead of one *sevak* multiplying into two both the parties drop out of service. This is my experience. There are exceptions, and may this union be one such. To that end pure restraint on your part will prove helpful to them in every field.

The Medical Board has not been lax; it has to do work that is vast in scope. Besides, they are contemplating a co-ordination of the various systems of medicine; so the matter it seems will take some time. Let me also add that although I have a great regard for Ayurveda my experience with those practising it has not been very good. But, at the moment this is beside the point. We shall discuss this further when you can find time to come over.

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

[1] The lowest among the shudras

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219. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

December 3, 1945

DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,

You have fallen ill. It should not have happened. What you say is correct. Do what you think is proper. It will be all right if you go to different villages.

Do not worry about me. God will keep me fit as long as He will. You may come whenever you get an opportunity. You had better not come if there is no particular business.

There is nothing more to write. I am writing this at night.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 540

220. LETTER TO SAILEN CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

BHAI SAILEN

It is thought, and it has been my experience, that through the power of prayer, heart-felt prayer, one can achieve what cannot be achieved by any other power. Swaraj is a very small thing. But prayer should not be recited mechanically. True prayer transforms the life of a man.

Your second question displays sheer ignorance on your part. When did I say that I would live up to 125 years? If I can be so arrogant I shall be God as the questioner says. On the contrary I do not know whether I shall be able to take the next breath. What I have said is that I want to live for 125 years while rendering service. And I have also said that all should aspire to that end. We can only wish. I am an humble devotee of God.

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

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221. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 4, 1945

Gandhiji explained that the real purpose of the prayer could not be fulfilled unless the congregation became calm and quiet.

I have just seen that a crowd of people have entered the prayer ground after we have finished the prayer. I must remind you all that the prayer begins punctually at 5 p. m. (Bengal Time). Those who want to join the prayer must reach the place earlier.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that he was happy that such a big gathering attended his prayer. He was also happy that those who had unfortunately come late had imbibed the mass feeling and stood at the edge of the congregation and listened to what he had to say very calmly and quietly. Even though they could not take part in the prayer they were very silent. That attitude, said Gandhiji, was what the prayer intended to teach the average man. It was called self-control and was a great factor of human life. For the last sixteen years he had practised it. Whenever he was late in attending any meeting or function he decided better not to go at all as otherwise he was sure to disturb others. When placed in such a position he requested friends to excuse his inability to comply with their requests for attending the meeting. He would strongly urge upon those who came to attend the prayer to learn the virtue of self-control and develop it in their lives.

During his stay in Calcutta, concluded Gandhiji, he would try to explain the social and other important aspects of self-control and prayer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-12-1945

[1] According to the source the gathering included British, American and Chinese nationals as also a large number of women students.

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222. LETTER TO SHANTILAL DESAI

December 5, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

I have your letter. One of your notes is kept in my files so that whenever I get the time I can go through it and return it to you. The other one I have already read but I don't know where it is now. It is not lost. But I agree it should reach you at the earliest. I am sorry there has been some laxity about it but I do not know how it happened.

It is good that you gave me the information about Manibhai. I have had a talk with him. I now have my eye on him. I am very keen on engaging him in Dinshaw's clinic. I believe that the experience he will gain there will prove very useful for village work. Moreover, since he has to spend some time with me he will certainly be under my supervision from time to time and so I shall myself get better acquainted with him.

I hope you are getting on well at your end.

SHRI SHANTILAL DESAI
ANAVIL VIDYARTHI ASHRAM
NANPURA, SURAT

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

223. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I got your letter and the cheque. It has to be considered whether we should go as far as you suggest regarding the copyright. Anybody writing to us for permission and our giving it will mean that we have read the work or got it read by someone and approve. In this connection Anand Hingorani had suggested different Boards, so that the Tamil Board would decide about the Tamil translation and the Malayalam Board would advise about the translation in that language. There would, thus, be a separate

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Board for each language. We have to consider how far it would be advisable and becoming for us to bother ourselves to that extent.

There are several translations of Tolstoy's books in the same language. All of them are not up to the mark, and the titles of the books also have been translated differently. All of them sell, but the translation which is most faithful to the original, most painstaking and beautiful sells more than the other translations. The same has happened in the case of the Bible. The authorized version is there but there are many others in the field and their publication is not prohibited. Every translation has its own circle of readers.

You have raised the question of the *Autobiography*. A translation has been brought out by one Tamil publisher and now this is the second. How would we know which of the two is really good? Or would it be advisable to stop other translations from being published? I do not see much benefit in that. Even when we decided to claim copyright, I did not go as far as that. This matter cannot be looked at from a purely legal point of view, nor from a purely financial one. We should look at it wholly from a moral and practical point of view. And looking at it thus I feel that we should permit the person who has written to us to publish the translation. I have not replied to him, however. Consult all the others and discuss the matter with them and suggest whatever reply you think should be given. I will think over it and then send a reply to the man.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9959. Also C.W. 6933. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

224. LETTER TO SONAVANE

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

BHAI SONAVANE,

I have your letter. It is good that you wrote. I hope that your legal practice will flourish. I very much like your idea of not going into the Assembly.

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

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225. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 5, 1945

Gandhiji spoke about the the technique and purpose of prayer which was to commune with the inner self by the individual. To the extent this communion was achieved the individual man got a fresh lease of spiritual enlightenment to sustain one for the next 24 hours.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 6-12-1945

226. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

As you were eager to have a copy of the *Constructive Programme*[1], I had procured a copy. But today's post brought me a proof copy of the revised edition. I send it for your perusal. You will read what you like. The copy need not be returned to me.[2]

The other things I am trying to collect as fast as possible in the midst of the overwhelming work before me.

May I repeat the pleasure it gave me to meet you and Mrs. Casey.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

From a photostat : G.N. 811; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government 1944-47*, p. 105

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 146-66.

[2] The addressee in his letter of December 9, 1945, said that he entirely agreed with Gandhiji's views on home-spinning and weaving but he was against each cultivator growing his own cotton as that would reduce the already very small areas for the growing of his main crop—paddy. Further, his scheme would not free cultivators from the thraldom of monsoon or other disabilities arising out of lack of irrigation.

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227. LETTER TO MONA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

MY DEAR BABY,

Your sweet letter. I was pleased to see your big family. Only I was too busy to play with them to my heart's content.

If you have not come up to your promise, try again.

You need not trouble to come, I shall not misunderstand your absence.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

228. LETTER TO A. K. M. ZAKARIAH

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to see yours of 3rd inst. to Shri Pyarelal. You can come any day just before 5.15 p. m. You will forgive me if I am called away for work at the time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB A. K. M. ZAKARIAH
68 SYED AMEER ALI AVENUE
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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229. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA),
December 6, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this about the little crematorium on your ground. You know perhaps that when I was a prisoner in the Aga Khan Palace in Yeravda the ashes of Mahadev Desai first and then of my wife were buried in your compound. The remains were cremated there at the Government's instance. They would not let me cremate them outside at the usual crematorium. Through Government's good grace and your people's forbearance, friends have been able to have access to the above crematorium. I have been pleading with the Government that they acquire the little plot and some right of way for devotees. Now that you are in India, may I look to you to facilitate my request in the manner you think proper?

I hope you are keeping well and that we shall meet before you leave India again.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

230. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have just been able to reach your letter. A letter to the Aga Khan is enclosed.[1] Read it. If you approve of it, send it on to him. If you wish, you may show it to Sir Purushottamdas[2].

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4806. Courtesy : Shantikumar N. Morarjee

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] Purushottamdas Thakurdas

231. LETTER TO MADALASA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

You want no reply, but I do wish to reply. You have had fever again. I do not like it at all. Make a practice of lying in the sun. You may, if you like, increase the duration gradually. Cover up the body to start with and, as you feel warmer, remove the covering gradually till finally you are stripped of all clothing. This will not only cure the chest complaint but I am sure make the whole body perfectly healthy.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 327

232. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your two letters. If other people's advice differs from mine, follow mine. I assume that you have gone to Poona and am accordingly addressing this letter there.

Why should you feel concerned over anything that you may hear? Remain engrossed in your work and don't speak except when absolutely necessary. You should attend to only three duties there and discharge them to the best of your ability : writing the accounts, doing the marketing and maintaining cleanliness. In doing the last you may occasionally have to express your opinion, but in doing the other two things you need speak nothing. If you keep up courage and faith, your work is bound to win appreciation. But even if it does not, what does it matter?

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Kanchan seems to be keeping good health. I get very little time to talk to her. She works and remains cheerful.

I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8615. Also C.W. 7197. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

233. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

BHAI BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. Since Satyawati[1] has passed away, I should certainly like to be better acquainted with you.

SHRI BALBHADRAJI
6 PYARELAL BUILDING
KASHMERE GATE, DELHI

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

234. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

1. With regard to Om Prakashji I think there is no need for an M. A. degree. Of course he must improve his knowledge of Urdu and achieve proficiency in it. But how will a degree help in that? If he wishes to go home when his brother sends for him, he can certainly go.

2. I had entrusted the sadhu to Aryanayakum's charge because I felt I should not burden you with the responsibility of a case which needs careful [medical] attention. Let him go if he wishes to. If he stays he has to abide by all the rules. Cleaning of lavatories is the first duty. He should not be a burden in any way. From what Kanu tells me he seems to be a totally useless man.

As for new Sevagram only what is deemed proper should be done. In this connection, only what Jajuji says should be done.

[1] Grand-daughter of Swami Shraddhanand

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Read the letter to Sankaran which is enclosed herewith. That includes my reply regarding his sister and his son.

Any girl who wishes to learn only Hindi can easily learn it on her own. But we cannot provide facilities for teaching only Hindi. Provision can be made for both the scripts. This point is perfectly intelligible. Try to convince them by appealing to their reason. We may not compel anyone to learn both the scripts, but let us provide facilities for those who wish to learn both the scripts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4835

235. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

CHI. SUNDARAM,

I have your letter. I do not take the least interest in the Assembly elections. I am forwarding your letter to Pantji[1]. I remember Suresh very well. I am surprised that even a man like Suresh wants to enter the Assembly.

Blessings from
BAPU[2]

SHRI V. SUNDARAM
KRISHNA KUTIR
BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY
BANARAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 2895. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

236. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SODEPUR,
December 6, 1945

In his introductory speech Gandhiji referred to the incident which took place at Sodepur Railway Station when one person either in attempting

[1] Govind Ballabh Pant
[2] The subscription is in Tamil.
[3] The meeting was also attended by Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru.

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to board a running train which was not scheduled to stop at Sodepur or for some such reason was run over and killed.

They might think that when there were crores of Indians what did it matter if one met with death in such circumstances. But that was a totally wrong view. And if they allowed themselves to think in that way they would not be able to build up a brotherhood in India and secure her salvation. They must instead think that the person who met his death the other day was one of them and must feel sorry for his tragic end.

Perhaps, said Gandhiji, he himself was partly responsible for his death for the deceased went there either to see him or to attend the prayer. The congregation too was partly responsible because after the prayer was over they rushed to the Station, vied with each other to catch the train and thereby created a situation which caused this death. They, therefore, should henceforth take the vow with him not to create any such situation in future which might cause the death of a fellow-brother.

All this happened because they were not disciplined. The prayer was intended to confer upon man that discipline which he required so urgently. If they were mentally disciplined through the practice of prayer they would no more commit the mistake they committed the other day.

If by prayer they could be mentally disciplined, stated Gandhiji, they would attain a state which was nobler and higher than even the salvation of India.

Perhaps, freedom of India could be maintained with the help of pistols or swords. But were those weapons of any value if their votaries were not disciplined? Therefore whether a country was wedded to violence or non-violence discipline was of paramount importance to all men.

Without discipline it was difficult to attain swaraj as he had stated two days ago.

If they practised prayer with all concentration they would find that all their difficulties would smoothen.

Concluding, Gandhiji referred to an incident in South Africa when a ship came upon a rock and was about to sink. Its Captain was a strong-willed and disciplined man. He preserved the calm of his mind and realized that he could not save all lives. He, therefore, secured the safety of as many men as he could and then went down with a hymn to God on his lips alone with the sinking ship. If he was not a disciplined man, said Gandhiji, he could not have saved the lives of the many passengers of the ship whom he brought to safety. What was, therefore, urgently required of all was discipline and this all men could acquire by actively participating in prayer.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-12-1945

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237. TELEGRAM TO THE AGA KHAN

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

H. H. AGAKHAN
BOMBAY

MANY THANKS YOUR WIRE. WOULD LOVE TO MEET YOU AND LEARN FROM YOU WAY TO SOLUTION COMMUNAL PROBLEM. MAULANA IS ILL BUT AT WORK. EXPECTING TO REACH WARDHA FEBRUARY. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

238. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

CHI. JIVANJI,

I got your proof-copy of the pamphlet on constructive work yesterday. I wanted to use that copy here and did so. But I had already gone through the proof earlier. As there is no letter accompanying it, I don't quite understand why you have sent it. You have given a heading to my preface but there is no heading on the page on which the pamphlet itself begins. I infer from this that final touches still remain to be given to the printing. I have of course asked Pyarelalji to write to you about this, but I think it is better to dictate this just now in the morning.

I have the impression that I have already written to you about the cover. My suggestion is that the eighteen headings which you have given in the pamphlet should be reproduced on the cover in their proper order, with the page number given against each. This will help the reader and we shall be able to show what topics have been covered. The topics can also be shown on the cover in the form of a circle. We can have a

drawing of the spinning-wheel in the centre and the headings can be printed round it like the planets round the sun. There is one difficulty in this, of course. How can communal unity be represented as a planet? If it is so represented, my original conception would be vitiated, for the basic conception is that khadi is the chief handicraft and that the other industries take their place and revolve round khadi like planets round the sun. If now we can find a place in this scheme for Adivasis, *kisans*, students and communal unity, then the conception will have been worked out. It might be better, therefore, to give up the idea of the circle, or to form the circle only with khadi and cottage industries. But we need not waste any time over this, for it is essential that the pamphlet should be published as soon as possible. It is also necessary that the translations should be published simultaneously. It would, also, be good if at the end a supplementary list of other books to be read with the pamphlet are given. For example, Rajendra Babu's book, Gulzarilal's essay, etc. You may drop this also, if you cannot recollect the names of the books immediately. Pyarelal will most probably send you a wire today saying, "Send another copy proof." The idea behind this is that if I have to correct the proof, the time which would be taken by an ordinary letter may be saved, for the copy which I have passed on is not likely to come back to me now.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9960. Also C.W. 6934. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

239. LETTER TO JATINDAS AMIN

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

CHI. AMIN,

I got your letter sent with Sushila. She arrived the day before yesterday. You do not seem to have calmed down yet. You can render great service if you calm down. Take up only a little work there. If you bring credit to it, it will be greatly appreciated.

[1] This was given to R. G. Casey, the Governor of Bengal, *vide* p. 167.

What you write is absolutely correct. Greatness lies in becoming small and smallness in assuming greatness. We should therefore only serve by becoming as small as dust particles.

Your camera is to be sent only with somebody going there, is that not so? I am sure you are not in a hurry.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

240. LETTER TO MANORANJAN CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI MANORANJANBABU,

I have your wire. I am writing to Dr. Shyamaprasadji[1] and I shall send either Dr. Sushila Nayyar or Pyarelalji there.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANORANJAN CHATTERJEE

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

241. LETTER TO SHYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI SHYAMAPRASADJI,

Why did you fall ill? Dr. Bidhan tells me that you do not take care of your health and that once you take up some work you never let go. This is a virtue as well as a vice. It is good when you persevere in it within a certain limit. It is bad when you go beyond the limit. I hope that, as reported in the newspapers, you will resume work after taking complete rest.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE
CALCUTTA

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

[1] *Vide* the following item.

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242. LETTER TO SURENDRANATH VISHWAS

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

BHAI SUREN BABU,

I have your informative letter. It will be useful to me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SURENDRANATH VISHWAS
1/23 PRINCE GULAM MOHAMMED ROAD
KALIGHAT
CALCUTTA

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

243. LETTER TO CHARUPRABHA SENGUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 7,[1] *1945*

CHI. CHARUPRABHA,

These days I try to write to all Indians in the national language. How long shall we go on writing to each other in English ?

I am occupied with many things up to the 10th. I don't know how long I shall be here after that. Even then I am writing to Aruna.[2]

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8710. Also C.W. 1496. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

[1] A copy of the letter available in Pyarelal Papers bears the date December 8.

[2] Addressee's daughter; *vide* the following item.

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244. LETTER TO ARUNA SENGUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

CHI. ARUNA,

Mother writes to me that I should write to you to come here. I am busy till the 10th. I don't know where I shall be after that. Look up the newspapers and if I am in Sodepur come any day at 5 o'clock for the prayer. I shall have a talk with you for two minutes after the prayer.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI ARUNA SENGUPTA
93/3/2 HARI GHOSH STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8711. Also C.W. 1497. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

245. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

December 7, 1945

Asked whether he would like to say anything about the Congress Working Committee meeting[1], Gandhiji replied.

No, I am tired.

In reply to another query Gandhiji remarked :

What can I give you? The Maulana is here. You can take whatever you like from him. They have called me here, but they have not given me any food to eat, or water to drink. And after my work has been finished they are sending me back to my place. Your food is being cooked at Maulana's hands and he will give it to you when it is ready.

[1] Held at the residence of Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President. According to the source "Gandhiji spoke for over an hour and touched upon the political situation, the Indian National Army, changes in the Congress constitution, Congress prospects in the Central and Provincial elections and other matters. He also reported on his talks with R. G. Casey."

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While waiting for the car Gandhiji turned to Maulana Azad and remarked :

Maulana Saheb, these Press reporters and photographers are having a good time and detaining our car.

A hearty laughter followed. A Press correspondent drew Gandhiji's attention to the announcement from New Delhi that the Viceroy had agreed to see Mahatma Gandhi. The correspondent inquired whether it suggested that Gandhiji had sought the interview.

Gandhiji replied the news had appeared in the newspapers and he declined to make any further comment.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-12-1945

246. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 7, 1945

Gandhiji said that he noticed that the people became quiet only after he arrived at the place. That was not ideal. The place where a prayer was conducted, he said, should be considered as a temple and only in prayerful mind should they present themselves there. They should come silently and maintain calm and should leave the place in the same mood.

If, however, those who joined in the prayer would remain quiet and peaceful he would be only too glad to see the whole of Calcutta assembled there.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that there were incorporated in the service Bengali songs as the majority of those present were Bengalees; but for the benefit of others he wished to get a booklet including all songs and other prayers printed in both Devanagari and Urdu scripts. This proposed booklet which might be priced two pice would be of permanent benefit to the readers who could then be acquainted with the texts whenever they so wished.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-12-1945

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247. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I have your letter of 26th November about Shri Yajee.[1] I am thankful for the considered reply. I am now trying to put myself in touch with the gentleman and see what he has to say.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE VICEROY

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 61

248. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I thank you for yours of 1st instant.[2] I shall send you in due course fuller details about Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia and have written to Shri Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi to proceed to New Delhi and report himself.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 63-4

[1] The addressee had written that the allegations of Sheel Bhadra Yajee about food and inhuman living conditions given to him in the jail were all exaggerated. *Vide* also p. 35.

[2] The addressee had asked Gandhiji to send directly to the Home Member the details about Vidyarthi and Lohia.

[3] A telegram was however sent on December 9. *Vide* also pp. 114-5.

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249. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

Immediate

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I write this with the greatest hesitation. The more I see and hear, the greater is the grief over the happenings in Bengal. Here is a sample demanding immediate attention.

Satish Babu brings me the story that potato-growers cannot get seed potatoes and the planting season will be over in a week's time. Seed potatoes are there in the market under Government control. But the grower cannot get them.

There is evidently something radically wrong if the news brought by Satish Babu is true. I wonder if you can do anything. You were telling me about the clever Mr. Dey whose services you have enlisted for such matters. Can you make him over to me or some other officer who can attend to this immediate affair?

I am having this letter delivered at once. The question is small enough on the large Bengal canvas but is all in all to the poor growers whose livelihood is at stake.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 813; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, p. 113

250. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just finished reading your broadcast to be delivered today. It makes interesting and informative reading. If the waters of the rivers can be captured and utilized by the people

[1] In *Gandhi's Emissary*. Sudhir Ghosh writes that the Government, using emergency powers, seized whatever stocks there were with the profiteers and 250 mounds were distributed among the growers that same day.

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of Bengal, instead of being wasted in the Bay, it would be a great gain. But it is a long-term proposition. The millions, meanwhile, must be taught to utilize every minute of the working hours for their own benefit. If they learn this art they will make good use of the captured waters. You have well said :

> The tens of millions of farmers of Bengal are idle more than half the time. They constitute the biggest problem of unemployment in the world and the biggest waste of potential human effort.

I have provided you with a complete answer which can be worked out today with a very little outlay on the part of the Government. Regard human labour more even than money and you have an untapped and inexhaustible source of income which ever increases with use. If I had been your adviser, before the speech was printed I would have suggested the insertion immediately after, "Let us examine the problem", of a paragraph or two, showing the way of immediate utilization of human effort. You could then have followed it up with your entrancing scheme as a long-range proposition.

Is your peroration right? You say :

> The answer to my mind lies not in our politics, our religion or our individual ambition, but in the abiding factors of our environment, i. e., the land and water of Bengal.

This is a gross error of thought and consequent action, handed down from generation to generation by the British official element. Your gigantic project will come to nothing until the whole mass of the people of Bengal is interested in the Government of the province. Therefore, religion and even individual ambition are intermixed. They are as much abiding factors of our environment as the land and water of Bengal, and they are equally shifting.

You asked me for my reaction to your thoughtful speech and I have given it as it has come to me.

Very many thanks for your prompt action[1] on my letter of this morning on seed potatoes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 812; also *Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47*, pp. 107-8

[1] *Vide* footnote on p. 181.

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251. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA),
December 8, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your long wire to which I have replied[1] as follows :

Of course, I shall be glad to receive your suggestions. It does not matter to me in the least that in this matter you will be representing nobody but yourself. The only question is how we shall meet, when and where. I have a fixed programme for Bengal, Assam and Madras, which is calculated to take me up to almost the middle of February before I return to Sevagram. If, therefore, I know your movements about February, I shall try to see what I can do.

Maulana Saheb has interrupted his rest for the sake of the Working Committee. He is none too well, but I have no doubt he will be in communication with you himself.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* p. 174.

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252. LETTER TO SATYANAND

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR SATYANAND BABU,

It was a delight to receive your postcard. I am doing all I am capable of for the alleviation of distress. I do not know what God will do through the effort.

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

253. LETTER TO NOEL BARWELL

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR MR. BARWELL,

I thank you for your cordial note. I am so much fixed up and so embarrassingly besieged wherever I go that I dare not promise myself the pleasure of visiting the society you mention. But I shall certainly be pleased to see you for a few minutes at this place if you and Mrs. Barwell can conveniently come. There is not a moment left open till Monday, but I shall know more fully on Monday where I stand.

Could you please phone on Tuesday next or send a messenger ?

Yours sincerely,

NOEL BARWELL, ESQ.
6 MIDDLETON ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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254. LETTER TO BALWANTBHAI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. BALWANTBHAI,

I got your postcard. I am really very glad. Get rid of all doubts.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BALWANTBHAI DADUBHAI DESAI
DAKOR

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

255. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter. I am certainly going to . . .[1] Tara. Her letter reflects her character. The work which she is doing now will not clash with the work of K. G. N. M. Trust. She will also have some help from Sushilabai.[2] If she would rather not stay at the Mahila Ashram, she can live in Akola and there can be no hitch even if she has to be paid a salary. I am passing on Chi. Tara's letter to Bapa. I strongly feel that you two should go and stay at Bombay for a time.

How strange that I myself never knew that my car had met with an accident. Still it made a story. People might be escaping hundreds of such accidents daily. If the papers were to take note of them we would have to stop travelling by cars, etc. If Prabhu Dayal is there please ask him to stay on.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA
SEVAGRAM

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

[1] Omission as in the source
[2] Sushilabai Mukundrao Joshi, a teacher at the Mahila Ashram, Wardha

256. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. I think the kind of questions asked by Vishnudatta's friend ought not to be encouraged. Had I been conducting *Harijan* I might occasionally answer such questions. Generally those who ask such questions are idlers.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

257. LETTER TO SHANTILAL TRIVEDI

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. SHANTILAL,

I have your letter. Saralabehn spoke at great length of your courage and service. I am glad.

I am pleased with what you write about wool. It may be useful if you have your experiences during the journey published. You should be concise and to the point.

SJT. SHANTILAL TRIVEDI
GOVIND NIWAS
ALMORA

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

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258. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

CHI. TARI,

I read your letter to Kishorelal. How long will you continue to be so diffident? Your name will be announced as an Agent. Thakkar Bapa will write to you the details. You will no doubt take all the help you can from Sushilabai. It would certainly be better if she could be spared from the Mahila Ashram and stay with you in Akola. I think her salary can be paid from the K. G. N. M. Trust. Write to me at length, or write to Bapa.

I take it you are all well. Sushilabehn and the children are not with me; Manilal is.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

259. LETTER TO ATMARAM

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI ATMARAM,

It is certainly a bad thing that during prayer undesirable thoughts come. But you should not worry. Take any *sloka* of the prayer and concentrate on it. If even this is not possible repeat Ramanama from the depths of your heart with such concentration that there is no room for any other thought. It is no doubt difficult but it can be done. Such has been my experience and the experience of other people as well. That is why Ramanama is said to be the panacea for all ills.

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

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260. LETTER TO KHUSHIRAM

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI KHUSHIRAM,

Bhai Jairamdas has told me how generous you are. It is good to give whatever you want to give without laying down unnecessary conditions. And the trust is being made. All this makes me very happy.

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

261. LETTER TO MRS. S. R. DAS

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to see you, but it also made me unhappy. I was not prepared to see you in such broken health. Urmiladevi has given me a cheque for Rs. 500. I will spend that money on the Adivasis. You know who the Adivasis are, don't you? Thakkar Bapa and Khersaheb are working among the Adivasis.

Blessings from
BAPU

MRS. S. R. DAS
1 AUCKLAND PLACE
CALCUTTA

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

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262. LETTER TO UDDHAV

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI UDDHAV,

On the death of your brother you performed only the yarn sacrifice and no religious rites. I liked it very much. It will bring great benefit if all do so.

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

263. LETTER TO V. V. SAXENA

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

BHAI SAXENA,

Kishorelalji has forwarded here your letter addressed to him. I shall not be able to reach Sevagram before February in any case. It will be best if you write to me what you want to discuss with me. In this way both of us will save time—and money of course.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. V. V. SAXENA
VANASTHALI VIDYAPITH
VANASTHALI (JAIPUR)

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

264. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 8, 1945

Congratulating the congregation on its maintaining an ideal condition for proceeding with the prayer straight away as soon as he reached the place, Gandhiji explained the significance and gradual development of the system of mass-prayer at Sodepur Ashram.

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In 1936 about a dozen Japanese monks paid him a visit when he was staying at Maganwadi, Wardha. The leading monk suggested to him that he intended to send one or two of his disciples to the Ashram, a proposal which he approved. First came one and later on another. Of the two, one was staying with him till the war with Japan broke out and as a result he was taken into custody. This Buddhist monk used to do all the tasks he was given very punctually and methodically. In between his work he used to spend the time at his disposal in singing religious songs in the Japanese language all the time beating a little drum. This he did while taking his rounds. This was a Buddhist religious song in praise of the Infinite. Gandhiji said that he incorporated the song in his prayer. This was the first item of the prayer.

The second item of the prayer was a Sanskrit *sloka* and was, according to him, universal in its appeal. This was an invocation to Mother Earth, sustainer of man. If there was any objection to it on any score he would plead that he was helpless. To him all faiths were welcome. He believed in all faiths but he saw no reason to give up his own faith. Possibly, said Gandhiji, this Sanskrit *sloka* was symbolic, but, according to him, many noble thoughts and ideas were couched in symbolic language.

Thirdly, there was the prayer quoted from the Koran. It was incorporated at the instance of the daughter[1] of Abbas Tyabji, the well-known Congress leader. She possessed a gifted voice. When on a visit to the Ashram she expressed the desire to propagate the teachings of the Koran to the Ashramites, he readily agreed. She suggested a verse from the Koran for inclusion in the prayer and it was done.

The fourth item of the prayer was taken from the Zend-Avesta written in the Pahlavi language. When he was fasting in the Aga Khan's Palace, Dr. Gilder was there as were also Dr. Bidhan Roy and some other medical men. Dr. Gilder was a Parsi and from him the verse from the Zend-Avesta was taken and included.

So far as *bhajan* songs were concerned, said Gandhiji, there was no hard and fast rule. It all depended upon the time and place of the prayer. As the prayer was for the moment being held in Bengal and Bengalees in larger numbers were present, Bengali songs had to be included in the prayer daily.

It was Gandhiji's desire to get all the prayers included in a booklet with their meanings given in Hindustani. He wished it to be printed both in Devanagari and Urdu scripts and, if possible, in Bengali too.

He asked the assembled people to follow the prayer in a proper spirit and to live up to the lofty ideals it inculcated.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-12-1945

[1] Raihana Tyabji

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265. TELEGRAM TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

CALCUTTA,
December 9, 1945

PRABHU DAYAL
ASHRAM
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

PROCEED NEW DELHI AND SEE DEVDAS WHO HAS INSTRUCTIONS.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 11673

266. LETTER TO SAMARENDRANATH ROY

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

DEAR SAMARENDRA,

It grieved me to learn from Satis Babu that your great father[1] was no more. You may know that your father and I were friends. We often met and exchanged views. My condolences to you all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAMARENDRANATH ROY
33/2 BEADEN ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Kalinath Roy, editor in charge of *The Tribune*, who died on 9th December, 1945

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267. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. It is enough that your aspiration is pure. I don't think there is anything special in staying with me. When you serve people wherever you are, I shall take it that you are with me. I do not feel that you are losing anything by not being with me. The air is humid and it is cold, too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4967

268. LETTER TO SITA GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SITA,

You seem to be demanding too much. How can you expect a letter from me unless you write to me? I know that you are keeping well and are working hard. Pass the examination. Come to me when you can. I am glad to know that you do rowing. It is a good exercise. Row the boat of India, too.

Take care of your health while studying.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4968

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269. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I got your letter today. I made very few changes. I am sending it back.

I am happy to hear that Madalasa is all right. Tell her that I think of her every day.

Do not give any importance to my cold. I did have a touch of it but am I not a "mahatma" after all?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 307-8

270. LETTER TO BHAGWATI PRASAD

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. BHAGWATI,

How will the marriage be performed in Gondia? You have not said whether there will be any rites or it will be a civil marriage before a magistrate. I wish both of you well. I cannot have any objection to marriages which are intended not for indulgence but for observance of self-control, for enhancing the spirit of service and widening its sphere. On the contrary I encourage such marriages. And therefore I would like to have your reply to the above question.

What is the girl's brother doing? Why doesn't the girl write to me? What has she been doing these years since she visited the Ashram? I am keen to know all these things.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI BHAGWATI PRASAD
C/O DEVIPRASAD DAMOHE
RANGE OFFICER, CENTRAL EXCISE
GONDIA

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

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271. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYAN,

I have your letter. Personally I liked it very much. I intend to show it to Sharmaji. You have not asked me not to do so. Similarly, if it becomes necessary I shall also want to show it to Jajuji and Vichitra Narayan. The whole episode seems strange to me.

I will find out more about khadi because I have received complaints from other people also in this regard.

SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA
P. O. BOX NO. 17
DELHI

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

272. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I had sent a copy of your letter to Gadodiaji. I have a long reply from him, saying that whatever you have said is all fabrication and where it has any truth it has never been hidden nor is it a matter of shame. I only hope that you have not done anything improper and if you have you must frankly confess it. I enclose a copy[1] of Gadodiaji's letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI H. L. SHARMA
KHURJA

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

[1] This is not traceable.

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273. LETTER TO SARASWATI GADODIA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SARASWATI,

What is there in your letter that makes it confidential? Still, since you want it, I shall treat it as such. Of course I shall not take it to mean that it is to remain confidential from those who work for me. For instance, I did not read the letter, but Kanu read it out to me while I ate.

You would want me to show it to Sharmaji, wouldn't you? If I don't do that, the letter, which I like and which I find clean and pure will become useless. Even then I shall wait for your reply. My advice is that not only the above-mentioned letter but anything we do or write should not be kept secret. We should do nothing which has to be kept secret or hidden. That is the main thing.

Blessings from
BAPU

C/O SHRI LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA
P. B. NO. 17, DELHI

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

274. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAI RADHAKANT,

I have gone through your letter. I do not take any interest in the elections. I know that the Congress must win.

Babuji has formed a separate association. I did not like it. But who was I to prevent him from doing so? I think it is improper for you to run it. It is a different thing if Babuji does so. Have a talk with the Working Committee about the role of the Hindu Mahasabha. I personally do not like it. I am returning the two letters.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

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

275. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

CHI. SHYAMLAL[1],

You are going ahead very fast. If it is in keeping with your strength, it is good. The work of Kasturba Memorial can progress only with such self-sacrifice. We cannot always measure the strength of self-sacrifice. What does it matter? May God preserve your strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

276. LETTER TO VASUDEV

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAISHRI,

Your letter is written in a very bad hand. And that too in English. Can't you express your views in Hindustani?

I have gone through the printed statement. I did not like it. Its is pompous and lacking in humility. There is also exaggeration in it. Read what I have written about students. Writing will not help. Only work will. Constructive work is easy as well as difficult. Meet Rajendra Babu. Do what he says.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

VASUDEV
YOUTH LEAGUE
PATNA

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

[1] Secretary of the Kasturba Memorial Trust

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277. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SODEPUR,
December 9, 1945

BHAI MOTI BABU,

How long should I go on writing to you in English? These days, as far as possible, I write to everybody in the national language or the mother tongue. Perhaps you may not be having anyone who can read the national language, so I am enclosing a Bengali translation of the letter also. Amtul Salaam will deliver this letter to you and also have a talk with you. She has complained a lot to me about the khadi policy of the Pravartak Sangh. Amtul Salaam has stayed with me for years as a daughter. She is very industrious and very knowledgeable. Hence, she has been doing the khadi work at Borkamta for the last few years. Now the Pravartak Sangh is also functioning there. Amtul Salaam's work is purely altruistic and for service of the people.[1] Amtul Salaam says that the [Pravartak Sangh][2] is not for selfless service but. . .[3] ends. She also says that its work is against the policy of the Charkha Sangh and may cause harm to it. I refuse to believe that you are aware of these things and allow them to continue. And so I am sending Amtul Salaam to understand the situation. She will explain things in greater detail.

It is a matter of regret that the money advanced by the Charkha Sangh has not been returned so far. They should get it back now. It belongs to the Trust. And how can the Trust write it off?

Blessing from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 11058

[1], [2] & [3] A few words are indistinct here in the source.

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278. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 10, 1945

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

The newly-opened account in the United Commercial Bank, as per papers herewith, is to be operated by you or by me. I am thinking of two more signatures, though I have not decided who the persons should be. If you can think of any names, let me know. Perhaps two names may suffice for the present. The question will arise when one of us dies.

Send your specimen signature on the accompanying form. I have given mine in Hindustani and intend to sign in that language in future. You also can do the same. Think over this and do as you like. Preserve the other papers relating to the account sent with this. Send the specimen signature to me.

I shall be here for some time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10648

279. LETTER TO SHITIKANTH JHA

SODEPUR,
December 10, 1945

BHAI SHITIKANTH,

I have your letter. If you want to sit by my side, come over some day. But what is so special in sitting near me? Doing the work suggested by me amounts to sitting near me.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SHITIKANTH JHA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
GRAM SEVA KENDRA
THAKURDANDI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 7477. Also C.W. 4923

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280. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 10, 1945

When we are making a supreme effort for the realization of our goal, let nobody have any opportunity of pointing it against us that we are not disciplined and therefore not fit for swaraj. Either today or tomorrow the power must come to our hands. But how are we going to exercise that power unless we are disciplined?

The British Government, he reminded the people, was not the last hurdle to be got over. If the people were not disciplined then even if power came to their hands they would not be able to retain it and someone else would be there to snatch it away from their hands.

It was only wild animals which were not disciplined and took recourse to unreasonable and meaningless climbing. But if men also took recourse to such tactics how could drivers and guards of trains manage their affairs.[1] It was also often found that small boats which had only limited capacity often gave way and sank because of overcrowding. They were crores and perhaps for that reason they did not notice the loss they sustained in such catastrophes. If they could not board a train they should just wait for the next to travel instead of overcrowding the first and thus make it impossible for the driver and the guard to run it.

Proceeding, Gandhiji said that they must learn discipline. There were two ways of learning it. The soldiers learnt it by having drill exercises. But there was the prayer to teach them the other way. Prayer not only secures for them their salvation for the next world but also in this world. If they failed to secure their salvation in this world, could there be any possibility of securing the salvation for the next? In the circumstances, concluded Gandhiji, they should conduct themselves as thinking men.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-12-1945

[1] The reference is to the conduct of passengers who boarded engines and guards' compartments on the previous day to travel to and from Sodepur.

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281. SPEECH AT CALCUTTA[1]

December 10, 1945

Addressing the gathering outside Government House, Gandhiji said that when he entered Government House in the evening he found a crowd of people around his car. Hence he had come this time walking to them.

He asked them to be calm and peaceful. He was an old man and could not bear the strain of demonstrations. If they did not allow him to go by car, he would have to walk on foot to Sodepur.

Gandhiji added that he had come there to serve them and the country. He urged on them the need for discipline. India had attained a great position in the past because of her great message of *shanti*. They could attain freedom only by peace and discipline.

Referring to the prayer meeting at Sodepur Ashram, Gandhiji said that thousands and thousands of people came there to join the prayer, but perfect silence was maintained.

Gandhiji then asked the gathering whether they would allow him to go by car. The crowd respectfully replied in the affirmative and Gandhiji got into his car while a corridor was made for him to pass through. Sitting with his hands folded in salutation, Gandhiji then moved out in the car to his Ashram at Sodepur.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-12-1945

282. CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION[2]

[On or before *December 11, 1945*][3]

After the arrest of the principal Congressmen in the August of 1942, the unguided masses took the reins in their own hands and acted almost spontaneously. If many acts of heroism and sacrifice are to their credit, there were acts done which could not be included in non-violence. It is, therefore, necessary

[1] At 8.40 p.m., after his talk with the Viceroy. For the Viceroy's version of the talk *vide* Appendix I.

[2] & [3] The resolution, drafted by Gandhiji, was passed by the Congress Working Committee on December 11, the concluding day of its five-day session held in Calcutta.

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for the Working Committee to affirm, for the guidance of all concerned, that the policy of non-violence adopted in 1920 by the Congress continues unabated, and that such non-violence does not include burning of public property, cutting of telegraph wires, derailing of trains and intimidation.

The Working Committee is of opinion that the policy of non-violence as detailed in the Congress resolution of 1920, since expanded and explained from time to time, and action in accordance with it, has raised India to a height never attained before.

The Working Committee is further of opinion that the constructive activities of the Congress, beginning with the spinning-wheel and khadi as the centre, are emblematic of the policy of non-violence and that every other Congress activity including what is known as the parliamentary programme, is subservient to and designed to promote the constructive activities as explained by Mahatma Gandhi.

The Working Committee is of opinion that civil disobedience, mass or any other, meant for the attainment of freedom, is inconceivable without the adoption of the constructive programme on the widest scale possible by the masses of India.

The Hindu, 12-12-1945

283. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 10th instant, for which I thank you.

I have not discounted[1] your irrigation scheme. I have only suggested an addition to it so as to bring almost immediate individual relief to the crores of villagers by occupying their admitted leisure hours. In your written note you seem to be in entire accord with my proposition. Where then is the difficulty in the Government of Bengal sponsoring the scheme and at once creating a hopeful situation so far as the shortage of cloth is concerned? I have never suggested that attainment of happiness is possible without the control of physical surroundings. But I have no desire to enter into any argument. If you have immediate regard for home-spinning and weaving and other village crafts,

[1] *Vide* pp. 181-2.

I have suggested a way out. That each cultivator should grow his own cotton is not a *sine qua non* of my scheme and certainly no cultivator should be compelled or even advised to grow cotton to the detriment of any staple crop. The question is one of utilizing waste labour, as under your scheme it is one of utilizing waste water.

If you favour the idea as practical and capable of immediate application, I could furnish you with a detailed scheme which, as I have told you, can be worked with the help of the various khadi organizations controlled by the All-India Spinners' Association.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 110

284. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter of 10th instant regarding the Gope Palace.[1] This is a matter of such a delicate nature that I do not think I can usefully interfere. And why should there be any hurry if a popular government is shortly to replace the present regime ?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 112

[1] The palace, which was on the outskirts of Midnapore, housed a British Military Hospital and the Health Department of the Bengal Government was anxious to acquire it permanently for a T. B. sanatorium. The addressee had suggested to Gandhiji to use his influence with the owner who was a Congressman.

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285. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

Chi. Sushila[1] has addressed the following letter[2] to Shyamlal :

I had assumed that Sushila would readily take up this work and had, therefore, welcomed Shyamlal's suggestion that he himself should write to her. But Sushila suggests your name and has declined to join while you are there. So I ask your advice as to what should be done. Shouldn't we do what would help the work and bring credit to it? If you want to give your reply after consulting Sushila, do that. You may make any suggestion you like. If you address your reply as above, I shall get it wherever I am at the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10441. Also C.W. 6880. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

286. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE[3]

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

BHAI KHARE,

I think that you are anxious to meet me.[4] It will be all right if you can come tomorrow evening at 8 o'clock.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4869. Courtesy : N. B. Khare

[1] Sushila Pai

[2] Not translated here. She had declined to be the Agent of Kasturba Memorial Fund Committee for Maharashtra and suggested the addressee's name instead.

[3] (1884-1967); Congress Premier of C. P., 1937-38, and member of Viceroy's Executive Council, 1943-46

[4] Some of Khare's supporters wanted him to explore possibilities of rejoining the Congress and to see Gandhiji in this connection.

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287. LETTER TO RADHAKANT MALAVIYA

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

BHAI RADHAKANT,

I received your letter last night. The meeting of the Working Committee is over. Please understand my limitations and also my unwillingness concerning what you write.

SHRI RADHAKANT MALAVIYA
16 TARACHAND DUTT STREET
CALCUTTA

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

288. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 12, 1945

Gandhiji said that an individual, even if a snake might be lying on his way, would pass by it, assuming that it was not a snake but a piece of rope. He would not be frightened then. But if his companion then drew his attention to the fact that it was not a piece of rope but a living snake that he passed by, he would at once be frightened. Was it not curious, asked Gandhiji, that although the same conditions prevailed, at one time the individual had no trace of fright in him and at another he would be awfully frightened and would thank God for his miraculous escape.

Drawing the moral from the illustration, Gandhiji concluded that the source of happiness and woe, therefore, did not lie elsewhere but in one's own mind. In his reply to Arjuna as to who had attained illumination, Krishna explained the nature of such a man by stating that he only was self-illumined (*sthitaprajna*) who was not affected either by a feeling of happiness or woe.[1] This was possible only on the part of that individual who was self-controlled. To a self-controlled man life becomes simple and salvation easy.

Amrita Bazar Patrika 13-12-1945

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II, 54 and 56

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289. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 13, 1945

No knowledge conducive to the real good of the world could be attained without purification of heart, said Mahatma Gandhi. Those who attended these meetings should derive some benefits from them; otherwise, it would be useless for them to attend prayer meetings. They must concentrate their minds and only then would they realize the existence of God in their hearts. But if they kept quiet because he (Gandhiji) had asked them to do so, they would derive no benefit from the prayer. By concentration, their hearts would be purified and their inner knowledge would grow. Everybody should think that they were going to the prayer meeting for self-purification. Only then would their intellectual progress be uninterrupted and they would get real peace by controlling their passions.

The Hindu, 14-12-1945

290. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind telegram. I do not return from Madras *via* Poona. The probability is that I shall return *via* Bezwada to Wardha in February, when a date mutually convenient can be agreed upon either in Bombay or Poona, wherever it is convenient for you at the time.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. H. THE AGA KHAN
BOMBAY

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] According to the source a large number of women and over a hundred Harijan boys attended the meeting.

291. LETTER TO BISHOP FOSS WESTCOTT[1]

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Your kind letter (undated) from Ranchi has been received.

I thank you for the book Sudhir has given me. I shall try to make time to read it.

I entirely agree with you that the spirit of hatred can never solve India's problem, for I believe in the general proposition that the spirit of hatred has never solved and never will solve any problem in the world. But I also believe that the causes for such hatred have to be discovered and removed. The removal of these, in India's case, lies first in the superior, i.e., the ruling party, undoing the wrong it is doing. My method, by which I swear, is calculated to do it in the quickest manner possible.

I am glad you will bear in mind the thought of passing some time with me in the quiet of Sevagram.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE RT. REV. BISHOP FOSS WESTCOTT
C/O THE BISHOP'S HOUSE
RANCHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

292. LETTER TO KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAYA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

DEAR KAMALADEVI,

Your letter of 2nd instant came into my hand only this morning. When, after the conference[2], you find that you have to go to Mysore for Kasturba work, after due notice of your

[1] Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan Bishop of India

[2] All-India Women's Conference to be held in 1946 over which the addressee was to preside

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proposed entrance and that you will proceed to Mysore for that definite purpose, you should enter the State and take the consequences. If the State presumes to interfere with your activities, it might be worth while to test the legality of such action. But of that nothing need or can be said at the present moment.

About those who will be thrown out of work,[1] is not Jawaharlal developing some central scheme or, it may be, the Congress? I have only a hazy notion. But I know this much clearly that it is a big problem not to be tackled by any single individual. The Talimi Sangh can only take in the smallest number possible, and then they are to be specialists having love for the work. The A. I. S. A. can absorb some more but such have to appreciate the dignity of village life and village simplicity. Can those whom you have in view take to it?

Of your future activity I understand what you say and I would much like to see you settle down in a village and put your hand not to the plough which may be too hard for you but to the wheel which is hard for nobody.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

SHRIMATI KAMALADEVI
C/O WOMEN'S CONFERENCE OFFICE
LAMINGTON ROAD, BOMBAY 7

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

293. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your long letter. I was taken aback a little. I was not unaware that meat, and even beef, is cooked in the kitchen there. This is a problem which can be solved only with patience. You need not get alarmed and run away. It should be enough that you yourself do not eat either meat or beef. But you cannot prevent others from doing so. It would be good if they

[1] The reference is to the demobilization of army personnel and labour engaged in war service. The A. I. C. C. which met at Bombay from September 21 to 24 passed a resolution expressing its concern.

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thought about it and stopped on their own. I would, therefore, advise you to have patience and go on doing the work I have suggested.

I do not want to keep you too long. But I shall be satisfied if you start writing up the accounts and set them in order and bring the sanitation work within manageable limits. The other changes can be introduced only after my return. Jehangirji must have arrived there by now.

Kanchan remains engrossed in work. She has not recovered complete strength, but I am hopeful that she will. Has Durlabhbhai left for good or only temporarily? If you know anything about this, write to me.

Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8610. Also C.W. 7193. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

294. LETTER TO ATUL CHANDRA GHOSH

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

BHAI ATUL BABU,

What can I do? I cannot be young for ever. Therefore be content with whatever service I can render from one place. Please tell the people of Manbhum that we can achieve everything through ahimsa and the symbol of ahimsa is the charkha.

Blessings from
BAPU

BABU ATULCHAND GHOSH
NIVARAN ASHRAM
PURULIA (MANBHUM)

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

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295. LETTER TO V. G. GAVANDE

SODEPUR,
December 14, 1945

BHAI GAVANDE,

Ramkrishna has given me your statement. When you send something to someone, whether it is long or short, it should always be legible. What you have sent is illegible. Unless one gives it concentrated attention one can't read it. Where do I have so much time? I am sorry to say I have not been able to read it. In writing this my intention is to tell you that anything, any statement you send, should be in a clear and legible hand.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI V. G. GAVANDE
MAHAL, NAGPUR

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

296. TELEGRAM TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

December 15, 1945

YOUR LETTER. DO ALL WORK YOU CAN SECURING NECESSARY ASSISTANCE.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 8614. Also C.W. 7194. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

297. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 15, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

A correspondent writes from the United Provinces to the effect that manufacture of *gur*[1] is prohibited there. *Gur*-making is a

[1] Jaggery

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village industry. It is manufactured on their fields by cane-growers from juice extracted by means of village *kolhus*[1] and boiled in village pans. I, therefore, thought that my correspondent must be mistaken and asked him to send me a copy of the order on which his observations were made. He has sent me a copy of the enclosed startling order.[2] Cane-growers have since passed resolutions protesting against the order and threatened to disobey it if it was not withdrawn. As a result the authorities relaxed the order. A copy of the relaxation order is also herewith enclosed. I doubt not that you realize what this means to the poor people. The original order could not have been issued for the protection of sugar mills but must have been meant to secure judicious use and distribution of sugar as *gur* or refined. If so, it defeats the purpose. The modified order, though less bad than the first, does not really serve the purpose, considered in the light of the villagers. There should be no licence for *gur* made in village.

As this is not a mere provincial matter but applies to all India wherever cane is grown, I venture to approach H. E. the Viceroy for relief.[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. E. B. ABELL, ESQ., I.C.S.
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO H. E. THE VICEROY
THE VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 70-1

[1] Cane-crushers

[2] The notification was to the effect that in certain specified areas no person should "manufacture *gur*, introduce or set up any *kolhus* for crushing cane" or "move sugar-cane . . . to any place outside such areas except to sugar-cane factories listed".

[3] The addressee in his letter of January 4, 1946, said that *gur*-making was not prohibited except in a small area of the United Provinces and that too in order to plan production and distribution of sugar and *gur* in the Province.

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298. LETTER TO C. K. NARAYANASWAMI

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NR. CALCUTTA),
[*December*][1] *15, 1945*

DEAR NARAYANASWAMI,

I am afraid that, owing to my movements after leaving Poona, I have not been able to be up to date with my correspondence. I hope that Menon is making good progress with his work.

As to the constructive programme I can say this much that it is doing better than before. But have you any workable suggestions to make? What you have said in your letter is good enough for city mentality. What you and I have to do is to think out suggestions in terms of village mentality unless, of course, you have reached the conclusion that the village and village mentality are to go if they have not already gone. My conclusion emphatically is that if the world is not to end, the village and village mentality alone will save it. In spite of their glamour the city and city mentality are going before our eyes. Therefore, I have left for me no other alternative but to think of ways and means for sustaining the village life.

What is your concrete suggestion about Muslim unrest?

Yours,
BAPU

SHRI C. K. NARAYANASWAMI
5 HIDAYAT HOUSE
BOMBAY 19

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The source has October but Gandhiji was then in Poona.

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299. LETTER TO J. C. GUPTA

SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Many thanks for your letter.[1]

I am doing all I can about the prisoners.[2] I do not think I need trouble you to see me about them.

It was a pleasure to see your blind son and his wife.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI J. C. GUPTA
23 CIRCUS AVENUE, CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

300. LETTER TO UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM

SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 15, 1945

DEAR UTTIMCHAND,

Though the receipt for the 4th instalment has, I presume been sent you, I have not been able to acknowledge your p. c. of 22nd ultimo. I have been travelling.

Your puzzles baffle me and my clever friends. I must therefore give up hope of getting prizes from you for Harijans. I must rely solely on your love of Harijans and khadi, perhaps also Adivasis.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI UTTIMCHAND GANGARAM
BOMBAY BAKERY
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 26-12-1945, the addressee who was chairman of the All-Parties Political Prisoners' Release Campaign Committee had said in his letter that "43 pre-Reform political prisoners between themselves had undergone imprisonment for no less than 600 years . . ."

[2] *Vide* pp. 215-6.

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301. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

CHI. HARJIVAN,

I got your letter of the 10th yesterday. You seem to be very impatient. You ask my blessings by wire. We are after all poor people and trustees of those much poorer than we. And how can we so much as wish for blessings? Even if we have such a desire, how can we have it met telegraphically? So thinking I refrained from sending a wire. Why should you need any blessings? Here is the secret of blessings. When we are engaged in a work which is worthy of blessings, then the work itself is a blessing; it does not wait for blessings from others. Seeking blessings from other people is, therefore, meaningless; it is nothing but self-deception. It no doubt has a meaning in that blessings act as a stimulant from which a weak person derives momentary encouragement. But this kind of encouragement is not of much help. If you understand this and still really need my blessings, you certainly have them for your work of producing the tools necessary for making khadi provided it is done intelligently. When I say intelligently I mean that we should not manufacture spinning-wheels, winding frames, *taklis*, etc., just to sell; we should make only as many as are needed and see that they are so perfect that no one may find fault with them. Our aim should be—and is—that all the things are produced locally. Only then will the villages prosper. What I am now saying is covered by the new line of thought on khadi that I am propounding. Whatever I have not elaborated may be deduced from the aforesaid.

Yesterday Sardar was here. He wanted to know why he was not informed about your leaving the khadi shop. I could not give him a satisfactory answer. I take it that you must have gone through all the formalities since you are so alert. However, if you have anything to say in this regard, write to Sharda. I see from your letter that Sharda is with you. Is she doing anything?

Blessings from
BAPU

HARJIVAN KOTAK

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

302. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 15, 1945

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

I have your letter. I shall start working on Mahendra Chaudhary's case after receiving other opinions on it.

You should be perfectly fit.

I am going to Santiniketan on the 18th. I shall return on the 20th.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD
SADAQUAT ASHRAM
DIGHAGHAT
PATNA

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

303. LETTER TO KHWAJA NAZIMUDDIN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR, CALCUTTA,
December 15, 1945

BHAI SAHEB,

Amtussalaam has given me your letter inviting me to your place on the 4th. How nice it would have been if I could come to your place. But circumstances do not permit me to do so. Does it mean that we shall not be able to meet? If that happens I shall be very sorry.

SIR NAZIMUDDIN
CALCUTTA

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

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304. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have insistent complaints about goondaism and favouritism at the elections.[1] We had a talk about these. But they seem to persist. I know you do not want these things. Can something be done in the matter?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 113-4

305. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

Literature about your prisoners is pouring in on me.[2] According to the papers in my possession, you have over twenty-five pre-Reform prisoners, all of them having undergone sentences above ten and most of them above fifteen years.

Then you have untried detenus, detained only on one-sided secret evidence which they have not seen, and some convicts, all of them political.

Among these prisoners are two women cooped up in a small cell.

I am told that there is no terrorism to be feared. The prisoners are all likely to be public-spirited. But that can be no reason for keeping them behind prison bars.

I submit that they should all be discharged without the slightest ado.

I plead for a little grace before, as you and I hope, the transference of power comes.

[1] It was Fazlul Haq, ex-Premier of Bengal, who had brought the matter to Gandhiji's notice. The goondaism was resorted to by supporters of the Muslim League.

[2] *Vide* also p. 212.

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I have offered, and still do, to see these prisoners, if it is thought desirable.

I leave for Santiniketan on 18th instant, returning here on the 20th evening.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 132-3

306. LETTER TO DHUNDIRAJ

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI DHUNDIRAJ,

I have been receiving the figures sent by you. I glance through them as they arrive. According to the new policy, you are also required to indicate the number of people who go there to learn or to spin, how many of them know all the processes, whether those at the shop have learnt them and so on. All these particulars should be shown in figures.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DHUNDIRAJ
KHADI BHANDAR
395 KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

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

307. LETTER TO SARALADEVI A. SARABHAI

December 16, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I came to know of your brother's passing away from a letter of Chi. Mridula. I also learnt that you had been to Rajkot in this connection. Such things are part of life. All of us have to go—some sooner, some later. That being so expression of condolence would only be folly. Why should I then indulge in it? And why should you expect me to? So the purpose of writing this letter is only to let you know that you are not out of my thoughts.

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

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308. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

Sushilabehn gave me news of the death of your maternal uncle and told me how calm and unperturbed you were in your bereavement.

Badshah Khan left yesterday. He was telling me that in the event of Akbar[1] being prepared to go to him, you would take up his work at Samau or make some arrangement. If this is correct, talk it over with Akbar and finalize the arrangement. If Akbar is still not satisfied then let me know who is willing to take up the work at Samau and how it can be done, so that I can write to Akbar. If some dependable worker is not available, do tell me so frankly.

I have not yet written to Saraladevi regarding her appointment as Agent because I had a letter from Mavalankar that he would be seeing her. Write to me if you know anything more. I hope you are well. I shall go to Santiniketan on the 18th, and return on the 20th. 24th Midnapore. It is correct to regard Sodepur as my camp for the present.

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

309. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your second letter written on the 12th arrived here on the 15th. You must have received the following wire which I sent you yesterday :[2]

The description you have given is quite good. I am sure that as the problem about beef was solved so will the other also

[1] Akbarbhai Chawda
[2] *Vide* p. 209.

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be solved through patience and love.[1] I entrusted certain jobs to you as being the most important, but since I have already accepted responsibility for all other arrangements except medical attention I should certainly like you to take up that work also. So do take up whatever work you can without coming into conflict with anybody.

Though I shall not be there on January 1, from that day the institution[2] will be run only for the poor and on behalf of the poor. From that day the management of all departments except the medical will be considered to have become my responsibility. I trust you will take up the responsibility on my behalf. But you must assume the responsibility for only as much work as you can easily attend do. Let me know what jobs you are not able to take up.

After January 1, there will be no wealthy patients there. If there are any, they will not be treated as wealthy men.

Dr. Dinshaw had said that he would himself see about the furniture. He wanted it for his clinic in Bombay. There will be very few poor indoor patients for the present. Maybe there will be none. Hence, though we shall keep facilities ready for a large number, the hospital is not likely to get filled in the immediate future. We shall have to use our judgment in the matter of furniture. Ascertain Gulbai's[3] wishes. Don't insist on ordering things which the two do not want.

From among the patients there, those who wish to leave may be permitted to do so. From January 1, really speaking, the only patients will be Balkrishna[4], Vanu[5] and Zohra. You will have no difficulty in looking after them. You must have realized by now that it is no easy job to shoulder the responsibility of that institution. The task would easily test the capacity of any man.

I wish you not to worry about Kanchan.

Blessings to everybody there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8614. Also C.W. 7194. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* pp. 207-8.
[2] Nature Cure Clinic
[3] Wife of Dinshaw Mehta
[4] Balkrishna Bhave
[5] Vanamala Parikh

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310. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

CHI. RAMACHANDRAN,

Why should I now write to you in English? If you have to write in English, you may do so. However, I should like you to make an attempt to write in Hindustani.

How can I explain to you how much harm we are causing to India by being unable to write except in English.

I have seen to the matter of the Rs. 100. You do not have to worry.

I hope your work is going on well. Write to me whatever you want to. I shall be going to Santiniketan on the 18th for two days. After that I shall return here.

I hope Saundram is well.

SHRI RAMCHANDRAN
GANDHI ASHRAM
SALEM DISTT.

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

311. LETTER TO JASWANTRAI CHURANI

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI JASWANTRAI,

I had your letter dated the 20th. Ever since I have been touring. You have done well in sending the receipts of the deposits. If there is anything more, Mukherjee will write to you.

SHRI JASWANTRAI CHURANI
15 LAKE ROAD
LAHORE

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

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312. LETTER TO KUMAR BABU

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

BHAI KUMAR BABU,

You have spared me from having to visit Vasudevpur. Thanks. I am indeed sorry that I cannot go there.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

313. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 16, 1945

The tendency of learning English rather than one's own language was deprecated by Mahatma Gandhi. "If we could stop this tendency we would be free from one of our slaveries," said Mahatma Gandhi, adding that he could not express how this tendency of some people talking and writing in English damaged them and the country. But in England, whenever a good book was published anywhere in the world, within a few days it would be translated and would reach the hands of the English-speaking public. Mahatma Gandhi asked :

Should we not do the same thing in India? Although it would take time for all people to understand the *rashtrabhasha*, there were languages of the locality and any good book could be translated and presented to the public in their mother tongue.

The Hindu, 18-12-1945

314. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

December 17, 1945

I see that I have overstayed my time in Calcutta. I found I had more work in Calcutta than I had expected. And then events compelled me to work more strenuously than I had counted

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upon. The result is that, much to my and my fellow-workers' disappointment, I have been compelled to cut off the places I had originally conceived and tentatively discussed with friends who were arranging the tour. But let no one think that the curtailment will affect my study of the Bengal situation. The visit to Santiniketan is more by way of a friendly visit than study. I do not expect to see or meet visitors. They will oblige me by abstaining from wishing to see me during my very short stay there.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-12-1945

315. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

CHI. MIRA,[1]

This is merely a love letter written on the silence day. I have read your descriptive letter with much interest. But I do not know when I shall reach the Kisan Ashram. Is your account to the English Press quite accurate?

Love.

BAPU

SHRI MIRABAI
KISAN ASHRAM, MULDASPUR
BAHADRABAD POST, *via* JWALAPUR
SAHARANPUR DT.

From the original : C.W. 6513. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9908

316. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

MY DEAR C. R.,

Your letter. You have not much to do for deserving what I said about you to the friends. For my observation was based on the past performance, not on the promise of the future.

Let my thought work, if it is true and well thought. The spoken word may spoil matters. Wait, watch and pray. Let us see.

[1] The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

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You should write regularly or, if you are too busy, ask someone to write. How are you? The account given to me was none too good.

Things here are as bad as could be imagined. I am trying. I go on 18th to Santiniketan, return on 20th and go to Midnapore on 24th for a week. Your letters should be addressed to Sodepur.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 2114

317. LETTER TO MAKHANLAL ROY-CHOWDHURY

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

DEAR PROFESSOR,

If you can come at 5.45 p. m., i. e., just after public prayer on 22nd instant you can talk to me while I am having my walk.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

PROF. SHRI MAKHANLAL ROY-CHOWDHURY
12 SITARAM GHOSH ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

318. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

JANAKIMAIYA,

It was good that I got your telegram.

I was a bit worried. You must have got Sushila's wire and letter. I hope you remember about the cow. You are coming to Madras, aren't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5851. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

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319. LETTER TO MADALASA

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

CHI. MADALASA,

It is good that you have undergone the second operation. I hope you are well. You are learning your lesson all right. Write to me when you are fit enough to do so. Ramakrishna[2] is fine. He does some work of service. Kamalnayan[3] has come today. I hope the child is well. Is he growing normally?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 37. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

320. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 17,[4] *1945*

CHI. ARUN[5],

I think of you every day, but especially today during silence. Do you spin carefully at least 160 rounds daily? Is the yarn even? Do you yourself fix the spinning-wheel? Do you keep a daily account? If you keep this one promise, you will learn a lot.

Are you all right? How is Ila[6]? Has she become a little wiser?

Blessings to all of you from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4969. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.
[2] & [3] Addressee's brothers
[4] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.
[5] Son of Manilal Gandhi
[6] Addressee's sister

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321. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

BHAI KUMARAPPA,

Your work has come to my notice. Look after your health and do not tempt God. If you have understood what I have said, then you need not move about a lot. It is a question of your being ready. What is required is mastery over one vocation and working knowledge of the others. It is very necessary to have good knowledge of Hindustani.

Blessings from
BAPU

KUMARAPPA
WARDHA

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 10406. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

322. LETTER TO RAM MANOHAR LOHIA

SODEPUR,
KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
December 17, 1945

BHAI RAM MANOHAR,

I am sorry that your father passed away suddenly yesterday. We used to meet often. I had sent Pyarelalji and Prabhavatibehn to see his charkha activity. In my view he died in the manner he wanted. He had been engrossed in his work.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIA
AGRA

From the Hindi original: C.W. 11065. Courtesy: Hardev Sharma. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

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323. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your letter about the appointment of Ramdhanbhai in Kashmir in place of Vichitrabhai. I agree.

I have sent my signatures on the authority letters for opening accounts in banks.

I have sent the letter after signing it to the Bihar Charkha Sangh.

The reply sent to Badshah Khan is all right.

Do whatever you can about. . .[1] khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

JAJUJI

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

324. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SODEPUR,
December 17,[2] *1945*

BHAI MAHMUD,

How was it that you came and went away? I kept on waiting? It was much easier for you to come to Sodepur. How can any arrangement be made now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5092. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] A word is illegible here.
[2] In Pyarelal Papers the date is 18.

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325. LETTER TO VEENA PATEL

SODEPUR,
December 17,[1] *1945*

CHI. VEENA,

I have your beautiful letter. Let me know to what extent you had been suppressing yourself. Khimji is no doubt a good man and you will be happy there. Keep on writing to me. I am going to Santiniketan tomorrow. Father meets me quite often. He will go to Wardha. He will take Swadhina with him. Dhiren is well.

Blessings to you and Khimji from
BAPU

VEENA

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

326. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[2]

SODEPUR,
December 17, 1945

We have come so close together and you have been observing such exemplary silence that it will give me a wrench to be away from you. God willing I shall be leaving for Santiniketan on Tuesday. I hope to return and again join you in the prayer on the 21st.

The hymn that has been sung on Monday is particularly appropriate. It says that he who gives his all gets all without asking. As against this he who grabs what he has no right to, loses all.

I have been told that some of you travel without ticket on trains and even stop trains by pulling the alarm chain at will.

[1] Although the date in the source is 18, it would appear from the contents that the letter was written on the 17th, for Gandhiji left for Santiniketan on the 18th.

[2] The speech, written in Hindi, was read out by Kanu Gandhi, it being Gandhiji's silence day.

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The report has pained me. Both these things are illegal. But I do not want to dwell upon the legal aspect. These practices are contrary to the spirit of the prayer. All I can say is those who indulge in these practices have not grasped the meaning of prayer. If they will reflect on the hymn that has just been sung they will realize that they may not travel without ticket or pull the alarm chain without legitimate cause. I hope that such things will not occur again. If we continue to indulge in this kind of behaviour it will neither bring us independence nor enable us to retain it after it has been won. May God guide us aright.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-12-1945

327. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

CAMP: KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
December 18, 1945

DEAR MR. ABELL,

In continuation of the correspondence[1] about the alleged ill-treatment of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, I am now able to send as requested a copy of the statement made by Dr. Lohia to his legal adviser.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 66

328. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

Owing to my many preoccupations, I have not been able to write to you of late. I hope you are getting on well. You must be learning Hindustani.

Enclosed is a letter from Vrajlal. Read it and preserve it. Give it to me when I return. I have replied to Vrajlal and told

[1] *Vide* pp. 114-5.

[2] Acknowledging this in his letter dated December 20, the addressee said that the statement had been forwarded to the Home Member.

him that if he finds it convenient he may go to Sevagram even in my absence. If he can persuade you to marry him, he may by all means do so. As I understand you, you do not even countenance the idea of marrying. But my judgment of you may be wrong. Can any man or woman really know his or her heart? Does not God alone know it? If, therefore, you change your mind after meeting Vrajlal, believe yourself to be absolutely free to do what you like. Don't be obdurate through a false sense of shame. Obey the promptings of a pure heart. I shall welcome your writing to Vrajlal, and if you do write, send the letter to me. I will forward it to him. If you are not very eager to write, I shall not press you to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9267

329. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Though I am here I keep thinking of matters there. Please train Munnalal well. He is hard-working, honest and accomplished.

What did you do about the furniture? We will not take in any new patient from the new year. We might admit some who are poor. I hope you are calm. I am enclosing the wire from Met Manage. Let him come when he can. Those who stay on should do so after careful consideration. Those who want to leave may go. Write to me at the address given above.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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330. LETTER TO GULBAI D. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. GULBAI,

You must now be due for confinement. How are you? You are calm, aren't you? Write to me whatever you like. You are not going to fight shy of me. How is Mother?

How is Ardeshir[1]?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

331. LETTER TO ANASUYABAI KALE

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I was happy to read your letter. Your Hindi is not in any way inferior to mine.

Everyone should do some constructive work over and above parliamentary work. And the aim of parliamentary work should also be to advance constructive work.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ANASUYABAI KALE
ANAND BHAVAN
DHANTOLI
NAGPUR

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

[1] Addressee's son

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332. LETTER TO B. P. SINHA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI SINHA,

I have received the statement[1] of Dr. Rammanohar which you have sent. Thanks.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI B. P. SINHA
KASHI VIDYAPITH
BENARAS CANTT.

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

333. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI RANGA,

I have gone through your letter. I will read your pamphlet. You are doing a lot of work.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

PROF. RANGA
NIDUBROLU

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

[1] *Vide* also p. 227.

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334. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI DASAPPA,

I have your letter. Meet me in Madras when I go there. I doubt whether I shall be able to go to Mysore. Be in Madras, both of you. Blessings to Yashodhara.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA
SHRI KASTURBA SHIBIR
PADURAVALLY
V. V. MOHALLA POST
MYSORE

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

335. LETTER TO SANKARAN

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

CHI. SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. I understand. I have already written for the expenses of [your] son and sister being paid.

Come here after improving your health. Write to me about everything there. Let me know how many patients there are and what treatment they are being given and so on.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SANKARAN
BALESHAWAR SINGHJI
JIVAN SAKHA, LUKERGANJ
ALLAHABAD

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

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336. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,
December 18, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter about Durgabai. You may accept her services. I am not however fully satisfied. How will she be able to do the work of Kasturba Memorial Trust while practising law? Let us see whether she learns Hindustani. I have your letter about Shri Panajikar, but I have not received his letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHYAMLAL
SECRETARY, KASTURBA GANDHI SMARAK NIDHI
WARDHA

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

337. LETTER TO PURNIMA BANNERJEE

SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. PURNIMA[1],

You must be knowing that from January onwards the Kasturba Smarak Nidhi will function through its Agents instead of the committees. I am enclosing herewith a copy of the resolution passed in this connection. Will you become an Agent? It will be easy for you to fulfil the conditions laid down. I had a talk with Jawaharlalji. He says neither he nor Pantji has any objection to your taking up this work. That is to say, they will relieve you from other activities. Someone told me—I cannot remember his name—that you might try to get into the Assembly. One going into the Assembly will not be able to do the work of Kasturba Memorial Trust well because an Agent will have to give a lot of time to the work if she wants to bring credit to it.

[1] Purnima Bannerjee of Allahabad, sister of Aruna Asaf Ali

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Now write to me at the Sodepur address. I wanted to write to you a few days back but forgot about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

PURNIMA BANNERJEE

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

338. LETTER TO MANGALDAS PAKVASA

[CAMP] SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN [TO SANTINIKETAN],
December 18, 1945

BHAI MANGALDAS PAKVASA,

I have your letter and the opinions. It was good that you sent copies of the opinions to Jajuji. I shall now see what can be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4784. Courtesy : Mangaldas Pakvasa

339. LETTER TO OM PRAKASH

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. OM PRAKASH,

I have your letter. If you have to go to your brother and do the work there, you should spare some time and come back after finishing the work. Take care that you do not devote too much time to it.

It is necessary to have a good knowledge of Urdu but why should you crave for a degree?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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340. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
ON THE TRAIN TO SANTINIKETAN,
December 18, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have received all your letters. The letter written on rough paper is also lying with me. Today I shall answer whatever I possibly can.

I am doing quite a bit of work here.

As for hand-carding I believe that this makes the cotton very clean. It is not so well cleaned either by machine or by any other means. By all these other means the fibre does become somewhat weak. In my view hand-carding is a grand process. Combing should be given a place in it. Hand-carding teaches us cleanliness and patience. Adding the time spent in hand-carding [to that of the whole process] the speed of spinning the yarn seems slow. But that does not matter. Hand-carding of course cannot provide a livelihood. But it has a very significant part in self-reliance. As the process of hand-carding has not been very much in vogue, we have not had a real estimate of its power. We shall have an idea of its power if large numbers of people take to hand-carding. Show this letter to Vinoba also. Hand-carding is his discovery. He has also had a wide experience. I would like to know if I am mistaken in this.

Because the sadhu had gone away, it was quite proper that he was asked to leave the Ashram. In my view this does not mean that it was quite wrong to have kept him in the Ashram. This will enable you to understand my argument.

I have no doubt that there should be separate classes for women. As for Om Prakash I shall be content with whatever you think right. It would not be proper for me to write anything about this.

I think the proper thing would be for me not to lay down limits as to the expenses of the people who are staying in the Ashram and who come as visitors. For my experience these days should be regarded as limited. In my view you have all gone too far ahead. And when one has left a thing behind, one's view of it becomes less acceptable. The same applies to me.

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A doctor, however great a specialist he may be, does not regard himself as a specialist when he has given up practice. Others, who have acquired degrees later would be considered more competent. Hence, if it is decided to limit the expenses, let me first know the amount now being spent. Then I shall provide whatever light I can.

As for quarters for workers in the Ashram, I have discussed the matter at length with Shantabehn. But I am neutral. Shantabehn must be well now.

I shall not write anything from here about the work of Kamle and Om Prakashji. It would be improper for me to write. But I shall be ready to write to them when you write to me that I can place your views before them.

I understand what you say about Kailasbehn. It would have been better if I had asked you to be present when I spoke to her. I admit that what happened was improper. But I was dealing with things under such pressure that, much as I should have wished it, I could not have kept you with me all the time. This does not imply that I should not be warned again. Even a cautious person is likely to commit mistakes. Hence, it is a good policy to give a discreet warning.

It seems to me that however much we may get to know Vinoba, there is still more to learn. Do take the girls and the boys with you. Let there be one rule in this matter, that is, there should be no undue pressure on Vinoba. We should value his time.

Do you want a wall clock or a timepiece?

As a general rule, the new entrants should bear their own expenses. If it is decided to keep anyone free of charge, it should be done after recording the reason for doing so. I hope you have kept some such book there.

What decision did you want from me with regard to Chakrayya? What do you want now?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

On the train. Have not revised.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4536

341. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SANTINIKETAN,
December 18, 1945

Gurudev (Rabindranath Tagore) was like a great bird, wide and swift of wings, under which he gave protection to many.[1]

Under the warmth of his wings Santiniketan has been nurtured to its present size. Bengal is full of his songs. He has glorified the name of India throughout the world not by his songs only but also by his pen and brush. We all miss the warmth of his protecting wings. But we must not grieve. The remedy lies in our own hands.

True monuments to the great are not statues of marble, bronze or gold. The best monument is to adorn and enlarge their legacy. A son who buries underground his father's legacy or wastes it will be adjudged unworthy of his inheritance.

Whilst on Rathi Babu[2] and his colleagues must primarily rest the sacred duty of making Santiniketan truly worthy of Gurudev's great tradition, that duty rests no less upon all those who, though they may not be directly connected with Santiniketan, received the warmth of Gurudev's wings.

All mortals must quit this world one day. Gurudev has gone, having achieved all that a human being can expect to in life. His soul now rests in peace. It is for you now, the workers and inmates of Santiniketan—as indeed all those who are imbued with Gurudev's spirit—collectively to represent his ideal.

Santiniketan has been the abode of peace to me and since my family was given shelter on arrival from South Africa it is a pilgrimage to me and whenever I got the opportunity I came here to seek peace and tranquility.

It is indeed sad that we no longer have his protective wings on us. But I find solace in the fact that he has left his own memorial in the form of many gifts that he has bequeathed to the nation.

It is our duty to receive those gifts with humility and gratitude and to see that they go on increasing. If we can continue

[1] The following four paragraphs are reproduced from *Visva-Bharati News*.
[2] Rathindranath Tagore, son of Rabindranath Tagore

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his work and prove ourselves true to the task he has left us, I do not see why we should mourn his passing away. I feel in my heart that his soul is somewhere in this Ashram and in perfect peace.

His songs that you have sung to me, although their meanings are not accessible to me just now, were full of sweetness and inspiration. I very much wish I could prolong my stay here in your midst, but I am afraid it is not possible this time, because I have other urgent duties to attend to.

During the last few years, India has passed through a great ordeal and none has suffered so greatly as this province of Bengal. The news of Bengal's agonies reached me when I was in jail—powerless to do anything. I all along prayed to God to send me to serve Bengal and to help the distressed people. My visit this time, therefore, was undertaken with a view to serve and to work for Bengal. That is why I am very sorry that I shall not be able to prolong my stay. I shall take my sustenance of peace and inspiration from this place and then go away. I hope you will understand and forgive me.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-12-45, and *Visva-Bharati News*, Vol. XIV, No. 7

342. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 19, 1945

Santiniketan is no new place to me. This Mandir too is familiar to me by old association. On more than one occasion I have come here and addressed the inmates. Santiniketan is like a home of my own. The world is in need of the ideal of peace which is the ideal of Santiniketan. That is why I expect a great deal from this place.

Gurudev lives on in his own creation. He has fulfilled his mission. It is we who have certain duties which we owe to him. If we fail to fulfil them we shall be failing in our duties.

The message of Santiniketan is urgently needed for the world in travail. Gurudev travelled from one quarter of the earth to another to bring about peace and conciliation. In a way he has designed Santiniketan for bringing peace to the whole world. His

[1] The meeting was one of the weekly ones held every Wednesday morning. Gandhiji spoke at the request of Kshitimohan Sen.

father founded the Ashram and it was left to the son to bring its benediction to the whole world.

When we come to a place of worship our minds should be calm so that our hearts can be receptive. That is why we close our eyes during prayers. But today I would rather keep my eyes open to see the vision how the students of this place are getting ready to carry the message of peace as couriers of goodwill and brotherhood of the world.

Students of Oxford, Cambridge and other well-known seats of learning carry their own hallmark. I would like to see the students of this Ashram invested with that hallmark of peace and fellowship. I would like to see, moreover, how alert they are to receive the word and how unperturbed and calm they are in the face of difficulties.[1]

The world has now grown a small place. England is no longer seven seas away. It takes hardly three days to reach the heart of England. We have come so near that we can share our joys and grief with all. The War has ceased. The Allies have won, but turmoil is still there, the pain and sufferings are on a very large scale. Winter is coming. We who belong to the tropics cannot even imagine what hardships will have to be endured by the people of the West in the face of dire winter there. Thousands have died and there is death staring in the face of many other thousands. They die of the severe cold and we of famine. What further suffering is in store for humanity nobody knows.

In the midst of this world-wide turmoil this Ashram should carry out its ideal of peace. All of you should carry the message of peace and brotherhood and dedicate yourselves to the cause of removing pain and suffering of the poor. You should prepare yourselves for that task from now on. You should be resolute and at the same time unperturbed. It is for you to fulfil the hope and trust that Gurudev left upon you.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-12-1945

[1] According to Pyarelal "Gandhiji had noticed that during the prayer some of the boys did not sit erect. Some were fidgety, others listless. He pulled them up for this as he had done before on the previous evening."

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343. SPEECH AT FOUNDATION-LAYING CEREMONY[1]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 19, 1945

Birth and death are the obverse and reverse of the same coin. They are not distinct. They are different aspects of the same thing. But out of our ignorance we welcome the one and shrink from the other. This is wrong. Mourning over the death of dear ones, especially those like Charlie Andrews and Gurudev who have done their part so nobly and well has its root in our selfishness. Deenabandhu is blessed in death as he was in life. Death of people like him cannot be an occasion for sorrow. Speaking for myself, I may say that I have almost forgotten to mourn the death of friends and dear ones and I want you to learn to do likewise.[2]

Between Deenabandhu and me there existed love like that between two brothers. I remember how Deenabandhu came out to South Africa at the instance of Mr. Gokhale and with the blessings of Gurudev, and how he repeated from place to place with deep feeling the *mantras* Gurudev had given him. Today I have laid the foundation of the hospital in memory of Deenabandhu Andrews—a title which has been bestowed on him by the grateful poor who need hospitals.

Being situated midway between Sriniketan and Santiniketan, it will serve not only these two places but also the villages round about. I have been very much touched by the cordial welcome given me by the representatives[3] of the villagers. It is symbolical of their blessings with which are joined the blessings of you all.

Gandhiji referred to the high prices of building materials and said that it might take some time before the hospital could be erected.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 20-12-1945, and *Visva-Bharati News*, Vol. XIV, No. 9

[1] Of Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews Memorial Hospital. The function which was held in the evening was attended by the staff and students of Sriniketan and Santiniketan as also a good number of local peasantry.

[2] This paragraph is reproduced from *Visva-Bharati News*.

[3] On his arrival Gandhiji was welcomed by a Santhali headman, who applied sandal paste on his forehead, while a Santhali girl garlanded him.

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344. DISCUSSION WITH HEADS OF DEPARTMENT, SANTINIKETAN[1]

December 19, 1945

Regard me as a blank slate. So far I have had only hearsay and hearsay has very little place in my life. Solid facts are what I want. Without a full knowledge of facts I shall be able to do little to help you.

It is not that you have nothing to say. That would mean that the institution is perfect. But nothing in this world is perfect. Speak to me freely about the shortcomings. Good things speak for themselves, not the bad things, at any rate, not to me.

I have followed every word of what you have said with the keenest interest and I have learned a lot from it. I do not propose to make detailed observations on what has been said or to give expression to all that is welling up in me just now but shall confine myself to one or two remarks of a general character.

As I listened while Nanda Babu[2] and Kshitimohan Babu were speaking, I said to myself : 'Here is a real difficulty; but it is a difficulty of our own making.' If a person conducts a big department he is expected to transmit what he stands for to someone who can be termed as his successor. Yet it is the dominant cry of the two stalwarts that they are unable to find a suitable successor for their respective departments. True, these are departments of a special character. I know these departments and I know too Gurudev's views about them. Speaking generally, may I venture to suggest that there is no difficulty but can be overcome by *tapascharya*? It is almost an untranslatable word, the nearest approach to its true meaning being perhaps 'single-minded devotion'. But it means much more than that. Whenever, in the course of my multifarious activities, I have been confronted with a difficulty of this character, this single-minded devotion has solved my difficulty in a manner which I had never expected. During my twenty long years in God-forsaken South Africa, where under circumstances of the worst kind

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's article "The Santiniketan Pilgrimage". The heads of the various departments had met Gandhiji in the evening informally to place before him their difficulties.

[2] Nandalal Bose, who was in charge of Kala Bhawan, Santiniketan.

conceivable I found my God, it was my invariable experience that the right helper appeared at the right moment.

It is my conviction, which I arrived at after a long and laborious struggle, that Gurudev as a person was much superior to his works or even this institution where he soared and sang. He poured his whole soul into it and nurtured it with his life's blood and yet I dare say that his greatness was not fully expressed by it or through it. That is perhaps true of all great and good men—they are better and greater than their works. If, then, you are to represent that goodness or greatness for which Gurudev stands but which he could not express fully even through this institution, you can do it only through *tapascharya.*

There is a remarkable string of verses in the Tulsi *Ramayana* to the effect that what is not possible through other means becomes possible through *tapascharya.* This is said with reference to Parvati. Narada had prophesied that she would have for her companion-in-life one who answered to the description of Siva. If instead of Siva those characteristics were met in the person of a rogue, her life would be ruined. How to avert such a calamity was the problem and it is in that context that the verses to which I have referred come. I commend these verses to you for your careful perusal. Only you will have to strip them of their orthodoxy.

Finances were mentioned by you in the course of discussion. I will plead with you to dismiss from your thoughts the word 'finance' altogether. I am convinced that lack of finances never represented a real difficulty to a sincere worker. Finances follow—they dog your footsteps if you represent a real cause. Here, let me utter a warning. A worker may be real and yet the cause he represents may not be real. His handicap in that case will continue. There are, of course, seeming exceptions. The world is full of fools and successful rogues. But speaking of sincere men and women, it is my faith that if their cause is as worthy as their means, the handicap of finance need never deter them or damp their ardour. It is a big thing you have undertaken and in future you may have to undertake still bigger things and the question will be raised, 'What about the finances?' and you will find that the difficulty lies somewhere else rather than in the lack of finances. Set it right and the finances will take care of themselves.

Yours[1] is a common difficulty. You cannot ride two horses at the same time. If you mix day-scholars with full-time students,

[1] Bibhutibhushan Gupta's; he had mentioned the complication arising from the admission of day scholars.

the former will overshadow and spoil the training of the latter. Your institution was not designed for the mixture.

Then it was said by Krishna Kripalani that they did not know what they were aiming at or stood for, what the sum total of the energies of Santiniketan and Sriniketan signified. My answer is that the ideal before you is not to represent Bengal or even India; you have to represent the whole world. Gurudev's claim was not smaller than that. He stood for humanity as a whole. He could not do that unless he represented India with its destitute, dumb millions. That should be your aspiration as well. Unless you represent that mass mind of India you will not represent Gurudev as a man. You may represent him as a singer, as a painter, or as a great poet but you won't represent him, and history will say of Gurudev that his institution was a failure. I do not want history to give that verdict.

I agree that if my claim that I am one of you is to be fully vindicated I ought to be here in your midst for a longer time.[1] I would love to do so. But my future dispositions are in the hands of God.

Vishva-Bharati News, Vol. XIV, No. 9

345. DISCUSSION WITH WORKERS AND STAFF MEMBERS[2]

SANTINIKETAN,
December 20, 1945

I want to hear from your lips what inspires you to be here and what are the difficulties that confront you.

Q. Should Santiniketan allow itself to be drawn into political work?

A. I have no difficulty in saying that Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati ought not to be mixed up with politics. Every institution has its limitations. This institution should set limitations upon itself unless it is to be cheap. When I say that Santiniketan should not get mixed up with politics, I do not mean that it should have no political ideal. Complete independence must be

[1] This was in reply to Rathindranath Tagore's request that Gandhiji should give more time every year to Santiniketan.

[2] Extracted from Pyarelal's "The Santiniketan Pilgrimage". As some members did not know Hindi, Gandhiji replied in English with the warning that they would have to speak in Hindi when they met next, at least he would not speak in any other language but Hindi.

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its ideal, as it is that of the country. But that very ideal would require it to keep out of the present-day political turmoil. I was asked this question when I was here thirty years ago and the reply I then gave was the same as I have given today. In fact it applies with even greater force today.

Q. In order to make Visva-Bharati really an international university, should we not try to increase the material resources of the university and provide greater facilities and ordinary comforts of life to attract scholars and research workers of outstanding merit from all over the country?

A. By material resources I suppose you mean finance. Let me then say that your question is addressed to a person who does not swear by material resources. 'Material resources' is after all a comparative term. For instance, I do not go without food and clothing. In my own way I have tried—more than perhaps any other man—to increase the level of material resources of the average man in India. But it is my firm conviction that Visva-Bharati will fail to attract the right type of talent and scholarship if it relies on the strength of the material resources or material attractions that it can offer. Its attraction must be moral or ethical, or else it will become just one out of the many educational institutions in India. That was not what Gurudev lived and died for. I do not mean that creature comforts should not be provided to the staff and workers who work here. There are ample material comforts in evidence here already. If I stayed here longer and had my way they might be considerably reduced. As Visva-Bharati progresses and more and more gifts and donations begin to pour in, in due course it will be able to provide more attractions to scholars and research workers, if it wants to. But if I were asked for advice I would say : 'Do not yield to this temptation.' Visva-Bharati must take its stand on the advancement of moral worth. If it does not stand for that, it is worth nothing.

Q. What must be done so that the institution might not lose its high moral appeal? What remedy do you suggest for it?

A. Every one of you should understand the significance of moral worth. Moral worth is easily distinguished from material worth. The one leads to devotion to moral value, the other to Mammon-worship. What distinguishes man from the four-footed beast is merely the recognition of moral worth, i. e., the greater the moral worth of a person the greater his distinction. If you believe in this ideal, you should ask yourselves why you are here and what you are doing.

Every worker must have, of course, food, clothing, etc., for himself and his dependants. But you do not belong to Visva-Bharati merely because Visva-Bharati feeds, clothes and finds creature comforts for you. You belong to it because you cannot do otherwise, because your moral worth increases day by day by working for its ideals. Therefore, every defect that crops up, every difficulty that obstructs its working, will be found to be ultimately traceable to some defect in your outlook in regard to moral worth. I have been connected with many institutions for over sixty years and I have come to the conclusion that every difficulty in their working was traceable to a defect in the understanding of moral values.

Q. We are trying to serve villagers. We find that at every step our activity is blocked by the social environment in the villages. The joyless routine of life there, the stagnation and the incubus of evil social customs obstruct our efforts. Should we not work for the eradication of these before we can hope for success in our other activities, and if so how can it be done?

A. Ever since I came to India I have felt that social revolution is a much more difficult thing to achieve than the political revolution, by which I mean ending our present slavery under the British rule. There are some critics who say that India cannot attain her political and economic emancipation till we get social emancipation. I regard it as a snag and a conundrum set to puzzle us, because I have found that the absence of political emancipation retards even our efforts for bringing about social and economic emancipation. At the same time it is also true that without a social revolution we will not be able to leave India happier than when we were born. I can however indicate no royal road for bringing about a social revolution except that we should represent it in every detail of our own lives.

Force has been used to alter the structure of society in some countries. But I have purposely eliminated it from our consideration. So my advice to you is : Try again and again and never say that you are defeated. Do not get impatient and say, 'the people are no good.' Rather say, 'I am no good.' If the people do not respond within the time limit prescribed by you the failure is yours, not theirs. It is thankless and laborious work. But you do not expect thanks for your work. Work that is undertaken for love is no burden—it is pure joy.

Q. In an ashram, does the introduction of salary system raise or degrade the ideal of the institution?

A. I have no difficulty in saying that it makes no difference whether you pay a fixed salary or your expenses are paid for you. Both methods can be tried. The danger to be guarded against is this : if you pay a man his bazaar price you do not carry out the spirit of the Ashram. We should rather do without talent and ability, be it of the highest order, if it demands its bazaar value. In other words, we should wait till talent is attracted to the institution, not for money but for something else for which the institution stands. Nor should you let the principle of "according to want" take you even beyond bazaar values. The salary system in Visva-Bharati is not a thing to complain of. The difficulties to which you have referred cannot be removed by mere tinkering. You must find out and remove the causes which are at the root of the defects you have in mind.

Q. How can we make headway against cynicism or lack of faith that we find among the youngsters?

A. I heave a sigh of despair when you ask me that question. When you find that your pupils are without faith you should say to yourself: 'I am without faith.' I have found that again and again in my own experience. And each time the discovery has been like an invigorating bath for me. The Biblical saying 'remove the beam from thine own eye before ye point out the mote in thy neighbour's'[1] is even more appropriate in the case of pupil and teacher. The pupil comes to you to find in you something infinitely better than himself. Rather than complain, 'Oh! he has no faith. How can I implant faith in him,' it would be far better that you resigned from your job.

Q. The intellectual tradition of Gurudev is being fairly well maintained here but I am afraid that the idealism for which he stood does not find full scope. There must be something wrong in an organization that leads to such a result. What is the remedy? Secondly, should our institution only work to make culture available to the man in the street? This is your ideal. At the same time should not there be a place where higher culture can be preserved for the initiated? This was Gurudev's ideal. Such an institution will necessarily be exclusive and for the select only. I am a follower both of yours and Gurudev's ideals and I am torn by the conflict between the two.

[1] *St. Matthew*, VII. 5

A. To take the second question first, it is a reflection both on Gurudev and myself. I have found no real conflict between us. I started with a disposition to detect a conflict between Gurudev and myself but ended with the glorious discovery that there was none.

Regarding your question, all I can say is that the feeling, 'I am all right but there is something wrong with the institution,' betrays self-righteousness. It is a killing thing. When you feel within yourself that you are all right but everything around is wrong, the conclusion which you should draw for yourself is that everything is all right but there is something wrong within you.[1]

Visva-Bharati News, Vol. XIV, No. 9

346. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

ON THE TRAIN FROM SANTINIKETAN,
December 20, 1945

I daily write the diary.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi : Courtesy : National Archives of India

[1] When Gandhiji was about to leave, Indira Devi, Rabindranath Tagore's niece, asked him : "Is there not too much music and dance here? Is there not the danger of the music of the voice drowning the music of life?" As Gandhiji had no time then, he replied to the above and some other questions from Calcutta; *vide* pp. 250-2.

[2] The reference is to "A Thought for the Day"; *vide* the last item. This was a postscript to Sushila Nayyar's letter to the addressee.

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347. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

RAMPURHAT,
December 20, 1945

Hindu-Muslim unity can come only by selfless service of Muslims untainted by political motives.

They (Muslims) are just like us and we must be friends with them. The same applies to Harijans. We cannot survive if we are unjust to them. By all means let all those go who want to go to the Assemblies but even there they must make it their business to work the constructive programme. In any case, the bulk of the work of Congressmen will be outside legislatures and they must devote themselves whole-heartedly to the new, enlarged programme of constructive work.

In reply to his enquiries Mahatmaji was informed that the population of the district was about eleven lakhs including two lakh Mohammedans and about 73,000 Santhals. He asked the workers to include the Santhals also in their programme of service. . . .

In regard to the shortage of cloth the workers informed Gandhiji that there were 500 spinners in the district before 1942. But cotton yarn had always come from outside, as Bengal had never grown enough cotton for her needs. Gandhiji said that the lack of cloth in any province could not be looked upon as an insurmountable difficulty and cited the example of England, which though it grew no cotton, was the biggest exporter of cloth.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1945

[1] Gandhiji addressed "about 60 Congress workers of Birbhum and adjoining districts in the local town hall. . . . Welcoming Gandhiji, Satyen Chatterjee, Secretary of the Birbhum District Congress Committee, said that Gandhiji's advice would have great effect on all of them and every worker would try to work his constructive programme."

348. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

RAMPURHAT,
December 20, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the need for removing untouchability from the Hindu society. It was a terrible blot on Hinduism, he added. They must feel that every Indian was their brother—their own flesh. They must banish from their hearts all distinctions between Hindus and Muslims, Harijans and Bhils and Santhals. If they could learn these lessons they could banish a good many of the evils that beset society.

Mahatma Gandhi regretted that all of them could not understand Hindustani. They must, of course, know the language of their province. But, he pointed out, if they wanted to travel all over India and wanted others to come to them, they must have a common language and that language had to be Hindustani.

Explaining the language, Gandhiji said that Urdu was one form of Hindustani and the other form was Hindi. The difference was that Urdu contained more words of Arabic and Persian origin and was written in Persian script, whereas Hindi contained words of Sanskrit origin and was written in Devanagari script. It was not so always but he would not at this moment enter into the history or the causes of the present division. Gandhiji emphasized that those who wished to serve India must learn both the scripts and forms of the language. If they loved their country and its people they would not mind the trouble and it was not a hard task either.

Urging the people to wear khaddar, Gandhiji observed that after 30 years' experience he could say that if they had the will to produce their own cloth they could overcome the scarcity of cloth in no time. It was strange, he remarked, that they could not or did not produce cloth in their country where cotton grew in abundance and did not spin and weave their own cloth.

Gandhiji referred to the prevalence of malaria in the district and said that one reason for this was their terrible poverty. But if they used their leisure hours rightly, Gandhiji thought, they could lessen their poverty also. They must give up their insanitary habits and it was the duty of all their workers to know how to preserve their own health and teach people the way to do so.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-12-1945

[1] *The Hindu*, 22-12-1945, reported that Gandhiji spoke in Hindustani and the "speech was explained to the audience in Bengali by Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh".

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349. SPEECH AT RAILWAY STATION, BURDWAN

December 20, 1945

Gandhiji asked them to be peaceful as, he said, freedom could not be achieved by shouting slogans. Peace was their only weapon for non-violence which alone could bring independence. He advised them also not to think in terms of Hindus and Muslims.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1945

350. LETTER TO ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

SODEPUR,
December 21, 1945

DEAR ABANI BABU[1],

I hope you received my telegram sent to you yesterday from Santiniketan. How I wish it were possible for me, being in Calcutta, to come to you and meet you face to face! But I know that I must deny myself that pleasure!

I went yesterday morning to see Nand Babu's museum and in it in a glass case he showed me some rare specimens of your producing beautiful art out of almost nothing, even straws!

You must live to give India and the world more of such things.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ABANINDRANATH TAGORE

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Nephew of Rabindranath Tagore

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351. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 21, 1945

We are all travellers. I had been to Santiniketan for two days. I have returned and will stay here for two or three days and again I will go to Midnapore.

We are all travellers. Sooner or later we will have to undertake a long journey. This is the preparation for the long one. We must not be sorry for any travelling, short or long. But we do feel sorry for the long journey because we do not understand the significance of life and death, which are equal.

Today's song conveys the idea appropriately ("*Ai Korechho Bhalo Nithur, Ai Korechho Bhalo*"). This is a prayer to God to burn our passion. And only when we have succeeded in that, shall we have no sorrow for the long journey.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 22-12-1945

352. LETTER TO RATHINDRANATH TAGORE

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. RATHI,

It was a matter of pure delight for me to be in Santiniketan and to study all I could during my very brief stay. I told you that I would put down in writing some of the things I was unable to say there either to you personally or during the conversation[1] with the heads of departments.

1. Just as I do not like day-scholars, I do not like preparing boys and girls for university examinations. Visva-Bharati is its own university. It ought not to be in need of a charter from any Government. As it is you are giving Visva-Bharati degrees side by side with preparing students for the chartered university. You have a high ideal to live for and live up to.

[1] *Vide* pp. 240-2.

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University degrees are a lure to which you cannot afford to fall a prey. Concessions that Gurudev made to weakness with impunity, Visva-Bharati without him cannot make. Concessions to weakness began with the introduction of the orthodox matriculation examination. I was unable even then to reconcile myself to it and I do not know that we have gained anything by it. I am not now thinking at all in terms of non-co-operation. I am just now anxious for Santiniketan to represent the highest that Gurudev stood for.

2. Music in Santiniketan is charming, but has the professor there come to the conclusion that Bengali music is the last word in that direction? Has Hindustani music, i. e., music before and after Muslim period, anything to give to the world of music? If it has, it should have its due place at Santiniketan. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that Western music which has made immense strides should also blend with the Indian. Visva-Bharati is conceived as a world university. This is merely a passing thought of a layman to be transmitted to the music master there.

One question[1] about music. I have a suspicion that perhaps there is more of music than warranted by life, or I will put the thought in another way. The music of life is in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity? It was not an idle remark[2] which I made at the Mandir service about the way in which boys and girls should know how to walk, how to march, how to sit, how to eat, in short how to perform every function of life. That is my idea of music. So far as I know, Gurudev stood for all this in his own person.

3. You will not have real rural reconstruction unless you begin with the basic craft, which is hand-spinning. Weaver's art without hand-spinning is a dead art. You know that I pleaded for it with Gurudev; at first in vain, later on he had begun to see what I was driving at. If you think that I have interpreted Gurudev aright in the matter of spinning, you will not hesitate to make Santiniketan hum with the music of the wheel.

The spinning-wheel and all it means lends itself to the exhibition of all your skill. Do you know that the spinning-wheel is considered to be the solace of the poor widow? And it is the

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 246.
[2] *Vide* p. 238.

Annapurna[1] of the hungry. When you adopt spinning by way of a sacrificial rite you are immediately in tune with the dumb masses.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RATHINDRANATH TAGORE
SANTINIKETAN

From a copy : C.W. 10553. Courtesy : Visva-Bharati

353. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

I got your letter. It is quite amusing. You are working hard to pass three examinations at a time. I wish you success in all the three. Be a good doctor. Set a fine example of success in inter-caste marriage and be an expert at spinning and constructive work. Truly speaking, all the three examinations are a test of ahimsa.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7382. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

354. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. MRIDULA,

I hope you received my letter. The following is my itinerary : I am leaving here on the 24th for Midnapore. I expect to return on the 4th January. After staying on for four or five days I shall go to Assam. I shall be there for a week. After I return from there I shall go to Madras. The latest date for Madras is [January] 23rd.

[1] Goddess of plenty

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You are moving about quite a lot and gaining experience. Sometimes I wonder whether it would not be better for you after gaining so much experience to settle down at some place and put it to good use. And I wonder whether looking after his health does not have a place among the many duties of a man.

In my case these questions do not arise any more, because I have all along assumed the answer in my practice. But is there any absolute rule that what applies to one can apply to all?

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

355. LETTER TO SHARAYU DHOTRE

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. SARAYU,

I have your letter. I never thought you would come to Calcutta.

I shall leave here on the 24th on a tour of Midnapore. I hope to return on January 4th, after which I shall be staying on for four or five days. I shall be pleased to see you during that time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. SHARAYUBEHN
DHARMASANGHA, KISHORE BUNGALOW
25 BALRAM STREET
CALCUTTA

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

356. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter.

You will succeed in your work with the K. G. N. M. Trust. Help Sushila rid herself quickly of the gall-stone. She will be all

right. Sometimes diagnosis of stone, etc., turns out to be wrong. It has been observed that doctors also commit errors.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. TARABEHN MASHRUWALA
AKOLA

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

357. LETTER TO RAMANAND TEERTH

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

SWAMIJ,

I have your letter. I have read everything. You have done well in not accepting any conditions. I had a talk with Panditji. Keep on writing to him everything.[1] I am happy to know that your health is improving.

SWAMI RAMANAND TEERTH
HYDERABAD

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

358. LETTER TO SARASWATI GANDHI

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

CHI. SARU,

I have your letter. Kanti has described to me the sweet quarrel between you two. When both of you testify to each other's conduct or when I come to know that either has won over the other, I shall withdraw the adjective 'mad' and substitute it with a similar, nice adjective. There are innumerable couples in the world who carry on their life smoothly through the drive of passion. But real greatness lies in creating unity and spontaneity through knowledge.

Shanti[2], I trust, is well.

[1] *Vide* also p. 115.
[2] Addressee's son

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You must learn one thing. As a rule, the wife spends most of her time in the kitchen. But if you can master the art of eating just to keep alive, you will have to give the minimum time in the kitchen. For this you must learn the rules of proper diet. If you are really keen to learn, I shall teach you some day.

You have asked my permission to come to Madras. If you want to meet me for the sake of meeting I would advise you to save both the money and the time. Saving time is also saving money. But if you feel that you must, then do come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 7383. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

359. LETTER TO PALTU JHA

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

DEAR PANDITJI,

I have your letter.

I have already given you my reply with regard to Sanskrit. I have written at length about Varnashrama. A collection of my articles[1] has also been published. I have expressed my present views in the foreword[2]. The gist of it is that it is the duty of every Hindu to regard himself as a Harijan, that is, the lowest among the Shudras. Thus alone can Hinduism be purified and saved. This includes my reply to your questions.

I cannot say when I shall be able to read your two books. I should like to read them.

You have the name and address on your card printed in English! Why and for whom?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5682

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

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360. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
December 22, 1945

We do not want to live on the mercy of anybody except God. *Gita* teaches us to be fearless. If you could learn that, nobody would be able to keep you down. If anybody asks me to bow down my head—I am an old man and anybody can push me or knock me down—but if I say, 'I won't,' the utmost he can do is to kill me. This fearlessness is swaraj. If everybody acts in the same way or feels in the same spirit, swaraj is there. It, however, does not mean that Government will go away today but it means that no power can make us bow down our head. We would not achieve independence by simply repeating the word like a parrot. Our deeds must be on the same line.

Explaining the evening song, Gandhiji said that it was not an easy task to select an appropriate song out of the many composed by Gurudev. In this particular song, the Poet asked them not to be cowards. They were in a small boat and God was their helmsman. When God was their helmsman they should not be afraid of anything. His hands were not shaky and He would safely escort them to their destination.

Gandhiji asked his audience to have faith in God. They would have to swim across the ocean of life. After all, what was fear? The word itself frightened them. He, therefore, advised them that they must take the essence of the song to their heart. Gandhiji asked them not to leave him, nor would he leave them, so long as he was in Calcutta. He also advised them to take part in the prayer by singing in chorus with them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-12-1945

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361. LETTER TO RANGANAYAKI DEVI

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. RANGANAYAKI,

I have your letter. I have shown your letter and cutting to Dr. Sushila Nayyar. She says that surgically the thing is substantial. But I would not advise you to pay for your doctor friend for going to America. If you feel like it you may go to America. But that is a matter solely for you to decide.

Personally I think that you should turn your deafness into a blessing and listen to the voice from within. What is worth hearing will be written down for you. But this can be done only if you feel like it, not otherwise.

Blessings from[1]
BAPU

SHRI RANGANAYAKIDEVI
FIRST HOUSE
SRIRANGAM
S. INDIA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

362. LETTER TO MANIBEHN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
24 PARGANAS,
December 23, 1945

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Kakubhai[2] has suggested that the post of Secretary of the Bombay branch of the A. I. S. A. should be offered to you. He informs me that you have seen the letter to that effect. I shall indeed be glad if you could honour the post. I know about your capabilities but I was not aware that you were also competent to

[1] The subscription is in Hindi.
[2] Purushottam Kanji Jerajani

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cope with accounts. However, if that be so I shall be very pleased. Please, therefore, let me have your reply, after careful consideration. Once you accept the secretaryship I don't want to be obliged to admit that you are not as good an accountant as anyone else. I don't wish to be a champion of women's talents nor do I want to cover up for them. I have, all along since my South African days, wished that women would acquire the ability to struggle independently and not lag behind any man, in their own field. And I believe I have fairly succeeded in my endeavour.

And is it correct for you to become an agent of the artificial silk mill instead of following in the footsteps of your husband? Or don't you yourself experience any contradiction in becoming a director of the mill? I shall expect your reply to this before I arrive at any decision. Write to me frankly. Send your reply to the address mentioned above. I shall be in Bengal and Assam till the 20th of January, but my headquarters will continue to be Sodepur.

I got your letter after I wrote this, which all the same covers all the points.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

363. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter of the 16th and postcard of the 19th.[1]

No fee is to be charged from the poor who may be admitted as indoor patients, but we shall accept what they can offer. In other words, we shall follow the practice obtaining in Sevagram. At present even our expenses on food are so heavy that no person of ordinary means can meet them. We shall have to consider what diet we can devise for those people which will cure them and help them to keep fit.

2. Along with the poor we shall admit only such wealthy patients who agree to live as the poor do.

[1] The addressee's letters are not available.

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I can see no place for them in this sanatorium if they have to be provided special facilities. I shall not permit even providing a special room for a rich patient simply because he is rich. The plan of constructing new rooms, etc., does not appeal to me just now. For we shall know only from experience how many poor patients will seek admission or how many of them we shall admit. We shall see what to do when we run short of accommodation. My view, therefore, is that we should incur no expenditure just now except what is absolutely essential.

3. The chairs, etc., will of course have to be removed. The Doctor himself wished to buy up some of the furniture. I do not know whether he still wishes to do so. If he does not, I am afraid I shall have to arrange for their disposal. I can only hope that I shall be able to do so. We shall have to make do with the number of beds we have at present. I see that there will be no occasion in the immediate future to admit a large number of patients.

4. The reply to this is contained in what has been stated above.

5. If the boiler for heating water has become useless, it should be replaced by a new one. I did have some talk with the Doctor about it, but I forget what decision we took. If it is necessary to seek the help of the mill-owner in the neighbourhood or of Birlaji, I shall be ready to do so. Do what the Doctor suggests in this matter.

6. There is no reason to believe that we shall start getting patients right from January 1. We shall need to make arrangements only for those who are already there. And they can even sit on the floor and eat off porcelain plates.

7. I have made arrangements to buy the required quantity of khadi. If, therefore, you let me know the requirements, I shall be able to supply it. You yourself suggested five to seven rolls for three dozen bed-sheets. Will that number suffice ?

8. Please consider whether those among the workers there who have their own arrangements for meals can continue the practice. I think it is our duty willingly to have meat served to those who are used to it and whose need we ought to supply. I see no harm or pollution—no one should—in the two kinds of food being cooked in the same kitchen. The idea of pollution is a mere excrescence [on our religion]. Those who are vegetarians should follow their dharma. It is self-evident to me that utensils used for cooking meat should not be used for cooking vegetables. In this matter I think we ought to respect the wishes

of the Doctor and Gulbai. There should not be even the slightest suspicion that we are indirectly trying to introduce vegetarian food. But we welcome anybody accepting vegetarianism on his own as being good for him.

I think it will be our duty to supply meat or eggs to those patients for whom the Doctor may consider them necessary.

9. The selection of medical assistants will rest with the Doctor.

10. Calls for no reply.

11. Just now I would regard Balkoba[1] as representing the standard for poor patients.

12. I agree with the Doctor that ultimately we shall have to shift to some large place. I have the fullest faith that God will make our path clear.

13. There is no need just now to call anybody from Sevagram. I have already written to you about Manibhai. He will come whenever we send for him.

14. The expenditure will have to be met by me. Is there no balance in the bank account there? I think I asked this question in a previous letter too. Probably it was in a letter addressed to the Doctor.

15. I have always held the view which you have expressed.

I think I have now replied to all your questions. If, however, there is anything you do not follow, do write to me. Address the letter to Sodepur.

I got your postcard today. The reply to the question you have asked in it is contained in what I have said above.

I have not revised the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8622. Also C.W. 7195. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Balkrishna Bhave

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364. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

CHI. PREMA,

Your letter of December 17 is strange, and so is its language. This is the first such letter I have had from you. You are very busy. How surprising and sad that, though you claim to be a public worker, you feel embarrassed to have to ask for money from time to time? Why need one feel embarrassed to ask for money for public work? You have, I am sure, seen me putting out my head through windows of railway carriages and begging a pice each from the people. You have even helped me in this. And still the letter to which I am replying seems to have been written by a millionaire. I can understand your feeling embarrassed if you were asking for money for yourself. But how can it be too much to ask for money even a hundred times for a public cause? You have asked for an additional sum, but have not sent me a copy of the letter. If you have addressed the letter to me in my capacity as Chairman, you should have addressed a formal letter to the Secretary too. I can immediately reply to a letter received through the Secretary. If you have written to me as to an elder, you should give me enough details to enable me to send the money to you without delay.

I sought your advice as from a daughter, co-worker and one who was more than a sister to Sushila. Instead of giving the advice I asked for, you have written as if we were utter strangers. I do not understand what all this is. Address your reply to Sodepur. I shall be touring in Bengal, and they will redirect the letter from here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10442. Also C.W. 6881. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

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365. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI KHARE,

I have your letter.[1] Thanks for the same. I have read it through. Let us see what happens now.

I am enclosing a newspaper cutting[2] which seems to me quite wrong. Is not what happened quite the opposite?[3]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4870. Courtesy : N. B. Khare

366. LETTER TO T. J. KEDAR

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI KEDAR[4],

Such things have appeared in the Press. I am really puzzled. I have sent the original cutting to Dr. Khare.[5] I am sending you a copy. Is not the case quite the opposite of this? Who, I wonder, is getting things published in this manner? How can such a wrong thing be set right? If Dr. Khare also holds the views that have appeared in the papers, the situation cannot be remedied. Think about it and write to me. It may be taken that my address will be Sodepur till January 20. Though I shall be touring in Bengal and Assam, I am having letters addressed to Sodepur.

[1] The addressee along with his letter had sent for Gandhiji's perusal the Government of India's scheme for helping the Indians in Malaya.

[2] Which carried a report of Gandhiji having been eager to meet the addressee

[3] The addressee in his letter of January 12, 1946, denied that he had given any interview to the Press and was surprised to see the report of their meeting in the newspapers.

[4] A Congress worker of C. P. He acted as a mediator between Khare and Gandhiji; *vide* footnote 4, p. 203.

[5] *Vide* the preceding item.

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I got your letter after writing this. Nobody has ever mentioned such a thing to me. I know that you did not charge any fee in the Ashti-Chimur case.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4874. Courtesy : N. B. Khare

367. LETTER TO HARIGANESH PHATAK

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter written in English. Why did you not write to me in Marathi if you could not write in Hindustani?

There was nothing wrong in sending Savitribai's name. It was your duty to do so. It is good that you wrote to Thakkar Bapa. I have been corresponding with Premabehn. I shall keep Savitribai's name in mind. What is her husband doing?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 6103

368. LETTER TO CHARUCHANDRA BHANDARI

December 23, 1945

BHAI CHARU BABU,

Your letter is very painful. What can I do? You should have some consideration for my capacity. I shall not be able to move about after 4 o'clock. If I had the strength, I would have gone to all the places. I can finish all your work in half an hour. Do kindly forgive me. This is my only request.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8699. Also C.W. 1470. Courtesy : A. K. Sen

[1] *Vide* p. 28, also Vol. LXXIX, p. 335.

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369. LETTER TO ANNASAHEB SAHASRABUDDHE

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI SAHASRABUDDHE,

I have your letter. I have gone through everything. I feel that at the moment nothing needs to be done in this connection.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SAHASRABUDDHE
KHADI KARYALAYA
MAHAL, NAGPUR

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

370. LETTER TO TRIPATHI

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

BHAI TRIPATHI,

Why did you write to me in English? I have a feeling that you are either a Maharashtrian or a Gujarati. In which case you could have written in one of the three Indian languages. You could have written in the national language or in your mother tongue. You could have written in Bengali if you are a Bengali. What do you do?

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

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371. DISCUSSION WITH POLITICAL WORKERS[1]

SODEPUR,
December 23, 1945

The first [question] was from a lady who wanted to know when the remaining prisoners would be released. Gandhiji was reported to have talked with H. E. the Governor about them. Some of the prisoners were important workers without whom the great organization could not be said to be in full working order.

Gandhiji said he had naturally discussed with His Excellency many questions, but he could not allow himself to be cross-examined. He could only hope with those present that if they were on the eve of liberty these prisoners must be set free sooner rather than later. But he warned the lady questioner not to worry about them if she believed with him that prisons for patriots were gateways to liberty. Was not India in bondage one vast prison?

To a student who wanted to know what part students were to play Gandhiji said that he could not understand student organizations antagonistic to one another. Students should all be lovers of freedom and therefore all Congressmen in thought. But their first work was study. They were all servants of the nation. They should have no communal taint nor could they harbour untouchability. They were bound to follow the constructive programme and, through the charkha and all it meant, ally themselves with the millions of poor villagers of India. For the rest they should hear everything and everyone respectfully, weigh everything and follow what they thought was right. But they must keep out of party politics.

To the question whether "*Vandemataram*" should be replaced by the new song "*Qadam, Qadam*", Gandhiji said that a song that carried such glorious associations of sacrifice as "*Vandemataram*" could never be given up. It would be like discarding one's mother. But they could certainly add a new song or songs like the one mentioned to their repertoire of national songs after due thought and discrimination.

[Q.] Was there violence by the people in 1942?

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's Weekly Letter issued to the Press. Those present included members of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, students and trade union workers. The meeting took place in the afternoon between 3 and 5 p. m. before Gandhiji left for Santiniketan.

Gandhiji referred the questioner to his reply[1] to the Tottenham pamphlet and added that had the people as a whole not remained non-violent, India would have gone back. He also thought the Government had senselessly put the principal Congressmen in prison and thus provoked the people who were not yet restrained enough for complete non-violence. He had seen nothing to alter his conviction that the Government excesses far outweighed what the people had done in the way of violence.

Q. What could Congressmen do to draw Muslims to the Congress?

Gandhiji said that in the presence of the prevailing distrust there should be no attempt to enlist Muslims or any other group or individuals. What however every Hindu could do was mutely to serve his Muslim or for that matter every non-Hindu neighbour as his blood brother. Such selfless service was bound to tell in the end. That was the way of non-violence, otherwise called love.

Asked as to what the position of the Congress in relation to class struggle between the capitalists and the labouring class was, Gandhiji replied that he could speak only in his individual capacity as he was not even a four-anna member of the Congress. His own relations with his capitalist friends, he remarked, typified the attitude of the Congress towards the capitalist class. He freely accepted the hospitality of capitalists like the Birlas and made use of their money to serve the cause of the poor, but the latter did not expect anything in return from him. On the contrary, they were glad to be exploited by him in the interests of the poor. His relationship with them was ethical. He could never give up his associations with the capitalists because of fear of anybody. To do so would, in his opinion, amount to a betrayal of the cause of the poor.

Similarly, whilst the Congress accepted the financial help and co-operation of the capitalists in its fight for independence, it never was and never could be a capitalist organization. The Congress was pledged to defend the rights of labour against anyone who might attempt to encroach upon them. From its very inception it had stood for the poor, and consciously or unconsciously striven to become an organization of the masses. In this connection he referred to Dadabhai Naoroji's monumental work *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, which showed the deep concern of the Grand Old Man of the Congress for Indian masses.

They could now understand why he asked them to rally round the Congress. They should all identify themselves and serve the Congress, irrespective of whether they were on its membership register or not. The Congress tricolour symbolized truth and non-violence. It was the only flag worthy of being adopted by them. There was no power in the universe

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXVII, pp. 105-99.

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greater than truth. Bereft of truth man was no better than the four-footed beast. If they made truth their staff and ahimsa their shield they would be irresistible.

Continuing, he told them that he considered himself to be a labourer just like themselves. He did not think that there was any essential antagonism between capital and labour. In fact he held that labour alone was true capital. All the gold of the capitalists could not provide them with one morsel of bread. Collaboration of labour was necessary before capital could bear fruit. Again the gold and silver of the capitalists had only a limited currency but labour was universal currency. The capitalists could be robbed of their wealth but no one could rob the labourer of his wealth, namely, industry.

Moreover, capitalists were after all few in number. The workers were many. But capital was well organized and had learnt to combine. If labour realized its inherent strength and the secret of combination it would rule capital instead of being ruled by it.

He commended to them the Ahmedabad Labour Union as a model organization to copy. It was perhaps the best organized labour union in the world. It ran its own free hospital, schools for children and cheap grain shops out of the union funds. It had conducted several successful strikes. The essential condition of a successful strike was that the strikers should not be dependent on public charity for their sustenance during the strike. They must have an alternative occupation to fall back upon in a crisis. He recalled how during the 23 days' strike[1] of Ahmedabad labour workers, he had offered them work but had refused to give them doles. The latter would have demoralized them. Spinning was an occupation *par excellence* for their purpose. He therefore asked them to learn and practise it in their homes. Concluding, he observed that a strike should be organized not out of hostility towards the employers but for the restitution of the just rights of labour. Rights and duties were reciprocal in their nature, the former accrued only from a due performance of the latter.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-12-1945

[1] In 1918; *vide* Vol. XIV.

372. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I promised on 22nd, when we met, that I would send you for your kind acceptance a copy of my reply[1] to the Tottenham pamphlet. This I do now with great pleasure and hope that you will find time to read it and, if possible, to share it with Mrs. Casey.

I forgot, when we met, to ask you about the salt tax. I trust you have not forgotten this humanitarian matter.

The first question that was put to me yesterday at the meeting[2] with some friends was about prisoners. It was addressed by a woman. I do feel that your Government will be wholly wrong if they persist now in keeping in jail these prisoners, some of whom have broken down in health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 133

373. LETTER TO SANTOSH KUMAR BASU

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

DEAR SANTOSH BABU,

Many thanks for your letter and the papers. I have read your statement[3] with painful interest. I propose to make full use of the facts vouchsafed by you. I return the papers as suggested by you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR BASU
65 DIAMOND HARBOUR ROAD, KIDDERPORE

From a photostat : C.W. 10554

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXVII, pp. 105-99.
[2] *Vide* pp. 265-7.
[3] This related to incidents in January 1943, within Mahishadal Thana in Tamluk Sub-division. The addressee, who was then a minister in the Government of Bengal, had visited Mahishadal and Tamluk during the disturbances.

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374. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR N. MORARJEE

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I got your letter only today. I am leaving for Midnapore. Write to me at the address given above. I have got a telegram from the Aga Khan acknowledging [receipt of my letter[1]]. If a letter follows, I will send you a copy of it. In the telegram he has suggested an interview. What you say in your letter is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4807. Courtesy : Shantikumar N. Morarjee

375. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

CHI. SHARMA,

I got your letter today. I am merely acknowledging it as I am going to Midnapore right now. The work is becoming difficult. Let me see what can be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi : *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 344

[1] *Vide* p. 205.

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376. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SODEPUR,
December 24, 1945

Monday the 24th December was a great day for the Christians. The day following would be Christmas Day and that was the reason why they had heard in the *bhajan* a translation of one of the best English songs from the "Book of Psalms". They should understand the meaning of the song. It depicted one who had lost his way and was penitent for going on a wrong track. Now after a period he had been able to realize his mistake and he implored God to guide and show him the right way. He appealed to God to illumine his way in order that he might not fall into numerous pits which covered all his way. Wistful as he was to realize God, he fervently appealed to Him to take him to the other world. He knew that it was God alone who was able to take him from darkness to the kingdom of light.

This was the essence of the song, said Gandhiji. What they said in their daily prayer was not different from this. Gandhiji asked all to remember this and respect all religions of the world like their own.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-12-1945

377. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

December 25, 1945

BAPA,

I am going to accommodate all the topics in one letter. I am writing this on the steamer taking me to Midnapore.

You have written to me about Kuttimalu Amma[2] of Malabar but I am afraid she may not be able to complete our job if she becomes a member of the Assembly.

I have written to Purnima telling her that I very much doubt if she can be an Agent if she wishes to enter the Assembly.[3]

[1] As it was Gandhiji's silence day, the speech was read out by Kanu Gandhi.

[2] A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, wife of K. Madhava Menon, for some time minister and later President of the Kerala Congress.

[3] *Vide* pp. 232-3.

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I discussed the same point with Jawaharlal also. If, however, you think that this will not present any difficulty I might revise my opinion.

I think anyone wishing to take up work among women, especially village women, will have no time for and no interest in the Assembly. For my part, I would suggest that you write to Kuttimalu Amma to give up her longing for the Assembly; only then will she be able to work whole-heartedly for the K. G. N. M. Trust.

Now your second letter—regarding Ram Swarup Khanna. I do not remember if the words "as far as possible" were dictated by me or by some other trustee. But they were added during the meeting itself. If you are inclined to delete the words I shall not say no. But if the words are to be removed we ought to obtain a formal consent of all the trustees.

I do not yet have Shyamlal's letter in this connection.

I have gone through Hariji's report on Midnapore and I am proceeding there.

Sucheta has sent a very good and exhaustive account of the camp at Sahibnagar. The girls of the camp also came and saw me. We are likely to gain some worth-while experience from it. You should however write to me only at the Sodepur address. Midnapore district will take eight days. On the 3rd I shall return to Sodepur. After having spent there a few days I shall go to Assam, where I expect to spend seven days at the most. After that to Madras *via* Sodepur. The date fixed for Madras is 23rd January. Let us see what happens there. Will you be going to Madras?

I ask this because we had some talk about the K. G. N. M. Trust. Spending a day in Orissa does not appear possible.

THAKKAR BAPA

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

378. LETTER TO JATINDAS

December 25, 1945

CHI. JATINDAS,

If you say that I must write my own letters they are bound to be delayed, or I may not even be able to write them. Hence, for the time being you had better give up the desire to receive

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letters written in my own hand. That occasionally I may write myself is a different matter. This is in reply to your letter of the 18th which reached me yesterday at Sodepur. I am dictating this on board the steamer taking me to Midnapore. It is good you have gone there in time, for the silver jubilee celebration of the girls' school. You will certainly take a leading part in the athletic events. And I hardly need say anything about the Art section. Don't act in haste. I am not going to issue an immediate summons for you to rush to me! After all you are doing work there and I also believe it will bear fruit. Besides, it will immensely please me if you satisfy Father. A selfless worker always gets an opportunity to serve wherever he goes. Therefore, the question of searching for a field of service does not arise.

I shall write whatever is right regarding the Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya[1] affair after you write to me.

I hope you are fine. Send the reply to the Sodepur address.

It appears I shall be leaving Bengal on January 21st.

JATIN

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

379. LETTER TO SAUDAMINI G. MEHTA

December 25, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. Did you have the purse you had brought specially for the Bengal Harijan Sevak Sangh? Anyway it does not matter whether or not you have it. For my part, I have collected a fairly large amount. How much would you require? Please let me know. If you say that no sum will be too much I am going to look upon you as a lazy person. Workers who only know how to spend and cannot produce what they spend cannot do any work. This has been my experience over the past sixty years. It began with myself. In England we formed the Vegetarian Society in the Way's Hotel, but did not collect funds from amongst the members, with the result that we achieved nothing. I occasionally exposed myself to laughter but I don't remember anyone having been converted to vegetarianism because of my activity. My later experience gradually proved sweeter because I then decided that funds would be collected from those amongst

[1] A girls' school at Nadiad in Gujarat

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whom we proposed to work. That balanced the two sides. The result was I became a "Mahatma". I am pointing out the golden way in case you want to become one. This by way of jest. I am dictating this on board the steamer taking me to Midnapore. That is how I could get some time. About meeting Harijan workers you may decide after I return.

SAUDAMINI MEHTA
CALCUTTA

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

380. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

ON THE STEAMER,
December 25, 1945

CHI. SUCHETA,

I have your report. It is very good. You have given all the information. I got your report the day before yesterday after the women of the camp met me. I have written to Purnima.[1] Hope P[rofessor][2] is well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI SUCHETA DEVI
SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

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

381. LETTER TO DHOLKE

ON THE STEAMER; MIDNAPORE,
December 25, 1945

BHAI DHOLKE,

I have your letter and also the newspaper cutting. I personally do not like all these things. Even a well-meaning report can do harm. I had never thought that any part of the report was going to be published. In parts it is not even true. What can I say about the comment appearing in *Navabharat* and *The Nagpur Times*?

NAGPUR

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

[1] *Vide* pp. 232-3.
[2] J. B. Kripalani

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382. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

December 25, 1945

BHAI DASAPPA,

I saw your letter addressed to Rajkumari. When will you write in Hindi? Make an effort, or is it that you cannot even make an effort in this life?

There is no need to tempt me as far as Mysore is concerned. I should at least like it for the camp of the Kasturba Memorial Trust, but I am afraid it is necessary for you and me to develop the spirit of renunciation.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA
GURUKUL ASHRAM
KENGERI POST, *via* BANGALORE

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

383. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

December 25, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

I have your postcard. If the Congress wants us to organize an exhibition during the Congress session and is willing to pay for it, we should do it. Did the Professor write to you? Will you write to him or shall I ask him? Who will look after the work? Will you leave things in the hands of Vichitra?

I am sending a copy of what I have written about Manibehn. I have a letter from her. I send a copy of it. There is no need to write more. You will know my mind from my letter.

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

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384. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

December 25, 1945

CHI. VICHITRA,

Are you aware of the quarrel between Gadodiaji and Dr. Sharma? What do you know about it and what is your opinion? Gadodiaji does khadi work. He says that he is doing it sincerely. Let me know how far that is so.

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

385. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING[1]

DIAMOND HARBOUR,
December 25, 1945

Gandhiji had already had one blessing from them. They had gathered there in thousands but there was no noise and they were sitting there quietly and peacefully under the scorching sun. If he left them after two hours, he would be going to serve them elsewhere. If they realized that in their heart he would be really happy.

So many of them, men and women, were spinning there. That was a sight very pleasing to him. He also desired to thank them for the purse of Rs. 25,250 which they had given him for work in this sub-division. It was still more pleasing to him that this money had been collected from 3,900 persons. He was giving it to Charu Babu[2] and was sure that it would be spent wisely with maximum benefit. He hoped that the work would be taken up with this sum as capital.

He had read and heard of the calamities suffered by the people of this sub-division due to flood, famine and pestilence. He also knew that unless they bore such calamities with fortitude, they would not be able to survive in this world. Calamities occurred at every moment in some place or other and humanity all over the world had to pass through such sufferings. Today humanity was suffering in one form or other all over the world. But if people thought of them as misfortunes falling on them and broke under them, they would not be able to reap good out of evil.

[1] Gandhiji's Hindi speech was simultaneously rendered into Bengali by Satis Chandra Das Gupta.

[2] Charuchandra Bhandari

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The songs sung at Khadi Pratishthan at prayer-time every day had one central message and that was that even those who suffer get the blessings of God hidden in those sufferings.

It pained him to find that thousands of villagers were still coming there from distant places. It had been decided that he should come there at half past three and remain with them for two hours. If he had done so his programme of work would have been disturbed and he would not have been able to serve them as he desired.

He had a faith and it was still with him after he had come there. That was about the charkha. He had been saying from the very beginning that if we did not have faith in the charkha and realized its inner meaning, we would not be able to live peacefully in Hindustan. He had been saying this for 60 years, and this was true not only for Hindustan but for the whole world, wherever humanity lived, whether it was a small or big community or country. Humanity could not live peacefully unless it accepted the creed of truth and non-violence. It needed to be said that hooliganism or rowdyism would not enable us to bring swaraj or do anything good for humanity. He was convinced that if the 40 crores of people in India were truly imbued with this spirit of truth and non-violence then swaraj would be in our hands.

He would also tell them briefly the significance of the charkha. They would see that the poorest of the poor could have a charkha and spin. He had not seen any other machine which could be as useful as the charkha. Spinning was a form of labour. If a person did not work for his bread, he would be like a thief stealing the property of others. The charkha gave them scope for honest labour.

In our country persons who knew English and who were said to be educated told us that our people, who had no work to do for six months, could have nothing in store for them but begging. He would tell them that they would have to use intelligence in spinning too. A few minutes earlier he was spinning. The charkha was good but there was something wrong in it. He had to mend it before he could spin. In this way, if there was anything wrong in the machinery used by the people of India, then we would not be able to reap the maximum benefit out of it. Here one charkha went wrong. What would be the fate of Hindustan if 40 crores of charkhas went wrong? Those who believed that swaraj could be won by the charkha, would necessarily have the blessings of God. So long as we did not believe in God we would not be able to banish fear from our mind. A person or people who was not fearless could not be free. That was a simple truth.

He desired to thank them again for they had listened to him quietly. He hoped they had listened and realized what he had said. If, however, they had not been able to follow him, he hoped what he had said would be translated into Bengali and circulated among them. When he heard that they would be glad if he held his prayer there he was greatly delighted. He

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would hold his prayer for a few minutes and then would take leave of them. That did not mean that his work there was finished. He would go to the launch and hold discussions with their representatives. If he could work according to his plan, he would know his duties towards them. Concluding Mahatma Gandhi said :

I would request you to be quiet at the time of prayer. You should be wholly given to meditation of God while praying. Prayer is not parrot-like repetition of words. It is meaningless without singleness of heart.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 26-12-1945

386. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS[1]

MAHISHADAL,
[On or after *December 25, 1945*][2]

I cannot say that all that has been done has been well done or ought to have been done. On the contrary, much of it ought not to have been done. That the people did not remain inert is a matter of satisfaction, but the fact that after all these years they should not have known what the Congress stood for is a matter for sorrow. What they did was thoughtless. By its very nature it could not be sustained.

You have graphically put in your reports how you blew up a railway track, put roads out of use, burnt a *kutchery*, seized a *thana*, set up a parallel government and so on. This is not the technique of non-violent action. People committed the mistake of thinking that all that did not involve killing was non-violence. Sometimes killing is the cleanest part of violence. If you kill the mischief-maker outright, there is an end to it as far as he is concerned, but harassment is worse. It did not put out mischief. On the contrary, it brought the mischief on our own heads. The authorities became vindictive. Perhaps, you will say that they would have been vindictive anyhow, but that is not what we should desire or aim at. It does not pay us to let them go into panic.

In August 1942, the authorities became panicky. We gave them that excuse. But they are a people who do not know

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Non-violent Technique and Parallel Government"

[2] Gandhiji was in Mahishadal from December 25 to 30.

what defeat is; their cowardice is not fundamental. So, they let such things as *thanas*, *kutcheries*, panchayat courts, etc., remain in your hands for a short while as toys but as soon as they had completed their dispositions they turned the full blast of their machinery of retaliation against us. It is not in this way that India will attain her independence. We cannot afford to repeat it.

Today you have to reckon not with Britain alone but the Big Three. You cannot successfully fight them with their own weapons. After all, you cannot go beyond the atom bomb. Unless we can have a new way of fighting imperialism of all brands in the place of the outworn one of a violent rising, there is no hope for the oppressed races of the earth.

Let nobody be misled by the Russian parallel. Our tradition is wholly different from Russia's. The historical setting too is different. In Russia the whole population was under arms; Indian masses will not take to arms even if they could be given the necessary training. But it is useless to think that our rulers will let us give them that training when they have at a stroke disarmed a first-rate military State like Japan. Today Japan lies prostrate at the conqueror's feet. But non-violence knows no defeat. It must however be true non-violence, not a make-believe. I would not shed a single tear if I alone were left to represent such non-violence.

Q. After all that we have done and suffered, we have begun to doubt whether our energies have flowed in the right channel, whether the mass awakening was not misdirected. But is not non-violent rebellion a programme of seizure of power?

A. Therein lies the fallacy. A non-violent revolution is not a programme of 'seizure of power'. It is a programme of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power. If the people had fully carried out the five steps outlined by me in my 8th of August speech[1] in the A. I. C. C. in Bombay, and had there been a perfect atmosphere of non-violence, the Government's power and repression would have been sterilized and it would have been compelled to yield to the national demand.

If under the impact of foreign invasion or some such cause the ruling power abdicates and a vacuum is created, the people's organization will naturally take over its functions but such *jatiya sarkar* would have no other sanction except that of non-violence

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXXVI, pp. 384-96 and 396-401.

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and service of the people to enforce its fiats. It will never use coercion. Even those who might hold contrary views will receive a full measure of security under it.

As an instance of the infinitely greater efficacy of the non-violent technique as compared to the technique of coercion, he mentioned the case of Bardoli. In Midnapore whilst they succeeded in capturing a few symbols of power in the initial stages, they could not retain the fruits of their success. But in Bardoli the satyagrahis were able fully to retain the gains of their struggle.

Moreover, you have seen that all your bravery could not prevent the violation of women. Now that is intolerable. No one should be able to cast an evil eye upon them. This requires inculcation of a higher form of bravery, i. e., that of non-violence which can hurl defiance at death and against which the power of the aggressor cannot prevail. This is what I am trying to do. It may take time. It takes a long time to infuse this kind of higher courage among the millions. Whether this kind of non-violence will ever come into play or not I do not know. But you who have had training in non-violence for all these years ought to realize that in your hands non-violence should show all the brilliance that is inherent in it.

They next wanted to know as to how they could start on the right lines. Gandhiji in reply prescribed to them the spinning-wheel as "the symbol and central sun of the 18-fold constructive programme". It was the best way of achieving social solidarity and non-violent organization. The technique of non-violent action consisted in isolating and sterilizing the instruments of evil. *Jatiya sarkar* based on non-violence would not put Government servants under duress but would effectively isolate them so that they would either have to align themselves with the people or be reduced to the necessity of carrying out the foreign Government's writ through undiluted barbarism of which they would soon sicken and tire. Even their relations and dear ones would desert them.

This presupposes that no section among the people is labouring under a sense of injustice and wrong at the hands of the others. Untouchability, exploitation and communal rancour can have no place under a *jatiya sarkar*, or it will be like a house divided against itself which must fall.

Harijan, 17-2-1946

387. LETTER TO HOMI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HOMI,

I would advise you not to get involved in the Assembly business. How does it matter if the people ask you to? Moreover, of what use can my testimonial be? For a noble person his own noble acts or humanity are the testimonials.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

388. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BAPA,

Herewith the letter from the Kanya Gurukul. I think you had better write to the Gurukul lady yourself.

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

389. LETTER TO BHAILALBHAI PATEL

MAHISHADAL,
CAMP: SODEPUR,
December 26, 1945

BHAILALBHAI,

I have your long letter. As on reading it I got a clearer idea of your enthusiasm, I felt that I might not by myself be able to do justice to that enthusiasm and, therefore, showed the letter to the experienced co-workers who are in my party. I was accompanied yesterday by Shri Satis Babu and Shri Annada Babu[1] in the boat which brought me to Midnapore. Both of them are

[1] Annada Chowdhury, a veteran constructive worker of Bengal

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learned men and thinkers and are taking the utmost interest in constructive work. They are not men who would obstinately cling to their own ideas; they would go wherever the quest of truth leads them. Neither of them has been impressed by tractors, nor very much by electrically operated flour mills. Since I myself am temperamentally cast in a different mould, I leave out myself. I asked Satis Babu to reduce his opinion to writing and am sending his note in the original. Annada Babu has definite proofs in support of his view and he will collect them and prepare a note after the present tour is over. I will send it to you. I think that ultimately the gulf between the two opposite views will remain unbridged, and everything will depend on experience alone. Meanwhile, you should cling to the view which you hold so firmly and act on it. I have always acted on what I believe to be true and it seems but right that I should continue to do so. Keep on writing to me if there is anything which you feel might change my views.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

From a facsimile of the Gujarati : *Shri Bhailalbhai Patel, Sitermi Janmaganth Abhinandangranth, 1958*, p. 254

390. LETTER TO SADHU CHARANDAS

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI SADHU CHARANDAS,

I have your letter. I have written quite a lot on students. You should read it and do whatever you feel is right. What can be there in it which makes you sleepless?

SADHU CHARANDAS
HEAD MASTER
BOARD HIGH SCHOOL
SURADA (GANJAM)

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

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391. LETTER TO DHARMA DEV SHASTRI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

SHRI DHARMA DEV SHASTRI,

Is it true that you have fallen ill? Get well soon. Why did you fall ill?

SHRI DHARMA DEV SHASTRI
DARSHAN KESARI
ASHOK ASHRAM
KALSI, DISTT. DEHRA DUN

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

392. LETTER TO HARIPRASAD SHASTRI

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HARIPRASAD SHASTRI,

I have your letter. Why did you write in English? What I am doing is also for the sake of Truth. Who knows what consummation will serve Truth. It is better to keep on doing what we consider our duty irrespective of the result.

SHRI HARIPRASAD SHASTRI
SHANTI SADAN
30 LANSDOWNE CRESCENT
LONDON–W II

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

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393. LETTER TO HARIRAM

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI HARIRAM,

I have your letter. I cannot do anything in this matter.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

394. LETTER TO MUKHERJEE

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

BHAI MUKHERJEE,

I have your letter dated 23rd December. I have had a talk with your son. I hope your wife is now well. I have gone through all the papers from Nepal that you have sent. I do not see what help they can be. This work perhaps can be done only by people like you who are familiar with it. It cannot be done with the help of a certificate from the Government of Nepal or anyone else.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

395. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MAHISHADAL,
December 26, 1945

I have come here to know what you have done so long, and also to know about your sufferings, and after that to try to help ameliorate some of them.

[1] The meeting was held in the open space adjoining Gandhiji's hut. It was attended by more than one lakh people.

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I have not come here to deliver speeches. I have delivered many speeches in my life. Now I am old in age and there has been a change in my mind, and I think by delivering speeches I will not be able to do any good to you.

Referring to the sufferings of the people of Midnapore during the past years Gandhiji said that he was anxious to visit the district for some time, and he was glad that he got the opportunity today. During his stay in their midst, he would study their conditions—political and economic.

Mahatma Gandhi advised the gathering to join in singing God's name as by doing so they would pick up the habit of doing things unitedly. Swaraj could not be given by anybody. The people must possess unity of strength for achieving it. It also meant non-violence or peace.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 27-12-1945

396. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

MAHISHADAL,
December 27, 1945

If we can conduct ourselves unitedly as we have done in maintaining the rhythm of the *bhajan* sung, then whatever injury is inflicted on us and however wronged we may be as the result of the visitation of Nature or policy of the State, we will be the master of the situation and keep our head unbent. History provides many such instances.

Proceeding, Gandhiji referred to the *bhajan* sung at the meeting and stated that it would not distort the meaning of the song if in the place of "temple" the word "liberation" was used.

But, asked Gandhiji, what was exactly that liberation which the Poet in the song and they as well wanted to attain? Was it the liberation or salvation that came to man after his death or was it the liberation from all vestiges of bondage that a human being suffered under in this world?

The congregation, Gandhiji hoped, would agree with him that they all wanted the liberation from bondage in this world. If that was the hankering then they must appreciate the significance of a unitedly given rhythm.

They were suffering under a bondage of foreign yoke and consequently they were anxious to be liberated therefrom. There might be, if not equally, strong powers or influences in their country which also were anxious to keep

[1] The meeting was attended by over one lakh people.

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them down in bondage. They were anxious to get rid of all these bondages but, added Gandhiji, the worst type of bondage was that which enabled one to submit himself to any form of slavery.

Man was a slave to many things,—his property, his desires. They should seek deliverance from all these things. If they could press forward their claim for liberation from all these bondages in the same way as they did in maintaining the rhythm of the chorus of the *bhajan*, they would, he hoped, realize his message.

When they kept rhythm by a movement of the hands, the feeling of such a movement came from within. In other words their hearts were attuned to the outside movements. That was exactly the thing prerequisite to the attainment of salvation.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 28-12-1945

397. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. AMRIT,

The papers report your safe arrival. This is earlier than anything you could have sent. I hope all will go well there.

Here I am in the midst of peaceful surroundings on the canal bank. This is saved children's home. No mosquitos. Is it not 'es'? Fancy meetings absolutely silent though attended by perhaps one lakh of people.

No more.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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398. LETTER TO T. H. BAIRD

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 18th November. I am forwarding your letter and pamphlet to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Your pretension appears to me to be too great.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

T. H. BAIRD, ESQ.
33 PARK AVENUE
PORTOBELLO, EDINBURGH

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

399. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

MAHISHADAL,
SODEPUR (24 PARGANAS),
December 28, 1945

CHI. KAKA,

I can only dictate the reply to your letter. Just now I have to be content with what I can dictate or write after the morning prayer. I therefore do not think it necessary to stretch out the hand from under the quilt to write to you.

I can think of only one thing regarding you, and that is, you should go on doing what I tell you—though you may make any suggestion you like. This is exactly what you say in your letter too. Even if your interpretation is the only correct one, I would say that it would be safer not to exercise the right which has been granted to you but to consult the committee. At any rate you will lose nothing thereby, nor is such procedure likely to result in any delay, especially when you can consult them by correspondence.

Let us forget the affair of the Vidyapith library, for I never think about it. And, in any case, what is the use of recalling it?

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I see no need for you to resign from activities in Gujarat. The whole thing seems to be your imagination. Moreover, Amritlal takes interest in them. It was you who made him what he is. Without your support his interest would dry up. He is a straightforward and hard-working man. From among your discoveries, I consider him as the one who has proved his worth. So you can leave only after convincing him fully. You have as good as left, since Amritlal will never do anything against your wishes.

Thirdly, though you had intended Prof. Banhatti for B. B. Mandir and told him so, there will be no harm if you take him away for the Adhyapan Mandir. The latter needs his services for work which is already in progress, whereas nothing is definite yet about B. B. Mandir's work.

I did not like your falling ill. I see no need to work at such speed and expense of energy. Do what you can without overtaxing yourself. I can understand your desire that nothing should be overlooked through lethargy, but I am not at all ready to grant the necessity of working with speed. I remember in this connection the couplet : "To be impatient is to be confused and to be patient is to be self-possessed." It is for you to know who the author is.

I experience supreme peace here even in the midst of meetings attended by thousands. This is a new sight altogether. I even believe that this is the result of the work we have been able to do in Sodepur. Moreover, the people no longer ask for speeches from me, but want prayer meetings. On one side we have this, on the other, I read in newspapers the reports of the goondaism that is going on. Who can say what the outcome of all this will be, or what God will do? Is it not enough that we should cheerfully shoulder the burden of the small tasks that fall to our lot?

Let this suffice for today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10987

400. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BAPA,

Herewith Mridula's wire. You will be able to see Devdas also. What shall we do about Delhi? If these two names cannot be approved we should look for some other lady. I also hold the view that until we come across a woman worker we should carry on the work through the Wardha office as best as we can, since the main thing is for us to work in the countryside.

Have you written to them that Tai Rajwade has declined the offer? Rajkumari has agreed to find [workers] for both the places (Delhi and Central India). Yet Devdas's scheme still remains to be considered. I am doubtful if Ramachandran and Saundaram can adjust themselves to this task. Ramachandran has adjusted himself to the Nayee Talim work, so how can we withdraw him from it? Saundaram alone surely cannot cope with the responsibility. This is what I think, so discuss this thing also with Devdas.

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

401. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. DINSHAW,

Today is the 28th. I am dictating this from a village in Midnapore. I have sent a full reply to Munnalal's letter. He had informed me that it was written on behalf of all of you. I don't know when this will reach you.

I only hope that everything will change from January 1st. My heart is there. When I shall be there is in God's hands. He will take me there whenever He wills.

A sign-board in Hindustani, Urdu and Marathi was to be put up there. Have you done it? Or have you put it off till I come?

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Do you still have the 'big' monied patients or have they left? If they have stayed on, will they agree to be in the same line with the poor?

What did you do about the hospital furniture? Did you get the pieces you wanted for your Bombay unit? Or shall I have to see to the matter myself? I know I shall have to put up with the monthly expenditure there. A number of questions have been raised in this connection; I shall remit the appropriate amount after I get a reply.

I do not expect a large number of indoor patients moving in soon. I take it that those who have already applied to you will be the rich ones. There is no question of our admitting them at the moment. It will be a different matter if we admit them after the new norms are established and the rich agree to stay with the poor.

Of course, I strongly feel that you should adapt yourself to the new pattern in full knowledge and faith.

I hope Gulbai is fine. I expect it is now nearing time for her confinement.

Write to me at the Sodepur address.

Blessings from
BAPU

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
POONA

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

402. LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL, KANYA GURUKUL, DEHRA DUN

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I was a little surprised. I had always regarded the Gurukul as Dharma Devji's institution.

I have forwarded your letter to Thakkar Bapa and have written to him to write to you.

THE PRINCIPAL
KANYA GURUKUL
DEHRA DUN

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

403. LETTER TO C. N. MUTURANG MUDALIAR

P. O. SODEPUR,
December 28, 1945

BHAI MUTURANG MUDALIAR,

I have your letter. I do have partiality for Rajaji. I feel that he alone is able to hold the reigns of the Government in Madras. But do whatever you people think is best. I do not involve myself at all in the affairs of the Working Committee. I give my opinion on whatever is referred to me. Therefore it will be no use coming to see me. Dr. Rajan and other friends had been here. I told them the same thing. I know nothing about what Asaf Ali did. I have read only what has appeared in the newspapers.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

C. N. MUTURANG MUDALIAR
4 MAULVI ROAD
THYAGARAYA NAGAR
MADRAS

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

404. LETTER TO DADA DHARMADHIKARI

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI DADA,

I have gone through your letter, also that of Gopalrao. After taking into consideration everything I have arrived at the following decision : Because all your friends want it, you may seek election to the Assembly if it can be done without any exertion on your part and on the clear understanding that it will be a bed of thorns and not of velvet. If something good comes of it the credit will go to the electorate or to God. If nothing comes of it we lose nothing because, if you remain outside it will be to serve truth and if you go in, it will be also

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to serve truth. I understand what Vinoba says. I am giving this opinion knowing very well his views. Refrain from all arguments and discussions, observe silence, and if even then people elect you go to the Assembly. You should not make any effort on your part to get elected.

I am not writing a separate letter to Gopalrao. This is meant for him also.

DADA DHARMADHIKARI
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA

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

405. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

I have your letter. I have gone through it and also discussed it. I shudder at the thought of your programme. You seem to have taken it for granted that I can keep running about if I live for another 49 years. But it is not so. I can live perhaps for 125 years if I stick to one place and work within my limits. I had agreed to give seven days to Assam, inclusive of the time taken by the journey to and fro. You have arranged for seven days' programme in Assam itself. And two days will be spent in going and coming, which makes it nine days. How can I spare so many days? You will listen to everything and then decide whether my stay at two places will serve the purpose or not. If it does not then forget about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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406. LETTER TO HASTMAL PATWA

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI HASTMAL PATWA,

I received your telegram at Mahishadal. I do not know what can be done about it. Write or telegraph to Jawaharlalji.

SHRI HASTMAL PATWA
13 NARMAL LOHIA LANE
CALCUTTA

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

407. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

CAMP : MAHISHADAL,
POST SODEPUR,
December 28, 1945

CHI. JAWAHARLAL,

I am enclosing a letter, this as desired by the writer. He might have met me in South Africa, but I do not remember. I have written to him that he has made a tall claim in his address. He seems to be a crazy man.

I could find time only now to read what you said before the students in Bihar. I liked it very much.

You need a little rest. It would indeed be good if you could snatch it.

I had told Rajkumari to write to you about the Communists. Today I find a totally different thing in the newspapers. A clipping is attached herewith. What is this? Can you throw some light?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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408. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have written to the Ashram about the money.

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

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

409. LETTER TO SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI JAJUJI,

It is my firm view that we should demand yarn for the khadi required by the Congress. It calls for tact and efficiency. Those who wear a uniform must learn to spin. The question implies that those wearing uniforms did not wear khadi and did not spin. Will they do so now? The presidents of the Congress committees will have to be patiently persuaded. It is they who want to destroy khadi, and they may if they can. By efficiency I mean we may provide yarn in cases where spinning cannot be started right now. I always have quite a large stock of yarn and I am willing to spare some. The only provision is that I will give yarn only to those who are willing to give it but are not able to do so immediately as they do not know spinning. But they should accept the condition that they will spin and do as required. And they should collect yarn for the khadi required in future. If we observe these rules faithfully we shall know whether khadi will bring us swaraj or will only remain a provider to the poor. You may send this letter to Vichitra if you want.

SHRI JAJUJI
SECRETARY, A. I. S. A.
SEVAGRAM, WARDHA

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

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410. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter.

Haven't I written about Lala Ramswarup that even if we want to delete a word we have to invite the opinion of the members as far as possible ? Consult Pakvasa and Dada Mavalankar. They are there. We must have the opinion of the persons who have moved for the amendment of the resolution. There is no doubt that it can be secured. Only it will take some time but you have to put up with that.

The second question you have raised is good. I would not like to be bound down to any particular use of the building. I would like that Lala Ramswarup should either donate the building on the understanding that we may make what use we like of it or he should not donate it at all. The donor should make the donation on our condition and not his.

BHAI SHYAMLAL
WARDHA

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

411. LETTER TO PRABODH CHANDRA SEN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
[*December 28, 1945*][1]

BHAI PRABODH CHANDRA SEN[2],

I have your letter. I have written[3] to Rathi Babu about it. All the inmates of Vishva Bharati must know Bengali and Hindustani. English should not be compulsory for everybody. Arrangements should be made for the foreigners to learn Hindustani

[1] From the postmark
[2] Professor and Head of Bengali Department, Visva Bharati
[3] *Vide* pp. 250-2.

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first. It should be compulsory for those who come from provinces other than Bengal to learn Bengali; similarly Hindustani should be made compulsory for Bengalis. Then only can Vishva Bharati be worthy of its name and also the name of Gurudev. If I had my way, I would carry on everything in Hindustani. If that is not possible now, I would do it in Bengali, but certainly not in English.

I do not wish to express any opinion regarding the fourth question as I do not have full information.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 10408

412. SPEECH AT SHISHU SADAN

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

I have come here to study facts. I have known and studied and understood. What I have got to say to you I tell you through the prayer. Practise it in your everyday life.[1]

Gandhiji smilingly asked the boys whether they would like to play with him. On being asked by a boy to give him his blessings Gandhiji said that he could not do that because the boy had dirty dress. He thereupon turned to the teacher of the boys and said that he would have a quarrel with him. He explained to the teacher that the aims of Wardha scheme of education was not merely to teach the boys arithmetic and a few other things. The Wardha scheme of education, Gandhiji emphasized, moulded the life of man to a new form. Why should they sit with their face bent down? They should be taught to sit erect.

Remember if they are properly reared up they will be the best soldiers of Hindustan. Why should the boys put on dirty dress after having undergone Wardha training for six months?

He urged that in imparting Wardha training they should be more concerned with its essence rather than the routine courses of study. Gandhiji also enquired about their progress in spinning.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1945

[1] Gandhiji was answering a woman worker who had complained of hardships and Government oppression.

413. ANSWER TO QUESTION[1]

December 28, 1945

Mahatma Gandhi said that if it was necessary to use the plain red flag of the A. I. T. U. C. in order to be better able to serve the labour of all faiths and denominations he saw no harm in doing so provided the red flag was not used as a rival to the tri-colour flag.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29-12-1945

414. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MAHISHADAL,
December 28, 1945

Gandhiji stated that he had noticed that ordinary rules of business of an assembly were not observed. If one was to attend a meeting it was expected of him, whether he liked the proceedings or not, that he should remain till the end. If this procedure was not followed and if he left abruptly while the meeting was going on he would only disturb others. He had been told by many women attending such meetings that they had only a limited time at their disposal for attending such functions because they had to attend to other household duties. Undoubtedly it was a strong argument in their favour but his reply to them would be that in such cases they should consider beforehand whether they had the time or not at their disposal to sit till the end of the meeting.

If they at all decided to attend the meeting they should be there till the meeting was dissolved. There are many who arrived at the meeting after it had commenced. In such a case the attendant should stay outside the assembly.

All these rules of conduct were applicable in respect of an ordinary assembly. But they are obligatory in case of prayer meetings. Because at the prayer they wanted to be in meditation. During such a time anything disturbing from outside was unwelcome. He would particularly draw the attention of the organizers of such meetings to the observance of these general rules of conduct. They should circulate amongst the people before-

[1] Dr. Maitreyi Bose, Secretary of the Hindustan Mazdoor Sevak Sangh, Bengal Branch, had asked Gandhiji about the advisability of Congressmen engaged in the labour movement using the Red Flag.

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hand these rules for their observance. If they could train up people in this respect they would be rendering a public service and will be able to organize themselves better, advance the cause of public decorum and give new inspiration.

Referring to the charkha demonstration participated in by about 500 spinners, men and women, Gandhiji said that he noticed that there were two types of charkhas in use. The older one was the wheeled one and the latter was called the box-charkha. The latter was introduced by him and the reason for its introduction was that for the convenience of men like him who were regular spinners and had to travel, this type of box-charkha was suitable. But let them not forget, he said, the golden rule for charkha that its price should be cheap and be made from materials available in the particular locality. Crores of persons could not be expected to use one uniform type of charkha. Nor should its manufacture be limited to one central place. If they developed a central supply store of charkha how would it be possible for them to supply it to the 40 crores of people?

So far as the strength of the charkha was concerned he could assert that there was no other machine which was more powerful than it. To him the charkha was the symbol of swaraj, ahimsa and *annapurna*.

Referring to the *bhajan* sung Gandhiji said that its composer maintained that it was through sufferings that a man could realize God. What was the method prescribed for the realization of God was also true for the attainment of swaraj.

There was no instance in the world to show that swaraj could be had without undergoing sufferings. Not only swaraj, they could not acquire even knowledge without undergoing hardships. If there was anything which was available to a man without undergoing hardships he could not fully prize or appreciate the same. Therefore, if they had followed the *bhajan* of the day they should remember that for the sake of God they had to put up with all sufferings. As it was true that without suffering they could not realize God so was it equally true that without suffering they could not attain freedom. They should also remember that for the sake of swaraj whatever they had suffered had not been in vain. They had all paved the path towards their attaining swaraj.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-12-1945

415. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

CHI. KANTI,

It is 6 a. m. just now. It is pitch dark all around. The prayer was over at 5. After the prayer, instead of returning to bed I read or heard letters and started writing. I thus reach your letter at 6 a.m.

Chi. Shanti will get well. Every householder passes through such experiences, bitter, sweet, sweet and bitter.

I would like your doing whatever work relating to spinning comes to you unsought at home. If you have skill, proficiency, firmness of mind, purity of character, devotion to God and humility, then the work you do at home will be like the Ganga flowing by your door-step. I will regard such work done during student life as more than enough.

If by fulfilling your family obligations and doing service to others while studying you have to take two years instead of one to complete your studies you need not feel unhappy at all. It would certainly be a matter of shame if studies were neglected from lethargy or love of pleasures. Those who believe that it is impossible to do public service during student life are mistaken. The student's stage of life is also meant for increasing one's capacity for service. If, therefore, the immediate opportunity for service is neglected, the student's life becomes as it generally is today, a selfish one instead of one dedicated to service. Moreover, present-day education by and large is antagonistic to the spirit of service or patriotism. Add to this the burden of learning through English. And the subjects of study also include some which are unnecessary and exclude some which are essential, such as spinning. According to me, spinning, which means both its science and craft, should be introduced as the principal subject right from the earliest stage. But that is not done anywhere. Our boys, therefore, who study in Government institutions must determinedly make good this deficiency, as you have been doing. If that is not done, one would be guilty of the vanity of claiming perfection. You should not, therefore, in any circumstances

abandon spinning and its science. Show and explain the whole of this letter to Saraswati. It will help her to understand and realize how much service, and nothing but service, is contained in spinning. If she is still not able to understand, let me know. I will try again to explain the point to her. Besides, you will also have received my previous letter written from Sodepur.

I followed what you wrote about the politics there. You should remain detached and go on doing what you can.

I could perhaps have revised the English of your report and sent it to you, but the news you had given in it was so good that I felt I must convey it to Jajuji and so sent on the report to him. I do not very much care if your English is not of the highest class. I am more interested in your being in the highest class as a human being and acquiring wide knowledge of Indian languages. I would, however, like it if at the same time you could also write grammatically correct and chaste English. That is why I dropped the hint in my letter.

Here I have been enjoying the highest peace. Tomorrow I will go to Contai. The programme there, too, is for four days. I expect to return to Sodepur on January 3. From there I will leave for Assam on the 8th and return to Sodepur again on the 16th. We are a large party but we experience no difficulty on that account.

Address your reply to Sodepur. I shall probably reach Madras on the 23rd.

Blessings to the three of you from
BAPU

[PS.]

Harilal is in Bangalore with Nanjapa.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 7381. Courtesy : Kantilal Gandhi

416. LETTER TO MADALASA

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. Sushila will of course write to you. You may be considered to be out of danger and pain now.

The operation on the breasts is a long one but is not considered a difficult one.

It seems you are still in Bajajwadi. If, after you are able to leave the bed, you eat only what your health requires but eat it regularly and in adequate quantity, you will soon get well. I was glad that Vinobaji paid a visit. It was good that the train was late, for he could give more time to you because of that.

The baby's weight is rather low. If you learn through all these experiences and become more careful in your habits, everything will be well.

Ramakrishna is gaining plenty of experience. The entire tour is full of happy experiences. How strange it is that people do not want speeches but want prayer-meetings!

If both you and the baby lie in sunshine for as long as you can stand, you will sleep longer. Just now I am having first-hand experience of this. And the longer you sleep the healthier you will become. If the sleep is not a sign of lethargy, it will refresh the mind, too. "Rasgulla"[1] is daily becoming more of a *rasgulla*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5855

417. LETTER TO MATHURABHAI

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

BHAI MATHURABHAI,

I have your letter. What you say is absolutely right. Since you are in Bombay you should personally collect all the information. I am under the impression that pickers [*sic*] are made from dead animals. But now that I have your letter I shall make further enquiries.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. MATHURABHAI
PICKERS FACTORY
DHARAVI ROAD
BOMBAY 17

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

[1] Gandhiji's nickname for the addressee's son

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418. LETTER TO SHRIPAD JOSHI

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
December 29, 1945

CHI. SHRIPAD,

I have your letter. Congratulations on your inter-communal/interprovincial marriage. I hope that this marriage will not be for indulgence but for sacrifice and that your capacity to serve will at least be doubled.

I am not writing a separate letter to Bhai Joshi[1].

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 5616

419. A LETTER

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. It is good that Harilal has reached there at last. Both you husband and wife should now redeem him. If he is saved I will consider him as your property.

If you are not able to understand Hindi properly, Harilal will explain to you. Does he write to Kanti and Saraswati? I had one or two letters from him. Blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] S. M. Joshi, socialist leader

420. TALK WITH PEOPLE[1]

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

Gandhiji replied that he had been asked the same question[2] in 1920 and 1921 and he could only repeat the reply which he gave then. The question betrayed ignorance of non-violence and also of swaraj of his conception. He did not want swaraj at the cost of women's honour. If what passed as non-violence did not enable them to protect the honour of women or if it did not enable the women to protect their own honour, it was not non-violence.

Believe me, it is something quite different.

And he described what he had written in *Hind Swaraj*[3] in 1909. Gandhiji observed that experience had added force to the argument.

After all who protected Sita from Ravana? The poet tells us that her purity was such that Ravana dared not compass his end without her consent.

He warned them in the end that if anybody came to him with the plea that they could not protect the honour of their womenfolk because they had taken the vow of non-violence, he would give them no quarter. Non-violence should never be used as a shield for cowardice. It was a weapon of the brave. He would rather they died fighting violently than became helpless witnesses to such atrocities. A truly non-violent man would never live to tell the tale of such atrocities. He would have laid down his life on the spot in non-violent resistance.

Harijan, 10-2-1946

[1] Extracted from Sushila Nayyar's "Non-violence and Molestation of Women". On the night of the 29th Gandhiji met about 200 men and women of Mahishadal and neighbouring villages including local workers and victims of police and military atrocities during the 1942 movement.

[2] The question was whether they were expected to remain non-violent even when their womenfolk were molested.

[3] *Vide* Vol. X.

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421. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

MAHISHADAL,
December 29, 1945

Gandhiji paid a glowing tribute to the affection and painstaking care that the men and women volunteers who were in charge of the camp, had shown in looking after him and his party. Gandhiji congratulated the gathering on the exemplary silence and order which prevailed during the public prayers at Mahishadal. It had given him the deepest satisfaction. The peace of mind which he experienced there exceeded even what he had experienced in Sevagram or Sodepur.

Referring to the events in connection with the 1942 struggle, he said that as a result of all that he had heard and learnt during the last few days, he had come to the conclusion that whilst people had shown singular courage and endurance, they had also committed some mistakes, especially in their understanding of the principle of ahimsa. He added :

Besides, there were some acts of high-handedness amongst ourselves. There must be some difference between a national organization and alien rule. In our national organization there should not be any differences amongst ourselves. I should go further today and say that those outsiders who lived near us should be made to realize that our organization was superior to the alien organization because we did not want violence. We wanted to carry on our work through non-violence.[1]

Under a national government, even the opponents or those who held contrary views ought not to experience a feeling that the ideal had not been attained in Midnapore or, for that matter, in any part of India. It might even be said that it was a tall order. But if he did not point out their faults or place the undiluted ideal before them, they could never hope to reach their ideal. Gandhiji continued :

If you do not do it, I won't be able to do anything, even if I carry our claim throughout the world. I won't succeed if I do not make these things clear to you. During my work for the last 60 years it has been the practice with me that I do not praise those who work with me. I make their mistakes known to others and I think, by doing so, our mistakes would be rectified.[2]

[1&2] These two paragraphs are reproduced from *The Hindu* of 30-12-1945.

Gandhiji reiterated his conviction that India had lost nothing, but on the contrary had gained in every way as a result of the adoption and practice of truth and non-violence during all these years. If they had not attained the goal which they had set before themselves, the fault lay not in truth and ahimsa, but in themselves.

For instance, if they had fully imbibed the principle of ahimsa, they would be completely free from the feeling of discrimination against the votaries of religions other than their own and regard them and serve them all with equal love. It had pained him to learn that, in the Mahishadal area, Harijans were still not being admitted in the temples. He hoped they would completely rid themselves of the taint of untouchability. It would be a big advance in ahimsa.

Referring to the song that had been sung, he pointed out that, in it, the devotee prays to God to purge him of the cowardice which springs from doubt, as well as the cowardice that results from fear of misfortunes. To harbour doubt is to insult God. To shrink from misfortune, is to run away from Him. He, therefore, prays for spiritual as well as physical courage, so that he might be completely rid of all fear.

The Hindu, 30-12-1945 and 31-12-1945

422. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

December 30, 1945

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. About me you must be getting all the news from the papers. I hope there was no dejection underlying the statement that Prabhudas had had yet another daughter. If we really see no difference between a boy and a girl and if we do not, out of a false sense of attachment, consider a girl a liability there will be no cause either for dejection or for a feeling of being burdened with responsibility. It will be sufficient, if we bring her up, train her to think independently and become self-reliant and teach her, in case she wants to marry, the art of finding herself a mate and also help her, if she wants, in her search for one. Moreover, we shall, in addition, master the art of bringing up daughters and set an example for others to emulate.

Pass this on to Prabhudas for his perusal. If possible Prabhudas and Amba should now practise continence. If they fail to practise it their capacity for service is going to be greatly limited.

I am not surprised at Kashi's lack of strength. Her weakness will persist because she continues to be ever so restless. Otherwise I know she can partly get over the cold weather by keeping herself warm. My suggestion to her to go to Bombay for the cold season did have flaws. All the same I did make the suggestion which she rejected. I hope the cold has abated now.

Rajkumari is in Hyderabad (Sind). She will be relieved from there on the 2nd.

I hope you yourself are well.

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

423. A NOTE

December 30, 1945

Children should spin well. They must learn the processes preceding and following spinning. Children should know and observe the rules of cleanliness. It is essential to keep the posture when sitting or standing. Truth and non-violence should come to them easily and naturally.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 7179

424. LETTER TO NARAYAN M. DESAI

ON THE STEAMER,
December 30, 1945

CHI. BABLO,

You have now really grown big. You too must aspire to live 125 years in the service of others, and strive towards that end.

If Durga's health is as good as you describe I shall say you have truly grown up. Sushi, I am sure, will be quite well.

As for the wedding, in my opinion the longer it is put off the better it will be.

I keep on hearing that you are grown in body as well as in mind. May you fill Mahadev's place and excel him.

Blessings from
BAPU

NARAYAN DESAI
SEVAGRAM

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

425. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
ON THE STEAMER FROM MAHISHADAL TO CONTAI,
December 30, 1945

CHI. PUSHPA,

I have your letter. How can you afford to be cowardly? You should endure your fate. I can bear, even understand, your refusal to look upon Vajubhai as your husband. But he is a brother to you, is he not? And why need one fear one's brother? How can you refuse to discuss the subject with him? He has committed no fault. If anyone is at fault, it is you. You do not want to abide by custom. I see no harm even in that. One who wishes to disregard custom must generally display great firmness of mind, purity of character and gentleness. Moreover, you aspire to rise even higher. You are resolved to have as husband no ordinary man but only God. Your stiffness does not become your noble resolve. You should, therefore welcome Vajubhai. Then alone can you uplift both him and yourself. I am glad, that you believe yourself to be still weak. You should, therefore, carefully observe the restraints which a weak person should. These restraints are only not to be alone with Vajubhai and not to touch him. It is no part of a sister's duty to a brother to touch him freely. If she chances to touch him, she does not run away nor does she experience any passion because of it. But when a girl is weak, even touching one's blood brother may sometimes have to be avoided. You will learn to look upon God as husband and be accepted in His large court only if you understand all these subtle distinctions. Otherwise you are bound to fall by the wayside like a mere pebble.

Go to Vinoba when you can. There you will get affection and knowledge and your determination will grow firm.

If you do not want, I will not send you the letters from Father or Vajubhai. But I would like you to remain unperturbed even after reading those letters. Yesterday we had a Bengali *bhajan*. Daily in the evenings a Bengali *bhajan* is sung here and that is only proper. The first line of the *bhajan* was : "Lord, save me from weakness even when I am assailed by doubts." That is,

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destroy every doubt in my mind. Your vow is a hard one. You have taken it of your own free will. You will not be able to keep it without God's grace. I am dictating this letter with great care in the early morning in a boat, hoping that it may remove your ignorance and strengthen you. There can be no peace except through absorption in service. You can show this letter to Vinoba. He will be able to explain my ideas better and if there is anything lacking he will make up for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9268

426. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

December 30, 1945

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 26th. I feel it is necessary to consult the scheme before sanctioning expenditure for opening a basic training (school) in the village of Tirumalai. Shall we have the ownership of the site of the building? Have you received the Rs. 500? What is the population of Tirumalai? If it is necessary to sanction the expenditure soon, then decide about the ownership, etc., and you may take my approval for granted. As I want to reply quickly I am writing this on a boat. Sodepur should be taken as my address.

SHRI SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA SMARAK NIDHI, WARDHA

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

427. LETTER TO SATYANARAYAN

ON THE STEAMER,
December 30, 1945

BHAI SATYANARAYAN,

Two of your letters came more or less at the same time—one of the 24th addressed to me and the other of the 26th addressed to Sushilabehn. I am planning to reach there on January 23, 1946. Whether I can do so is in God's hands.

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You should stop touring for the present and get to work in Madras. If the ground is well prepared there our work will shine.

I do not remember having talked to Sitaramji. I did have some talk with Kamalnayanji. I shall try to talk to Sitaramji when I return to Sodepur. Much depends on the success of the programme in Madras. I believe that it is easy to get money if we are perfectly honest and industrious. You will remember what I mean by honest. I think I explained to you.

Sardar told me that the meeting of the Central Parliamentary Board would be held somewhere there. He had no objection but thought Maulana Saheb might not be able to travel so far. There is no need for you to do anything in this connection. I personally do nothing and indeed I should not. Whatever has to happen will happen.

I have gone through the programme. It is for both morning and evening. It will be very difficult for me if I have to attend it at 9 in the morning. Monday is obviously a silence day and on Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday I observe silence at 9. That is the time for massage, etc. So bearing in mind that it will be possible to take work from me only from 2 to 5, do whatever you want to.

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

428. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

ON THE STEAMER FROM MAHISHADAL TO CONTAI,
MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
December 30, 1945

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

It is good that you have started hand-carding. Vinobaji's new attempt is actually a very old thing. It can be perfected by practice. Somebody gave a demonstration at a public meeting. He separated the cotton from the seeds and pulled the cotton on all sides with his hands, made slivers from the same and started spinning. He did the spinning on the *takli*. His yarn was very neat. One woman had started spinning without separating the seeds from the cotton. But I do not value all these things much. I value Vinobaji's experiment very much because he says that he is doing it scientifically and from the point of view of social

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benefit. Hence, I would always be eager to know the results of the new experiment.

I understand about *Gitai*[1] and other things. Just as Vinobaji has written about sleep to Balkobaji and made it into a beautiful article, he should also write about observing silence while walking and follow it in practice. I understand its significance, but even so I am not practising it in this tour. I am caught by desire and temptation. But I know that if one wants to live up to 125 years, desire, etc., should necessarily be given up. I shall not write anything more about it today.

I am glad that Kanam[2] has gone to Paunar. But it is rather disconcerting that Vinoba should spare one hour for him.

It is good that Balvantsinha has gone to Kharangana. Let him continue the same way. It will do him good. I also infer from this that Hoshiaribehn is doing well and she has completely regained her balance.

I understand about Om Prakash. He must be provided sufficient money for travel.

Vasumatibehn must be in good health.

Shantabehn will be all right. It would be nice if Hoshiari, Kailas, Shanta and others wrote to me.

Let Chakrayya get himself trained there. Let him learn there. Everything is bound to be well if his mind and body are in good shape.

We had elaborate recitations from *Gita* on Ba's death date[3]. And we did spinning. Some outsiders also did spinning with us for an hour.

I am not in the least interested in keeping that sadhu any more. I have realized too that my suggestion to keep him arose from unworthy attachment and temptation.

I shall see about the clock[4]. Remind me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4540

[1] Marathi verse rendering of *Bhagavad Gita* by Vinoba Bhave
[2] Kanam Gandhi, son of Ramdas Gandhi
[3] 22nd of every month
[4] *Vide* p. 235.

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429. LETTER TO MARJORIE SYKES

As at Khadi Pratishthan,
Sodepur (24 Parganas),
Camp : Contai,
December 31, 1945

DEAR MARJORIE,

I must not attempt to write this myself in the boat that carries me along the canal going towards Contai. I must dictate the letter.

My best wishes for the season, if you think that a vocal effort in the direction is at all needed. Any such effort becomes formal if the heart wish is there.

About Charlie Andrews[1] I fear nothing can be sent to you before I reach Sevagram, for the papers have to be searched. They have been distributed in the various subject files. Some may be in the file named after Andrews himself. This can be only searched by Pyarelal who is with me. The writing[2] I shall do and it will be a pleasure. For this you will be in no hurry, for your own manuscript will take some time.

What I said and did in Santiniketan[3] was a duty performed. Of course, much is expected of you and I have no doubt that you will try your best to come up to the standard. More no one can do.

I have read fully Agatha's letter. I had anticipated her. I am doing all I can to ensure helpfulness to the deputation[4] on behalf of the Congress. If, as the papers report, the expenses of the deputation are to be found by India, it is a bad job. The deputation will lack the required grace. You can forward a copy

[1] The addressee was preparing a biography of C. F. Andrews and during the eighteen months of its preparation she had held an "Andrews Memorial Chair" at Santiniketan.

[2] The reference is to the foreword which Gandhiji actually wrote on January 12, 1947.

[3] *Vide* p. 239.

[4] Of the members of the British Parliament; *vide* footnote on p. 338.

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of this letter or the relevant extract to Agatha. My letter may not reach her in time even if I succeed in dictating one.

Love.

Yours,
BAPU

MISS MARJORIE SYKES
SANTINIKETAN

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

430. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

CHI. BAL,

I have your letter. It is worthy of you that you wish to serve Kaka or me; however, at present your dharma is to keep up what you are doing. If you do credit to what you have learnt you will have rendered service to both of us. We might have to consider what your dharma would be if there had been no one else to serve us; but all that is irrelevant in the present context. For the time being your knowledge is to be utilized for Birlaji's work. In the end you have to let the masses utilize your knowledge without any thought of fame or fortune. I shall certainly like you to come and stay with me for some time at your own leisure.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BAL KALELKAR

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

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431. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

BHAI VAIKUNTHBHAI,

I got your postcard. You may gladly inform Khushal Shah[1] of your disinclination to join the sub-committee, adding at the same time that, since Satis Babu has not tendered his resignation, the question of your joining does not arise.

VAIKUNTHBHAI

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

432. LETTER TO GOPINATH BARDOLOI

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

BHAI BARDOLOI,

With great difficulty I can spare five days for Assam. You can have me freed for Assam but do not be tempted to keep me there too many days or take me to too many places. I had explained this to the man who had come from there. He too was convinced. The truth is that I am no longer fit for travelling. I had to visit Bengal, so I included Assam also. What else can I do? It does not look nice to go on refusing. I am receiving wires. Please save me.

Blessings from
BAPU

BARDOLOI

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

[1] K. T. Shah

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433. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
December 31, 1945

Gandhiji congratulated the people of Contai on successfully rivalling other places in Bengal, where he had been of late, in maintaining exemplary discipline. He hoped that they would show the same spirit of discipline in the event of any other leader coming in their midst.

Gandhiji recalled how in 1934, when he was touring in Orissa in connection with the Harijan programme, a German Nazi, Herr Buto, had requested to be allowed to accompany him on his tour. He professed himself to be an ardent admirer of Hitler. Having heard how Gandhiji's method was exactly contrary to Hitler's and how in South Africa he had led a successful struggle against General Smuts with only a handful of Indians and no other weapons than that of non-violence, he was curious to meet the author of that movement and study his method at close quarters. Gandhiji had granted him his request in the hope of converting him to non-violence, but when Herr Buto saw the undisciplined behaviour of Orissa crowds, he told Gandhiji that he could now understand how a handful of Britishers in India could keep a nation of 400 millions in bondage. As a result of his experience, he had become sceptical of India ever winning freedom through non-violence. What India needed, he thought, was a Hitler. Gandhiji, however, had drawn a different moral from the same events. What India needed was discipline, no doubt, but not of the Hitlerite variety. It had to be of the non-violent type and, therefore, voluntary. His experience in Bengal during his present tour had confirmed him in his faith that the latter was infinitely superior to the former. If six and a quarter crores of Bengalis could show the same discipline which the present gathering had shown that evening, not even a thousand Hitlers would be able to deprive them of their freedom.

Commenting next on Gurudev's song that had been sung, he observed that, in that song, a devotee pledges his soul to Truth and prays that Truth may always triumph. He prays further that Truth may give him strength so that neither misfortune nor fear of direct punishment may force him into untruth in thought, speech or action. For fulfilment of that pledge, he longs to lay down his life and all. If the song that had been sung came really from their heart and not merely from their lips, it ought to transmute their entire life and they should see the sovereignty of Truth in their lifetime.

Referring next to repression, followed by the havoc caused by cyclone and floods through which the people of Midnapore had recently passed, he told them that all that had filled his soul with anguish. The song which they had just sung was surely a message for them in their present misfortunes too.

As regards the triple problem facing them, namely, shortage of food, shortage of clothing and lack of drinking water, he told them that it would be easily solved if they could throw off their inertia. It was no use waiting idly for Government help. They must show capacity to help themselves. He was afraid that, so far, they had not done all that they might have. If all the people of Contai and the neighbouring areas took to spinning in right earnest, they could solve the problem of cloth shortage. He observed that their success in that would be followed by amelioration in other respects too.

Concluding, Gandhiji remarked that if the Government had recognized in their behaviour in 1942 the legitimate longing to be free and co-operated with them instead of trying to thwart them, the history of India would have been written differently. That was not to be. He, however, refused to shed a single tear over the past and wanted them to do likewise. The present was enough to claim their energy and attention, and that evening's song indicated the spirit in which to approach the problem.

The Hindu, 3-1-1946

434. NOTE TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

1945

You must flatly refuse to give any secret help. It would be altogether wrong. The fact will never remain secret. No one would or should accept such help openly. This whole thing needs to be carefully considered. Such important decisions should not be taken in haste or through hope of gain. Never mind if we are defeated. Let the British give them Pakistan if they wish.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 285

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435. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

MAIN CAMP : SODEPUR,
December 30, 1945/January 1, 1946

BAPA,

I got your letter addressed to Haribhau Phatak. I agree with your view. I wish to add this by way of clarification. It is desirable that non-Harijan boys may stay with Harijan boys but we cannot admit such boys as free boarders. They must pay their full expenses. If the building is ours then we must get the rent, and if the building is rented they must pay their share of the rent.

BAPU

[PS.]

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

I shall see about Sucheta. It is in February, I believe.

I have been able to send the matter regarding Brijkrishna Chandiwala. It will depend on the reply to Mridula's wire.

We may as well let Santhanam complete [the writing] about Ambedkar. If, after reading Rajaji's booklet[1], he himself believes that he will be able to shed no new light, it will be a different story. If I get Rajaji's booklet I shall go through it.

I understand about your tour. About mine it is what you read in the newspapers. I have been drinking cupfuls of delight.

Regarding the Harijan Fund, Kanaiyo will write to you.

The above is in reply to your letter of December 26. I have already sent one letter to you regarding Dharma Dev. I did not like the thing. I have left it to you to look into the matter. And now I have this second, alarming letter. I cannot say whether there is any substance in it. I can form no opinion on the basis of it, but all the same I must admit that I fear it may be true. Inquire into the matter and return Mirabehn's letter.

BAPU

Enclosure : Mirabehn's letter[2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1196

[1] *Ambedkar Refuted*, written on Gandhiji's advice to refute Ambedkar's indictment of the Congress

[2] This is not traceable.

436. LETTER TO MANUEL S. FERNANDES

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In a case like yours no one will be able to advise you by post, and if you cannot leave your bed you must do the best you can in the circumstances. The only general advice I can give is that you should live for some time on fruit juices such as orange, grape or pineapple, and have regular enema if your bowels do not move regularly and fully without causing any strain. This will do no harm and is likely to give you much benefit.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI MANUEL S. FERNANDES
ETHEL VILLA MOIRA
BARDEZ, GOA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

437. LETTER TO S. P. MISRA

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 26th instant. So far as I can see, you must abide by your original promise.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI S. P. MISRA
KUTCHERY ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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438. LETTER TO M. J. SUNDARAM

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and the pamphlet slandering Rajaji.[1] I can only say that it is a disgraceful attempt packed with untruth and half truth which is worse than the first. He never did any harm and he remains today the same dear friend which he became in 1918, when I had the privilege of being his guest.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI M. J. SUNDARAM
43 ROYAPETTAH HIGH ROAD
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

439. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

MAIN CAMP : SODEPUR,
CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your letter, as also the wire. Wherever Satis Babu and Hemprabhadevi are in charge, there can be nothing wanting in perfection of arrangements. Therefore wherever I am, I regularly receive the post redirected to me from Sodepur. Just like you, Satis Babu officiates as sentinel wherever I go and so has he done here. "Here" means Contai (in Midnapore). Though we are in unfamiliar surroundings, everything is so well arranged that I get the maximum possible free time. So why should my health suffer? I daily see the miracle wrought by prayer. Thousands attend, the number sometimes reaching even a hundred

[1] Reference is to the accusations of betrayal against him on two counts, viz., non-participation in the August movement and his stand regarding Pakistan; *vide* Vol. LXXXI, p. 425.

thousand, but the prayers are peaceful. There is no noise and no jostling. This is an altogether new experience.

I have gone through the papers[1] regarding Rajaji. I hope the matter has been settled. I say this because doubts persist in my mind. I get letters of that type. I reply to them only when I must.

What shall I say regarding your health? Dinshaw's suggestion appeals to me. But if you use up the strength that you daily regain, believing that you are thereby doing service, what can be done?

About the *samadhi*[2] the Aga Khan had sent a wire saying "Will Meet." There has been no other communication. I understand his discussing the matter with you. The reply you gave regarding Jinnah was excellent. I am not attracted by the Aga Khan's proposals. I am wholly opposed to such partition. More when we meet.

I am reaching Sodepur on the 3rd. On the 9th I leave for Assam, and shall be back to Sodepur most probably on the 18th. After that I shall be leaving for Madras on the 23rd. I have spared a maximum of two weeks for Madras. After spending a few days in Sevagram, if you permit me I shall go to Poona. Otherwise I shall first go to Bardoli and then to Poona.

I had a letter from Bhai Vaikunth[3] saying that Balasaheb[4] and you and also Deo[5] are pressing him. Do get him in as member[6]. The rest after I return.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 285-8

[1] A. P. I. report about the formation of the Madras Election Board which carried Sardar Patel's telegram to Kamraj Nadar, a letter to P. C. Subramaniam and a statement by T. Prakasam.

[2] The reference is to a proposal to acquire the land on which samadhis of Kasturba and Mahadev Desai were built.

[3] Vaikunthlal L. Mehta

[4] B. G. Kher

[5] Shankerrao Deo

[6] Of the Bombay Legislative Assembly; *vide* also p. 320.

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440. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have your letter. Ramdas[1] has left. It is as well. But I now realize my mistake. Even though you yourself were willing I ought not to have put his burden on you. In the event of his not being taken care of or his not submitting to being taken care of the way he was, I should have had him taken back to Mysore or allowed him to stay in whatever position he was. Wouldn't I have done the same to my own son? I should also have considered your unsuspecting nature. This I did not do and entrusted him to your care. Dasappa[2] was certainly at fault but it was my responsibility to rectify the mistake. Dasappa had pledged that he would leave Ramdas to my keeping. There is no dearth of people making pledges, but those who keep them are rare. Well, whatever was destined has happened; I am not going to entertain Ramdas any more.

May your tour—and Kakasaheb's—be a success, and may he keep up his health.

I think you can manage the examination work in Wardha in addition to your work in Gujarat. Again, if Kakasaheb's responsibility comes to be entrusted to you his blessings will give you the strength to cope with it too. All the same let me warn you that you must not do anything at the cost of your work in Gujarat, because if the work in Gujarat suffers I am certainly going to take you to task and Kakasaheb, too, will take you to task because you took up the Gujarat work in the nick of time and you have no right to let it break up.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. AMRITLAL NANAVATI
C/O SJT. MAGANBHAI DESAI
GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

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

[1] Ramdas Dasappa
[2] H. C. Dasappa

441. LETTER TO VAIKUNTHLAL L. MEHTA

MAIN CAMP: SODEPUR,
CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I have your letter. I accept most of your arguments. Aren't you a dweller of *Vaikunth*[1]? Or are you its king? But whether you are a simple dweller in *Vaikunth* or its king or its gift, there is no doubt that you are a saviour at need. If, therefore, it is found necessary that you should go in order to help them out of their difficulties, we shall think over the matter.

My tour of Bengal and Assam will end on the 20th at the latest. After that I leave for Madras on the 23rd. There I will spend 15 days at the most. After that I will go to Sevagram. We shall have, therefore, enough time to think over the matter. Offer your name as a candidate for the Assembly, on the condition, however, that you will not have to spend a single pie and will not have to go begging for votes. It may not perhaps be possible to apply this rule in all cases, but it should be applied in yours.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 97. Also V. L. Mehta Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

442. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have your letter of December 28, 1945. I hope you got my letter of December 28 sent by airmail. Your letter demands immediate reply and so I am sending this right away.

[1] Vishnu's abode

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It will not be becoming for you to admit some patients privately in your Poona clinic. It does not at all look right that the same person should run a charitable department and a profit-making one. You may if you wish retain the Bombay clinic; I have agreed to put up with it. The expenditure at Poona is my responsibility from January and I have made an arrangement for that. In the end the monthly expenditure at Poona ought not to be as much as Rs. 3,500 but if it is, so be it. If we render service worth that amount it will not irk me. At the moment the main question is whether you may open a separate profit-making clinic in Poona. I have expressed my opinion in this regard.

What you write about Gulbai is somewhat strange. She is at present with child, so we must patiently put up with her whims. I shall certainly write to her not to meddle with the affairs of the hospital.

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA
NATURE CURE CLINIC
6 TODDYWALA ROAD
POONA

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

443. LETTER TO PURNIMA BANNERJEE

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

CHI. PURNIMA,

I have your letter. It is straightforward. I do not want to dampen your interest. You have the aptitude for it. Nor would I consider your going into the Assembly a bad thing. After all someone has to go there. What I mean is that neither you nor anyone else can ride two horses at the same time. A similar case from Malabar has come to me. In that also I have given the same opinion. The lady[1] in question is competent—perhaps as much as you are. Bapa is favourably inclined. But I have advised her that if she goes into the Assembly our work will certainly suffer because working for rural women is not a small thing at all. We have to respect the feelings of those women.

[1] Kuttimalu Amma; *vide* p. 270.

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It is a drawback if they cannot go and live in villages but all of us suffer from that drawback. I am confident that you are rural at heart. If that is true, in my view your place is at Wardha. It is surprising that you do not have anything more to give me. I have a vague impression that it has appeared in the newspapers. Even then I enclose a copy and should like you to send in your acceptance. If you cannot, then suggest the name of some other woman.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI PURNIMA BANNERJEE
41 GEORGE TOWN
ALLAHABAD

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

444. LETTER TO R. K. PATIL

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI PATIL,

I have your letter. What you have written is correct. I can say that I had forgotten about the change of air and with that all the things associated with it.

You can give your name for the Provincial election on the condition that you would neither beg for votes from the electorate nor spend any money. If you can get elected on this condition you may enter the Assembly. We shall see about the rest. We shall think over it when I come. I expect to reach there in the second week of February.

SHRI R. K. PATIL

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

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445. LETTER TO SHANKERRAO DEO

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI SHANKERRAO DEO,

I received your letter, and also Vaikunthbhai's at the same time. I have written to him to seek nomination for the election. Accepting presidentship is a different thing. I believe that that can be easily decided by February. There is a good deal of substance in Vaikunthbhai's opposition and for that reason the decision about the presidentship has been postponed. He has my approval for seeking election. Only I have written to him that he should see that he does not have to spend money or beg for votes from the electorate. If people want him it will be enough to give his name. We see quite a number of such instances in British elections. We of course have such instances here, too.

SHRI SHANKERRAO DEO
LAKSHMI NRISHINH BHAVAN
SHIVAJI NAGAR
POONA 5

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

446. LETTER TO RAMAMURTI

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAISHRI RAMAMURTI,

I have your letter. Do what Prof. Kumarappa wants you to do. I cannot address a meeting on my way to Madras.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI RAMAMURTI

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

447. LETTER TO CHINNARAM THAPAR

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI CHINNARAM,

I have your letter. I neither take any interest in the Assembly elections nor keep track of them.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI CHINNARAM THAPAR
VICE PRESIDENT DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE
LYALLPUR (PUNJAB)

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

448. LETTER TO GOVINDDAS

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI GOVINDDAS,

I have your letter. These days I do not give any messages to newspapers and I have begun to believe that a noble venture needs no message. The purity of the endeavour is in itself a true message.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI GOVINDDASJI
RAJA GOKULDAS PALACE
JABALPUR

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

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449. LETTER TO INAYATULLAH KHAN

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

It is good you wrote in Urdu. I received the letter only today in Contai. I have written to you that I am not a member of the Congress. I cannot write anything on behalf of the Congress. Only Maulana Saheb can do so. I have already expressed my opinion that no one is going to accept your constitution. I personally do not accept it.

Write to me at the Sodepur address.

M. K. GANDHI

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

450. DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESS WORKERS

January 1, 1946

Gandhiji's advice to ladies was that they could serve the country even by doing household duties. Generally, they hankered after making their daughters fit for marriage and sons for earning. Such families could not be said to be serving the country. Married men and women could give much time for the service of the country even after looking after their children and doing household duties. Instead, they passed their days in enjoyment of life and thus ended the span of life. There were some who were so addicted to pleasure that they used contraceptives.

Asked how women whose husbands were imprisoned could serve the country, Gandhiji said that they should no doubt spin. But this might not be sufficient for their living. They should take to some means of earning money. They could still work for the country. Under no circumstances, Gandhiji emphasized, should women earn their livelihood by sacrificing their honesty and purity. Mahatmaji was faced with the problem of spending annually one crore and 25 lakhs of rupees of the Kasturba Fund. Although he was trying hard to utilize the money in the best possible way still enough women workers could not be found.

Gandhiji advised women living in towns to serve the villages. He appealed to them to search their hearts whether they were really ready and then begin work when they found response in their hearts.

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Addressing the students, he said that the question which was put to him was not new. How the students could serve Harijans should not have been asked so late. If they were ready to serve the Harijans they could easily do it. They could go to villages, mix with the Harijans and educate them.

As regards inter-dining and intercaste marriage, Gandhiji said that so far as he understood the mind of the Congress he knew there was no difference of opinion about inter-dining but he thought that so long as one could not think himself one of the Harijans the poison of untouchability could not be removed. If anybody was not prepared to marry a Harijan he found no occasion of giving his blessings to that marriage. The question of marrying a Harijan was not so difficult but the difficulty was only mental.

Replying to the question whether girl students should have a separate organization, Gandhiji said although the life of men and women was not quite different so long a woman remained a woman there might be necessity for a separate organization for their work. In his Ashram men and women lived together and worked together, still there might be such necessity.

Discussing the constructive programme, Gandhiji said that besides the charkha there were several other items in his fifteenfold programme and women could take to any of them as they liked. Women could take a large share in the freedom movement of the country as they always had done specially in Midnapore and other places of India during the Salt Satyagraha. So he thought that it was needless to question what share the women could take in national movement.

As regards reorganization and rehabilitation scheme[1] Mahatmaji said that the people and workers should depend more on their own strength and endeavour than on the Government. Regarding the drainage problem he had talks with the Governor Mr. R. G. Casey and was trying to do whatever was possible in that respect.[2] If they could take up any item of work themselves and could fulfil it other things would follow.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1946

[1] A scheme for the reorganization of the Congress and the rehabilitation of cyclone victims entailing an expenditure of about Rs. 11,13,000 was placed before Gandhiji by the members of the Executive Committee of the Contai Sub-Divisional Congress Committee, members of the Keleghal Drainage Committee, women workers, students and Harijans.

[2] *Vide* pp. 181-2.

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451. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
January 1, 1946

Thousands of Hitlers would neither be able to win their hearts nor take away their freedom if six and a half crores of Bengalis lived peacefully, as they were behaving at the prayer meeting, and carried out all instructions given to them.

He was very happy during his present visit, because the people made no noise and remained quiet. He recalled his visit to Orissa some time ago when people gathered in large numbers and shouted and stopped his car. He was accompanied then by a Nazi[1] who had arrived at Wardha from South Africa. This Nazi noticed the incidents and told Gandhiji that he did not like Gandhiji's way of non-violence. Hitler's method, he said, was the best, and if Gandhiji wanted peaceful swaraj he would not succeed.

Referring to Midnapore's sufferings, Gandhiji said that the area was still suffering. They had no cloth to wear, no food to eat and no water to drink. There were two ways of removing these sufferings, one by Government relief and the other through their own exertion. If they were to be fit for swaraj or wanted to get swaraj, it was their duty to solve these difficulties by their own exertion.

Success in one effort brought them further strength and this strength would help them to succeed in other things. The Government of the country would come in their hands. He had no doubt about it.

If troubles like those of the flood and famine days came, they should all stand together and face the danger.

Gandhiji suggested that teachers, both in schools and colleges, should understand the real significance of mass prayer and teach it to students. There should be no compulsion in any case, and those students who wanted to join prayers willingly, might do so. There was a magnetic power in prayer. As magnet attracted iron, so would prayer attract all, especially students.[2]

Gandhiji said that he was told that they came to hear his voice and not to join the prayer. If it was so then he would be very sorry. He wished that they understood the real significance of prayer and felt that through prayer one could get one's desired thing.

The Hindu, 3-1-1946, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 3-1-1946

[1] Herr Buto; *vide* p. 313.

[2] This paragraph is taken from *The Hindu*. What follows is reproduced from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

452. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

As at Sevagram,
January 1, [*1946*][1]

DEAR ANGAD[2],

I have your letter received by me early morning on New Year's day. I am penning these lines in the evening before retiring.

I fancy that I wrote to you some time ago. Your letter just represents you as I have known you. Of course it is good you have returned to your old love. We should all be glad to greet you back, even if it be for a short time, if you do succeed in coming this side.

Agatha[3] is in India. I hope to see her soon.

With love and all good wishes.

Bapu[4]

From a photostat : C.W. 4546. Courtesy : Swarthmore College Peace Collection

453. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

Sodepur, Contai,
January 2, 1946

CHI. NARAHARI,

You have asked a question in the letter addressed to Sushilabehn. The original draft did contain a reference to underground activities, too. Though it was dropped, the general view was that they should have no place in non-violence. I think what you

[1] The source has "1945", evidently a slip.

[2] Character in the *Ramayana* who acted as Rama's messenger to Ravana. Gandhiji had given this name to the addressee when he carried his letter to Lord Irwin in 1930; *vide* Vol. XLIII, p. 8.

[3] Agatha Harrison; *vide* Vol. LXXXIII, "Letter to Horace Alexander", 31-1-1946.

[4] The letter bears the following postscript by Amrit Kaur : "I gave your news to Bapu and he was so glad to have it. I do hope your passport will soon be forthcoming."

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have read in Jawaharlal's statement is different from what I have. My impression is that he had described underground activities as incompatible with non-violence. I may be mistaken, for I am a hurried reader. Whatever the likely consequences, we should cling to our view if we are convinced about its correctness beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9139

454. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

MAIN CAMP : SODEPUR,
CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

Your letter is good. Instead of replying 'Yes' or 'No' to your questions, I think I shall be able to explain my point of view more clearly if I state my own ideas. If any institution has not become self-supporting on the lines suggested by me, the fact can be interpreted in two ways; either that the workers were not efficient enough, or that my calculations were erroneous. If any institution has not succeeded so far, I will begin to doubt only my calculations. But probably you will be able to see that both these inferences are irrelevant. I have advocated self-reliance in three matters: (1) for the workers in villages, (2) for basic education and (3) for institutions. In regard to the first, my view is that any individual or family who settles in a village must earn their subsistence by working in the village itself. For instance, the person may start some industry—that is, without entering into competition with anybody else engaged in a similar industry—or may join an existing industry. If the person becomes popular with the local population, the people themselves will meet his needs. In either case I will describe the worker as self-supporting. (2) As regards basic education, I am of the view that the rent of the school building, the teacher's salary and the running expenses of the school should be met from the pupils' labour during the seven years of their stay in school. I am doubtful about including the expense incurred on the pupils' food in the scheme of self-reliance. Third, any institution will be considered to be self-supporting if the people for whose benefit it is run

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provide its expenses. For instance, if the money for Indian Christian institutions comes from America, then the Indian Christians will have proved their incapacity. Those institutions must be supported by the local Christians. I think this should answer all your doubts. But the three rules I have suggested should not be interpreted to mean that any activities which do not conform to them should be treated as useless and be wound up. I have thought deeply and long about our institutions and formulated a code on the basis of experience. We shall be able to render better service to the extent we are able to live up to it, and will not become a burden on others. I think it would be dangerous to take the prevailing prices as the basis for any calculations. That is, if you produce cotton, foodgrains, vegetables, fruits and milk on your own land and consume them, need you concern yourself with their market prices? I would exclude for the present the expenditure on cows, seed and bullocks. I think on the basis of this you will yourself be able to answer the questions you have raised. If you have any more questions yet to ask, you may do so.

Can Maharaj[1] be said to be completely cured? I hope Gangabehn[2] is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S. N. 9522. Also C.W. 441. Courtesy : Shivabhai G. Patel

455. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

CHI. BHANSALI,

If you resort to fasting to cut down your weight or have to go on a fast for any other reason it is a matter which you and I need to consider. The ideal position, according to me, is that one taking a balanced diet should not find it necessary to resort to fasting nor make any changes in diet. This would be the ideal position. My ambition for you is that you should reach that stage. You certainly have the required strength. Your diet should be

[1] Ravishankar Vyas
[2] Gangabehn Vaidya

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so adjusted that your body works like a machine. After all, is not our body only a machine given us?

I hope to reach there by the middle of February.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. BHANSALIBHAI
SEVAGRAM

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

456. LETTER TO CHARUCHANDRA BHANDARI

SODEPUR, CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

BHAI CHARUBABU,

I have just been able to reach your cheque. There was some confusion also. The only satisfaction is that nobody has suffered any loss. When all the money is to be spent there, why should I keep this cheque with me? So I am returning it. You must be having some committee. And would it not be for the committee to spend the amount? Please let me know who are on the committee. Also send me the budget of the expenditure so that I may pass it after checking it. However, if you want that the money should remain with me and that I should remit it as and when required, please return the cheque to me. And as and when you write and send me the budget I shall send the money. Do as you like.

Tomorrow I will go to Sodepur and from there to Assam on 8th. Please write to me at Sodepur.

Blessings from
BAPU

Enclosure : Two cheques

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8700

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457. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter. You can belong to any category. I have nothing to say if the money is given up after due deliberation. Public criticism about such things should not be given any importance. What do they know about our condition and about our means ?

I enclose herewith what you have sent for my approval duly signed.

SHRI SHYAMLAL
KASTURBA GANDHI RASHTRIYA SMARAK NIDHI
BAJAJWADI, WARDHA

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

458. SPEECH AT VOLUNTEERS' RALLY

January 2, 1946

Gandhiji, while taking the salute of the volunteers, asked whether they belonged to any permanent corps or were recruited temporarily. On being told that they were recruited on the occasion of his visit there, Gandhiji said that they should have a permanent volunteer corps for their own good and for the service of the people. The volunteers, he said, should be wedded to the cult of non-violence and should serve the people and not harass them.

They should spin charkha regularly and know the rules of cleanliness. That means, Gandhiji emphasized, that if they found dirt anywhere they should try themselves to clean it. They should look at every human being with an eye of love and should do their best to alleviate the sufferings of the people. Their whole life should be dedicated to prayer and they should realize that prayer would instill a power in them which would enable them to face anything.

Gandhiji put a number of questions to Sj. Sudhir Chandra Das, G.O.C. of volunteers and asked them why they did not have uniform dress. Knowing that their volunteer group was temporary and due to shortage of time

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they could not have uniform dress, Gandhiji told them that volunteers must get such instructions so that wherever and whenever they were required they all must be in the same uniform.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 3-1-1946

459. DISCUSSION WITH MIDNAPORE POLITICAL WORKERS[1]

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

GANDHI: How long would you take to learn it then?[2]

A WORKER : One year.

G. Since Hindustani is one out of the 18 items included in the constructive programme and since the carrying out of all these items in their fulness is swaraj, how long at this rate would you take to attain swaraj ?

In independent India, continued Gandhiji, they would need to have a lingua franca which could be understood by everybody. He was an admirer of the English language, but it could never take the place of the national language. There was a saying in English to the effect that matter out of place was dirt. English had its place in international affairs. But he could not tolerate the introduction of English in our day-to-day business, in our domestic life. The lingua franca of India could only be Hindustani, i. e., the language written in Urdu and Devanagari scripts and so simple that it could be understood without any difficulty.

The workers promised that they would all learn it within six months. After that Gandhiji took up the questions which had been submitted to him before the meeting.

The first question invited suggestion as to how they could make a success of the constructive programme and how they could overcome the obstacles in their way.

Replying, Gandhiji enumerated the various items of the constructive programme. The spinning-wheel, though he gave it the central place, must not be on the brain. There were 17 other items. Communal unity was one of them. Did they regard all communities as one? Then they had to get rid of untouchability root and branch. Similarly, they must realize the

[1] A report of this discussion, which was attended by 500 workers of Midnapore District, was sent to the Press by Pyarelal.

[2] There were many among the audience who did not know Hindustani.

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importance and place of the mother tongue. Their mother tongue alone could be the language for the domestic affairs and day-to-day business. He was in his 77th year and yet he had set his heart on learning Bengali. He hoped to learn to read Bengali before he left Midnapore. Nothing would give him greater pleasure than to be able to talk to them in Bengali. He could hope to touch their hearts through Bengali, never through English.

Then there were the Adivasis (called Aboriginals). The 1935 Act had separated them from the rest of the inhabitants of India and had placed the "excluded areas" under the Governor's direct administration. It was a shame that they had allowed them to be treated like that. It was up to them to make the Adivasis feel one with them. The other items were prohibition, village industries, basic education, adult education, women's education in health and hygiene, economic equality, *kisans*, labour, students, and village sanitation. The last was most important and at the same time most difficult. He almost despaired of our people ever observing the rules of sanitation voluntarily when he saw the riverside fouled without hesitation even by those who should know better. He continued:

> The execution of the constructive programme in its entirety means more than swaraj. It means *Ramarajya*, *Khudai Sultanat* or the divine kingdom. I am thirsting after such *Ramarajya*. My God does not reside up above. He has to be realized on earth. He is here, within you, within me. He is omnipotent and omnipresent. You need not think of the world beyond. If we can do our duty here, the 'beyond' will take care of itself. This necessarily includes political independence.

Such independence could only be achieved through non-violence and truth exemplified in constructive work. The Working Committee had realized the importance of constructive work. Even Subhas Babu would admit his (the speaker's) thesis. He did not believe that Subhas Babu was dead.[1] His feeling was that he was hiding somewhere and would appear at the right moment. He admired his courage and patriotism. But he differed from him with regard to the means. He was convinced that real freedom, freedom for the man in the street, could never be achieved through armed revolt.

For him, the parliamentary programme was only a means of promoting constructive work. The Congress had adopted it because they did not want self-seekers and enemies of India's freedom to go to the legislatures and hinder the struggle for freedom. He would feel happy if they sent patriotic scavengers to the legislatures. Their real job would be to keep the undesirables out.

[1] Subhas Chandra Bose was reported to have died in an aeroplane accident while on his way to Tokyo on August 18, 1945.

If India won its freedom through truth and non-violence she would not only point the way to all the exploited Asiatic nations, she would become a torch-bearer for the Negro races that inhabit the vast continent of Africa, and even to Europe. The smaller nationalities lived in fear of losing their freedom. In fact they had no freedom. India's independence through any other means could never have that result.

He had heard harrowing tales of what the women of Midnapore had suffered. The shame was not theirs but the menfolk's. God would take them to task for having been helpless witnesses to those atrocities. The only atonement they could make was whole-hearted execution of the constructive programme.

Another friend asked him what he thought of the class struggle which was inevitable in labour work.

Gandhiji's reply was that class struggle there had been always. It could be ended if the capitalists voluntarily renounced their role and became all labourers. The other way was to realize that labour was real capital, in fact the maker of capital. What the two hands of the labourer could achieve the capitalist would never get with all his gold and silver. Could anyone live on gold? But labour had to be made conscious of its strength. It had to have in one hand truth and in the other non-violence, and it would be invincible. Labour and capital, classes and masses, are as old as the hills. The whole trouble arises from the fact that neither labour nor those who are guiding the labour movement realize the dignity and strength of labour. It is like the lame leading the blind.

Gandhiji was asked about Karl Marx. He got the opportunity and privilege of reading *Capital*, he told them, whilst he was in detention. He entertained high regard for his great industry and acumen. But he could not believe in his conclusions. He had no faith in violence being able to usher in non-violence. World thought was moving and was outdating Karl Marx. That, however, did not detract from the merit of the great man's labours.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that non-co-operation and civil disobedience in terms of swaraj were not to be thought of without substantial constructive effort. Either without the latter will be body without soul, as good as dead.

Amrita Bazar Patrika 5-1-1946

460. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

CONTAI,
January 2, 1946

Summing up his experience of prayer gatherings in Contai and elsewhere in Bengal, Gandhiji said that he had been noticing phenomenal changes in behaviour of crowds taking place before his very eyes. He was not surprised at it. Bengal had given birth to that prince of devotees, Chaitanya, and a host of other God-intoxicated saints. He longed for the day when the example of the crowds would be taken up by the whole of India.

He had felt overwhelmed by the consideration that had been shown to him, by ensuring him as much peace and quiet as was humanly possible, and the way in which he had resolved to repay his debt of gratitude was by devoting every moment of leisure accruing therefrom to learning Bengali. He had been doing that ever since he came to Bengal most systematically. In Contai he hoped that the love for all Indian languages which that resolve symbolized, would fill them too.

Before coming to the meeting he had been told that carcasses of about 700 cattle and 300 human beings, out of many more which had perished in a cyclone, lay buried indiscriminately together where the prayer gathering was held. Dust had returned to dust, and there was no mark to tell the tale, as Gurudev had observed in one of his songs. God mercifully hides man's tragedy on earth under a mantle of greenery. Nevertheless, it betrayed lack of human feeling on the part of those who were responsible for it. The common practice was to give to each dead body a separate burial and the ground in which the burial took place became consecrated ground. This was where cremation was not in vogue. While, therefore, he respected sentiment, he did not make a fetish of it and he even derived satisfaction from the fact that common calamity had united men and cattle in death, thereby symbolizing the essential unity of all life. Thought of it ought to humble man's pride and bring home to him the insignificance of human existence with its illusions, which[1] held him a prisoner in their net till man had learned to break through this net of illusions and make the fulfilment of one's dharma the pole star in life's pilgrimage.

[1] In *Mahatma Gandhi—The Last Phase*, Vol. I, p. 154, the rest of the paragraph reads : ". . . hold him prisoner. If man learned to break through this net of illusions and made the fulfilment of his dharma the Pole Star of his life's pilgrimage, it would considerably lessen the burden under which the world is groaning."

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Explaining the significance of prayer Gandhiji told them that it ought to result in self-purification and it ought to transmute their entire conduct. If anybody thought that it gave him licence to do as he liked during the rest of the day, he deceived himself and others. That was a travesty of the true meaning of prayer.

Commenting on the song that had been sung at prayer, Gandhiji said that in it the devotee prayed to God that he might be able to see Him face to face. Through single obeisance it betokened an indefinable strength of faith in man. With such faith nothing in the world would be impossible of attainment. Faith in God to be real, however, had to find expression in work. In his opinion the eighteenfold constructive programme which he had placed before the country was prayer through work since it was based on the principles of truth and ahimsa. If they fulfilled that programme in its fulness not only would they be free, but their example would serve as a beacon light to all the oppressed and exploited people of the earth.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-1-1946

461. LETTER TO MADALASA

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. MADALASA,

I have your letter. My previous letter seems to have gone astray.

You have no reason at all to feel depressed. I have no time today to write more. I have to deal with the rest of the mail.

Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5856

462. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I got your note. I have telegraphed as follows :

"Leaving Bengal 20th and Madras about February 8. Very anxious to go Poona before Bardoli. Will middle March be suitable Bardoli?"

The Bengal programme is not exceeding the limits I had set. According to me much work has been done here. The result is in the hands of God. I am dictating this letter in a boat. I shall reach Sodepur this evening. This letter will be posted from there tomorrow morning. I have to go to Assam on the 8th after four days in Sodepur. The Assam tour, including travelling, will take eight days. I shall then go to Sodepur and thence to Madras on the 23rd. I must reach Madras on that date at the latest. We must, therefore, leave Sodepur on the 21st. In the wire I have mentioned 20th.

I suppose I shall meet the people[1] from Britain in Bombay, Poona or Wardha. It would be unseemly to speak disparagingly of them. There would be no harm whatever if we use kind words. There are some good men among them also. I do not see much point in condemning them in advance.

You will have received my previous letter. After I take charge of the work in Poona, I must give some time there. I have therefore suggested the middle of March for my Bardoli visit. But I shall be guided by your wishes in the matter. I presume that you will definitely not keep me in Bardoli for more than 15 days. You may even release me from the promise to go there. There is also the possibility that you yourself will be engrossed in the Congress affairs. I take it that you will call me to Bardoli only if my presence there is necessary. This is just to let

[1] British Parliamentary delegation headed by Robert Richards. It arrived in India on January 5, 1946, ostensibly to make personal contacts with the political conditions and leaders of India but actually to "reduce" Krishna Menon's influence. It left on February 10, 1946. (*Vide Transfer of Power*, Vol. VI, p. 300)

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you know how my mind is working. The final decision must be yours. After all you are the Sardar. Are you not? That too of Bardoli. And now of India.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 289-91

463. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter of December 30, 1945, on January 3, 1946, at Contai. I read it in the boat and am dictating this reply, too, in the boat. I understand what you say regarding khadi. If I can know how much will be available there, I can think and decide immediately. I am going to supply as much as is needed.[1]

I can understand the Doctor [Dinshaw] not being satisfied with my reply. But I am helpless.

I will try to return as early as I can. I will arrange about the Bank account. I will arrange for the transfer of the money, too, as soon as I reach Calcutta.

We should certainly admit all patients who will mix with the poor. Nobody can be given a special room merely because he is rich. Will the patients who wish to be admitted be paying ones? If there are any, apart from our own people, who can mix with the others and observe the rules, I will not object to their being admitted.

The equipment at Sinhagadh has been covered by the Trust and I, therefore, believe that we can use it for our purpose and transfer any item from there.

If the Doctor thinks otherwise, I should like to know his point of view.

We have no intention of starting any other centre outside Poona in the immediate future. I will write to Vanamala.

Kanchan is with me in this very boat. She has got a slight cold but is in fine spirits.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8611. Also C.W. 7200. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] *Vide* also pp. 258-60.

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464. LETTER TO RAGHUNATH S. DHOTRE

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. DHOTRE,

I think I told you to resume the remittances to Ramachandran. If not, please understand from this letter that the money is to be paid from October 1945. That makes three months to date. Send a sum to cover this period and later send a hundred rupees every month. The address is : Shri G. Ramachandran, c/o Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

465. LETTER TO SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

BHAI SACHINDRA NARAYAN,

I have your letter. We can achieve everything by love. Love can never be impatient nor can it ever be angry. If you behave with Muslim brethren in this spirit their anger will go.

PROF. SACHINDRA NARAYAN ROY
31 SHAH SAHIB'S LANE
DACCA

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

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466. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN

ON THE STEAMER TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

CHI. SHRIMAN,

I have your letter. I returned your letter on the very day I received it after making corrections.[1] Today I am replying to the letter of December 30, 1945. I am on the steamer, going to Sodepur.

It is difficult to fix the date of my return. I am considering whether I should go first to Poona or Wardha. Even so I shall try my level best to reach Wardha on February 8.

If the 12th is not Monday, fix it[2] for that date, otherwise fix it for the 11th at 2 o'clock. Let the venue be Sevagram.

As regards the Provincial Assembly you may take it that I am not interested. But if you are inclined that way and have the ability for it, and if all others agree, please do go.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 309

467. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

DEAR BROTHER,

Jagadisan tells me you are again unwell, so much so that you have given yourself only two months more on this earth.[3] Why will you not say with the millions that you are like them in the hands of God and refuse to *feel* that you are about to leave your friends. I do not know if I have clearly expressed myself. Slowly though

[1] *Vide* p. 193.
[2] The meeting of Hindustani Prachar Sabha
[3] He died on April 17.

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surely I am going through the doubly interesting collection made by good Jagadisan.[1]

Love.

Yours,
LITTLE BROTHER

From a photostat : C.W. 10524. Courtesy : S. R. Venkataraman. Also G.N. 8825

468. LETTER TO L. F. PHILLIPS

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

You must rely upon your merits, not upon certificates or recommendations.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI L. F. PHILLIPS
99 STEPHEN HOUSE
DALHOUSIE SQUARE
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

469. LETTER TO THE AGA KHAN

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
24 PARGANAS,
January 4, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your affectionate letter of December 30, 1945, yesterday at Contai. Then I took a steamer and reached Sodepur this morning from where I am dictating this. To you at least I should write in Gujarati, shouldn't I? Indeed it should be a matter of shame for us to write in English.

[1] The reference is to the collection of Sastri's speeches and writings on Gokhale published under the title *My Master Gokhale*, to which Gandhiji, wrote the Foreword; *vide* Vol. LXXXIII, "Foreword to *My Master Gokhale*", 20-1-1946.

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I hope to reach Wardha around the 8th of February. Then ten days later I shall leave for Poona. Then I shall do as you desire. If you are in Bombay we shall meet there or I shall suit myself to your convenience in Poona. Maulana Saheb of course will not be present. We shall think over it when we meet.

I understand about the samadhi. The facilities you suggest will suffice for me. It is not my desire that people should be able to visit the palace any time of the day. Those who go there out of devotion or respect should go by the prescribed route and at the appointed hour. I shall then take it that its sanctity is respected.

I shall certainly appreciate it if you will have the samadhi built and it will become you. I have never considered marble. I shall be content if something lasting is built. Mahadev and Kasturba had become villagers; they lived in huts. Shouldn't their samadhi be simple? I shall draw a plan but let us discuss it when we meet.

May your Diamond Jubilee be smooth and auspicious.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN

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

470. LETTER TO K. F. NARIMAN

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI NARIMAN,

I have your wire. I am very happy. But do not lay down any conditions. Remain a true soldier of the Congress.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI KAIKHUSHRU NARIMAN

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

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471. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

CHI. MRIDULA,[1]

I have your letter. You have done well in giving me all the news. I am dictating this reply in a hurry because I have sat down to the task just now soon after arriving here by the steamer. It is morning.

The matter regarding Saraladevi has now been resolved. She will continue to be an Agent[2]. You will then be able to do more work yourself as well as give all help to Saraladevi.

Devdas is what he was. Please don't worry. I can understand his feelings. After all his method of work is also different.

The rest later.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MRIDULABEHN SARABHAI
RETREAT
P. O. SHAHIBAG
AHMEDABAD

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

472. LETTER TO VIRENDRA KUMAR ROY

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI VIRENDRA KUMAR,

I have your touching letter. May God grant you peace.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI VIRENDRA ROY
CONTAI

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

[1] This is in Devanagari script.
[2] Of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust for Gujarat

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473. LETTER TO FATEHCHAND NAHATA

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI FATEHCHAND,

Consider what will be my fate if everyone asks me for 10 minutes of my time as you do. You are not going to gain anything by meeting me. You will unnecessarily waste your time. Read whatever I have written and devote yourself to service.

M. K. GANDHI

SHRI FATEHCHAND NAHATA
PRESIDENT KUSHTIA MAHAKMA CONGRESS COMMITTEE
KUSHTIA

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

474. LETTER TO SHYAMLAL

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

BHAI SHYAMLAL,

I have your letter of the 31st. Write to Nanabhai Bhatt that he may select any woman who is competent. I should consider Manubhai's Vijaya eligible if only she could reduce her preoccupation with the children—it ought to become less as the days pass. She can do the job. She does not have to work in the cities; it is the villages that have to be awakened, and, in my opinion, Vijayabehn is the right person for the job. But if some other woman worker of Vijayabehn's calibre can be found, Nanabhai may become to her what Lord Melbourne[1] was to Queen Victoria and thus encourage her progress.

SHRI SHYAMLALJI
K. G. [N.] M. FUND
BAJAJWADI
WARDHA (C. P.)

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

[1] Lord Melbourne (1779-1848) was the first Prime Minister of Queen Victoria. He was responsible for many important liberal measures of her reign.

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475. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had come back in their midst after some time. He would again go out to Assam on the 8th. The prayer would be held here till January 7. He did not know if he would be able to hold prayer here again on his return from Assam.

He had been on a pilgrimage to Midnapore. The tour was so peaceful, the orderliness was so impressive, that they were unique. He had been to three or four places : Diamond Harbour, Mahishadal, Kakra and Contai. In each of these places the orderliness of the people was praiseworthy. At prayer-time the gathering went up to about a lakh of people. Many people came from long distances. Every one of them was quite peaceful and none disturbed the orderliness. From Diamond Harbour he witnessed this orderliness.

Gandhiji said that Ramanama was so attractive that it could absorb man's whole thought and self into it. That was why he had asked them to clap their hands rhythmically when taking Ramanama. As they went on clapping their hands they got absorbed in the prayer. They knew soldiers were so trained that they were disciplined and learnt to work together. Discipline being the most essential thing, there was an English saying—'disciplined soldier'.

They were also soldiers of freedom. Soldiers of a State received salary and they maintained discipline. Soldiers of freedom did not get such payment; but they acquired strength by maintaining discipline. In the words of Badshah Khan[1], they were all *Khudai Khidmatgars* or servants of God. They were to maintain discipline and that was why he had introduced the practice of clapping hands while praying.

Explaining the *bhajan* sung at the prayer Gandhiji said it was very sweet. The Poet—Rabindranath—said that if nobody responded to their call they must not despair but continue to work for their ideal. Even if failures met them they must not be broken. They should go on working irrespective of whether their hopes and aspirations were realized or not. One who was devoted to God did not feel despair; he went on knocking at heaven's door for entrance to the kingdom of God.

Swaraj had not yet come, but he had not given up hope. They must keep on knocking and one day swaraj was bound to come.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5-1-1946

[1] Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan

476. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have to thank you for the arrangements made by the officials for my travel to and stay in the Midnapore District.

The Superintendent of the Presidency Jail writes to me to say that Shri S. Bakshi would like to see me. I am therefore bound to see him. This will be only after my return from Assam. I wonder whether I could see at the same time the other prisoners who are there.

Shri Sudhir Ghosh tells me you would like to see me on Monday next. I shall give myself the pleasure of doing so at 7.30 p.m. that day.

I must thank you too for the relief to the E.C. employees.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 134

477. LETTER TO M. E. C. MATHEW

CAMP, SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I do not know where I shall be at the time you reach India. However, I reciprocate your wish that we should meet. You will have no difficulty in finding my whereabouts at the time you come to India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. E. C. MATHEW, ESQ.
182 SEA BOURNE ROAD
SOUTH BOURNE WEST
BOURNEMOUTH, HANTS, ENGLAND

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The reference is to the reinstatement of some dismissed workers of Calcutta Electric Supply Company.

478. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I sent Rs. 10,000 to Dinshawji yesterday. You will be able to meet from it all expenditure from this month up to the time I return.

Kanchan had an attack of cold and fever. But there is nothing to worry about. She is being treated by Sushilabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8612. Also C.W. 7201. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

479. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

The booklet on the constructive programme[1] was received only yesterday. It has taken a rather long time. Why this delay? It took me some time to find the price. What was the intention in giving it on the back-page? Or is there merit in novelty as such ? Generally the reader's habit is to see the cover page and look for the price, etc. There is no signature at the end of the preface. I wonder whether you thought that, since the preface was by the author himself, there was no need for his signature. But that does not seem likely as Chi. Kanaiya also reminds me. Moreover, I had drawn your attention specifically to this point in my letter[2] of December 7, 1945. The

[1] By Gandhiji. *Vide* Vol. LXXV, pp. 146-66. Here the reference is to the second revised and enlarged edition recently published; *vide* pp. 66-8.

[2] *Vide* pp. 174-5.

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copies are very few. A lot of them could have been sold here. What happened about Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, etc.?

Blessings from
BAPU

JIVANJI DESAI
P. B. 105
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9961. Also C.W. 6935. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

480. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

I have remitted Rs. 10,000 to you yesterday. With this amount open an account in the name of the Trust in any bank you like and issue the cheques yourself, because I have remitted the amount to you as Trustee and Director. I hastened with the money because I understood you had no funds left with you. I am sorry I was under the impression that you usually had a large balance lying with you and, indeed, an important account such as yours ought to have such a balance. Had I known that the account hardly ever had a balance I would have arranged for an amount before leaving Poona—but let it be.

I have a letter from Gulbai, which has alarmed me. She is unhappy. Do not cause her unhappiness. It seems she is hesitant about getting Ardeshir vaccinated whereas you seem to be insisting on it. I don't have any faith in vaccination. I am writing to Gulbai accordingly. If I were in your place I would respect Gulbai's wishes. After all a mother has a stronger claim over the children. Once the seed is planted the man's job is over. It is the mother who carries the child for nine months and then suckles it while it grows. But that is not what pains Gulbai; it is your behaviour that pains her. We had already had a little talk on the subject. Please talk to her patiently and explain things to her.

You appear to be squeamish. I would still suggest that you draw a salary from the Trust. I am aware that the Deed does not provide for this, but the three Trustees can agree to make

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the necessary change. You may take up some other occupation if you like. A man's first duty is to be honest with himself and to be truthful. One who does not do this is no good for anything. He turns into a hypocrite or cheat. You made up your mind to go by my advice. Understand the significance of this. Anyone who decides to defer to another either sees the point of what he is told or accepts the advice on faith. Such faith, again, proves more productive than understanding. And when it does not, the person is ill at ease. May you never come to such a pass. I don't want you to lose your fire. I shall be satisfied only if you rise higher and higher as a result of my contact.

On further reflection I think I had better send you Gulbai's letter so that you can understand her feelings and know what pains her. Be calm and patient with her.

I shall reach there by the evening of 21st February, or on the 23rd, because 22nd is Ba's anniversary and I should observe it at a fixed place. This cannot be done on a train where it would be difficult to read the whole of the *Gita*.

It appears Chi. Sushila Gandhi has written to you. Have you not replied to her? If not, please write to her. She is now in Delhi at Devdas's. She does not seem to have benefited [by your treatment]. What could be the trouble with her? Was she administered thyroid extract? I have forgotten all.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

481. LETTER TO GULBAI D. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. GULBAI,

I have your letter. I was thinking of writing a third letter when yesterday I got your letter. I certainly have no faith in vaccination. My views have not changed. They are firm. Therefore if I had my way I would not have Chi. Ardeshir vaccinated. I would risk an attack of smallpox. But I know Dinshaw believes in vaccination. His views on nature cure differ considerably from mine. I cling to him in spite of this knowledge for I regard him as a man of truth. In the case of a man of truth

either I accommodate him or he accommodates me. There is no trace of obstinacy in me. Firmness I certainly have, as I should have. A man devoid of this quality can never cling to truth. He does not worry about the risks that confront him because a satyagrahi has faith only in God. Therefore do what you think right about vaccination after mutual consultation.

I have sent your letter to Dinshaw because it is a nice letter worthy of you. Dinshaw however should know that it expresses your pain. I hope I did not do wrong in passing on the letter to him.

When is your confinement due ?

Please don't worry about the nursing-home. It is for me to think about the expenses. Only yesterday I sent a sum for the expenses. According to my reckoning, it will not be necessary for us to keep the account we maintain for the poor going for long.

I see no need for Maji to move into the house which Balkrishna used to occupy. She may continue to live where she is or wherever she wants to till my return. I would suggest that Maji should live in the quarters that I used to occupy. When I return you may put me up there if you like. Since the party accompanying me will camp in tents the arrangement will cause you no inconvenience. In this way the room that you allot to me, with attached bath-room and the adjacent room will suffice for me. Let us see when Dinshaw comes by any new income. It is desirable that he does not go in for any fresh expenditure. I would be far from pleased if he accepted defeat for one reason or another.

I hope you and Ardeshir are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

482. LETTER TO HIRABEHN[1]

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. HIRABEHN,

I got your letter. May your wishes be fulfilled.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

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

483. LETTER TO HASMUKH[2]

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI HASMUKHBHAI,

I have your long letter. What is there for me to bless in what you write? I have not even understood the dispute fully. Besides, if the work is noble it does not need blessings from any man, however great. The work is its own blessing.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] & [2] The letters are in Devanagari script.

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484. LETTER TO NAGINBHAI T. MASTER

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI NAGINBHAI,

I have your letter. May your efforts for the sake of Vijayabehn and Valji bear fruit. I can see that you will be able to cope with the task, and I am pleased.

SJT. NAGINBHAI MASTER
BOMBAY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
CONGRESS HOUSE
VITHALBHAI PATEL ROAD, BOMBAY

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

485. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. AMALA[1],

I was happy to read your letter. It was creditable on your part to have refused the offer of private tuition to a pupil in your own class and you deserve to be complimented. Now you will be able to teach other things. That is good. But why do you look upon Principal Seal as your enemy? How can a person who looks upon dogs and cats as her friends regard a human being as her enemy?

Ahimsa can have no enemies.

If you go on increasing the number of your feline friends, you will not be able to shoulder the burden.

I keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] German Jewess who joined Gandhiji's Ashram in 1933

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486. LETTER TO VANAMALA N. PARIKH

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

CHI. VANAMALA,

I am not going to write a long letter either to you or to Zohra. I am leaving for Assam on the 8th and shall be back here on the 14th. After that as soon as possible I wish to go to Madras. I hope that I shall reach there on January 22, at the latest, and from there I shall return to Sevagram on February 8 at the earliest. Then to Poona on the 21st or the 23rd. How is Zohra? Both of you, or Zohra, or, if she is too weak, you alone, should help Munnalalbhai. But you must do nothing beyond your strength.

I shall be pleased if you both write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5797

487. LETTER TO SAVAL L. IDLANI

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI IDLANI,

How is it that your letter to me is neither in Urdu nor in Hindi?

You should refer to the Congress President the question you ask me.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SAVAL L. IDLANI, JOURNALIST
LALCHAND NANMAL BUILDING
JAMSHED ROAD
KARACHI

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

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488. LETTER TO SUBODHLAL SARKAR

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

BHAI SUBODHLAL SARKAR,

I got your postcard. Why in English? I shall not be going to Dhanbad.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

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

489. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKERS' CONFERENCE–I[1]

January 5, 1946

After enumerating the various items of the 18-fold constructive programme as mentioned in the revised and enlarged edition of his brochure[2] *Constructive Programme, Its Meaning and Place*, a copy of which had come into his hands only on the day before, he asked them to take note of the fact that the charkha and khaddar was only one—though by no means the least important—out of the 18 items in that programme.

Civil disobedience had been mentioned at the end of the 18 items. It had a place there since the theme of the brochure was the constructive programme not merely as an economic activity but as a means of the attainment of swaraj.

Civil disobedience was of two types, individual and mass. Individual civil disobedience was everybody's inherent right like the right of self-

[1] Extracted from Pyarelal's "Weekly Letter". About 750 to 800 workers from all the districts of Bengal, including several women, met Gandhiji on January 5 and 6 to seek his guidance regarding the Congress reorganization work in Bengal, particularly the constructive activity. A long list of questions were handed to Gandhiji just before he came to the meeting. Before answering the questions, Gandhiji addressed them briefly in Hindustani.

[2] *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 7-1-1946, had reported that, "incidentally in the course of his remarks, Gandhiji congratulated two Calcutta papers—*Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *The Hindustan Standard* for publishing the brochure in their columns and hoped that people would take up the programme and give effect to it in right earnest."

defence in normal life. No special sanction was needed for the practice of this kind of civil disobedience. Just as a man in normal life would use his dagger, revolver or even fisticuffs to foil a sudden attack, even so civil disobedience would be resorted to by the constructive worker as a non-violent equivalent to the use of fisticuffs or arms. It did not need sanction or permission from anybody. As an illustration of how civil disobedience could be used to overcome Government's opposition to constructive work he took up the hypothetical case of a worker engaged in the service of the Adivasis. If the Government prevented him from going among them he would simply disobey the order. The Government might put him in prison, he would welcome it. It would be a most auspicious beginning for his work. The very fact that he had gone to prison in order to serve the Adivasis would enshrine him in their hearts.

Mass civil disobedience was for the attainment of independence. For it the fulfilment of the constructive programme almost in its entirety was an indispensable preliminary condition. The 'Quit India' resolution of August 1942 might be cited as an exception to this dictum, he remarked. His reply was that it was justified by exceptional circumstances into which, however, he did not propose to take them at present. Moreover, the movement had never been started.

Gandhiji then took up the first two items from the constructive programme and showed how they helped the struggle for independence. The first was communal unity. If they could achieve true heart unity among all the communities, not as a political expedient to be cast aside when its purpose was served or as a token of their common dislike of the third party, no power on earth would be able to sow division amongst them as at present. And even a child would understand that an India united would be an India free. The same held true in regard to the removal of untouchability.[1]

In the course of his remarks Gandhiji referred to the report of Sarat Babu's recent speech[2] which was to the effect that since with Gandhiji he believed in non-violence of the strong—not of the weak, he felt that military training was necessary to inculcate the spirit of discipline, without which true non-violence could not be practised. Commenting upon it, Gandhiji said that he did not know whether Sarat Babu had been correctly reported or not. He himself had often suffered from bad reporting. But the statement as it appeared lent itself to an ambiguous interpretation.

It was only a half truth to say that military training was an aid to the practice of non-violence. The statement was true if by military training

[1] The following four paragraphs have been taken from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 6-1-1946.

[2] In the Bengal Legislative Assembly

was meant inculcation of perfect discipline, but if by military training was meant training also in the use of arms and the art of killing it could have no place in his (Gandhiji's) programme of non-violence.

He himself had been advocating the necessity of non-violent discipline in his prayer meetings and had even been trying to impart it to the people wherever he went. He considered this kind of discipline to be superior to what was known as military discipline inasmuch as the latter was enforced by penalties while the discipline of non-violence was absolutely voluntary and called for the strength to face death without killing.

If he found that his views were opposed to Sarat Babu's views and the people of Bengal asked him as to which of the two sets of views they should follow, he would unhesitatingly tell them to follow Sarat Babu's views and discard his, since Sarat Babu was the leader of Bengal and not he. But in the present case he felt sure that there was no difference between their views as Sarat Babu had himself told him in the course of his recent talks with him that in the matter of non-violence he wanted to go the whole hog with him. Therefore, he was of opinion that Sarat Babu's advocacy of military training held good only in the context of non-violence. In no other sense was it compatible with the Congress faith much less with non-violence as he (Gandhiji) understood it.

Gandhiji then proceeded to answer questions:

Q. You have asked the charkha workers to keep themselves detached from the political work of the Congress. From experience the questioner finds that such centres fail to make the people conscious fighters for swaraj. On the other hand, other centres, where workers have been working in double functions—both as charkha as well as Congress workers—give a better account of themselves during civil disobedience. So please make your directions in this respect clear.

GANDHIJI : It is a good question but it betrays want of clear thinking. All I have said is that a khadi worker will not be able to do full justice to his work if he has too many irons in the fire. Khadi work demands one's undivided attention. But that does not mean that it should be done mechanically. No khadi worker can afford to be indifferent to other things with which khadi is interrelated or lose sight of its correlation to the struggle for independence. Experience has shown that wherever intensive charkha work had been done the people had shown greater grit, unity and capacity for organization in the struggle for independence.

Q. You have often repeated that charkha without its full implications means nothing. Supposing we do not associate the charkha with political work, then, how will people understand its full implications?

G. 'Full implications' does include political work, but it includes many more things. The charkha has an undoubted value as a means for providing economic relief to the masses but as I have so often reiterated, khadi activity, stripped of its significance in terms of India's independence, means nothing to me today. At the same time if you take up charkha work merely for gaining political ends, it will defeat its purpose and you will make a mess of it in the political as in the economic sense.

To say that unless we associate charkha work with Political work it will have no political value, betrays a thorough ignorance of the non-violent technique. Let me take 'service of the lepers' which is another item in the 18-fold constructive programme. Surely, it cannot be associated with any kind of political work in the accepted sense. Yet it would be absurd to say that it has no value in terms of swaraj. Under the non-violent technique every real service rendered, every right act performed does bring the country nearer to the goal of political independence though in itself it may not have any direct political significance.

If you were to tell me that you have lost faith in non-violence as a means for the attainment of swaraj, I would agree that the charkha or constructive work have no use for you. Nor would you have any use for me in that event. But since you have discarded faith neither in ahimsa nor in me, your indifference to charkha and constructive work is a sign only of your laziness and inertia. It is my conviction that the phenomenal awakening that has taken place in India during the last 25 years is entirely due to the adoption of non-violence and the charkha as its symbol. To the extent to which we have neglected the charkha and constructive work we have failed in the attainment of our goal.

Q. On December 23, you have advised[1] Hindu workers to offer selfless service to the Muslim masses, for it will tell in the end. That might be termed a long-term policy. Should we then do nothing political among the Muslim masses? Apart from its effect on the Muslims, is not the policy of non-interference and political aloofness likely to engender in the non-Muslims a new attitude of exclusiveness towards the Muslims and thus serve the very purpose of those who are trying to divide the nation?

G. With due deference to the framer of the question let me say that I fail to understand it. If millions of Hindus regarded non-Hindus as their blood-brothers and sisters and treated them as such without the slightest tinge of a political motive, it must result

[1] *Vide* p. 266.

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in the complete political unity of India. Is it a 'long-term' effect? The framer of the question does not seem to know how ahimsa works. What I have deprecated in the present poisoned state of our communal relations is the attempt on the part of Congressmen to draw non-Hindus into the Congress fold, as it would only accentuate the existing mistrust. But supposing I make friends with Badshah Khan how does it widen the gulf between the communities? On the contrary, it immediately eases communal tension to that extent. Multiply this picture a millionfold and it will be seen that the difficulty posed in the question is altogether chimerical.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 6-1-1946 and 13-1-1946

490. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

CHI. ANASUYA,

I got your letter. It is not possible for me to offer any suggestions or guidance from here. Sir Radhakrishnan is going that way and it would be better for you to see him. I think no one can do from here anything that would prove useful to you.

Why do you write 'peoples'[1]? 'Peoples' means 'nations'. Are we 'nations'? And if we are, how many nations are we? And where? Great Britain has one people, but Europe has many peoples with their own different countries. Is such the case with India?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] The words in single quotes are in English ?

491. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Chi. Mridula writes to say that you are now growing old and are often bed-ridden!!! What is this? And why? If you grow old, what about me? 125 years is still far away for you as well as for me. And then 125 years is not for me alone. It is for all of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

492. LETTER TO SORABJI P. KAPADIA[1]

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

BHAI KAPADIA,

I have the letter from Joshi Behn which you sent me. I have sent her an appropriate reply.

Blessings from
BAPU

SORABJI P. KAPADIA
"MUMBAI SAMACHAR"
BOMBAY

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

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493. LETTER TO SARVANBEHN

January 6, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

I got the khaddar. According to me no one is an *abala*[1]. A woman who does even a little can never be called an *abala*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 7931

494. LETTER TO K. T. BHASHYAM

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

BHAI BHASHYAM,

I have your long letter. I may not be regarded as a guide in any way any more. The days are gone when I could act as one. My advice is that you may take up whatever appeals to you from among the activities I have already indicated. Hence you should come together and do whatever you can regardless of whether the outcome is good or bad. I am now of no use whatever for such matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI K. T. BHASHYAM
COTTONPET
BANGALORE CITY

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

[1] A weak woman

495. SPEECH AT CONGRESS WORKERS' CONFERENCE–II

January 6, 1946

Meeting Gandhiji on the second day of the conference[1] the Bengal workers found in him a hard customer. Instead of waiting for them to put questions he anticipated them by asking them whether they knew Hindustani. As only about half the number raised their hands in reply, he inquired as to how long they would require to learn Hindustani. Some replied: "One Year." Gandhiji commented:

No good, Contai people did not require more than six months[2].

"All right then, six months," shouted a few voices. But Gandhiji twitted them for doing no better than the countryfolk of Contai in the matter of learning the national language. Calcutta should do better. Someone from the gathering objected that they were not all Calcutta folk. But the objector's voice was drowned in a chorus from the rest who shouted "three months". [Gandhiji said:]

That is good, but say "six months" all in chorus and endorse the same by raising your right hand in affirmation.

A forest of hands rose in reply. But Gandhiji's keen eye detected a lacuna.

I notice that the women workers are hesitating. Is *Azad*[3] Hindustan then going to be for men only and are women for ever to be in Zenanistan? If not, you should all shout out, "*sub*" ("all") in one voice.

There was a deafening chorus of "*sub, sub*" in reply. Gandhiji was pleased . . . he told them it was up to them to see that they kept it. There were ample facilities in Calcutta for learning Hindustani and they should avail themselves of it.

Another friend asked whether by learning Hindustani was meant ability to understand Hindustani or whether it included the ability to read and write Hindustani as well. This gave Gandhiji the opportunity to emphasize the importance of learning to read and write both the Nagari and the

[1] For the previous day's report, *vide* pp. 355-9.
[2] *Vide* p. 333.
[3] Independent

Urdu scripts, if they wanted to maintain direct touch with all the sections of the people in the country. Even Hindus in north, let alone Muslims, did not know the Nagari script. In support of his argument he mentioned the instances of the late Lala Lajpat Rai, the Lion of the Punjab, Pandit Ajodhyanath, who was one of the founders of the Congress and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, none of whom knew the Nagari script. The Urdu script was not difficult to learn. Anyway he was not prepared to hear objections on the score of difficulty from intellectual Bengal.

Gandhiji's attention was next drawn to a Press cutting purporting to give a restatement of his views on the utility of the parliamentary programme in relation to constructive work. The reference was to a recent writing of his in Hindustani in *Khadi Jagat*. "What attitude should a whole-time constructive worker maintain towards the parliamentary programme? Can the will of the people be really represented by a legislature under present conditions in India? If the conditions are adverse, i. e., if the Government is hostile, should Congressmen continue to function in the legislatures and what help can they advance under the circumstances to the cause of constructive work?"

Gandhiji, replying, said that he had advocated the boycott of the legislatures as a part of the fourfold non-co-operation programme. He still held the view that if that programme had been given effect to in full, India would have got swaraj. But the country as a whole was not prepared for it. There was a considerable section in the country that wanted to use parliamentary talent in the service of the country. No one should prevent them from serving the country in their own way. As a practical idealist he had therefore reconciled himself to Congressmen capturing the legislatures and other elective bodies, if only to prevent self-seekers and enemies of India's freedom from getting there.

He repeated what he had said at Contai, that nothing would please him better than that ideal scavengers should be returned to legislatures to represent the Congress there. He himself claimed to be scavenger No. 1 of India. His ideal scavenger would not be an ignorant puppet but a man with sturdy common sense and capacity to think and decide upon the problems of the day. He would be an educated person though he might not know English. He could not see why such a one should not be President of the Congress. The positive function of those who went to the legislatures would be to promote constructive work. He, however, warned them that mere parliamentary work would not bring them swaraj. That would come only as a result of their work outside among the masses. A whole-time constructive worker would not be able to take up parliamentary activity without detriment to his own work. But those who were not giving all their time to constructive work might enter the legislature if people wanted

it, provided however that it did not lead to rivalries among workers and they had not to enter into any expenditure in order to be elected.

Q. In many portions of Bengal, the cultivators are Muslims and the proprietors Hindus. Recently in some places the Muslim tillers have refused to till the land under Hindu owners. What should the Hindu owners do under the circumstances?

Gandhiji, replying, said that the views he was going to express were strictly his own. As they all knew, he was not even a four-anna Congress member and therefore he could not speak as a Congressman. He spoke only in his personal capacity as a satyagrahi.

Although the question had been posed in a communal setting the real cleavage as he saw it was not communal but economic. In Bengal the cultivators might be Muslim and the proprietors Hindu. But in Andhra both the cultivators and proprietors were Hindus and yet the same conflict was in evidence in some parts.

His views, continued Gandhiji, on the ownership of land were well known. The only rightful owner of the land was he who tilled it. The present proprietors were morally entitled to hold land only if they became trustees for it. If the cultivators of the fields of a proprietor, who had become a trustee, refused to till the land for him, he would not sue them or seek otherwise to coerce them. He would leave them alone and try to earn his livelihood independently by his honest industry. If he has been discharging his function as a trustee honestly, they would come to him before long in contrition and seek his guidance and help. For, he would use his privilege not to fill his pockets by the exploitation of the labourers but teach the latter co-operation and organization so as to increase their produce and generally ameliorate their conditions. This would mean that the proprietor must himself become a cultivator *par excellence*. A proprietor who regarded his property merely as a means of satisfying his lusts was not its owner but its slave. The proprietors of land in Bengal had therefore only to adopt his ideal of trusteeship and their troubles would end.

Q. Would the trustee's property be passed on to his children by inheritance?

G. A proprietor who holds his property as a trust will not pass it on to his children in inheritance unless the latter in their turn become trustees and make good their claim as such. If they are not prepared for it, he should create a trust of his property. It is demoralizing for an able-bodied young man to live like a parasite on unearned income. A father should inculcate in his children the appreciation of the dignity of labour and teach them to earn their bread by their honest industry. As regards the monied people all I can say from my close personal association with

a large number of them, is that if a general atmosphere in favour of trusteeship, devoid of ill-will and class hatred, is created in the country they will fall in line with it.

Q. Many Congress workers who have recently come out of jail have to earn a living for themselves or their families. Under present economic conditions they have been forced to crowd into towns for this purpose with the result that the villages have begun to lose their services. Could not a paid service be established for them by the provincial or the district Congress organizations? If so, how would you advise them to find the money for this purpose?

G. The question reflects the present deplorable condition of the country. The cities are not only draining the villages of their wealth but talent also. The only way to check the process is for Congress workers to refuse to make their lives their God but to dedicate themselves to the service of their ideal only. God will then take care of them. A labourer is always worthy of his hire but I know that I have no magic wand to revolutionize people's outlook up to the ideal of voluntary poverty. Therefore I consider it desirable that a fund should be created either by the Provincial Congress Committee or by local agencies to provide maintenance for such workers as may want to dedicate themselves to the service of the villages. Do not expect me however to provide you with funds. My begging days are over. It is my firm belief that no worthy cause has ever suffered for want of finances if there are sincere workers to work for it. Calcutta has got enough 'money bags', and if a practical scheme of work in the villages is produced and there are sincere and earnest workers forthcoming to take it up, I am sure the money will come forth.

Q. You have advised spinning for swaraj. If, in trying to execute that programme in its full implications, spinning for wages has to be restricted, should we do so? That will mean hardship for the very poor who find some relief through their spinning wages. Then, again, if we keep up spinning for wages, the new rules of purchasing khadi against yarn will make it more difficult for us to dispose of the khadi produced for offering relief to the poor.

Gandhiji said that what he had recommended was that all people should spin not for self but for swaraj. Such conscious and altruistic spinning on the part of forty millions would constitute a veritable *yajna* or sacrifice out of which swaraj would emerge. It would knit the classes and masses, the brain workers and the manual labourers, in a living bond of unity. What had however happened was that although their efforts had resulted

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in providing thousands of men and women with a supplementary source of income, the spinners themselves did not wear khaddar. They did not realize the implications of khadi in terms of swaraj. He had therefore come to the conclusion that if khadi was truly to become the "livery of freedom"[1], to use Pandit Jawaharlal's expression, all those who spin should consciously adopt khadi and all those who wanted to wear khadi should spin. There was thus no conflict between spinning for wages and spinning for sacrifice. The two were supplementary, one of the other.[2]

Q. Violence is bad. . . . The only substitute for it is constructive activity as symbolized by the charkha. But the dynamic quality seems to have gone out of it. What should be done to bring out its revolutionary significance?

G. Dr. Radha Kumud Mukherji in one of his books has quoted Colebrooke as saying that in India, the home of chronic poverty, the spinning-wheel is the provider of butter and bread for the poor. The late R. C. Dutt has shown how the prosperity of the East India Company was founded on their trade in Indian textiles. No part of the world, neither China nor Japan could produce fabrics to equal them. In the early phase the East India Company battened on the exploitation of its monopoly in Indian textiles. Not only did it bring them immense trade profits, it also gave an impetus to British shipping. Later, Lancashire developed its own textile industry following upon a series of mechanical inventions. This brought it into competition with the Indian textile manufactures. The policy of exploitation of the Indian artisans then gave way to that of destruction of their craft.

An English writer has observed that the history of cotton is the history of civilization. Politics is the handmaid of commerce. Indian history provides an apt illustration of it. In the heyday of our cotton manufactures we used to grow all the cotton for our needs. The cotton seed was fed to the cattle which provided health-giving milk to the people. Agriculture flourished. The lint was turned into beautiful fabrics of which the *jamdanis* of Dacca were a specimen. As an offshoot we had the world-famed dyeing and printing art of Masulipatam. Connoisseurs say that our old indigenous dyes could not be matched by any in the world for their permanence as well as brightness and beauty. All that is gone now. India is today naked. We have to cover her

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXV, Appendix VIII.

[2] What follows is extracted from *Harijan*, 31-3-1946. It appeared under the title "How to Make It Dynamic?" by Pyarelal, who had explained that the question was "put to Gandhiji at Calcutta by the khadi workers of Borkamata".

nakedness. If anybody could suggest a better substitute than the spinning-wheel for the purpose I would discard the spinning-wheel today. But none has been found so far and I dare say none is likely to be found.

The question may however be asked: 'How can the charkha bring India freedom when it could not prevent its loss?' The reply is that in the past charkha was not linked with the idea of freedom. Nor did it then symbolize the power of non-violence. In olden days it symbolized our slavery. We had not realized that our progress, prosperity and even freedom depended on the charkha or else we should have put up a fight and resorted to satyagraha to save it from destruction. What was lost through our ignorance and apathy has now to be won back through intelligence and knowledge. We have today ceased to think for ourselves. The Government says that Bengal is a pauper province and we mechanically accept the statement. To call a province which boasts $6\frac{1}{2}$ crores of population as pauper is only to proclaim our own intellectual bankruptcy. Did not the Governor of Bengal observe in a broadcast talk[1] the other day that the cultivator in Bengal remains unemployed for six months in the year? Can any population in the world subsist while remaining idle for half the year? Even if all the water that the rains bring were captured and harnessed to irrigation it would not keep the masses alive if their enforced unemployment for the better part of the year were not removed. Our real malady is not destitution but laziness, apathy and inertia. You may achieve marvels of irrigational engineering. But well-filled granaries alone cannot and will not end our slavery. To end slavery you must overcome the mental and physical inertia of the masses and quicken their intelligence and creative faculty. It is my claim that the universalization of hand-spinning with a full knowledge of all that it stands for alone can bring that about in a sub-continent so vast and varied as India. I have compared spinning to the central sun and the other village crafts to the various planets in the solar system. The former gives light and warmth to the latter and sustains them. Without it they would not be able to exist.

Q. If swaraj hangs on the thread of hand-spun yarn, as you say, why have we failed to attain it up till now after a quarter of a century of khadi work?

[1] On December 8, 1945; *vide* also pp. 181-2.

G. Because our labour was not quickened by knowledge. The peace of the grave makes the latter the house of death. But the peace in the soul makes it the seat of divine intelligence. Similarly, soulless labour symbolizes serfdom. Labour illumined with knowledge symbolizes the will to freedom. There is a world of difference between the two. Khadi workers should understand that khadi work without the mastery of the science of khadi will be love's labour lost in terms of swaraj.

Q. What do you mean by the science of spinning? What things are included in it?

G. I have often said that I can do without food but not without sacrificial spinning. I have also claimed that no one in India has perhaps done his spinning with such unfailing regularity and conscientious diligence as I. And yet I will say that all that by itself cannot take the place of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge requires constant probing into the why and wherefore of every little process that you perform. Mere affirmation that in charkha there is swaraj and peace is not enough. A scientific mind will not be satisfied with having things scientific just on faith. He will insist on finding a basis in reason. Faith becomes lame when it ventures into matters pertaining to reason. Its field begins where reason's ends. Conclusions based on faith are unshakable whereas those based on reason are liable to be unstable and vulnerable to superior logic. To state the limitation of science is not to belittle it. We cannot do without either—each in its own place.

When I first discovered the spinning-wheel it was purely through intuition. It was not backed by knowledge so much so that I confused charkha with *kargha*, i.e., handloom. Later on, however, I tried to work out its possibilities with the help of the late Maganlal Gandhi. For instance, the question arose : Why should the spindle be made of iron, not brass? Should it be thin or thick? What would be the proper thickness? We began with the mill spindles. Then, spindle-holders used to be bamboo and wood. Later we came to leather and gut bearings. It was found that spindles got easily bent and were difficult to straighten. So we tried to make them out of knitting needles and ultimately of umbrellawires. All this called for the exercise of the inventive faculty and scientific research.

A khadi worker with a scientific mind will not stop there. 'Why the charkha, why not the spinning mill?' he will ask himself.

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The reply will be that everybody cannot own a spinning mill. If people depend on spinning mills for their clothing, whoever controls the spinning mills will control them and thus there will be an end to individual liberty. Today anyone can reduce the whole of London and New York to submission within 24 hours by cutting off their electric and water supply. Individual liberty and interdependence are both essential for life in society. Only a Robinson Crusoe can afford to be all self-sufficient. When a man has done all he can for the satisfaction of his essential requirements he will seek the co-operation of neighbours for the rest. That will be true co-operation. Thus a scientific study of the spinning-wheel will lead on to sociology. The spinning-wheel will not become a power for the liberation of India in our hands unless we have made a deep study of the various sciences related to it. It will then not only make India free but point the way to the whole world.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has very aptly remarked that at one time India was not lacking in the inventive spirit but today it has become dormant. Once one gets the scientific outlook it will be reflected in every act of his, in his eating, drinking, rest, sleep. Everything will be scientifically regulated and with a full appreciation of its why and wherefore. Finally, a scientific mind must have detachment or else it will land itself into the lunatic asylum. The Upanishad says that whatever there is in this universe is from Him. It belongs to Him and must be surrendered to Him and then enjoyed. Enjoyment and sorrow, success and failure will then be the same to you.

One thing more. Supposing the tyrant wants to destroy the spinning-wheel itself. What then? My reply is that in that event we should ourselves perish with the spinning-wheel and not live to witness its destruction. For every khadi worker who thus sacrifices himself thousands will arise to take his place. That act of his will set the final seal of victory on the cause he represents.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946, and *Harijan*, 31-3-1946

496. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

January 6, 1946

Gandhiji emphasized what he had said[1] at Mahishadal about the observance of the general rule for attending a meeting. He said that it was the common rule that nobody should enter the meeting place after it had begun and nobody should leave the meeting place during the continuance of the meeting. Those who would violate this rule, Gandhiji emphasized, would disturb others. Even if anybody did not find any interest in the meeting he should think of others who are in the meeting and not leave the meeting before it was concluded. This was the common rule for every meeting and in the case of prayer meeting they should be more careful, because at the prayer they had to train their minds and concentrate on God.

Referring to the song that was sung at the prayer Gandhiji said that they should take the significance of the song to their hearts. In the song Poet Rabindranath said that he would not be frightened to see God coming to him in the form of misery. In this connection Gandhiji would remind them of an English poem entitled "The Hound of Heaven"[2] in which God had been described as a huntsman pursuing the disciple continually. God, Gandhiji explained, could not leave His devotee alone because He, who had created the world, was concerned about the world going in order. So real misery came when they forgot God and happiness came when they kept God in them.

This[3] is also a kind of misery, but you should not feel like that. At the Sabarmati Ashram which was at a short distance from the Station there was a person who took the vow of silence. One day he told Gandhiji that he was greatly disturbed by the whistling train at the time of worship. Gandhiji suggested to him to shut his ears with cotton or rubber to prevent the whistle disturbing him. After a short time the man again came to Gandhiji and told him that he was no more in need of cotton or rubber because he had been trained to such a concentration of mind that no sound or whistle could enter his ears. What Gandhiji would tell them was that they should not be perturbed when misery—in whatever shape or form—came to them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7-1-1946

[1] *Vide* pp. 296-7.

[2] By Francis Thompson

[3] The reference is to the whistling of a train, which interrupted Gandhiji's speech.

497. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Express

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

SARDAR
CARE POWERFARM
BOMBAY

GOD WILLING SHALL BE AT BARDOLI THIRD MARCH.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

498. TELEGRAM TO K. SRINIVASAN

Express

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

KASTURI SRINIVASAN
"HINDU"
MADRAS

YOUR TELEGRAM. APPROVED.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

499. TELEGRAM TO M. SATYANARAYAN

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

SATYANARAYANJI[1]
CARE DAKSHIN [BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA]
THYAGARAYANAGAR (MADRAS)

RAJKUMARI WRITTEN ZAKIRSAHEB OR SAIYIDAIN[2]. FAILING EITHER RAJKUMARI WILL.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] Secretary, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras

[2] Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain, Principal, Teachers' Training College, Aligarh; later Adviser and Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Government of India

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500. LETTER TO SHARDA G. CHOKHAWALA

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

CHI. BABUDI,

Today is silence day. This is the first letter I am writing after the morning prayer. How are you? How is Anand? I am still touring on this side. I shall leave for Madras on the 19th or the 20th instant.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 10065. Courtesy : Sharada G. Chokhawala

501. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 7, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

Shrimati Saroj Basini Goho, the wife of Shri S. C. Goho, 'until a few days ago' said to be the Agent of the Government of India in Malaya, has just seen me and asked me to approach His Excellency about her husband, who is reported to have been arrested in Singapore. She has given me a copy of her memorial submitted to His Excellency. I have taken the liberty of telling her that if what is set forth in the papers shown to me and which are in the possession of the Government are true, her husband is quite safe. Could you please enlighten me in the matter?[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 75-6

[1] S. C. Goho had been charged with collaborating with the enemy. He was released in March 1946.

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502. LETTER TO SAROJ BASINI GOHO

SODEPUR,
January 7, 194[6][1]

DEAR SISTER,

I have gone through the papers you gave me and have started work in that connection. Please do not worry.

Blessings from
M. K. GANDHI

SHRIMATI SAROJ BASINI GOHO
6/1 KANTAPUKUR LANE
BAGH BAZAR P. O.
CALCUTTA

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

503. LETTER TO A. B. M. ENAYAT HUSSAIN

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

BHAI SAHEB,

I got your letter last evening. Today is my silence day. Tomorrow I leave for Assam. You and your friends may come on the 16th at 2.30 p. m. I shall manage to give you half an hour.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

JANAB A. B. M. ENAYAT HUSSAIN
GENERAL SECRETARY
MUSLIM UNEMPLOYED RELIEF ASSOCIATION
18 MIRZAPUR STREET
CALCUTTA

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

[1] The source has 1945, which is obviously a slip. *Vide* the preceding item.

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504. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

Gandhiji stressed the need for observance of the rules of cleanliness by every citizen. He asked them to remember that cleanliness was next to Godliness and that if they could observe the rules of cleanliness they would be pure in their hearts also.

Gandhiji said that although he did not travel much during these days he had heard from his friends how the city streets were made dirty with the kernel of fruits, paper pieces and other useless things strewn over them. It was also said that Calcutta had been dirty. But he could tell them that if every citizen did his part and observed the rules of cleanliness then the face of Calcutta would be changed.

Gandhiji also exhorted them to apply the rules of cleanliness in other spheres of their lives as well.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-1-1946

505. INTERVIEW TO STUDENTS DEPUTATION[1]

CALCUTTA,
[On or after *January 7, 1946*][2]

The answer is already in what you have told me just now. You should get into the habit of speaking in Hindustani. Just knowing it is not enough. One should be ashamed of speaking in English.

2. Students should assemble for this particular work and hold meetings. Vinoba, Dada, Aryanayakum, Ashadevi, Ramachandran, Mahesh and others are all there to guide you. Acharya Kripalani and Sucheta are of course there. For that matter

[1] R. Achutan, Secretary, Benares Hindu University Rachanatmak Mandal for students and spokesman of the deputation, says : "In January 1946, a group of students from Benares Hindu University met Gandhiji at Sodepur Ashram in Calcutta and discussed with him about the question of revival of Gandhi Seva Sangh to take up the constructive task of non-violent revolution. . . . Since Bapu was observing silence . . . [he] wrote [down] his reply. . . ." (S.N. 10854)

[2] Gandhiji's first silence day was on the 7th in January 1946.

Dhiren Majmudar and Vichitra Narayan are also there. Consult them also. There are many more whom I have not named. The thing is that there should be steadfastness and truth in you. Then everything could be done. But not today. Consult all these people. Aryanayakum is here and also Kripalani and Sucheta. Do this after careful thinking. There should be no repentance afterwards. Discuss with Radhakrishna. It is quite easy [to do this] in Kashi Vidyapith. What is the use of asking me? Think yourselves and do what you think proper. Have a talk with Pyarelal. He was also a student like you when he came to me.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 10854

506. TELEGRAM TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

CALCUTTA,
January 8, 1946

MUNNALAL
NATURECURE CLINIC
POONA

KANCHAN'S ILLNESS CAUSING ANXIETY. YOU CAN COME IF YOU FEEL YOU MUST. AM LEAVING FOR ASSAM. SUSHILABEHN REMAINING WITH KANCHAN. DOCTOR BIDHAN ROY SUPERINTENDING TREATMENT. ASKING NARAHARI[1] SEND MANIBHAI REPLACE YOU IF YOU LEFT.

BAPU

From a photostat : G.N. 8627

[1] *Vide* the following item.

507. TELEGRAM TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

SODEPUR,
Express *January 8, 1946*

NARHARIBHAI PARIKH
SEVAGRAM
WARDHA

KANCHAN'S ILLNESS SERIOUS. MUNNALAL MIGHT COME IF HE IS ANXIOUS. HENCE SEND MANIBHAI POONA IF FEASIBLE. GOING ASSAM FIVE DAYS STAY. ADDRESS GAUHATI.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

508. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

Yesterday I sent you a telegram as follows :

"God willing reach Bardoli 3rd March." I very much wanted to come on the 1st but I see that that is not possible, for February has only 28 days and I must look in at Poona, for a few days at least, before going to Bardoli. I have, therefore counted two days more so that I may arrange the programme as if the month had 30 days. Having started the thing I must see it through. I cannot in any circumstances tolerate misuse of money. And if I take no interest Dinshaw cannot manage the new venture. I will, therefore, quickly finish the work at Wardha, pay a brief visit to Poona, and then come to Bardoli and after that go back to Poona again. This is what I have in mind at the moment.

I have already written something about the Parliamentary Delegation.[1] We should not spurn it; on the other hand we should welcome it whole-heartedly. It is not necessary to get excited

[1] *Vide* pp. 338-9.

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over it as people used to when such people arrived in the past. We should not insult our guests in any manner whatsoever. There is no need for Congressmen to decline the invitation if they are invited to parties that may be held to honour the members of the delegation. I myself will certainly meet them somewhere. As it is, I was to see the Governor on returning from Midnapore. I saw him only last evening and he himself asked me when I could meet them. I gave him my dates. They will most probably meet me in Madras, no other dates seemed suitable. Dr. Mahmud has come over to see me. He met me the day before yesterday, and since I am soon leaving for Assam he intends to go to Patna after seeing me off. So he will go today. In the meanwhile, the Governor heard about his arrival and suggested a meeting. They were together for about an hour. Nothing important seems to have been discussed, but they were glad to have met. I have not as yet been able to sit and talk with Dr. Mahmud for even a quarter of an hour. Just as he came my silence began. It lasted throughout yesterday. Dr. Mahmud came in the evening, but I went to see the Governor. When I returned it was already a quarter to ten; and so naturally we could not sit and talk.

I am all right. Kanchan has been taken very ill but I hope she will recover. She has severe anaemia. She has had it for some time but she did not pay attention to it. I leave for Assam today. I do not like to leave her but you know how often I have had to go like this. Most probably Sushila will stay on for her sake. I am dictating this early in the morning after the prayers. How she fares today we shall know only in the course of the day. Just now she is sleeping. So is Sushila, She was with Kanchan for most of the night.

If I fill this letter with an account of my experiences here, it would become much longer. I have not the time for it. Besides, why should you want to read all that?

Rajkumari is of course here. She had to go to Hyderabad (Sindh) for some time. She will accompany me to Assam. After that she will have to go to Mysore.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
68 MARINE DRIVE, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 291-3

509. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 8, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I enclose herewith a cutting[1] for you to read. Can the information therein be true?[2] Probably you could let me know without troubling His Excellency.

Enclosure : 1

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 44

510. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR (NEAR CALCUTTA),
January 8, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

His Excellency knows Dr. B. C. Roy. He is one of the foremost physicians of India. He is responsible for the efficient management of several hospitals in Calcutta. His services have been enlisted by the Government of India. He was on the Bhore Committee[3] too. The Congress has organized a mission of relief for the people of Burma and Malaya. I see from the

[1] From *The Hindustan Standard*, 6-1-1946, which had reported that twenty-five INA prisoners were bayoneted to death for singing the INA national anthem in Bahadurgarh camp and many were punished for shouting the slogan "Jai Hind"

[2] The addressee in reply enclosed a Press Note which said that 42 men had received bruises on their buttocks from the tip of the bayonets as a result of their resistance. No one was killed and no one was punished for using the slogan "Jai Hind".

[3] The Health Survey and Development Committee appointed by the Government of India

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papers which Dr. Roy has handed to me that the Government of India are hesitating about giving facilities to the mission, the reason being that the Government are doing all they can. But in a service of this kind all that even a powerful Government can do is not enough. Lest for want of offered help people in distress might suffer, I want to dismiss from my mind the suggestion that because it is a Congress mission there is hesitation about its acceptance. I only hope that the very able assistance offered by Dr. B. C. Roy will not be rejected.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 73

511. LETTER TO STEPHEN LEE

SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt and clear reply. I propose to make the fullest possible use of it.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

STEPHEN LEE, ESQ.
FRIENDS' SERVICE UNIT
1 UPPER WOOD ST.
CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] In his reply of January 30, the addressee said the offer "must be declined" because the Government of Burma were themselves trying to provide medical relief and could not provide facilities to the mission.

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512. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

KHADI PRATISHTHAN,
SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

Herewith the note I promised last night to send to you.

1. Mahishadal—Tamluk sub-division, Midnapore District.

On the application of one Shridhar Chandra Goswami on 27th June, 1944, the presiding officer ordered the return of articles seized. These articles have not yet been returned nor compensation offered, if the articles are missing (according to my information).[1] Original papers sent herewith. (Enclosure 1)[2]

2. Contai sub-division.

Water that has become saline there and probably in the other sub-divisions also should be drained out and renovated so as to be drinkable.

I enclose herewith the original letter from the Friends' Service Unit showing how urgent this work is. (Enclosure 2)

3. Abhoy Ashram, Comilla.

I attach hereto a paper marked 'Enclosure 3'. It discloses a curious state of affairs, as I understand it. I know personally that the Ashram activities were wholly beneficial and constructive. Schools based on social reform were run, catering for mostly Muslim children of spinning families who span yarn for wages; a depot was established for the storing of yarn, cotton and khadi; a hospital was conducted under the able supervision of Shri Suresh Bannerji.[3] (Enclosure 3)

4. Other Khadi Centres.

[1] The addressee said in reply that the applicant had filed a claim petition after the articles were auctioned and therefore he was asked to withdraw the sales proceeds which he declined. It was not possible to return the articles but the payment of compensation would be considered if he submitted an application to the District Magistrate to that effect.

[2] This and the other enclosures mentioned in the letter are not traceable.

[3] The addressee said in reply that the question of removing the ban on these institutions would be examined and the payment of compensation for the damage done to the property would be considered.

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Other khadi centres affected are shortly referred to in enclosure No. 4.[1]

5. Sales Tax Act.

As to Sales Tax Act, I observe that the Act was passed on 1st July 1941. Handloom cloth was excluded from the operation of the Act, but it was amended on March 30th 1944, and the tax was raised from one to two pice per rupee. On 25th June 1945, it was raised to three pice per rupee by the Governor's Ordinance. Handloom cloth was made taxable though originally omitted, but it is not clear when. Dhoti, sari and *lungi* worth Rs. 10, Rs. 15, and Rs. 18 respectively are excluded from the operation of the Act.

My point is that khadi, i.e., hand-spun and hand-woven, or hand-spun yarn should be excluded from all taxes. Logically, hand-woven cloth also, though woven from mill yarn, should be excluded for the tax hits the handloom weaver. Therefore, the exclusion of dhoti, sari and *lungi* is of no help. The revenue derived from khadi is altogether negligible. The revenue derived from hand-woven cloth is fair because hand-woven cloth is large enough in quantity to yield some income to the treasury, but at the poor weaver's expense. In taxing khadi, however, thousands of poor hand-spinners are so hard hit that the tax becomes so deterrent as to be punitive. I am quite certain that such was never the intention of the framers of the Act. The oversight has only to be brought to the notice of the Government to be remedied. I may also mention that all the khadi depots of the All-India Spinners' Association are benevolent concerns. The conductors are servants of the A. I. S. A. which according to the recent judgment of the Privy Council, has been held to be a benevolent institution, not liable to income tax.[2]

Incidentally, I may mention that whilst fresh milk is excluded from the operation of the Act, all other forms of milk such as boiled milk, pasteurized milk, *dahi*, etc., are taxable under the Act. The clause baffles me. The original Act is called Bengal Act of 1941.

[1] The addressee said in reply that in most of the khadi centres either the immovable property had been returned or compensation in lieu of it had been paid. The cases of the remaining centres were under consideration. In cases where premises were forfeited orders were being issued either to return the premises or to provide an alternative accommodation.

[2] The addressee assured Gandhiji that he would have the sales tax examined immediately.

6. Feni.

Feni is within the Japanese bombed area. Therefore, 98 villages were evacuated by the Government. Assurance is said to have been given that six months after the cessation of hostilities the villages would be returned to the villagers. Nevertheless, 28 villages appear to be still in Government possession. At the time of evacuation, removal of merchandise was strictly prohibited. This is a case demanding close inquiry.

I enclose herewith an account furnished to me, marked 'Enclosure 5'.[1]

I have hurriedly drawn up this letter. The chief aim is to involve as little reading as possible for you. If, however, any further papers are required I shall be prepared to furnish them on my return from Assam, I hope on the 14th. As I told you last evening I cannot myself vouch for the accuracy of the facts given. They have been given to me by co-workers as being accurate. But if that is not so I stand open to correction. If, however, they are found to be accurate I suggest that they call for immediate inquiry. I have taken care to refer only to those things which can be remedied without much difficulty or expense and yet they are the things which will give relief to the neediest.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure : 5

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 116-8

513. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter about Prabhu Dayal[2] on 3-1-1946. I am very busy myself. Prabhu Dayal seems to be getting along fairly well. I expect you have detained him, let me know the developments.

[1] The addressee said that eight villages would be permanently acquired as they had been converted into airfields. The other 14 which were requisitioned for making bricks were being released. The accusation that people in the requisitioned areas were prevented from removing their movables was wrong. On the contrary help was given to them to do so.

[2] Prabhu Dayal Vidyarthi

Kanchan has fallen ill. I have to go to Assam today. I hope you are all well.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. DEVDAS GANDHI
"HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

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

514. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 8, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I have sent the following wire:[1]

As it is Kanchan was ill. She was suffering from anaemia. Dr. Bidhan sent his own pathologist, who took her blood sample and examined it. She has been found to be suffering from severe anaemia. It is because of this that her cough does not leave her. I have not known even a millionaire receive better treatment than she is receiving. Dr. Bidhan calls regularly and guides Sushilabehn. The latter had treated her once through a serious illness and hence Kanchan has complete faith in her. I do not therefore believe that you will be able to do anything more by coming here. But if you feel you must, I will not dissuade you. It might not be proper also in view of the seriousness of the illness. I have, therefore, sent the above wire. If you have already left this letter will be superfluous. But I am dictating this assuming that you have not left. If you do come the question will arise as to who will take charge there. I have therefore sent a wire to Manibhai at Sevagram saying that, if he can, he should leave immediately for Poona. If you have not already left, he will help you. Take whatever help he can give. If you have already left, Manibhai will do as he thinks best.

I had got your postcard yesterday. All the questions in it had been answered in my previous letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8613. Also C.W. 7202. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] For the text, *vide* p. 375.

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515. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

January 9, 1946

Last night (Tuesday) was a terrible night for me. The crowds at every station were unmanageable. The shouts, although well meant, could not please me in my old age, if they ever pleased me before. For I know that swaraj is made of truer and sterner stuff. They serve no useful purpose. In the beginning stages, when people out of fear were afraid to hear their own voice, shouts and slogans had a place, not today when we seem likely to achieve independence, maybe within a few months. I was allowed last night no sleep except for what I could snatch in between stations. I cannot repeat this performance for many days and hope to live to the age of one hundred and twenty-five years. Friends will now appreciate why I have hardened my heart against even a brief tour through East Bengal. I would love to travel throughout Bengal but I know that for the sake of the common cause I must restrain myself and invite friends and co-workers to do likewise. Let them and people at large satisfy themselves with what service I can render without traveling as I used to before. Let the leaders in the various places try to conciliate the populace surrounding them and advise them to restrain from shouts and slogans and from jostling one another.

One vulgar and uncivilized practice must be given up. There is the chain on every train to be used strictly in times of danger or accidents. Any other use of it and the consequent stoppage of the train is not merely a punishable offence but it is a vulgar, thoughtless and even dangerous misuse of an instrument devised for great emergencies. Any such misuse is a social abuse which, if it becomes a custom, must result in a great public nuisance. It is up to every lover of his country to issue a stern warning against such wanton abuse of a humanitarian device intended for public safety.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-1-1946 and 11-1-1946

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516. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[1]

SAULKUCHI,
January 9, 1946

Gandhiji said that he had noticed during the *bhajan* that some of the people had failed to keep time with the song, but that was pardonable. He would like that this form of congregational prayer be adopted all over Hindustan. He was told that women in Assam sang sweetly during their work, for example when they were spinning or weaving. Gandhiji had noticed that women had not joined in today's *bhajan*. It might be that they were ashamed to sing in chorus, but Gandhiji told them that swaraj would not come until they gave up this feeling of shyness.

He was thankful to them for maintaining peace in the prayer meeting. In a few months they might have swaraj and they wanted to have swaraj within a few months in a peaceful way. But could they achieve swaraj if they went on shouting in season and out of season? This would go to show that they did not possess the necessary discipline.

Mahatma Gandhi referred to the experience of his journey and the indisciplined behaviour of the people at some places. He said this showed that the people had not yet fully imbibed the principle of non-violence. Indiscipline, he added, was only a variety of violence. If 40 crores of people or even a major part of them had assimilated the message of truth and non-violence which the Congress had been preaching for the last 25 years, India would have been free. But that was no reason for despair or despondency. To inculcate perfect discipline and non-violence among forty crores of people was no joke. It needed time. Twenty-five years were insufficient for such a tremendous task. That was why he desired to live 125 years so that he might, with his own eyes, see the consummation of his own ideas. But he could not hope to live up to that span of life unless the conditions attaching to it were fulfilled. If these conditions were fulfilled not only he, but anybody even in a country like India where the average expectation of life was the lowest in the world could live up to that period. It was clear, however, that if he exposed himself to experiences like that of last night his candle would be burnt out within a month.

Britishers, continued Gandhiji, might realize, as they were bound to one day, that they could not hold down an awakened people for all time with

[1] Held on the northern bank of the Brahmaputra. The first two paragraphs are reproduced here from *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11-1-1946.

force of bayonets and therefore, decide to transfer power to them. They (the people) would find themselves in a quandary in that event, if they had no discipline and organization. He hoped that they would not allow themselves to be caught napping like that.

There was no greater spell-binder of peace than the name of God, said Gandhiji. He had, therefore, commenced the practice of holding mass prayers and inviting people to join in singing *Ramdhun* to the beating of time with the hands, to inculcate in the masses the spirit of non-violence and discipline. He would love to see that the whole of India was covered with prayer gatherings like that.

The Hindu, 11-1-1946, and *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 11-1-1946

517. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

I have seen a report[1] in the Press, wholly baseless, to the effect that I propose to give two days to Orissa before reaching Madras. I would love, if I at all could, to give some days to Orissa and some days to Andhra. But I know the limitations of my body. It gives the work that it does from day to day to the utmost limit. Therefore, I cannot break my journey either for Orissa or Andhra and I invite all friends and co-workers in these two provinces to give their fullest co-operation by telling people not to expect from me what seems to me to be impossible. I do not know who is responsible for the report in question.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-1-1946

[1] The report appeared in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 8-1-1946.

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518. TELEGRAM TO JAMINI BOSE

Express

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

JAMINI BOSE[1]
CONGRESS OFFICE
CHITTAGONG

YOUR WIRE. DOING NEEDFUL. WIRE OR POST FULL PARTICULARS GIVING OSTENSIBLE CAUSE OUTRAGE.[2]

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

519. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

CAMP : SARANIA ASHRAM,
GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I enclose herewith copy of a wire[3] received today. The story seems to be unbelievable. I know you will inquire and take the necessary steps, if there is any foundation for the truth of the story.[4]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL
CALCUTTA

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 114

[1] President, Chittagong District Congress Committee

[2] Four men of Ganjam Pioneer Corps had tried to molest a village woman near Chittagong. On their attempt being foiled by the villagers they came back in great strength and set fire to houses, assaulted men, molested women and plundered property.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item; also "Telegram to Private Secretary to the Governor of Bengal", p. 404.

[4] Casey informed Gandhiji that the culprits would be tried by a civil (criminal) court.

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520. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. MIRA,

This is just to tell you that I succeeded only yesterday in studying your drawings of the Himalayan scenes. They need greater study than I was able to give them. But I had little difficulty in understanding and appreciating the love you have put into your work. Your instructions at the back are most careful.

I hope you had my previous letter[1] in answer to your long letter. I do so wish you had less trouble with men and animals. Others must write to you about the wonderful experience I am having here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 6514. Courtesy : Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9909

521. LETTER TO TAYYEBULLA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

DEAR TAYYEBULLA,

Some mutual friend had told me of your loss before your letter was given to me on my arrival here last night at about 10 p.m. Why grieve over the inevitable? And death is the common treasure of all that lives. Imagine the torture that birth would be if there was no death! Loss therefore is a conventional word. Then true friendship is tested finally by the death of the loved one. And the verse you quote from the Holy Koran puts the finishing touch on all I say. Let Him take what He has given. Let us then praise His great name. My prayer with you.

[1] *Vide* p. 221.

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You have done well in not coming to me.
Love.

BAPU

M. TAYYEBULLAH
NOWGONG

From a photostat : G.N. 3765. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

522. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

I got your letter here last evening. You seem to have succeeded very well. Kanta of course is a very obliging lady. She knows the art of looking after children. I am, therefore, not surprised by what you say. I am only pleased. How is Sarala? How is Kanta's own health? Ask her to write to me.

You have said nothing about Shanti. I trust the children are all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8759. Also C.W. 1046. Courtesy : Champa R. Mehta

523. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

CHI. AMTULSALAAM,

Since you have been following my suggestions without arguing about them, you are bound to get well. I should be very happy if both of you sisters[1] recover enough to be able to come to Madras. But it will be as God wills. I may not write to anybody else today. Blessings to all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 503

[1] The addressee and Kanchan M. Shah

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524. LETTER TO PUSHPA K. DESAI

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. PUSHPA,

I got your letter. Keep meeting Vinobaji from time to time. You should regard it as your dharma to write regularly courteous letters to Father. If you want to tread the path of truth, you should lovingly and in a spirit of humility do whatever work of service is entrusted to you. If you understand only this much, all your problems will be solved. To say that God may lead you to this path of truth would be tautologous. Truth itself is God. Hence dedication to truth is itself discovery of the path of truth. Reflect on all the implications of the path of *bhakti* from this point of view.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9269

525. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 10, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your two letters before me, which I am enclosing. I am sorry to learn that Parnerkar's sister's son has passed away. I understand what you say about Anantramji. It will be good if he grows leafy vegetables. See how much land Aryanayakumji wants and where he would like to have it. In my opinion, we should give him whatever he wants. Maybe I have left out something but today only this much.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

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526. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

Gandhiji congratulated the gathering on the beautiful way in which they had followed *Ramdhun*. Particularly he was pleased that women had whole-heartedly joined in it without any feeling of false shame. In taking the name of God, hesitation and fear as well as false shame were equally out of place. The man who had the realization of God Who dwelt in the hearts of all beings should know no fear.

"*Jai Hind*" should not replace "*Vandemataram*".[1] The words which Subhas Bose uttered were very pleasant to hear. But by this people should not forget *Vandemataram* which was being uttered since the inception of the Congress. First, they should say "*Vandemataram*" and then "*Jai Hind*". He would wholeheartedly return that greeting but it should not be to the exclusion of "*Vandemataram*". If they could discard "*Vandemataram*" which had such a tradition of sacrifice behind it, he was afraid they would one day discard "*Jai Hind*" also.

Gandhiji reiterated his belief that Subhas Babu was not dead, but was hiding somewhere[2] and said that if he could communicate with Subhas Babu, he was sure the latter would endorse him in his view about "*Vandemataram*".

The Hindu, 12-1-1946

527. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your wire. Your decision not to come over is perfectly correct. It was my dharma to send you the wire that I did. I had explained to you what your dharma was at the time of your father's death. You have adhered to that. May you be blessed. I daily get news about Kanchan's progress.

[1] The source had reported that Gandhiji was greeted by some girl volunteers with 'Jai Hind' as he arrived at the prayer ground.

[2] *Vide* also p. 334.

I am dictating this in the early hours of the morning. I had a wire from Sushila yesterday, saying that Kanchan was improving. She gives the credit to penicillin. I believe that Sushila has nursed her very well indeed. She has stayed behind entirely for the sake of Kanchan. Let us see now what happens. Perhaps this serious illness may bring about a complete transformation in Kanchan. She is simple-hearted but is very much of a child also. As she grows in age, she does not correspondingly grow in understanding. Can it be that you are the cause of that? The people around us believe so, and hold me also jointly responsible with you. I do not admit the charge. But that is another matter. I have mentioned the thing in case you would like to think over it.

Manibhai must have arrived there by now. We had in any case decided to summon him there, and because of the development regarding Kanchan I felt it my dharma to send him there and asked him to proceed immediately if he was free. I have had very little experience of him. But Shantilal, who has lived at Sevagram for some time, and Ishvarlal Desai, husband of Nirmala, Mahadev's sister, have given me the impression that he is a man of uncommon ability. Narahari has had experience of him and seen his worth. You will, therefore, find Manibhai of the greatest help. He is a capable man at any rate.

I have been insisting on the account books being kept in English entirely for the sake of Jehangirji[1]. If he is not keen on that, you may by all means have them kept in Hindi or Marathi. Can it be so arranged that the months and the dates are entered according to the Gregorian calendar, so that Jehangirji can check them?

You can show this letter to Dinshaw. You may show him any letter of mine.

Give the accompanying letter to Manibhai. Give Doctor the letter I am writing for him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8618. Also C.W. 7204. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

[1] Jehangir Patel

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528. LETTER TO SITA CHARAN DIKSHIT

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

BHAI DIKSHITJI,

I have your clear letter. It is good that you have written frankly. I am dictating this also at a Mahila Ashram. It is in Gauhati. A camp of the Kasturba Fund is being held here. On one side there is a village and on the other Gauhati city. It is utterly peaceful.

It gave me satisfaction to know that the cereals which were used for the camp would be cooked as kedgeree. It is quite true that I like *garba* and this I mentioned there. In one way I liked the scene, but from another point of view I did not like it and felt sorry.[1] I could not then express myself in words as I was deeply moved. My heart was already in Bengal. I can never say that there was anything wrong in what you did. There was nothing wrong. The whole scene was one of love and it was performed with my consent. Even so I had some talk with Shriman Narayan. But its purport was quite different. I do not remember whether I was able to convey it or not. But if I could not speak out then I am telling you now. The Mahila Ashram is an institution of the poor. It is born of a noble sentiment. It is filled with Jamnalalji's feelings and Vinobaji's *tapascharya.* It is regarded as a good means of rendering service to poor women. And its management is in the hands of Shantabehn. And yet what a difference between what goes on in such an institution and the almost naked condition of the millions of poor women of India and Bengal. And I being a witness to all this. It wrung my heart then. Even as I recall the scene, my heart weeps. Even if I could not convey my meaning, Shriman understood it and conveyed it. I dictate this early in the morning. If it calls for further explanation, or if you want to know more, ask me when I come there. You may share this letter with all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 10421. Courtesy : Sita Charan Dikshit

[1] *Vide* pp. 140-1.

529. LETTER TO MANIBHAI

SARANIA ASHRAM, ASSAM,
January 11, 1946

CHI. MANIBHAI,

Naraharibhai replied to my wire and what I had expected has come about. Give all help to Munnalal. Do as much as you can without harming your health. I expect to see in all you do firmness, sweetness, cleanliness and skill. That is the impression Chi. Shantilal has given me of you and, as far as my experience goes, you have lived up to this reputation. I had intended to take you to Poona with me but circumstances have conspired otherwise; and I think it is all for the better. Please write to me. Munnalal will give you my itinerary.

I hope your leaving Sevagram has not inconvenienced Naraharí.

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

530. LETTER TO DINSHAW K. MEHTA

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 11, 1946

CHI. DINSHAW,

Chi. Munnalal's wife Kanchanbehn has been very ill, so I sent a wire saying that he should be relieved if he wanted to come away. I assumed that someone would have to replace him there and so telegraphed to Sevagram also asking them to send M[anibhai], whom I regard as very competent. He has promptly left for Poona. I am glad I have been told that Manibhai is a very good worker. I believe it. I have hardly any personal experience of him. You will have some.

I hope you received the Rs. 10,000 I sent you, so the new account will not suffer from paucity of funds.

The patients who were already there should adapt themselves to the new pattern. They should mix with the poor. Everyone should be punctual to the minute. Over and above this, you

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should accommodate them only if they pay or else let them leave. This alone will be true comradeship. We cannot any more allot separate rooms to the patients according to their wishes. In fact for the present we cannot accommodate patients who need separate rooms. I have already written to you to allow as much privacy as the patients may need. I hope you remember it. If you haven't had such instructions from me so far, please make a note now.

Munnalal suggests that the English method of book-keeping is more expensive. I believe it is true. How would it matter if we maintained accounts in the Indian style? The Indian method can also ensure accurate account-keeping. Indian firms maintain accounts in the Indian way and carry on business in millions involving dealings with English banks. And since our little affair is going to be and should be worthy of an Indian we ought to infuse into it the swadeshi atmosphere as far as possible right from the beginning. Please show this letter to Jehangirji. It was at his instance that we had agreed to maintain accounts in the English way. But I believe, if opting for the English method is likely to cause an expenditure of Rs. 40 to 50 per month, Jehangirji would be in favour of saving the amount. The money that I shall contribute must be regarded as belonging to the poor. I may be getting it from the rich, but once it comes into my hands it becomes the poor man's pie, to be spent solely for the poor. All my dealings are carried on in the same old way and it pains me that now because of my old age I cannot fully follow that way, and I also put up with the situation because I cannot get on otherwise. But I must not burden others with my foibles.

I hope you got my earlier letters, and have replied to them.

For the present save all avoidable expenditure. I shall try my best to reach there on the 20th or the 21st of February. It is in God's hands whether I shall succeed.

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

531. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

SARANIA ASHRAM, GAUHATI,
[*January 11, 1946*][1]

CHI. SUSHILA (GANDHI),

I saw what you wrote at the bottom of Arun's[2] letter. You will know from my letter to him how my mind is working. You should not be soft. There is a famous line in Kalidasa and, I think also in the *Bhagavata*. It says that love is more tender than a flower and harder than steel.[3] That alone is love which can soften or harden with the occasion, all else is infatuation. Those who are worldly-wise should also note that such famous sayings are often misconstrued.

There are many occasions when I remember all of you. There are also occasions when there is a feeling of relief that you did not come. The experience which you are gaining there and what Arun and Ila are witnessing is of course worth while. Maybe, comparatively speaking that is better than anything else. Ila for one was not likely to have imbibed anything in this place. Hence, for her at least I regard this atmosphere as positively bad. You needed peace. You cannot expect to find peace in my company, especially while I am touring. Arun's can be considered a different case, yet on the whole he is likely to be safest while he is before your eyes. He is a fine boy. I am of the view that he will have achieved all if he grows finer and finer. As for the other development everything happens in its own course. And in the absence of nobility of character even the Kingdom of Heaven is meaningless.

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

[1] The letter is found among letters of this date.
[2] The addressee's son
[3] वज्रादपि कठोराणि मृदूनि कुसुमादपि, *Uttararamcharita*, II. 7

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532. LETTER TO KAILAS D. MASTER[1]

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. KAILAS,

I have your letter. I shall say you have grown very wise if you get good testimonials from everyone there. And then I shall have nothing more to say to you. I shall be glad and the expectations that Prabhudas himself has entertained and has encouraged me to entertain of you will bear fruit. Besides, you already have my blessing that you may grow to be a very fine girl. There is much scope there to learn for anyone who wants.

I have your brother's letter to which I am enclosing a reply. Pass it on to him after you have read it. Don't encourage him to come till you are yourself perfectly settled and don't let him come until he grows into a very hard-working, firm and obedient boy. The question of his earning anything does not arise. See that in your zeal you do not encourage him only to repent later and cause embarrassment to others. You must watch out. You must draw your letters still bigger and you must form them well. You have learnt Urdu, haven't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

KAILASBEHN

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

533. LETTER TO JITU MASTER

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. JITU[2],

I have your letter. You must improve your handwriting. I am glad you want to live in the Ashram. But it is a difficult life. You can lead Ashram life in your home and pursue

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] Brother of Kailash D. Master; *vide* the preceding item.

the crafts that are pursued in the Ashram. If you don't have the strength to do it the Ashram cannot endow you with it. Wanting to live in the Ashram merely for this is, I am afraid, mere infatuation.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

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

534. LETTER TO ARUN GANDHI

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. ARUN,

I have your letter. I find it better than your earlier one, although it has scope for improvement, which you must bring about. I would always advise you and it is my wish that wherever you be you will always fully observe your vow.

I can very well understand that there are difficulties while one is travelling. It is also quite understandable that sometimes one just cannot spin however much one wants to. I shouldn't mind if you are not lazy but fail to spin owing to some unavoidable circumstances. Thorough observance of one vow straightens out all other matters. This is invariably found to be the case.

Why is Ila growing insolent. As her elder brother, you are, I think, to blame for it. She is a nice girl. You can therefore help her make good progress.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

ARUN GANDHI
DELHI

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

[1] & [2] The letters are in the Devanagari script.

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535. LETTER TO PRABHU DAYAL VIDYARTHI

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

CHI. PRABHU DAYAL,

I was glad to have your letter. I had seen your letter to Sushilabehn and I think she had sent a reply also.

It is right for you to remain there as long as they do not relieve you.

I shall pay your expenses, including your return fare. Draw the amount from Devdas and that, too, from my account. As long as Devdas is there, there should be no need to send it from the Ashram. The Government have of course offered to pay for your journeys. All this is only for your information.

The Delhi weather is considered to be the best during this season. Normally, [good] climate and pure food are adequate for maintaining good health.

I understand about the Jamia. It would indeed be good if they let you stay there. Maybe they cannot for want of accommodation but if the reason is paucity of funds you can tell them that your expenses will be borne by the Ashram.

I am writing to Bhai Shriram. It is good that you informed me.

From here, I shall reach Sodepur on the 14th and on the 19th I may leave there for Madras. That means that a letter written to reach me by the 19th, should be sent to the Sodepur address.

C/O DEVDAS GANDHI
"HINDUSTAN TIMES"
NEW DELHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 11696. Also Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

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536. LETTER TO SHRIRAM SHARMA

[*January 11, 1946*][1]

BHAI SHRIRAMJI SHARMA,

Prabhu Dayal writes that you lost a son while you were in jail and another after your release. What can I write to you? How can I console you? But where is any call for consolation on a death? Why fear death? Is death painful? And is birth joyful? Why is it that great epics such as the *Ramayana* teach the same thing? Because, on reflection, we find that birth and death are but two sides of the same thing. What is there good or bad about it? A world without death would be a frightful thing. Maybe the world would then have perished. All this is not philosophizing but an utterance of the thoughts that come to my mind.

Prabhu Dayal also writes that after meditation in the jail, your faith in truth and non-violence has grown much stronger and that you and your whole family spin beautiful yarn. All this makes me very happy.

My Assam tour will end tomorrow. I intend to leave Calcutta for Madras on the 19th and February 8 is the date when I reach Sevagram.

My address in Madras : Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Thyagarayanagar. At Calcutta, it will of course be Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur. I shall expect your reply at either Place.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIRAM SHARMA
BALKA BASTI
NAGPUR

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

[1] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.

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537. LETTER TO ADVAITKUMAR GOSWAMI

[*January 11, 1946*][1]

BHAI ADVAITKUMAR,

I have your letter. I am trying to find out. Let us see what happens.

I have the Raja Saheb's[2] letter. I have not yet read it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI ADVAITKUMAR GOSWAMI
C/O MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER
BRINDABAN

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

538. LETTER TO SHANTA NERULKAR

SARANIA ASHRAM,
[*January 11, 1946*][3]

CHI. SHANTA,

I have your letter. You write with too much hesitation. There is no reason for it. It does not matter that I may not reply. I must still have letters from you.

Your illness pains me. One who would serve the villages should have a body strong as steel.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SHANTA NERULKAR

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

[1] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.
[2] Presumably Raja Mahendra Pratap; *vide* p. 406.
[3] In the source this is placed among the letters of this date.

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539. SPEECH AT KASTURBA MEMORIAL COMMITTEE MEETING[1]

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji explained the aims and objects of Kasturba Memorial Trust which had been started[2] during the period when he was in jail. Later on he lent a hand in framing the Trust of the Fund.[3] The idea behind the whole scheme of Kasturba Trust had been to make women self-reliant and self-sufficient. This did not mean that men would go down, but if womenfolk improved and raised themselves up, men would automatically be raised higher. It is good that in India there were no quarrels between the menfolk and the womenfolk as existed in other countries. But that did not mean that the condition of Indian women was better than those of European countries. If the resources of Assam could be utilized, then the face of Assam could be changed. So much time was wasted in useless and idle talk. If they kept a diary of their work for the 24 hours, then they would know it. If they could utilize only a portion of the time they wasted for constructive work, there would be a wonderful improvement in their condition. In Assam *muga* industry was one through which people could change their conditions considerably and thus could do immense service to the cause of their country.

He knew that quite a number of ladies had come merely to see him. But he could tell them that if they could devote all their strength to the execution of his constructive programme they would be immensely benefited.[4]

Gandhiji emphasized that beauty lay not in ornaments or fine clothes but in doing something good and in applying oneself to doing some service to others.

Replying to certain questions, Gandhiji said that the relation between the Congress and the Kasturba Memorial Trust was nothing but at the same time everything. If Congressmen took interest, the relation was there. If not, there was no relation.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946, and *The Hindu*, 13-1-1946

[1] This was held at Sarania Ashram to seek Gandhiji's advice on uplift of women.

[2] On March 18, 1944

[3] In 1944; *vide* Vol. LXXVII.

[4] What follows is reproduced from *The Hindu*, 13-1-1946.

540. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Gandhiji said that prayer was his life. He felt that the man who did not pray was a dry person, devoid of everything. He did not know whether salvation could come in the other world. He wanted salvation in this world, and did not bother about the other world. As he was a social being he could not have salvation for himself alone. That was why he wanted to share prayer with all of them.

Gandhiji was sorry that there was some misunderstanding about his going to the women's ashram (a centre of constructive work in a tribal area about 20 miles from here). He did not promise to go there, but a number of persons collected there and they were grieved as he did not go. He wanted to tell them through the people here and to the whole of India as well, that he had not the capacity now to go from place to place in view of his old age. He therefore wanted to work staying at one place.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 12-1-1946

541. LETTER TO HOSHIARI

[After *January 11, 1946*][1]

CHI. HOSHIARI,

I have your letter. Why is your mind perturbed at times? If you have grown wise enough there can be no cause for disturbance. Isn't it our duty to be completely engrossed in our own work of service? At the Ashram especially, every minute of one's time has to be devoted to service. What more can you ask for? It is equally important that you maintain good health. For that hip-bath, friction-bath, mud-packs on the abdomen and regular walks are essential. For strength of character and concentration *Ramanama*.

Does Gajaraj attend school regularly? Ask him to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

[1] In the source the letter is placed after those of January 11.

542. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

PRIVATE SECRETARY
H. E. GOVERNOR
CALCUTTA

PRESIDENT CONGRESS COMMITTEE CHITTAGONG SENDS WIRE ACCUSING CERTAIN PIONEER FORCE PERSONS MOLESTING FEMALES AND WHEN RESISTED RETURNING IN VENGEANCE WITH COMPANIONS ATTACKING VILLAGERS BURNING HOUSES LOOTING PROPERTY. TRUST FULL INQUIRY WILL BE MADE AND PROPER JUSTICE RENDERED.[1]

GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 114-5

543. TELEGRAM TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

Express

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

H. H. BHOPAL
BARODA HOUSE
NEW DELHI

YOUR KIND WIRE. BHOPAL SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. NOT SURE ABOUT DELHI. WRITING.

GANDHI

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] *Vide* p. 387.

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544. LETTER TO SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS

As at Sevagram, *via* Wardha (India),
Camp : Gauhati,
January 12, 1946

DEAR SIR STAFFORD,

I was delighted to receive your letter[1] of 19th December, 1945. As I am touring in Bengal and Assam, your kind greetings were received only yesterday. The Rajkumari had described her talks with you and told me how affectionate you were towards me. I am hoping that this time[2] there is determination to do the right thing in terms of Indian thought. I well remember what King Edward had said about right dealing. I was then in South Africa. The question was of interpreting the treaty between the British and the Boers and the King had gently insisted on the Boer interpretation being accepted in preference to the British. How I wish that the admirable canon be repeated this time.

I hope with you that this New Year will bring to the thirsting earth the much-needed shower of peace and goodwill for which the "Prince of Peace" lived and died.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. Gandhi

Sir R. Stafford Cripps
Board of Trade
Millbank
London, S.W. 1

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, pp. 175-6

[1] This said : "I most profoundly hope that in these coming months we shall be able by mutual understanding, respect and trust, to work out between us a happier and brighter future for India. I know you have laboured for this throughout your life and I pray that it may be given to you to see the climax of your hopes in the realization of your desires. I shall, as always, try and play my part towards that happy solution of the great problems which confront our two countries."

[2] The reference is to the Cabinet Mission, consisting of three members including the addressee, which was to arrive in India with a view to finding a solution for the Indian problem.

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545. LETTER TO G. E. B. ABELL

AS FROM KHADI PRATISHTHAN, SODEPUR,
CAMP : GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

DEAR MR. ABELL,

I am writing to you on behalf of Gandhiji. A couple of days ago he received a letter from Raja Mahendra Pratap dated October 19th, 1945, from Yokohama Prison. The letter came through the American Red Cross. He has also received a letter from a friend of Raja Mahendra Pratap to say that rumour has it that he is now in prison somewhere in India. Is this true? If so, could you let Gandhiji have any particulars about him?[1]

Yours sincerely,
AMRIT KAUR

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 78

546. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

CAMP : GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

DEAR DR. JAYAKAR,

Your kind letter and copy of the Sapru Committee[2] Report was received during my Assam tour. I was wondering why I had not received a copy and had to content myself with Press notices. I had come to the conclusion that my copy must have been sent to Sevagram and was awaiting my return there. I was, therefore, doubly pleased to find your letter and a copy of the report during my stay in Gauhati.

I wonder if you have seen the enclosed cutting.

I propose to read the report if I can find sufficient time for it. In any case I know enough of the report from my discussions

[1] The addressee informed Gandhiji that Raja Mahendra Pratap was in Tokyo and he no longer possessed British Indian nationality.

[2] Appointed by the Standing Committee of the Non-Party Conference in November 1944. Its report, which was compiled by T. B. Sapru, M. R. Jayakar, N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and Kunwar Jagadish Prasad, was published on December 27, 1945. For a summary of the proposals, *vide* Appendix II.

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with you and Dr. Radhakrishnan to feel that it is bound to be of value to constitution-makers.

Whilst I send this letter in English for fear of your resentment, I must inform you that nowadays to most Indian friends I have been studiedly writing in Hindustani or, when I find it is cruel to write to a countryman in the South in Hindustani, I take special care to get someone near me who knows one of the Southern languages to write in it. So I hope you will not mind receiving my letter one fine morning written in *rashtrabhasha*.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Enclosure : cutting from *The Statesman*, 28-12-1945, entitled "Out of date".

DR. M. R. JAYAKAR
WINTER ROAD
MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY

Gandhi-Jayakar Papers. File No. 826. p. 37. Courtesy : National Archives of India

547. LETTER TO G. A. NATESAN

[AS AT] SODEPUR,
January 12, 1946

BHAI NATESAN,

Your two letters. Jagadisan wrote to me about the state of Sastriar's[1] health. I shall certainly see him.

As for visiting your house, I am at present unable to decide. Apart from the question whether I shall have the time for the purpose, the trouble of the journey to and fro may be too much for me to bear.

What can I—who have not read many books—say about books[2]? Again, do I have Sastriar's power of writing? It is said that few are as well read as he and that the books he has not read are not worth reading. But I for my part have not read most of the books that ought to be read. What then could I write? And where is the time?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI[3]

From a photostat of the Tamil : G.N. 2239. Also C.W. 10525

[1] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri; *vide* also pp. 341-2.

[2] The addressee was publishing in *Indian Review*, of which he was the editor, a symposium on "Books that have influenced me".

[3] The letter was originally written in Hindi but the translation of it in Tamil bears Gandhiji's signature in Tamil.

548. LETTER TO MARGARET BARR[1]

January 12, 1946

DEAR MARGARET,

You will pardon me when I tell you that I had forgotten—which I should not have done—that you were in Shillong. I am going to Dhubri today and from there tomorrow I say goodbye to Assam. Therefore, for the folly of my forgetfulness—and shall I also say your folly in not descending to Gauhati to meet me—I shall have to go away without seeing you even though you are within such a short distance of me. However, it is good that you have reminded me of your presence in Shillong and told me how well you are doing there.

I am sure you have gained by following my instructions about not taking part in the political turmoil.

Yes. I have been hearing fairly regularly from Mary[2]. I agree with you that she will return to India when your father does not need her services. So far as I gather from her letters, however, she does not expect to come back to India in the near future. It does not appear as if there ever will be a time when your father will not need her services. According to my calculation if the old Mr. Barr's life is being spent in accordance with the teaching of *Ishopanishad*, he must complete the full span of life i.e., 125 years. Have you read that little Upanishad? If not you should get a copy from some library there or at least in Dr. B. C. Roy's collection. I suppose you know he has a bungalow there.

I shall be in Khadi Pratishthan, Sodepur, near Calcutta, for 4 or 5 days and then proceed to Madras.

Love.

BAPU

MISS MARGARET BARR
MALKI, SHILLONG

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] This was delivered by hand on January 12.
[2] Addressee's sister

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549. LETTER TO SITA VIJAYARAGHAVACHARI

CAMP : GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

CHI. SITA,

I am delighted to have your letter. I see that you do know some Hindustani. Why then should you write in English? I well remember how devotedly you looked after your father[1] and how you meant everything to him. But why are you grieved over his passing?[2]

It is difficult for me to go to Salem. I would be glad if you could come and see me some day after I reach Madras.

I very well remember the affection your father had for me. I expect to reach Madras after the 21st of this month.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SITA VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
SALEM

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

550. LETTER TO SARALABEHN

SODEPUR,
January 12, 1946

CHI. SARALA[3],

I have your letter. It gives all the news. Do whatever your health permits.

It is good that you informed me about the Nainital friend. When it is turned into a hospital the house, I am sure, will prove a great help to the poor.

[1] C. Vijayaraghavachari; he was President of the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920.

[2] He died on April 19, 1944, at Salem.

[3] Catherine Heilman, an English Jewess. She first came to India in 1932 as a teacher in an experimental school at Udaipur.

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I hope you have not forgotten your Urdu lessons. Ten minutes devoted to a thing daily produce far better results than hours spent on it irregularly; this is an unwritten law.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SARALABEHN
LAKSHMI ASHRAM
[KAUSANI]

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

551. LETTER TO N. G. RANGA

GAUHATI, ASSAM,
January 12, 1946

BHAI RANGA,

I have your letter. Do as you like about your forthcoming book[1].

Your latest book[2] has not yet been received. I shall go through it when I get it.

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

552. TALK TO HARIJANS[3]

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

He enquired about their wages, their accommodation and their food supply. When his attention was drawn to the next engagement, which was a meeting with sufferers of the August movement, Gandhiji was heard to say that he would also meet[4] them now. They were martyrs and many people would feel for them, but nobody would feel for these Harijans.

Referring to the condition of the Harijans he said that he knew how they lived and what they ate. Their condition was almost similar to what it was in other parts of India. Gandhiji asked two headmen of the Harijans to wait and see Mrs. Jayaprakash Narayan and give her a detailed account of their condition. He would try to do what he could for them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946

[1] Presumably *Mahatma Gandhi's Message to Oppressed Races*
[2] Presumably *Outlines of National Revolutionary Path*, which was published in December 1945
[3] Gandhiji met about four hundred Harijans at Sarania Ashram.
[4] *Vide* the following item.

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553. TALK TO SUFFERERS OF AUGUST DISTURBANCES

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Giving his blessings to these sufferers, Mahatmaji said that the victims had done what duty they had to do for the country. There was nothing for which they or the members of their families should be sorry. At yesterday's prayer meeting he had asked people to be fearless. They (family members) also should be fearless.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-1-1946

554. SPEECH AT POLITICAL WORKERS' CONFERENCE[1]

GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Explaining the scope of the constructive programme to them Gandhiji by way of an illustration described how a capital expenditure of about twenty-five lakhs of rupees had been able to put into the pockets of the poor a sum amounting to not less than five crores of rupees. Indian cloth consumption, he said, amounted to about one hundred crores of rupees according to the present price level. All that money can be prevented from going out of the pockets of the people by fulfilling one item of the constructive programme, namely, khadi.

With regard to parliamentary programme Gandhiji reiterated what he had previously said[2] at Sodepur. He was fully convinced that if all the people boycotted the legislatures, the country or the nation would not be losers by that. On the contrary, Gandhiji stressed that it would mean a great addition to their strength. But he realized that was not practical politics at present and as a realist he realized the necessity of preventing self-seekers and enemies of the freedom of India from entering the legislatures. The main function of the legislatures should be the advancement of constructive work. Any programme that hindered constructive work was not worth taking up. As an illustration of constructive work Gandhiji mentioned the services to Adivasis. Today, he said, they had been divided into water-tight compartments by the ruling power and that was why Adivasis had

[1] About seven hundred workers were present at the meeting.
[2] *Vide* pp. 363-4.

been classified as tribal races. It was a shame that they should be isolated from the nation of which they were an inalienable part. Here was a vast field of constructive work which Gandhiji exhorted all to take up. Nobody could prevent them from undertaking this kind of constructive work. And if for undertaking constructive work they were put in jail, they should not be afraid of jail-going. In this connection Gandhiji referred to his own stand in the Champaran Satyagraha.

In the course of his long and convincing speech Gandhiji made references to the names of Abbas Tyabji, Badshah Khan and Pandit Jawaharlal in order to illustrate his points by concrete examples.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1946

555. MESSAGE TO ASSAM STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

SARANIA ASHRAM,
January 12, 1946

I thank all volunteers of Assam Students' Union for the services they rendered and wish them all success. My blessings are with them.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1946

556. LETTER TO VICHITRA NARAYAN SHARMA

ON THE STEAMER,
January 13, 1946

CHI. VICHITRA,

I have your letter of 26-12-1945. Come and see me by all means. Consult Dada if you want. I see that you and Jajuji do not get on well. I am unable to make up my mind whether I should try to persuade you to keep together or let you work independently in your different ways. Either course can be justified. What harm could there be if you were to work independently of the Charkha Sangh? You are both devoted to khadi. It is possible that under Jajuji's control, the Meerut Gandhi Ashram's progress is arrested and they cannot work to their full capacity. If it is so and if Jawaharlalji and Pantji are also of the same opinion, why not have a separate organization for khadi in the U. P. ? Assuming that it is done for the love of khadi and if, as a result, khadi is more successful in the U. P., such a step would only do

good instead of harm. There have been many instances in my life when I gave such encouragement and it always resulted in good. The latest instance is that of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. I quit it. How could I oppose Tandonji? He had the main part in building up the organization. I do not approve of his present policies and feel that I would be able to serve Hindi well, perhaps even better, by keeping out of it. In case it does not turn out so, I shall admit my mistake and follow Tandonji. But if I have not made a mistake, I shall only further the cause of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan from outside. The important point is that our actions should not be inspired by selfish motives and our ultimate aim should be one and the same. Maybe I should be able to make a definite statement if I could meet all the people.

Think well over this letter, consult the others and write to me what you think is the proper course of action. I shall reach Madras probably on the 21st and shall stay there for 15 days. You may come there if you like. Jajuji will of course be there. You need not go there immediately I arrive. We can manage even if you come in the beginning of February. My sole intention is that all khadi devotees should make all-round progress and khadi should get its rightful place. Of course, if you do not sincerely believe in non-violence, do not consider khadi its symbol and have no faith in my present policy with regard to khadi, then it is a different matter. When our views differ to such an extent, the question assumes a wholly different form. And if, while maintaining different views with regard to the above three points you still want to serve khadi, you must dissociate yourself from the Sangh. Then the question is not one of differences with Jajuji but of differences over principle, and if that be the case they ought to be cleared up.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

557. LETTER TO DR. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

ON TOUR IN ASSAM,
January 13, 1946

BHAI PATTABHI,

I enclose herewith a cutting[1] from *The Nationalist* of Calcutta. Is the report correct? If so, we have no right to offend anyone like this. Whatever the case we have to be civil in the face of incivility. This is the secret of non-violence. There is nothing indecorous if your Association is represented by ten delegates.

Think over it and do as you think right.

Blessings from
BAPU

PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

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

558. LETTER TO NAWAB OF BHOPAL

P. S. *Persian*,
January 13, 1946

NAWAB SAHEB,

I had your wire. I hope you got my reply[2] sent from Gauhati. My position is not at all comfortable. The pressure of work is so heavy that if I take one hour off, one hour's work piles up. Under the circumstances how can I go to Bhopal? I have to keep some margin of time for Delhi because in the event of my presence being indispensable I have to go there. In that case, I shall inform you accordingly.

I hope you will understand my helplessness. What more can I say?

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

BY HAND

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

[1] Not traceable
[2] *Vide* p. 404.

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559. INTERVIEW TO UNITED PRESS OF INDIA[1]

[*January 13, 1946*]

Asked whether the cry of *Jai Hind* could be appropriately adopted in a non-violent action since originally it was devised by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as a war cry, Mahatma Gandhi said :

It does not follow that because *Jai Hind* was devised by Subhas Babu as a war cry in armed warfare, it must be eschewed in a non-violent action. On that basis even *Vandemataram* may have to be given up because there are instances of people committing violence with this cry on their lips. If a thing is essentially an evil it becomes a positive duty to abjure it. In my opinion *Jai Hind* and *Vandemataram* have almost the same meaning. In one we make obeisance to Mother India and thereby wish her victory; the other merely wishes her victory. There is no question of singing the two together. As I have said[2] before *Jai Hind* cannot replace *Vandemataram.*

Asked whether Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose enjoyed the same place in his esteem and affection and whether he heard what Netaji had written about him in his reported book *Father of All Nations*, as was believed in some sections of the people of Assam, Gandhiji replied :

I have not read what Subhas Babu is reported to have said about me. But I am not surprised at what you tell me. My relations with him were always of the purest and best. I always knew his capacity for sacrifice. But a full knowledge of his resourcefulness, soldiership and organizing ability came to me only after his escape from India. The difference of outlook between him and me as to the means is too well known for comment.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

[1] Gandhiji was interviewed by a special correspondent of U. P. I. aboard the steamer *Persian* which he boarded at Gauhati in the evening of January 12 for going to Dhubri where he arrived on January 13, 1946.

[2] *Vide* p. 391.

560. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

GOALPARA,
January 13, 1946

Gandhiji reiterated that there could be no non-violent swaraj which was but another name for *Ramarajya* except through the charkha. His definition of *Ramarajya* was that under it even the weakest must enjoy the same freedom and same rights as the strongest. For that it was necessary that even the physically weakest person should be able to take due share in the struggle for independence. In other words, women and children should be able to play an equal part with men. It was clear that this was not possible in armed warfare.

Gandhiji's reading of India's history was that every time the people made use of armed forces for their protection it only resulted in tightening their bondage. The so-called protectors in their turn, Gandhiji added, became oppressors. But under non-violence as symbolized by the spinning-wheel, men and women enjoyed absolute parity in the fight for freedom. The condition was that every thread of yarn that they spun should be a conscientious sacrifice or *yajna* for swaraj and it should be backed by the determination to resist with their lives any assault that might be directed against charkha. By charkha, he meant not hand-spinning alone but all those things which hand-spinning symbolized. These included the revival of all other village industries, of course, but it included all the various other items of his 18-point constructive programme as well. By way of illustration Gandhiji mentioned communal harmony and total abolition of untouchability, both of which were natural corollaries of ahimsa.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

561. SPEECH AT DHUBRI

January 13, 1946

Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that he was sorry for keeping them waiting for such a long time. The steamer could not move due to fog. He had heard and seen the miseries of Bengal. He came to Assam because the miseries of the people of Assam were no less than that of the people of Bengal. He could not stay longer in Assam due to urgent work at Calcutta. He emphasized that swaraj would not come from the heavens

and would not be given to them by anyone. Everything depended on their self-help and swaraj would be achieved through charkha.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-1-1946

562. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter. I do not feel happy about Dr. Dinshaw's indifference. It is good that Jehangirji helps you. You should go on doing patiently and calmly whatever you can. Let those who wish to leave do so. I hope Manibhai is giving you all possible help. Do not admit new patients. Even the old ones who pay their own expenses must abide by the new rules. We do not want to run the show with their money. We wish to do that with the blessings of the poor. The Doctor may recommend to new patients such treatment as they can take at home. If any patients come for baths, etc., these may be given. But nobody should be allowed to stay in the clinic. I hope that we shall be able to systematize everything after I return. If necessary, you may show this to Jehangirji. The Doctor of course will read it.

We shall arrange about khadi after I return there. I will get the required quantity.

I believe Kanchan is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8623. Also C.W. 7205. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

563. LETTER TO PREMA KANTAK

ON THE TRAIN,
Silence Day, January 14, 1946

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. What reply shall I give ? If the thing you assume does not exist at all, what reply can I give? What are we to say to a person who asserts that there is a flower in the sky? "As silver is perceived in the mother-of-pearl and sunlight

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in water though non-existent at all times are yet perceived. So is this illusion which none can dispel.'' Remember this verse of Tulsidas and laugh if you can.

I had never thought that you were so sensitive. And what epithets you use for Haribhau? When you write with a calm mind, I will write more. I have received Sushila's letter. I have advised Bapa not to fill the place till a Suitable woman Agent is available.

As desired by you, I have torn up your letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10448. Also C.W. 6882. Courtesy : Prema Kantak

564. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. MATHURADAS,

You will never cease to be the Modh bania that you are!!! Whose fault is it, yours or Taramati's? Now have a prompt betrothal, so all of you will have peace of mind. It seems life is a series of betrothals and marriages; am I right? I don't see I come anywhere into it. What is there to consult me about? This does not mean that what you are going to do is wrong. Why should you follow me wherever I go? I have taken a different path. Why should anyone join me along it without understanding? If...[2] has told nothing but the truth it will never prove false. You go your own way without any fear.

Take care of your health. Follow what others write about my health. It is also fairly adequately reported on in the newspapers.

Blessings to you all from
BAPU

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.
[2] A word here is not clear in the source.

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565. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR[1]

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

BAPA,

It is silence day, hence I must write myself. I got your condensed letter, precise and concise.

Jawaharlal thinks of nothing but the country's freedom. He spends all his energy for it. Then why shouldn't the people be mad about him?

I understand what you say about Sucheta. Deal with Sushila Pai's case as best as you can. I am firm in my opinion. Where a woman Agent is not readily available we should wait for one. Our work will go on. I shall, however, be prepared to do anything else that you propose.

In Assam I heard about the swami and about the women's college also. Both the cases need consideration. The swami seems to have reached the limit. I have his reply.

Amalprova is proceeding well though with great caution. Her father is on her side. The place is in the countryside, but near Gauhati. I visited the village. In fact I went there for my daily walks. I see our mangoes will not ripen in a hurry.

A good amount of money has been collected for Harijan work. A sum has also been earmarked for the tribal people. I welcome your refraining from going to Madras. I might use your presence for my own selfish ends but that would be wrong. You must take some rest somehow. You will then be able to do twice as much work as you now do. Even the man-made machine needs rest. Even a pair of shoes lasts longer if it has some rest, what then to say of man?

BAPU

SHRI THAKKAR BAPA
HARIJAN COLONY
DELHI

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

[1] The letter is in the Devanagari script.

566. LETTER TO SANKARAN

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 1946

CHI. SANKARAN,

I got your letter. Today is my silence day and therefore I cannot dictate the letter.

Your reply is perfect. I am glad to know that you are improving your health and learning nature cure.

Jeevansakha[1] might probably be in Sodepur. I could not find it in Assam. I am going to Sodepur by this very train.

It seems that like Dr. Dinshaw's [clinic] Baleshwarji's is also not meant for the poor. We must remedy this. We shall think over the matter after your treatment is over. I expect to reach Madras on the 21st and Wardha on 8th February. I am not keen to send any message for the special issue of *Jeevansakha*. All good things carry their own blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

567. LETTER TO H. C. DASAPPA

ON THE TRAIN,
January 14, 194[6][2]

CHI. DASAPPA[3],

I got your letter. The news about your brother is distressing, and on top of it your father is ill. But, if we reflect, we shall realize that death and diseases of various kinds are with us from the birth. It is therefore futile to grieve.

I have grave doubts about being able to go to Mysore. Let us see how I get along in Madras.

[1] A journal on nature cure

[2] The source has 1945, but the letter is placed among those of 1946.

[3] An advocate whose name was struck off the rolls in July 1940, for political reasons

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My blessings to Yashodhara[1]. Tell her to write to me. I hope Ramdas[2] is well. How is he doing? It will be good if he now settles down there. He should learn Hindi as well as Urdu as also all the processes connected with spinning.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI DASAPPA

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

568. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING[3]

SODEPUR,
January 14, 1946

I am sorry that today I cannot talk to you as I started silence at Dhubri at midnight. I am glad to say that on my way back people maintained perfect peace at the stations. I would like such peace to be maintained always. The villages of Chittagong have been reduced to such a state that it must have given you the same pain as it has given me.[4] The Government will have to do its duty. But I am thinking of ours. If true satyagraha were alive in all of us, men and women, such a happening could never have taken place. At the same time what happened in Diamond Harbour is also a tragic chapter.[5] Today's prayer song is helpful in pointing to a right decision in these matters. This I shall try to explain tomorrow.[6]

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8027

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] Addressee's son

[3] The speech was read out by Kanu Gandhi.

[4] The reference is to the looting of villagers' properties by Ganjam Pioneer Corps; *vide* pp. 387 and 404.

[5] On the occasion of the Gangasagar Mela some temporarily constructed jetties to enable pilgrims to board steamers bound for Sangam island at the mouth of the Ganga collapsed. As a result 147 people were killed and 80 injured.

[6] *Vide* pp. 426-8.

569. LETTER TO BEGG, DUNLOP & CO., LTD.

SODEPUR,
January 15, 194[6][1]

GENTLEMEN,

Shrimati Profullabala Sarkar, widow of Shri Rajkumar Sarkar, writes to me about her distress. She says that her husband left a provident fund of Rs. 1,650 with you, which cannot be withdrawn on account of certain other claims submitted to you. She says that she is in a helpless condition with several children to maintain.

If her condition is as she describes it, will you please let me know if you can render her the help she needs. Her address is : Shrimati Profullabala Sarkar, Tarapada Kumar's House, Vill. Anthpur, P.O. Shyamnagar, (24 Parganas).

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

MESSRS BEGG, DUNLOP & CO., LTD.
(MANAGING AGENTS, JAGATLAL ALLIANCE
NORTH JUTE MILLS)
2 HARE STREET, CALCUTTA

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

570. LETTER TO CHAMPA R. MEHTA

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

CHI. CHAMPA,

Today I have replied to Bhai Gatubhai's letters as follows.[2] I can think of nothing else and nothing more.

SMT. CHAMPABEHN MEHTA
SEVAGRAM

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

[1] The source has 1945, obviously a slip.
[2] *Vide* the following item.

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571. LETTER TO GATULAL J. DAVE

January 15, 1946

BHAI GATUBHAI,

I got your letter yesterday.

I don't know at all what in the first place I can do in Maganbhai's case. I shall not be able to give him as much time as he wants. Besides, it is very difficult for me to be involved in this matter. I am therefore of the opinion that you should seek the advice of some good lawyer and act strictly as he directs.

GATULAL JATASHANKAR DAVE
KARANPARA, SHERI NO. 23
RAJKOT

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

572. LETTER TO HATIM A. ALVI[1]

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI HATIM,

I had your letter but how could I give it thought being constantly on the move. Your belief that the titles Deshabandhu, Deenabandhu, Sardar, etc., are my inventions is not correct. I cannot therefore take credit for the inventions. I accepted the names. I don't even know if it is the invention of a single individual whom we could identify. The name 'Harijan' is also said to be my invention, but the assumption is unfounded. It was an untouchable friend from Kathiawar who found the name. I don't know if he is still alive. It is therefore not correct to attribute to me the inventive talent you do.

I should like to find some nice descriptive title for Bhai Jamshed[2] but I could think of one only if I were such an

[1] The letter is written in the Devanagari script.

[2] Jamshed Nusserwanji Mehta, "builder of Modern Karachi" who was presented an address by the people of Karachi on his 61st birthday describing him as "the greatest architect of Karachi".

inventor! Think of something yourself. January 7 has passed; how does it matter? We should start using the title when we find one.

HATIM ALVI
KARACHI

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

573. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

DEAR SISTER,

Yesterday I got your letter of 20th ultimo. I have no objection to your going to the Assembly. Some of us should, but personally I attach very little value to it. I very much doubt whether those who can utilize their time in other work, or are already doing so, will gain by going to the Assembly; especially those women who represent Kasturba Nidhi. I am corresponding with Bapa regarding this. In my view, it will not be good for these women to go to the Assembly. Is not the work of Kasturba Nidhi a novel scheme? Only experience will teach that work. Let us not fall into an error through our attachment. Only from this point of view your going to the Assembly will not please me. Give your objective opinion regarding this.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMESHWARI NEHRU
WARIS ROAD
LAHORE

From a copy of the Hindi : Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. Courtesy : Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

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574. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

The removal of Gajraj's tonsils must have done good.

I understand about Mavjibhai.

The right place for Chakrayya seems to be with Raju. By staying with him, he too may get trained.

I think there are several copies of the Hindi Koran lying with us. Any one of them may be given to them. It is likely that all those books have been given to the Talimi Sangh. From there also it can be got for them. Do what is necessary.

People do joke about boys and girls. It can be innocent as well as harmful. There cannot be one rule for this. Life is full of risks and will continue to be so. Ours can only be the middle path. Among our prayer songs there is one by Raichandbhai: "Innocent joy may be derived from anywhere." This song is probably there in the [*Ashram*] *Bhajanavali*. One who wants to do evil may do no evil at all by action but will do so by his thought. The golden rule is that always and in all circumstances we should remain pure. That purity does by itself influence the atmosphere. If you want to ask anything about this, ask me when I come there.

Let us be quite impersonal towards that sadhu and tell him bluntly that there cannot be any place for him in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4544

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575. LETTER TO HARI GANESH PHATAK

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your postcard. Write to Bapa about Savitribai. Will she do better than Premabehn?

I hope to leave here on the 19th for Madras and I shall have to spend a few days there. I expect to reach Sevagram on the 8th February.

BHAI HARIBHAU PHATAK
625 SADASHIV
POONA CITY

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

576. LETTER TO G. ANNASAMY

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

BHAI ANNASAMY,

I got your English letter. I am afraid that much as I would wish it, I shall not be able to visit Pondicherry. I hope you will all be able to understand this much Hindi.

G. ANNASAMY
PONDICHERRY

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

577. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

Gandhiji said that the victims of the Diamond Harbour accident were no more but what would happen to their relatives? Many lives had not been lost in Chittagong, however.

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These two incidents had overwhelmed him but it should not be so. Men should be calm and steady even if thousands, lakhs or even crores die. If we can bear it peacefully, we can hear the inner voice then.[1]

Government must be alive to their duties regarding these two incidents but at the same time the people should not forget theirs. The *bhajan* sung at the prayer on Monday (*Antar mama vikasita karo*) indicated the way. It was a prayer to open our hearts. The world would become a vast fraternity if that was done.

Gandhiji said that if he were there at Diamond Harbour, he would have advised the men and women not to go there. He had witnessed a similar instance at Kumbha Mela at Hardwar in 1915, when in the jostle for a dip in the Ganges, 17 men were drowned. At Diamond Harbour the pilgrims had to get on the jetty and the Government should have made proper shipping arrangements. However, even if the Government did not do their duty an accusation on that score would not help us. The people on their side should follow the right course. The Government could not be blamed for the incident at Hardwar. Here of course it could be found on enquiry that proper arrangement for shipping facilities had not been made.

At Chittagong, it was worse. People had read the Government account and it was an admission of the story as sent out by Jaminibabu. But the people, Gandhiji said, did not play their part as preached in the *bhajan* The *bhajan* wanted to make us firm, active and fearless. Gandhiji felt sure that if the people could rely on these qualities, the Chittagong incident could not have taken place. If people could sing the *bhajan* as they did in the prayer, why could they not act according to its message, he asked. Gurudev's words were not meant for Bengal only. Everywhere saints had preached the same message.

An Englishman had sardonically asked Gandhiji if the Indians could get independence by harping on the theme of their slavery. Gandhiji thought that the remark was true. No good could come out of repeating the fact of dependence. Slave people lived in eternal misery and only by working for eradicating this misery could they get swaraj. Only criticism could not make foreigners quit. If people realized the message of satyagraha, if they practised it in life, they could get rid of this misery. What was satyagraha? It was only the craving for truth inherent in man and there lay its strength.

Two women were attacked at Chittagong and for that two men were counter-attacked. As a result a hundred came, attacked the villagers and burnt the hamlet. If the people could rest firm on truth such an incident could never happen. He had subsequently learnt, Gandhiji said, that the rowdy

[1] *Vide* also pp. 387 and 404.

elements were his countrymen and therefore brothers. If that was so he also had some responsibility for their action and it was his duty as well to strive for the eradication of their vile instincts. On the other side many pilgrims died at Diamond Harbour. This latter accident occurred because the Indian people had not been successful in explaining the true significance of pilgrimage. Pilgrimage entails pain. It was not pilgrimage to travel by rail or steamer. Travelling from Cape Comorin to Hardwar by a train was no pilgrimage.

He had been preaching this idea for a long time, and he would be doing so in the future whatever the result. He would continue with his message even if five men only responded to the call.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-1-1946

578. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

CHI. JIVANJI,

I have with me three letters of yours dated December 13, 1945, January 7, 1946, and January 11, 1946.

I will not argue at length about another Tamil translation of *An Autobiography*. Nor have I the time for that. I am dictating this reply in the early hours of the morning, and that also while racing against time. I have seen in English more translations than one of a good book. I don't find anything wrong in it. Our only aim in retaining the copyright can be to guard against possible misuse of the privilege. But if we have authorized one person, and then another public-spirited person who can do a better translation comes forward, why should we not give him the permission? This is my line of reasoning. More when we meet and can talk at leisure. But meanwhile I will accept your decision as final and correct. For I may decide something in haste and you may have to bear the burden, which would not be proper.

I have decided for the present to refuse permission for a Finnish translation, for the person's intention seems to be to make profit.

About *Harijan* we shall decide after I hear more from you. For, as long as the Government does not share our desire that its publication should be resumed, I think it will be a great risk

to embark on the venture. I think I have discussed this matter with you earlier.[1] The lifting of the ban will not be enough for resuming publication. Discuss the matter with Mavalankar and Sardar, if he is there, and then write to me. We wish to do nothing in haste.

I have received the new edition of *The Constructive Programme*. You are right when you say that you can afford to send, and should send, a large number of copies only if a proper account of the copies is kept and the money is regularly remitted to you. Do not send more copies just now. Two of the newspapers here published the whole text. You may publish the booklet in the other languages you intend to.

You have given a full explanation about the preface, as also about the price.

Chi. Kanu will write to you separately regarding the *Bhajanavali*. Do not publish the new edition till you get all the material from him.

I should like you to publish the translation sent by Rajendra Babu. Discuss the matter with Kishorelal and Narahari also.

The *Rashtrabhasha* dictionary follows me wherever I go. I have not forgotten, either, about the foreword to the book on *Gita According to Gandhi* written by Mahadevbhai. I will be happy if I can finish it before leaving for Madras. But all that is in God's hands. I rest content with the work I can do from day to day. I cannot, of course, attend to all the things. I see in this my inefficiency. If I cannot overcome it, I cannot hope to live up to 125 years. But be it as it may. If you think it fit, you may reprint *Nation's Voice*.

Your suggestion for adding something more to the paragraphs on cow-protection in *The Constructive Programme* seems a good one. I would describe it as "improvement of livestock". I agree that it should not have been left out. We will remember the point at the time of the next edition. If the current edition is exhausted soon and any suggestions for improvements occur to you, let me have them, too.

I am leaving here on the 19th and reaching Madras on the 21st. The address will be c/o Dakshina [Bharat] Hindi Prachar Sabha, Thyagarayanagar, Madras. I will be in Madras for 15 days at the most. If I can finish earlier, I will try.

[1] *Vide* pp. 69-70.

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Then on the 8th to Sevagram. After spending a day in Bombay, to Poona on the 21st.

Blessings from
BAPU

Not revised.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9962. Also C.W. 6936. Courtesy : Jivanji D. Desai

579. TELEGRAM TO M. SATYANARAYANA

Express

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

SATYANARAYANJI
DAKSHINA BHARAT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
THYAGARAYANAGAR (MADRAS)

SORRY MUST REACH TWENTYFIRST. MAKE NO APPOINTMENTS BEFORE TWENTYTHIRD. CONTINUE YOUR USUAL WORK. ASSUME NO SPECIAL TRAIN FOR ME.
BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

580. LETTER TO R. G. CASEY

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two kind letters[1]. I shall have great pleasure in calling on you, perhaps for the last time (though I shall hope not) on the 18th at 7.30 p.m.

I am glad you have taken proper and energetic action on the two terrible tragedies.[2]

On the question of salt I see that I have failed to make my point clear. But I must not inflict written argument on

[1] Dated January 15 and 20
[2] Of Chittagong and Diamond Harbour; *vide* pp. 404 and 421.

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you. According to the exigencies of the time I shall discuss the matter with you on Friday.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Gandhiji's Correspondence with the Government, 1944-47, p. 131

581. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

MY DEAR C. R.,

I leave here on 19th and reach there with a large party on 21st. I must not be in a train the 22nd day of a month, if I can at all help it. Ba died that day and we have *Gita Parayan*[1] that day. I must devote 21st and 22nd to private, necessary visits. Just now I have only Sastri[2] in mind. Natesan wants me to go to my old home—his place.[3] You will see what should be done. The rest when we meet. Do hope there will be no boisterous demonstration. Noises and undisciplined crowds get on my nerves.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I expect to meet the Parliamentary Delegation on 23rd.

From a photostat : G.N. 2115

582. LETTER TO JEHANGIR P. PATEL

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI JEHANGIR,

I have your letter dictated in chaste Gujarati. I am delighted. However, since we want to work for Dinshawji I shall certainly write in English if that helps us better.

I shall try to reach Poona before 21st February.

[1] Recitation
[2] V. S. Srinivasa Sastri who was ill; *vide* pp. 341-2.
[3] *Vide* p. 407.

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I am sure you know that I have already sent the money. All I am worried about, if at all, is that the clinic should benefit the masses. Till now it has catered solely to the rich. But we shall further discuss all this when we meet. For the time being whatever you can do and get done is enough.

SJT. JEHANGIR P. PATEL
PATEL BROTHERS, PATEL HOUSE
10 CHURCHGATE STREET
FORT, BOMBAY

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

583. LETTER TO DR. N. B. KHARE

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI KHARE,

I have your letter. I was delighted to see that you wrote in Hindustani and signed in Urdu.

I am carefully watching what you are doing and what you can do in Malaya-Burma. And I wish that everything is for the good of the people there. What is the harm in Dr. Bidhan's Medical Mission going to Malaya-Burma?[1]

I understand what you have written about the Congress. I do not want to write anything more about it.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 4871. Courtesy : Dr. N. B. Khare

584. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRA RAO

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI RAMACHANDRA RAO,

I have your letter. I like it. I am also glad that you have decided to give Manorama in marriage to a Harijan. But your inference in favour of atheism is not correct; or as I believe, your *nastikta*[2] is only a form of *astikta*[3].

[1] *Vide* p. 378.
[2] Atheism
[3] Faith

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I am prepared to get the marriage performed in the Sevagram Ashram and have the same rites followed as in the case of Tendulkar. The priest, who will perform the ceremony under my supervision, will be a Harijan. You are welcome to make any suggestion in this regard. One thing more. Manorama is 17 years old; I think I remember her. My advice is that she should wait at least for two years. If your idea is that the ceremony may be performed now and the girl might go to stay with her husband on attaining the age of 19, I would suggest postponing the marriage till she can live with her husband. In the meantime they may learn whatever more they want to learn. Let them learn at least Hindustani in both the scripts and all the processes of the charkha right from beginning to end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi : C.W. 9194

585. LETTER TO SECRETARY, MADRAS LABOUR UNION FOR TEXTILE WORKERS

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,

I propose to address no meetings. I have neither the desire nor the strength to undertake more work than I have already accepted. You must realize that the days are gone when I could go anywhere and address any number of meetings. Therefore, please excuse me. You may consult Shri Satyanarayana about an appointment with me.

M. K. GANDHI

SECRETARY
MADRAS LABOUR UNION FOR TEXTILE WORKERS

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

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586. LETTER TO AVADHNANDAN

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI AVADHNANDAN,

I got your letter. None of us could make out the first signature; the second and third are all right. I think when one's signature is illegible, one should spell it out clearly beside or below. The English deliberately make their signatures illegible. Why should we imitate them? And if we do, we should also follow their signature practice of spelling out the name clearly below.

If your complaint is just it deserves to be considered. But then I should have your permission to show your letter to Satyanarayana. I will try to find some time for a talk with you.

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

587. LETTER TO T. J. KEDAR

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

BHAI KEDAR,

I got your letter of January 12. I was very happy. Let us see what happens.

I hope to reach Sevagram on the 8th. I shall stay there for ten days and then proceed to Poona.

SHRI T. J. KEDAR
ADVOCATE
NAGPUR

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

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588. LETTER TO SATYANARAYANA

SODEPUR,
January 16/17, 1946

BHAI SATYANARAYANA,

A wire was sent to you yesterday. Did I tell you that I would try to reach there about the 23rd? Well, I had forgotten at the time that the 22nd was Ba's death anniversary. Chi. Kanu reminded me of it and therefore I have now decided to reach there on the 21st. Besides, the M.P.s would be there on the 23rd and in order to meet them also, I must reach there a day earlier. I hope you will not be put to inconvenience if I come a couple of days earlier. You will have understood what Rajkumari explained on the telephone. I have no letter of yours regarding the special train. It would be wrong to incur expenditure on a special train. If it is the others who are to be brought by the special train, why bring them two days in advance? In any case if that be the intention you may do as you think best. That means that if everyone pays his own fare there will be no harm in requisitioning a special train.

I shall be accompanied by 22 persons. The number may even increase by two or three. A list[1] of their names is enclosed. Bapa will go there. You may put him up with me. He also wants it. See to it yourself. If the number of people increases, arrangements can be made to put some of them up elsewhere although I would prefer all my companions being put up in one place.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

January 17, 1946

The letter which called for the wire has arrived today but what I have written above is sufficient.

SHRI SATYANARAYANAJI
C/O HINDI PRACHAR SABHA
THYAGARAYANAGAR, MADRAS

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

[1] This, however, is not traceable.

589. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 17, 1946

Gandhiji said that Friday[1] would be his last day at Sodepur on this occasion. He had always cherished a desire to stay in this place and join them in prayer. Indeed he had not been able to stay there continuously owing to his tours. His tours had produced good results. He hoped that they would stick to the system of congregational prayer.

Exhorting them to sing the name of God in chorus and to keep tune with all heart, Gandhiji said that he had told them before and wanted to tell them now that soldiers were compelled to move together and to keep step in marching. At first there was an element of compulsion in making them do so but gradually as they became habituated the element of compulsion passed and their movements became easier and smoother. In their case the soldiers were made disciplined on pain of dismissal, but in prayer although they were the devotees of God yet there was no question of compelling them to keep tune or sing in chorus. But it was for the sake of their own good that they joined in prayer and if they uttered the name of God in one tune their hearts would be purified and they would get new strength in their hearts. This would be their remuneration for becoming the devotees of God.

Referring to the day's *bhajan*, Gandhiji said that in this song the devotee was making the submission that he would offer his salutation to God in all his worldly duties. God was their real friend, He was their father and mother and in fact everything. Their earthly friends and relations suffered death but God was immortal. He never left them at any time. The *bhajan* therefore very aptly taught them to remember God who was their eternal friend in every sphere of their life's activities. The song also told them to keep their inward eye open because it was through this inward eye that they were able to perceive God.

Concluding, Gandhiji said that in the prayer song of the day they had found such things which would be of great value in their everyday life. They should take the teachings of the song to heart. After they had attended the prayer if they returned home with their hearts unchanged they would be deprived of a great thing.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-1-1946

[1] January 18

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590. LETTER TO AMRITA LAL CHATTERJEE

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

CHI. AMRITA LAL,

Do you know that falling ill is a crime? And after falling ill taking no treatment is doubly so.[1] Hence get well soon. Your place is in Wardha. From that also you have been cut off. Now you can go there only after getting well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi : C.W. 10413. Courtesy : Amrita Lal Chatterjee

591. DISCUSSION WITH CHITTAGONG CONGRESSMEN

January 18, 1946

A number of Congress leaders of Chittagong met Mahatma Gandhi at Sodepur Ashram and had nearly an hour's discussion with him about conditions in the district since 1942, with particular reference to war-time economy and the problem of resettlement of the evacuees.

The Congress leaders also discussed with Gandhiji the recent incident at Kasaipara. Gandhiji told them that the question of resettlement of the evacuees had been engaging his attention for a long time. He asked them to correspond with him on this matter. The problem could be solved if the 18-point constructive programme was fulfilled.

The Hindustan Times, 21-1-1946

[1] The addressee had dysentery and had refused medical treatment.

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592. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

Gandhiji regretted that he was addressing the congregation for the last time on the present occasion and God only knew when he would be in a position to repeat his visit to Bengal. He had a mind to go to Chittagong and also to visit Munshigunj but he could not realize his wish. Mahatma Gandhi observed :

> Although during my stay I could not visit the different parts of Bengal as I wished, still I will say that I am satisfied with what little I could do in Bengal. My code teaches me to be satisfied even if I succeed in one front out of ten I try.

Referring to the Chittagong incident, Gandhiji said that there was no point in finding fault with others over this issue. They had to analyse themselves. They should remember that in always finding fault with others they themselves were likely to be at fault. If the habit of fault-finding became a permanent feature with them they would never be able to serve anybody. Tulsidas in his inimitable way made it quite clear that there were no animate or inanimate objects which were either totally evil or totally good. Those two qualities more or less were to be noticed in everything and just like the proverbial swan they had to discard the evil of a thing and adopt the good of it for their own welfare. He asked the people to remember this moral sermon of the poet and conduct themselves accordingly. If they concentrated only on black spots they would themselves be spotted. Therefore, for one's own welfare it was desirable that the habit of fault-finding be given up. In China there was a pillar on which three monkeys were carved in stone : one of them was blindfolded, the second ear-logged and the third close-mouthed. The moral of this illustration was 'see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil'. He urged upon the congregation to take to heart what this Chinese symbol taught them.

Dwelling upon the necessity of congregational prayer, Gandhiji hoped that people on return to their homes would conduct such prayer in the company of the members of the family and children. Theatres or cinemas they often visited, but those agencies could scarcely benefit the people to the extent the congregational prayer could do. He himself had been to a famous theatre in London and could speak from his personal experience that it

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hardly benefited him. Comparing the benefit of congregational prayer with what little historical knowledge a dramatic performance could offer, Gandhiji said that the former was many thousand times more beneficial. What could the stage teach, he asked. Was it of any consequence when compared with the realistic drama that the world presented? He had seen the role of a hero being played on the stage. Could Rama of his conception be played on the stage? Could the tragedy on any stage be so realistic and effective as the tragedies they witnessed on the world stage? Mothers were ministering angels of homes and they nursed children to life and to them he especially appealed to introduce God and divinity to their children and to introduce *bhajan* song which was full of eternal bliss.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 19-1-1946

593. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SODEPUR,
[On or before] *January* [*19*][1] *1946*

CHI. GHANSHYAMDAS,

The enclosed letter has been received from Kanya Gurukul. I think I had better send it to you. I do not know what exactly is to be done.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original : C.W. 8076. Courtesy : G. D. Birla

594. TELEGRAM TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

January 19, 1946

NO TELEGRAM RECEIVED. PERSONALLY AGAINST YOU ENTERING LEGISLATURE.

BAPU

From a copy : Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy : Pyarelal

[1] The numeral is faded in the source. Gandhiji left Sodepur on this date.

595. LETTER TO SUCHETA KRIPALANI

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

CHI. SUCHETA,

Your letter written from Allahabad is before me. I am dictating this after the morning prayer. At 2.30 p.m. today, I leave for Madras.

Your report is good. I have written to Bapa regarding the Delhi case as well as the question of representation. I am inclined to think that if we just wait till we find a suitable Agent for a place, meanwhile getting the work done through the centre, no problem should arise in the appointment of women Agents. Therefore, I am of the opinion that we may take any kind of work from Brijkrishna. We should not formally appoint him an Agent. If the idea does not appeal to either or both of you I shall be ready to do as you suggest. This has been my policy regarding any activity that I am not conducting myself and I am convinced that it is right. Therefore, send me your own opinion.

About the U. P., I am carrying on correspondence with Purnima. No decision has yet been reached. Concerning the appointments another question has now arisen, viz., whether anyone contesting election to the Assembly can continue to be an Agent. We have three or four such cases—those of Durgabai, the sister from Calicut (I forget her name), Rameshwaridevi and probably Purnima too. I feel that it would indeed be difficult, if not impossible, for those going into the Assembly, to do full justice to their work as Agents. Besides, the mere knowledge that their Agents are members of the Assembly is likely to perturb the village women. Do send me your views in the matter. Are you coming to Madras? Bapa is coming. You may also come. If you come I shall arrange for your accommodation.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI SUCHETA KRIPALANI
SWARAJ BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

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

596. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

CHI. MUNNALAL,

These days I am kept extremely busy. I, therefore, have not been able to reply to one or two letters of yours. They contained nothing special. I am glad that things have improved somewhat. However, I have realized your difficulty. We shall be able to solve it only through patience. I cannot do more from here. It will be enough if you do not incur any new expenditure. I will see about the khadi after I return.

I read your long telegram to Kanchan. I would say that you should not have sent it. I do not understand how Balkrishna encouraged you to send it. It can be described as a wire from a *vevalo*[1]. You will understand what I mean if you know the meaning of the word *vevalo*. I do not know the English equivalent for *vevala*. Every language has some words which are untranslatable. *Vevala* is such a word. I am not reprimanding you at all. This is only a joke. I actually gave you an opportunity to come, if you wished to. Kanchan is better now. And if she gives up her obstinacy, this illness will do her much good. I am leaving today for Madras. It is not certain whether or not I shall take Kanchan with me. Dr. Bidhan has had an X-ray taken. If the report is good, Sushilabehn says I can take her. She has not yet been permitted to walk.

My reason for sending Manibhai was that if such an occasion should arise again, you should be able to leave the place immediately. Manibhai, therefore, was to get trained by you even if you had not left. But what has happened has happened.

One thing is certain, namely, that Kanchan was looked after with as much care as would be bestowed on an Emperor. And she got a doctor, too, such as only an Emperor could get.

I had a letter from Jehangirji. He says he will do his best.

[1] Mawkishly sentimental

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Kanchan is accompanying me.
Not revised.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 8616. Also C.W. 7202. Courtesy : Munnalal G. Shah

597. A NOTE

SODEPUR,
January 19, 1946

I think the construction of the bunds at Hooghly, which has benefited the people greatly is actually a part of the Constructive Programme.[1] Such creative power should be there in all the sevaks.

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 8028. Also C.W. 10517 and 10526. Courtesy : Ratnamoni Chatterjee

598. SPEECH AT BALASORE[2]

January 19, 1946

He said that he had already spoken enough in Bengal and Assam and they must have read the speeches in the papers. He asked them to follow those instructions. Gandhiji laid stress on the need for Harijan uplift. He wanted caste Hindus and Harijans to live as brothers. He also complimented them on the discipline they had shown and said that the people at Balrampur had also behaved in similar manner.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-1-1946

[1] The reference is to the construction of a cross bund in Arambagh for irrigation purposes across the river Mundeswari by the villagers, the cost of which was met by voluntary cess.

[2] Gandhiji was sleeping when his train arrived at Balasore. However, when he was informed that a disciplined crowd was waiting on the platform to see him, he came to the doorway and addressed them.

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599. A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY[1]

November 1, 1945

The joy of life lies in divesting oneself of life's cares.

November 2, 1945

The past belongs to us but we do not belong to the past. We belong to the present. We are makers of the future, but we do not belong to the future.

November 3, 1945

He alone who truly serves is a good householder. He goes on giving without expectation of return.

November 4, 1945

A fault as small as a mustard seed becomes as big as a mountain when sought to be concealed. It can, however, be eradicated if an open confession is made.

Pratipada, November 5, 1945

Faith transcends reason; it is not opposed to it.

November 6, 1945

It is easier to cross the ocean between countries than to span the gulf between individuals or people.

November 7, 1945

It is not man that enjoys pleasures; it is pleasures that enjoy man, which is to say they consume him.

November 8, 1945

Everyone grows old with the passage of time; desire alone remains ever youthful.

[1] Gandhiji started writing "A Thought for the Day" for Anand Hingorani, at the latter's request, on November 20, 1944, and continued the practice for about two years. The thoughts for the period covered by this volume are reproduced as a single item under the last date, 19-1-1946. The thoughts were originally written in Hindi. The translation by Anand T. Hingorani is reproduced here with slight alterations.

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November 9, 1945

Irregularity never goes well with non-attachment.

November 10, 1945

He who is shamed into acting correctly is not acting correctly at all.

November 11, 1945

The avaricious, the lustful, the wrathful and the drunkard are among the ten types of persons reckoned by Vidura as having no regard for religion.

November 12, 1945

That which should be renounced must be declined as a matter of duty even if offered free.

November 13, 1945

None can put him to shame who, of his own free will, and even though others know nothing about it, makes a clean breast of his sin and is ashamed of it.

November 14, 1945

Innocent and dreamless sleep is *samadhi* (meditation), *yoga* (concentration of mind) and selfless action. (Adapted from Vinoba's letter).

November 15, 1945

Nothing is impossible for a true devotee.

November 16, 1945

A devotee is ever absorbed in God.

November 17, 1945

He who is absorbed in God cannot become absorbed in anybody or anything besides Him.

November 18, 1945

It is said that a pilgrimage is not undertaken at the cost of one's hearth and home. The truth, however, is that a pilgrimage is possible only after a complete renunciation of hearth and home.

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November 19, 1945

The fear of the gun disappears when it has been fired. The bond of love grows ever tighter, yet is never felt as bondage.

November 20, 1945

Man's real enemies are six—lust, anger, attachment, drunkenness, pride and grief. Victory over them makes it easier to conquer the rest.

November 21, 1945

Everyone agrees it is folly to do evil. But to consider evil means justified for gaining a worthy end must be regarded as even greater folly.

November 22, 1945

If a man were not to undertake work which is beyond his capacity, there would be no scope left for anxiety.

November 23, 1945

It is more than severe punishment to compel a man to do something which he does not understand.

November 24, 1945

I see a man whom I consider my brother and love him as such. Later, I find that he is not my brother. He is what he is and I give him up. Who is to blame in this?

November 25, 1945

What is it, if not futile, to argue about something which is beyond thought?

November 26, 1945

What should be done if a mad man appears before us and takes possession of our house and stores? What is the non-violent remedy? The simple answer is lovingly to let him have his way.

November 27/December 3, 1945

He who does not labour and yet eats, eats stolen food.

November 28/December 3, 1945

Who can eat with an easy mind so long as even a single person starves for want of work?

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November 29/December 3, 1945

Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket and you will learn much from such reflection.

November 30/December 3, 1945

To a starving person, God will appear in the form of bread alone.

December 1/December 3, 1945

Why insult the naked by giving them clothes? Give them work so that they may earn the money for clothes by their own labour.

December 2/December 3, 1945

It is a sin to open free kitchens for those who are capable of physical labour. To provide work for them is meritorious.

December 3, 1945

Faith that does not wane but ever waxes higher and turns into realization.

December 4, 1945

Beauty lies not in the complexion but in Truth alone.

December 5, 1945

When a man lives in submission to authority, it means he is paying the price of personal freedom.

December 6, 1945

When the administration becomes so evil as to be intolerable, a man sacrifices even personal freedom to offer non-violent resistance to it.

December 7, 1945

Truly, there are as many religions as there are men. But when one goes to the root of one's religion, one finds that in reality religion is one.

December 8, 1945

If we are careful about the means, the end will take care of itself. In other words there is no difference between means and ends.

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December 9, 1945

Confession of error works like a broom. The broom sweeps away filth; confession does no less.

December 10, 1945

One perfect man can dispel untruth even though the untruthful be legion.

December 11, 1945

There is a limit to violent action and it can fail. Non-violence knows no limit and it never fails.

December 12, 1945

Faith is put to the test when the situation is most difficult.

December 13, 1945

Violence is the weapon of the weak; non-violence that of the strong.

December 14, 1945

He who wishes to preserve his integrity must be prepared to lose all material possessions.

December 15, 1945

A religion which takes no note of this world and only harps on the one beyond, does not deserve the name.

December 16, 1945

He who is poor by force of circumstances, cannot become poor by choice.

December 17, 1945

Chastity needs no purdah. It needs only God's protection.

December 18, 1945

The right that accrues from the performance of duty endures.

December 19, 1945

So long as gold and diamonds lie buried in the bowels of the earth they are of no use to anyone. Man's labour digs them out and gives them their value. Seen thus, it is the labourer who produces them.

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December 20, 1945

Just as I have the right to eat and drink, so also have I the right to do my work in my own way. This is swaraj.

December 21, 1945

Do not seek to know the views of others, nor base your opinion thereon. To think independently for oneself is a sign of fearlessness.

December 22, 1945

If God be our protector and companion, why or whom shall we fear, however fierce be the storm, however deep the darkness.

December 23, 1945

In complete non-violence, there is complete absence of hatred.

December 24, 1945

Non-violence works for the good of all, not only of the greatest number. The votary of non-violence must be prepared if necessary to lay down his life in order to secure the good of all.

December 25, 1945

Prayer needs a heart, not a tongue. Without the heart, words have no meaning.

December 26, 1945

Purity asks for no external protection.

December 27, 1945

Our greatest enemy is not the foreigner, nor anyone else. We ourselves, that is, our desires, are our enemies.

December 28, 1945

He who does not want to be a slave of anyone, must become the slave of God.

December 29, 1945

Violence must be abjured, for the good that it may seem to achieve is in appearance only, while the harm that it does is everlasting.

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December 30, 1945

Man is the image of his thoughts.

December 31, 1945

True religion knows no territorial limits.

January 1, 1946

Looking at a blank sheet of paper, one cannot say which is the obverse and which is the reverse side. So it is with non-violence and truth. The one cannot exist without the other.

KASHI,
January 2, 1946

It would be considered deplorable if a dead man's body were to be buried in the same pit as the carcass of an animal. But on reflection it would appear that out of this action arises a happy state— the unity of all life is established.

ON WAY TO SODEPUR,
January 3, 1946

Physical weakness is not the real weakness. Weakness of the mind alone is the real weakness.

SODEPUR,
January 4, 1946

The common people are a devoted worker's real bank, and this bank never fails.

SODEPUR,
January 5, 1946

Renunciation which does not spring from the heart cannot be abiding.

SODEPUR,
January 6, 1946

He who in his distress turns to God is not troubled by any fear.

SODEPUR,
January 7, 1946

Education which does not mould character is wholly worthless.

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ON THE ASSAM MAIL,
January 8, 1946

When there is both inner and outer cleanliness, it approaches godliness.

ON THE ASSAM MAIL,
January 9, 1946

O man! If thou art really free from attachment, thou hast to put up patiently with insult, abuse and even assault.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 10, 1946

What matters to you the world's praise or censure? Do what you think is your duty.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 11, 1946

Only the brave can be forgiving. The weak are unable to punish; so, in their case, the question of forgiveness does not arise.

SARANI OR GAUHATI,
January 12, 1946

Economics which departs from or is opposed to ethics is no good and should be renounced.

ON THE STEAMER TO DHUBRI,
January 13, 1946

Man is where his mind is, not where his body is.

SODEPUR,
January 14, 1946

That which looks for mercy from an opponent is not non-violence.

SODEPUR,
January 15, 1946

One mark of non-attachment is that the work of a person free from attachment is never in arrears at the end of the day.

SODEPUR,
January 16, 1946

A person without attachment should have an inexhaustible fund of patience.

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SODEPUR,
January 17, 1946

A person without attachment should under no circumstances give way to anger.

SODEPUR,
January 18, 1946

One who thinks in terms of 'mine' and 'thine' cannot be free from attachment.

ON THE TRAIN TO MADRAS,
January 19, 1946

The non-attached person cannot own anything.

A Thought for the Day, pp. 347-426

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LORD WAVELL'S VERSION OF HIS TALK WITH GANDHIJI[1]

I deplored the recent speeches of Congress leaders and said that the preaching of violence could only lead to violence, especially with the inflammable material in India, of young students and goondas (the Indian equivalent of hooligans); and that fomentation of racial and communal hatred would not produce the atmosphere in which a solution could be produced in next year's discussions. He admitted the violence of Congress speeches and indicated that he was trying to get the tone lowered. I said that an agreement of some kind between Hindu and Muslim was necessary, even if it was an agreement to part. He said he had always tried for a settlement but was frustrated by the British policy of divide and rule. I said this was nonsense, we tried our best to bring them together; that the increase in communal feeling was mainly due to the action of Congress Ministries in 1937-39 which had made Muslims feel they would not get a square deal from Congress and had caused the rise of the Muslim League and the idea of Pakistan. He defended the Congress Ministries at some length, and said all Governors had admitted their fairness. I said there was no doubt about the psychological effect on the Muslims, whatever the facts may have been; and he admitted this. I then said that the British were accustomed to abuse and misrepresentation from Indian Nationalists, but that there was a limit, and that it seemed hardly wise to antagonize us at this moment when we were trying our best to bring about a settlement, and that India after getting her freedom would want Britain's co-operation in defence and in commercial development. I added that if any disorder resulted from the hatred now being stirred up, it would of course be my duty to suppress it, and I should do so by all means in my power. He assented to this; and then said that India needed no help from Britain in trade or defence. She would develop her trade in her own way, and her defence would be the moral force of non-violence, which would eventually conquer the world and bring about universal peace. I said I did not think either of us would live to see this desirable issue, and that the immediate point was to prevent violence in India during the next year or so. We left it at that. He was quite friendly though woolly, and seemed in good health.

The Viceroy's Journal, pp. 192-3

[1] *Vide* footnote 1, p. 200.

APPENDIX II

THE SAPRU COMMITTEE PROPOSALS[1]

BOMBAY,
December 27, 1945

"The Committee stands for a single Union of India, including the whole of British India and all the Indian States, the claim for secession or non-accession, by which individual Provinces or States can keep out of the Union is not accepted," says the Sapru Committee in its final report on constitutional proposals. This report, which was compiled by the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Rt. Hon. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, the Hon. Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar and Kunwar Sir Jagadish Prasad, was released to the Press on December 27, 1945.

Embodying this principle in its proposals, the Committee recommends that the constitution-making body to be appointed after the elections should proceed on the basis of framing a constitution for a single State, and urges that the right of secession or non-accession given to individual States or Provinces in the Cripps proposals should be withdrawn.

The Committee maintains that throughout it has endeavoured to make a constructive approach to the many knotty problems that confront the country, to investigate them from every angle, to appraise as dispassionately as they could every fact, circumstance or conceivable argument and to reach conclusions which in their estimation were calculated to promote the lasting interests of India and were likely to elicit the approbation of thinking Indians.

The report says : "It is the Committee's firm conviction that the future of India lies in adopting a democratic constitution. The ultimate sovereign in a democracy is the electorate, which chooses those who are to represent it in the Legislature and Executive. Adult franchise is therefore recommended. Under existing conditions, it is excusable to give religious communities the right to a fair and adequate share of opportunities for service in the Legislature and Executive, but the aspirants for these opportunities should realize that they hold them in trust for the nation as a whole and should for that reason seek the support of all communities."

[1] *Vide* pp. 406-7.

Joint General Electorates

The Committee has recommended that separate communal electorates should disappear and should be replaced by joint general electorates with reservation of seats. In the opinion of the Committee, Parliamentary Government is not unsuited to India and can be worked even with communally composed Legislature and Executive. One of the cardinal features of the constitutional proposals made by the Committee is the provision of ample and effective safeguards for the minorities.

Emphasizing the importance of joint electorates, the Committee says : "No Government, which is not merely in power but accepts active responsibility for its decisions, can legitimately flinch from the task of righting a manifestly wrong decision (taken forty years ago, accepting separate electorate for Muslims), which has been so mischievous in its effects. We hope the present Labour Government in Britain, with its high democratic ideals and the enormous voting strength behind it, will not lack the courage to get this decision reversed with the support of Parliament. We have no doubt that such reversal would be to the lasting benefit of the Muslims themselves."

Parity at the Centre

It is because the Committee attaches great importance to the abolition of separate electorates that it considers parity of representation in the Central Legislative Assembly between Muslims and Hindus, other than Scheduled Castes, not too great a price to pay. Hindu objections to this proposal are strong, because it means on a population basis one Muslim will be regarded as equal to two Hindus, other than Scheduled Castes, also the fear that the British Government may accept the parity concession without implementing the important provision that joint electorates must be introduced, is not unfounded in the light of past history. Each special concession has, in the past, been made the starting-point for fresh demands. But in the interests of communal harmony, which abolition of separate electorates will bring about, the Committee has ventured on this proposal, but it insists that in its recommendation on parity, the conditions and limitations it has laid down are equally important. Parity, however, is confined to the Lower House of the Union Legislature and Union Executive, which are the final organs for determining all-India policy; and it is important that such policy should have the substantial backing of the bulk of Hindus and Muslims. The same considerations do not apply to the Provincial Legislatures or Executives, or to the Services, or to other fields of administration.

Joint electorates, with reservation of seats, are admittedly a far cry from democracy, but they are a necessary halfway house between separate electorates and general electorates without any limitation even as to candidature.

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Concession Should Not Extend to the Services

The Committee considers that it will be unjust and improper to extend the concession of parity to the Services, civil or military. Government Services, like any other service, must be based upon individual merit and fitness. Neither does the Committee think that the Muslims are educationally backward, as they were thirty or forty years back. As regards other communities, the present proportions are considered fair, but they may be revised by future Governments, so as to provide adequate representation for backward communities. The Committee also expresses the view that it will be dangerous to extend the principle of parity to the Defence Services.

Maintaining that the Muslims are not a separate nation, the Committee in the chapter on Pakistan or partition of India says that the separate nationhood of Muslims cannot be established on grounds of race, language or culture. If religion alone will have to be the basis of division, then many other communities can also claim separate nationhood.

Declaring that self-determination is not an absolute right and can only be applied with due regard to circumstances, the Committee examines the practicabilities of Pakistan in the context of Indian conditions and in the light of Indian opinion. It says : "The position is that the scheme of Pakistan put forward by Mr. Jinnah is not acceptable either to the Hindus of the Punjab and Bengal or to the Sikhs or to the Congress or to the Hindu Mahasabha. The C. R. Formula has been totally rejected by Mr. Jinnah and has been opposed by the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab and Hindus of Bengal.

Pakistan Not a Practicable Proposition

"It is thus clear that Pakistan, whether whole, according to Mr. Jinnah's ideals, or truncated, according to the C. R. Formula, cannot be established without the consent of parties and will meet with the strongest opposition. Arbitration has been ruled out and is out of place when the fate of the entire country is to be decided. The only alternatives for enforcing Pakistan are either British enforcement of it or civil war."

After considering the problems of Defence of the sub-Continent and the position of minorities after division, the report states the Committee's conclusion that Pakistan "solves no communal problems and only raises fresh ones : that on grounds of Defence, leaving apart other major considerations, the division of the country into two independent States will endanger the safety of both, and that there is no justification for the British Government to support such a revolutionary scheme if they have genuine faith in the unity of India which they themselves have built up and fostered."

The report characterizes Prof. Coupland's regional scheme as "fantastic, unreal and academic."

Rejecting all schemes of partition and division, the Committee concludes : "We are convinced that the partition of India would be an outrage justified neither by history nor by political expediency. It is incompatible with the greatness, safety and economic development of the country and will lead either to constant internecine war or perpetual foreign domination. It multiplies and complicates the problem of minorities without solving it and threatens to plunge India back into the dark and dismal days of the 18th century."

The Committee feels certain that political unity can be maintained and Hindus and Muslims can live together amicably as they have done for a thousand years."

The report proceeds to consider the arrangements to be made by which India will remain united and at the same time, afford the communities sufficient scope for self-development. One of the Committee's fundamental recommendations in this regard is the provision by which in the Union Assembly, excluding the seats given to special interests, Muslim representation from British India will be on a par with the representation given to Hindus excluding the Scheduled Castes. The offer of parity is subject to the condition that joint electorates with reservation of seats are introduced throughout, i. e., for all elective bodies in the country and the Committee adds that, should the Muslims not agree to this condition and insist on separate electorates, not only should the offer stand withdrawn, but the Hindus should be free to ask for a revision of the Communal Award.

Provision for Adult Franchise

Another important recommendation is the provision for adult franchise. If political power is to be transferred to an Indian Democracy, so as to prevent its concentration in the hands of a few, the risk of enfranchising the entire adult population should be taken. Political consciousness among the masses has awakened to a great extent and the last elections in 1937 were in themselves a great educative force. The average man thinks more and more in terms of politics and, if his judgment is faulty, he is no better or no worse than the average voter in Europe, where adult franchise has been in existence for some time.

Before Pakistan came to occupy the field, Muslim opinion generally seemed to demand that the residuary powers should be lodged with the Provinces, in order that the latter might have the fullest freedom to legislate in matters which were not covered expressly by the provisions enumerating the distribution of powers. Though the case for a strong Centre is strong, the Committee, as a matter of compromise and for the sake of peace and amity, recommended the vesting of the residuary powers in the Provinces, in accordance with the Muslim view. Mr. P. R. Das and some other members disagree with this recommendation.

While the subjects allotted to the Centre are reduced to a minimum, it is provided that the Centre shall have powers to co-ordinate legislation and administration of different units when necessary as well as to ensure the maintenance of the political integrity and economic unity of India as a whole.

Representation for Communities

The Committee recommends that the constitution should provide for representation of different communities in the Central Executive on the basis of their strength in the Legislature. The Cabinet will be a composite one only in the sense that communities will be represented on it, but in the interests of harmonious working "the Prime Minister's choice of his colleagues is not to be fettered". The Committee looks forward to the choice of members to whatever community they may belong on the basis of their political affiliations. The substitution of joint for separate electorate should, by compelling candidates to seek support from all communities, help the emergence of political parties each of which will contain members of different communities. It is on these considerations that "composite" instead of "coalition" Governments have been envisaged. It is also provided that there should be collective responsibility to the Legislature. The Committee prefers the British model, namely that the Prime Minister should choose his colleagues though a suggestion had been made that the Swiss model, under which the Central Legislature in joint session by single transferable vote elects the Cabinet and the Ministers hold office for the duration of the life of the Legislature, was made.

Indian States and Federation

Dealing with the Indian States, the Committee says that provision should be made in the constitution for the accession from time to time of Indian States as units of a Federation on such terms as may be agreed upon but the establishment of the Indian Union should not be contingent on the accession to the Federation of any Indian State or of any minimum number of Indian States. The Committee, therefore, contemplates that the Union need not be identical with Federation and it may include States which have not formally federated.

The Committee says : "Our recommendation is that the new constitution should continue at least the unity that now binds the States and British India, though the bond may not be Federal. Federation, we recognize, is a closer and a more intimate and efficient bond and we earnestly hope that in due course and after the fullest consultation and investigation, all the States—a few individually but the great majority organized in groups and sub-federations—will have acceded as federated units of the Union. The inherent difficulties of bringing about such a happy consummation and the experience of negotiations which Lord Linlithgow inaugurated and conducted

between 1936 and 1939 do not encourage the hope that these consultations and investigations can be successfully concluded, except with the exercise of infinite patience and after lapse of several years. To hang up the Federal Union of such units as are willing to federate until some States, or a minimum number of States, or the last hesitant State has agreed to accede, would be a policy which is calculated to postpone indefinitely the elimination of foreign rule and the achievement of full self-government. The Committee, therefore, insists that the Union of India should be established without any such waiting and that, while individual States might take their own time to make up their minds as to whether they would accede as federated units, all of them should, from the outset, be treated as in the Union, united with each other and with the rest of India through paramountcy at the Union Centre."

As regards paramountcy, the report says, "British suzerainty, which is the mainspring of paramountcy jurisdiction today, will have to cease to exist and the new Union Centre, that is, the Federal Cabinet will come to exercise that jurisdiction over the unfederated States." The Committee hopes that the Rulers of States will not object to this inevitable development.

The Committee is also of the view that the Crown Representative as a separate office should disappear and the paramountcy jurisdiction now exercised by him should be transferred to the Union Cabinet. It is suggested that the Minister of the Union Cabinet should be in charge of the States affairs, assisted by a reformed Political Department. The Minister should also have a body of Indian Advisers to help him in administering paramountcy jurisdiction over the unfederated States.

"Head of State"

On the question of "Head of the State", the Committee says : "All parties are agreed that the constitution should be based on Indian independence and, therefore, in law and in fact the indefeasible sovereignty of the people of India from whom alone all powers of legislation and administration should be derived, should be recognized. No foreign power should be allowed to exercise any jurisdiction over the Indian Union and therefore the existing practice by which all residuary powers are exercised by the United Kingdom Parliament on the theory of "the indestructible sovereignty of the King in Parliament over the land throughout the King's dominions" will not be acceptable to any school of Indian political opinion. The Head of the State under the new constitution should replace the present chief Executive with his dual role as Viceroy and Crown's Representative. He will have such powers as are given to him under the constitution as also such other powers as are now vested in his Majesty the King, including powers connected with the exercise of the functions of the Crown in relation to

Indian States. The Head of the State cannot act arbitrarily but only on the advice of the Ministry. His term of office may be for five years and ordinarily one person may not hold it for more than one term.

Minority Rights

Dealing with the rights of the Scheduled Castes and other minorities, the Committee has provided that these communities will in future be accorded by statute a place on the Executive and will share in the responsibilities of administration. They will have adequate voice in framing the constitution with safeguards against hasty changes. They will have likewise the benefit of the fundamental rights with power to have more important ones enforced by the highest tribunal in the country. The Minorities Commission will keep a jealous watch over their welfare and will obtain relief when they are injured. The Committee hopes that with their rights ensured and protected, the minorities will not lose sight of their obligations to the sub-sections which exist in their midst.

As regards the Scheduled Castes, the Committee recommends the continuation of the method of election prescribed in the Poona Pact.

Indianization of Armed Forces

Dealing with the question of Indianization of armed forces the Committee says : "Under any system of real self-government, these must be in the charge of a member of a responsible ministry. The disciplinary head of the armed forces, the Commander-in-Chief, has to work under the orders of the Ministry and, on the Dominion analogy, the supreme command of the armed forces has to be vested in the Head of the State; Indian statute law will make provision for the government of the armed forces, the application of the British Army Act and any other enactment of a similar nature to the Indian Army being done away with."

The Committee lays great stress on the creation and rapid development of a National Army.

Secession

Dealing with the question of secession, the Committee takes strong exception to the provision contained in the Cripps offer in regard to secession. In the opinion of the Committee such a provision amounts to the recognition of revolt from and repudiates the constitution. It is, in essence, an extra-constitutional act and common sense is against the constitution recognizing it as a legal right to be unilaterally exercised at the option of the unit.

In the opinion of the Committee, the constitution-making body should proceed on the basis of framing the constitution for a single State. As a safeguard for minorities, it is provided that no decision of the constitution-making body will be valid unless it is supported by three-fourths of the

members present and voting. Valid decisions of the Constituent Assembly must be binding on the British Government. The Committee says that a stage has been reached when the British Government can no longer evade responsibility. Therefore they should not allow things to drift and the situation to deteriorate.

Interim Government

In conclusion the Committee makes an earnest appeal to all communities and parties in the country to accept the principles underlying its recommendation. In the event of there being no agreement, the Committee calls upon His Majesty's Government to set up an interim Government at the Centre and proceed to establish a suitable machinery for framing a new constitution, substantially on the principles enunciated by it and to have it put into operation at the earliest possible date by handing over all the power now vested in them to the authorities established thereunder.

The Indian Annual Register, 1945, Vol. II, pp. 176-8

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CHRONOLOGY

(*November 1, 1945—January 19, 1946*)

November 1: Gandhiji was at Poona.

November 8: In Poona. Attended meeting of Hindustani Prachar Sabha.

November 10: Mahendra Gope was hanged in Bhagalpur jail.

November 12: Jawaharlal Nehru called on Gandhiji.

November 15: Gandhiji visited Khadakvasala.

November 19: Left Poona for Bombay.

November 20: Left Bombay for Wardha.

November 21: Arrived in Sevagram.

November 22: Addressed students of Samagra Gram Vidyalaya.

November 23-25: Attended meetings of Kasturba Memorial Trust.

November 26: Had talk with members of Hyderabad State Congress.

November 27-28: Presided over meetings of the Charkha Sangh.

November 30: Spoke at Mahila Ashram Wardha. Left for Calcutta.

December 1: Arrived in Calcutta. Put up at Sodepur Ashram. Met R. G. Casey, Governor of Bengal.

December 3: Met R. G. Casey.

December 10: Had discussion with Lord Wavell.

December 12: Dr. N. B. Khare called on Gandhiji.

December 18: Gandhiji arrived in Santiniketan.

December 19: Laid foundation of C. F. Andrews Memorial Hospital.

December 20: Left Santiniketan.

December 21: Arrived in Sodepur.

December 22: Called on R. G. Casey.

December 23: Had discussion with members of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and kindred organizations.

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December 24: Left for Midnapore District.

December 25: Arrived in Mahishadal.

December 30: Left Mahishadal for Contai.

December 31: Arrived in Contai.

January 1: Had discussion with local Congress workers.

January 2: Addressed volunteers' rally. Had discussion with Midnapore political workers.

January 3: Left Contai for Sodepur.

January 4: Arrived in Sodepur.

January 5: Addressed Conference of Congress workers.

January 6: Addressed Conference of Congress Workers.

January 8: Left Sodepur for Assam.

January 9: Visited Amingaon, Saulkuchi. Arrived in Gauhati.

January 10: In Gauhati.

January 12: Addressed Conference of political workers.

January 13: Left Gauhati for Dhubri.

January 14: Arrived in Sodepur.

January 15: Visited Alipur Jail.

January 17: Visited Dum Dum Jail.

January 19: Left Sodepur for Madras.

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* Due correction made.

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